

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **What to do and say when someone answers ‘Yes’ to one of the screening questions?**

Under provincial law, we are not allowed to admit anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, individuals who have travelled internationally in the last 14 days, or anyone who has had close contact with confirmed COVID-19 cases in the last 14 days.

Advise the person that they need to stay home, and not come in for Mass at this time. Explain that we are doing this under the rules that have been set by Alberta Health Services and the Bishop. Please understand that this is for the wellbeing of everyone gathered; we will be sure to pray for you.

## **How to handle parishioners who did not bring face masks?**

If the parish is able to supply, offer one. If not, or if they refuse to wear one, we still let them in the church, but advise that they will not be able to go up for communion. This is for the protection of our priest.

If someone tries to dispute this direction, invite them respectfully to follow the directions given by the Bishops in this matter; if they cannot, we remind them – again respectfully – that they may potentially be putting their brothers and sisters, including the one distributing communion, at risk. Wearing the mask thus becomes an act of charity, which would reflect the proper disposition of heart for reception of the Blessed Sacrament. If someone continues to refuse, then they should be invited not to come forward for Holy Communion.

## **What to do when parishioners refuse to provide the requested contact information?**

Remind them that the contact information will only be used if we learn that someone at this Mass has COVID19, so that we can let you know that you may have been exposed. The information will remain in the parish office for two weeks and will not be shared with anyone outside the parish. If they insist on not participating, we let them in.

## **How to handle parishioners who refuse to receive in the hand and insist on receiving on the tongue?**

Respectfully say, “Hand only please.”

If the question is posed before Mass, when there is time for a longer conversation, consider offering some background information. The law of the Church recognizes the responsibility of the Bishop to direct the exercise of rights in his Diocese for the sake of the common good. This might mean an occasional and temporary restriction on the exercise of a particular right. The Bishops have determined, in consultation with medical experts, that our circumstances of pandemic are an occasion that warrants the limitation of Holy Communion to reception on the hand for the sake of the protection of everyone’s health. We understand that this may be difficult for you, but I ask for your understanding. This restriction will be only temporary.

## **If a 65+ parishioner inquires if they are allowed to come in the church.**

Yes, they are allowed as long as they do not have symptoms.

## **What about for those who didn’t register?**

After the brief screening and the collection of contact information, we let them in, provided the attendance limit has not yet been met.

## **SOME TIPS & SUGGESTIONS**

- Remind congregation at the beginning of the Mass:
  - They will need to wear a mask to approach for the reception of Communion. Explain the procedure for reception and how to handle the mask during the distribution of Communion.
  - Communion will be given in the hand only at this time. This is a direction from the Bishop, and it is only temporary for this specific time of pandemic and while the Health restriction continues. Anyone who has difficulty with this should be encouraged to continue to participate through Spiritual Communion.
  - Remind them that you (or ushers) will be directing how they will be exiting the church.
- Make the collection baskets available in a prominent place every time Mass is offered.
- It is advisable that the priest stands outside the church when parishioners line up for entry in order to be available to provide answers and guidance to anyone who approaches. This may also allow some time and space to provide for outdoor Confession to take place if at all possible, if requested.