

COMMUNIQUÉ No. 27 – January 22, 2021
INFORMATION

To pastors, parish pastoral teams and religious communities

Dear brothers and sisters,

Following a ministerial order issued this morning, January 22, 2021 the Government of Quebec is planning to relax the rules regarding places of worship:

- **Places of worship can open with a maximum of 10 participants, in addition to the necessary liturgical and technical facilitators.**
- The regular sanitary measures remain in place :
 - o The 2-metre physical distancing, both outside and inside the place of worship;
 - o Hand washing;
 - o Wearing a face mask.
- No congregational singing is permitted.
- For all services and celebrations, an attendance register remains mandatory.
- Places of worship may not be used as shelters. However, a one-time visit to offer support or comfort to a person can be made *inside* the Church, outside the usual services and celebrations.

Consequently:

The Archbishop leaves it up to the parish communities to decide whether or not to open the Church this weekend, wait until next weekend, or even to wait for an additional relaxation on numbers of participants (25 or 250), depending on the possibilities/capabilities and the discernment of the community.

So, until February 8 (or until new directives from the public authorities):

- Churches may open and Masses may be celebrated with a maximum of 10 participants (excluding liturgical and technical participants).
- Funerals may be held with a maximum of 25 participants (excluding those leading the celebration).
- The celebration of weddings is currently prohibited in places of worship.

So, new possibilities open up (respecting the maximum number of 10 participants or persons gathered at the same time), including:

- 1) Open for weekday Masses.

- 2) Receive people for the Sacrament of Reconciliation (*in the church*, not in the office). It is preferable that this be arranged by appointment (or plan opening hours, with a volunteer team to manage the flow of people).
- 3) Offer communion (*in the church*, not in the office). It is preferable to schedule time slots for receiving Communion (after online Mass, for example) and plan for the involvement of volunteers to ensure safe distribution.

More details will follow early next week.



+ Alain Faubert, VG
Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal