



March 18, 2020

To the Pastors and the Faithful of the Diocese of Prince Albert,

In response to the rapid developments that are occurring in the province, regarding the COVID-19 health crisis, this is an updated letter of March 17, 2020. There are now strong directives from our provincial and federal health authorities concerning public gatherings and alike. We have received many enquiries from our parishioners especially the seniors.

**Therefore, effective immediately and until further notice, I hereby direct the following measures throughout the Diocese:**

- 1) Celebration of Mass:** All weekend and weekday masses are cancelled until further notice. As per Code of Canon Law, 87, *I hereby grant to all the Catholic faithful dispensation from their Sunday obligation.* I do this with a very heavy heart, as I realize that the celebration of the Eucharist is at the heart of our faith. However, we must observe this out of love for one another. Our moral duty is to protect those who could be affected by the COVID-19 virus.

In light of these extraordinary circumstances, I encourage everyone to join me and the priests of the city of Prince Albert in the celebration of the Eucharist which will be live streamed on **Facebook each Sunday at 10:00 am**. It will also be broadcast on our website [www.padiocese.ca](http://www.padiocese.ca) later that day.

Other options are: tuning in to Salt+Light TV, Vision TV, or online at <https://dailytvmass.com>.

For a Spiritual Communion, the following prayer may be used:

*“My Jesus,  
I believe that You are present in the most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.”*

- 2) Access to Churches** – As per the letter dated March 17, 2020, I would request that the Churches be open from 10:00 am to 12:00 noon, Monday to Friday for people to come and pray.

### 3) Liturgies: Chrism Mass, Palm Sunday and the Triduum:

These celebrations will be live streamed on Facebook and later that day at [www.padiocese.ca](http://www.padiocese.ca)

- Chrism Mass – 10:00 am Saturday, April 4, 2020 (Priests, Deacons, and Deacon Aspirants and their wives only)
- Palm Sunday – 10:00 am, April 5, 2020
- Holy Thursday – 7:30 pm, April 9, 2020
- Good Friday – 3:00 pm, April 10, 2020
- Easter Vigil – 7:30 pm, Saturday, April 11, 2020
- Easter Sunday – 10:00 am, April 12, 2020

4) Lenten Parish Missions, Penitential Services, and other parish events are cancelled.

### 5) Sacraments:

**a) Baptism:** may be celebrated individually outside of Eucharist with less than 50 family members.

*For those to be baptized or received into the church at the Easter Vigil, the celebration will be scheduled for a later date.*

**b) First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation** are postponed until further notice.

**Sacramental preparation** is cancelled. Parish Catechists are encouraged to provide parents with the necessary resources to help them complete the remaining instruction of their children.

**c) Weddings** – marriages may continue to be celebrated in our churches with immediate family and close friends. The number of people must remain within the provincial guidelines.

**d) Sacrament of the Sick** – As an essential service to our sick and dying, the family should request a pastor to anoint their loved one.

### 6) Funerals:

May continue to be celebrated in our churches with immediate family and close friends.

The number of people must remain within the provincial guidelines.

Reception/lunches after the services are not allowed in our church halls.

*No funerals are to be celebrated from Wednesday evening of Holy Week to Easter Monday.*


Especially in this extraordinary time, we would like to offer the assurance that the church is close to you and is ready to accompany you through these challenging and difficult moments.

These steps are to be followed in respect and love of our neighbour.

It is a stressful time for all of us. We are all aware that this COVID-19 crisis will even have financial repercussions on our parish life.

Let us continue to pray and support one another.

Blessings to all,



+ Albert Thévenot, M. Afr. Bishop of Prince Albert