



# St. Joseph's Catholic Church

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25 February 2022

## A Message from the Pastor

If public health and health care indicators continue to improve, the following public health and workplace safety measures will come into effect on 1 March 2022:

- Face masks will still be required in indoor settings (including at Mass).
- Mass attendees should continue to screen themselves for any symptoms prior to arriving at the Church.
- Every other pew may now be occupied, with the exception of the smaller sections of pews at the side entrances. There, every third pew may be occupied by those feeling more comfortable with greater distance. As your comfort level increases, all pews will be opened.
- Ushers will continue to be available to assist parishioners with seating and traffic flow, and to maintain a comfortable distance between parishioners.
- Hand sanitizer will be available for parishioners' use at all entrances.
- Communion in the hand remains highly encouraged at this time.
- At the Sign of Peace, the shaking of hands is strongly discouraged.
- Holy water will be available at the fonts located at the entrances, and in the large container in the baptistry.
- The use of Extraordinary Eucharistic ministers and additional lectors will gradually increase.
- Congregational singing is permissible, with masks in place.
- The Choir will gradually return, with masks in place.
- Cantors may continue to be unmasked, with a 3-metre distance from others maintained.
- Collection baskets will remain at the entrances.
- Children's liturgy will remain suspended until it is deemed safe to resume.

After two years of living with pandemic restrictions, it may take some time before all of our parishioners will feel comfortable about returning to Mass in person. For that reason, the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days remains in suspension at this time.

On Ash Wednesday, we will employ the alternate practice of sprinkling ashes over the heads of the Faithful, rather than tracing a cross on their foreheads.

With the increase in our seating capacity, reservations will no longer be required for weekend Masses. As well, no reservations will be required for Masses on Ash Wednesday. We will monitor our attendance over the next few weeks. If necessary, we will resume the practice of reserved seating for our Easter Sunday Masses. If this becomes necessary, a notice will be posted in advance on our website and in our bulletin.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the parishioners, for your patience during this challenging time. I extend a special thank you to our ushers, whose assistance has been vital during this time. I add a final note of gratitude to those volunteers who will continue to stream our 11:00 a.m. Mass, permitting parishioners who are not yet comfortable returning to Mass the opportunity to join us each weekend in their homes.