

COMMUNIQUÉ No. 48 – NOVEMBER 11, 2021

INFORMATION

**To pastoral teams,
To priests, deacons, PCLs, LPAs,
To the faithful active in their communities,
To members of religious communities,
To Archdiocese staff,**

Dear Brothers, dear Sisters,

I. HEALTH GUIDELINES

As indicated in Communiqué No. 47, the following are the new health guidelines and directions from the Archbishop for our places of worship, to go into effect as of November 15, 2021:

- It will no longer be required to keep an attendance log for weddings and funerals;
- It will no longer be required to ask for vaccination passports from those attending places of worship;
- Places of worship now provide, according to Public Health, a "service considered essential," which explains the foregoing;
- For Masses where the vaccination passport is no longer required, the maximum capacity remains as before: a maximum of 250 persons in attendance indoors (with calculation taking into account the size of the space and the mandatory distance to be maintained between individuals or family "bubbles") and a maximum of 500 persons outdoors;
- When attending an indoor Mass not requiring the vaccination passport, hand sanitizing is mandatory, the distance between individuals or family bubbles is one (1) metre and **masks may be removed when the people are in their seats and speaking in a low voice.**

If those in charge of the place of worship so wish, the vaccination passport may be required at Masses;

- The place of worship may in these cases be filled to capacity;
- Hand sanitation requirements remain in effect, but there will no longer be a minimum distance to be maintained, and masks must be worn at all times, except when eating or drinking;
- Priests and liturgical servers must of course remove their masks to carry out their functions;
- Singing in the congregation is permitted, but masks must be worn at all times;
- With respect to choirs, whether a given Mass requires the vaccination passport or not, once the singers' masks are removed, special precautions must be taken: the distance

separating choir members and other musical participants from one another must be at least two (2) metres. Smaller vocal ensembles (mini-choruses) are recommended.

The Archbishop's directions in light of this easing of restrictions:

1. The pandemic is not over, and we must therefore not let our guard down.
2. If a person is ill or at risk, for instance, on account of a pre-existing medical condition, he or she must be told to stay home.
3. We are now considered an "essential service," and this reasoning must be maintained. To that end, we should be celebrating Masses without the vaccination passport; where desired, the vaccination passport may be required for certain Masses.

Consequently:

1. If you intend to schedule Sunday Masses at which the passport is required, you must also schedule at least one Sunday Mass without the passport requirement;
2. You are not obliged to schedule Masses requiring the passport. Assess whether you have adequate resources to do so: for instance, a sufficient number of trained volunteers;
3. In the case of weddings or funerals, you may consult the couple or family involved as to their preference and organize the event accordingly;
4. At Masses where the passport is required, children under 13 are exempt;
5. At weekday Masses, we ask that the vaccination passport not be required;
6. At any Mass requiring the passport, as for all Masses, please ensure that you are equipped to welcome participants appropriately:
 - Signage must remain in place (regarding sanitary instructions, circulation of the congregation inside the church and designated seating), but it must be adapted to allow frequent changes back and forth between 'no passport' Masses and 'passport required' Masses;
 - A sufficient number of trained volunteers must be available;
 - Information must be provided efficiently to potential participants via your website, social media, parish bulletins, local media, etc.;
 - Passport verification technology must be in place (smart phones, verification app).
7. "Passport required" Masses: all participants, including liturgical servers (priests, deacons, lectors, cantors and musicians, servers, communion ministers), must be adequately vaccinated and show their passports;
8. With the approach of CHRISTMAS and the festive season, if you intend to schedule "passport required" Masses, kindly begin organizing them at least two weeks before Christmas, in order to ensure that procedures in your place of worship are in place and running smoothly.
9. Further directions will follow soon with respect to maximum capacities and questions concerning activities in church basements, on the premises of your place of worship, etc.

II. OMBUDSMAN CONTACT DETAILS

- **IMPORTANT:** Please ensure that updated information concerning the Ombudsman is included on parish websites, in parish bulletins, posters, etc.:

(514) PLAINTE ((514) 752-4683)
plainte@ombudsman-ecm.com

III. MONTREAL WYD 2021

- Diocesan WYD is coming! It's a whole week of activities from November 14 to 21, 2021. To find out the best ways to support youth mission and World Youth Day [click here](#)

Once again, thank you for your invaluable collaboration and your constant vigilance. We begin to see a little light at the end of the tunnel. Nevertheless, let us at all times keep our eyes fixed on the true Light who has been coming to visit us since the first Christmas.

In Jesus, Light of the World,



† Alain Faubert, VG
Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal