

Merciful Redeemer Parish Guidelines for

Mass in a Time of Pandemic

Friday 11 June

On Monday 5 June 2021, the government of Ontario announced the limited re-opening of places of worship up to a maximum of 15% of seating capacity, while maintaining social-distancing protocols (6 feet between people of differing households), effective 12:01 a.m. Friday 11 June 2021. We are thankful as this time of closure has been painful and difficult. Our seating capacity at Merciful Redeemer is 940+/-; we plan on being ready to celebrate Mass with up to 125 people. To do so will require continued volunteer effort, effective communication, adherence to provincial and Archdiocesan requirements as well as those contained here, and the patience and coöperation of us all. Our plan for re-opening will change as circumstances and needs require. Herewith set forth is the parish plan for the period beginning Friday 11 June 2021 until we move into Stage II of the Provinces “Roadmap to Reopen”.

As we implement our re-opening plans, we must do so with prudence and caution. As you can expect, things will look a little different when we return to church. There may be some practices that are uncomfortable, and they may seem overly restrictive; I understand that. However, we must all do our part and make the best of this challenging situation. One of the biggest challenges is that, to re-open, we must do so in phases where our capacity will be limited due to directives from the Province of Ontario’s medical experts. Please read these carefully this document in its entirety to learn how our parish will do our best to tackle this issue.

A few things to note for the foreseeable future:

- There will be no congregational singing at Masses.
- There may be a cantor / musician to lead singing for our livestreamed Sunday Masses.
- There will be no need for Extra-ordinary ministers of Communion.
- There will be no need for altar servers.
- The office will remain open from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. For any assistance, please call 905-812-0030, ext. 0 (for the office) or email: office @mercifulredeemer.org (check website for all other email addresses).
- **The Confessionals remain closed for the time being.**

If you attend any Mass, meeting, even personal prayer, you are asked to bring your own hand sanitizer and advised to wear a face mask or covering. You may be asked/required to cleanse/sanitize/wipe down, any area that you sat/knelt/stood in or nearby.

Your coöperation is essential and your assistance, for your own good and that of your neighbours, is respectfully expected.

Schedule of Masses and Procedures:

Attendance at Mass will be available only for those who sign-up, which will enable us to get a sense of the numbers returning, and how best to celebrate together in a dignified and appropriate way. You may register using EventBrite (see below for details). If EventBrite is not available to you, you may call the office for assistance. If no one answers, please leave a detailed message (name/s of person/s intending to come, which Mass and specific date and time). *Note that, if you leave a voice message on the parish answering machine, your attendance at the Mass you wish to attend is not confirmed unless, and until, you have received a call back from the office.* **EventBrite is the preferred way for you to sign up.**

All Masses will be limited to a maximum of **125 people (for now), to accommodate social distancing requirements.**

Please plan on arriving well in time to avoid bottlenecks at the doors at the beginning of Mass. You will check in with ushers at the doors and be escorted to your pew, wherein you shall remain for the duration of Mass. Communion will be received in the pews, as the priest/s will come through the pews and distribute the Sacrament, rather than people approaching the priest in line-ups. Exiting will be done through the western doors of the church as directed by ushers.

- Effective Friday 11 June, Adoration Chapel open: 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m., **maximum 10 people.**

*** If you are in the Adoration Chapel praying with Mass set to begin and we have reached our capacity, if you have not signed up for Mass, **you will be asked to leave.** ***

Saturday 12 June 2021:

- Saturday daily Mass will be livestreamed at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday Vigil Masses: 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., livestreamed.

Sunday 13 June 2021:

- Mass 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., livestreamed.

Monday 14 June 2021:

- Mass 12:15 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. livestreamed;

- Adoration Chapel open: 7:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Please enter and exit only through automatic doors to avoid touching door handles; bring your own hand sanitizer and be prepared to sanitize your place of prayer and environs before leaving, after you finish your prayers (pew cleaning material provided at parish).

Tuesday 15 June 2021:

- Mass 12:15 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. livestreamed;
- Confession will be heard at 6:00 p.m. (as per the norm).
- Confessions will be heard in the Priests' Office and in the basement stairwell exit on the north side of the Church. Watch for the signs on the doors. Penitents are asked to wear a mask, and to clean their kneeler/seat before leaving (you may prefer to stand). Social distancing will be maintained.

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Please enter and exit only through automatic doors to avoid touching door handles; bring your own hand sanitizer and be prepared to sanitize your place of prayer and environs before leaving, after you finish your prayers (pew cleaning material provided at parish).

Wednesday 17 June 2021:

- 12:15 p.m. Mass; livestreamed, registration required for in-person.
- 7:00 p.m. Mass; livestreamed, registration required for in-person.

Thursday 18 June 2021:

- 12:15 p.m. Mass; livestreamed, registration required for in-person.
- 7:00 p.m. Mass; livestreamed, registration required for in-person.

Friday 19 June 2021:

- 12:15 p.m. Mass; livestreamed, registration required for in-person.
- 7:00 p.m. Mass; livestreamed, registration required for in-person.

Weekend of 19/20 June 2021:

- 9:00 a.m. Saturday morning Mass livestreamed; registration required: doors open at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday 19 June 2021:

- Confessions will be heard at 4:00 p.m. (as was the norm).
- Confessions will be in the Adoration Chapel, and in the basement stairwell exit on the north side of the Church. Watch for the signs on the doors. Penitents are asked to

wear a mask or face covering, and to clean their kneeler/seat before leaving (you may prefer to stand). Social distancing will be maintained.

- **5:00 p.m. public Sunday Vigil Mass** will be celebrated. The church will be open at 4:00 p.m. for entrance to registered attendees. **Please plan on arriving well in time as to avoid bottlenecks at the doors at the beginning of Mass.**

- **7:00 p.m. public Sunday Vigil Mass** will be celebrated. The church will be open at 6:20 p.m. for entrance to registered attendees. **Please plan on arriving well in time as to avoid bottlenecks at the doors at the beginning of Mass.**

Sunday 20 June 2021:

- public **Sunday Mass will be celebrated at 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.**

- All Masses will be livestreamed.

- The church will be open at 7:45 a.m. for entrance to registered attendees for the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

- The Church will open at 9:30 a.m. for those registered for the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

- The Church will open 11:20 a.m. for those registered for the 12:00 noon Mass.

- The Church will open at 6:00 p.m. for those registered for the 7:00 p.m. Mass.

Please plan on arriving well in time as to avoid bottlenecks at the doors shortly before the beginning of Mass.

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*** Cardinal Collins has extended the dispensation from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass for the foreseeable future. If, for legitimate reason, you are unable to attend, or even to participate on our livestreamed Mass, you are still obliged by Divine precept to keep the Lord's holy.

*** Please do your best to use washroom facilities at home before arriving. In the event of genuine necessity, bathroom use will be limited to no more than 1 person at a time.

*** The basement remains entirely off limits.

*** Please do not touch statues, images or holy paintings at any time.

*** If you test positive for Covid-19 virus within 14 days of any visit to the Merciful Redeemer Parish, please inform the office here so that we can take appropriate care of you and those with whom you may have been in contact.

*** These will be our norms until we enter Stage II, expected in the first week of July. Please watch our website any updates.

How to register for parish Mass with Eventbrite:

Here is the link to our Eventbrite page: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/merciful-redeemer-parish-mass-sign-up-registration-108881984948>

And here are instructions on how to use it:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/support/articles/en_US/How_To/what-does-the-checkout-process-look-like-with-eventbrite-payment-processing?lg=en_GB

You will be required to give the name and phone number of those you wish to register. Please register only those who will DEFINITELY ATTEND. Registration is on a first come – first served basis and closes two hours before the Mass begins. If you arrive at the church and your name is not on the list of registered persons scheduled at the Mass you have selected, you will not be able to attend that Mass unless there is leftover room (i.e. other registered person/s did not attend; socially distanced spacing can be maintained).

If EventBrite is not available to you, you may call the office for assistance. Please leave a detailed message (name/s of person/s intending to come, which Mass and specific date and time). *Note that, if you leave a voice message on the parish answering machine, your attendance at the Mass you wish to attend is not confirmed unless, and until, you have received a call back from the office.* **EventBrite is the preferred way for you to sign up.**

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A final word: THANK YOU and GOD BLESS EACH OF YOU for your patience, prayers, and attention to the directives here, and as expressed before and during our upcoming Masses. The Covid-19 situation is unprecedented, and it does try our patience. But patience is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, Who has been with us and awaits us as we return, to bless, heal, strengthen, console and sanctify. We need to continue to be patient: these are necessary temporary measures to get us back up and running, even with a new normal and for however long it takes.

Success depends on each one of us: please continue to forward your good ideas and suggestions; we all have something to contribute as we care for each other. We will

depend upon, and respectfully expect your goodwill, coöperation, willingness to assist, and your adherence.

It is not God's will that in worshipping Him we put others at risk. If we cannot do what we wish to do safely, efficiently and respectfully, we will not do it. Having seen how so many of you, inspired by your faith in Jesus Christ, have risen to offer so much to others – even before the pandemic and certainly throughout – I have every confidence we will remain united and strong.

I cannot put into words how nice it will be to see each of you again.

God bless, be well... and see you soon.

Msgr Owen

GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO CHURCH—RESOURCE FOR THE FAITHFUL

ARCHDIOCESE OF TORONTO

As we prepare to re-open churches, please be aware of the following guidelines. We recognize that they may be awkward/uncomfortable and contrary to our culture of hospitality and community. In working to foster a safe environment for all, we thank you in advance for your patience and coöperation.

Before coming to church:

- Please check temperature of all family members before coming to church. If any family members have a fever, please remain home for the health and safety of all. Consult your family doctor.
- Please remain at home if you exhibit any of the following symptoms:
 - cough, fatigue, loss of appetite, shortness of breath, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell, headache, runny nose, sore throat, chills with shakes.

Arriving at church:

- Maintain physical distancing at all times – 2 metres (6 feet) from others – in the parking lot, church entrance and in church itself.
- Upon arrival, put on mask/face covering before entering church (for all those over the age of 3).
- Parishes will likely be using one entrance only—it may not be the entrance you are familiar with. Follow direction of volunteers, signage as appropriate.
- Sanitize hands upon entry and regularly wherever possible. Please bring your own sanitizer for use during Mass.
- Pews and aisles will be marked to note physical distancing requirements. Families and households living at the same residence may sit together; the same 2 metre (6 ft.) distance should be maintained concerning others. Follow direction of ushers for seating.
- Pews will be emptied of prayer books, hymnals, etc. Parish bulletins will not be published at this time.
- Holy Water fonts will be empty and not in use at this time.
- Maintain physical distancing at all times—2 metres (6 feet) from others—in the parking lot, church entrance and in church itself.
- Upon arrival, put on mask/face covering before entering church (for all those over the age of 3)
- Parishes will likely be using one entrance only—it may not be the entrance you are familiar with. Follow direction of volunteers, signage as appropriate.
- Sanitize hands upon entry and regularly wherever possible.
- Pews and aisles will be marked to note physical distancing requirements. Families and households living at the same residence may sit together; the same 2 metre (6 ft.) distance should be maintained concerning others. Follow direction of ushers for seating.
- Pews will be emptied of prayer books, hymnals, etc. Parish bulletins will not be published at this time.
- Holy Water fonts will be empty and not in use at this time.

Celebration of the Eucharist:

- Please listen carefully to announcements before the start of Mass. Follow direction as advised.
- Please do not enter the sacristy unless you have been asked to assist during Mass.
- Other than a cantor appropriately physically distanced, there will be no singing at Mass until further notice.
- There will be no offertory procession or collection. Please leave donation in the designated basket upon departure as directed.

- We ask that people do not hold hands or shake hands during any portion of the celebration of the Eucharist. At the Sign of Peace, a nod or bow to others is appropriate.
- Masks/face coverings should be removed prior to reception of Holy Communion and put back on after consumption.
- During this time of pandemic and under the guidance of local medical health officials, the faithful are asked to receive Holy Communion in the hand by placing one on top of the other, allowing the Eucharistic Minister to safely place the Body of Christ in one's hand without contact.
- Follow direction of ushers for communion flow, ensuring physical distancing at all times.
- Follow direction provided for dismissal and departure – exits may be different than those you are accustomed to.

Conclusion of Holy Mass:

Please depart the church so that cleaning may commence. While it is our nature to congregate/socialize in the foyer or parking lot, we ask you NOT to do so at this time. Please maintain physical distancing.

- If you suddenly feel ill, start coughing or sneezing, please leave the church for the health and safety of others gathered.
- Please use washrooms *only if absolutely necessary*. One person or family at a time should be in the washroom. Ensure that all wash their hands with warm, soapy water after using washroom facilities. Please respect physical distancing outside the washroom.
- If, within 14 days of attending Mass, you learn that you or someone in your family who attended Mass with you has tested positive for COVID-19, you are asked to: a) contact the Ontario Public Health Authority; and, b) contact the parish office. Your identity will not be revealed to anyone other than the Public Health Authority, and only to ensure that any spread is contained. (see: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment>; you can also call Telehealth (1-866-797-0000), the local Public Health unit, or your family doctor).

If you would like to volunteer to help at the parish, please contact the parish office (office@mercifulredeemer.org / 905-812-0030).