

**COMMUNIQUÉ No. 31 - February 25, 2021
INFORMATION
To pastors, parish pastoral teams and religious communities**

Brothers and sisters, following you will find some items of information and calls to action as we enter the Lenten season:

1. Gatherings in places of worship

Several groups have recently appealed to the government, expressing their disapproval of its position that gatherings are allowed in movie theatres up to a maximum of 250 people in the red zone, while gatherings in places of worship are limited to only 10 participants.

The Quebec Interfaith Roundtable issued a press release (only in French) to this effect on February 23: <http://bit.ly/CommuniquéTable20210223>

Our Archbishop Christian Lépine has also published a message reminding us that spiritual needs are essential human needs: <http://bit.ly/SpiritualNeeds>

Both position papers propose setting the limit of participants during celebrations in places of worship at 30% of their usual capacity.

You too can make your voice heard on this issue:

- A. By calling your Member of Parliament. For more information: <http://www.assnat.qc.ca/en/deputes/index.html>
- B. By contacting the regional public health authority: <http://bit.ly/DirectionSantéPublique>
- C. By signing the petition " " CHRISTIANS, as Easter saves us LET US SAVE EASTER ": <http://bit.ly/PetitionSauvonsPaques>

2. Commemorating the victims of COVID-19: Thursday, March 11, 2021

A national day of commemoration for the victims of COVID-19 has been decreed by the Quebec government and will take place on Thursday, March 11, 2021. Faith communities are invited to join in this event.

We propose several ways in which you can participate, depending on what is feasible:

- After the civic ceremony to be held from noon until 1:00 p.m. in front of the National Assembly, observe a minute's silence at 1:00 p.m. and, if possible, peal the bell(s) at 1:01 p.m.
- Place a commemorative object in front of your place of worship (a cross, for example), so that people can comfortably approach in order to reflect and place a flower, a candle, a card or a commemorative object.
- Plan a Mass or a time for prayer.

Do not hesitate to let us know (vg@diocesemontreal.org and communications@diocesemontreal.org) by March 4 about the activities that will be planned for your parish. The Assembly of Quebec Catholic Bishops will convey the information to the government, which intends to publicize them.

Archbishop Lépine will preside at a commemorative Mass, on March 11, at 5:00 p.m, at Mary Queen of the World Cathedral; it can be followed on our diocesan YouTube channel ([link](#)).

In addition, the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism invites you to participate via Zoom in an interfaith ceremony in memory of the victims of COVID-19 on March 11 at 8:00 pm. People from many faith communities will be praying for the deceased. The event is free of charge. To register, click here: <https://forms.gle/REwdf3RJwaSm43vv7>

3. Parishioners' meetings for the election of churchwardens

Several parish communities were unable to hold their meetings before the end of 2020 and were therefore unable to elect new churchwardens. The current circumstances are still not conducive to holding these meetings. Here are a few directives to be followed:

- Each parish in this situation will have to hold an election meeting as soon as circumstances permit.
- In the mean time, the mandates of churchwardens whose terms of office expired December 31, 2020, will be extended until they are replaced.
- However, a Fabrique that deems it necessary to fill immediately one or more of the posts of churchwarden may ask the Archbishop to appoint them himself (cf. Article 41; Act respecting Fabriques). Please refer to this document ([link](#)) regarding the appointment of churchwardens and to this one regarding the election of administrators of missions ([link](#)).
- If a Fabrique makes use of this special request, please note:
 - That a resolution of the Fabrique, unanimously approved by its members, must accompany the request;
 - That a churchwarden who has completed two full consecutive terms cannot be immediately proposed for a third term of three years;
 - That it is desirable that parishioners be consulted concerning who should be proposed for the positions to be filled, and that this consultation should be as general as possible, in accordance with whatever means the Fabrique may determine.

4. Vaccines

The Vatican COVID-19 Commission has forwarded to our attention documents concerning, among other things, the morality of vaccination from a Catholic point of view:

- Note from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: <http://bit.ly/CongregationforFaith>
- Document from the Vatican COVID-19 Commission on COVID-19 and the Pontifical Academy for Life: <http://bit.ly/VaticanCovid-19>

In Jesus, our Resurrection,



+ Alain Faubert, VG
Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal