



Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

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M E M O

Date: February 17, 2022
To: Clergy, Parishes, Religious, and Staff
From: Bishop Gary Gordon
Re: Easing of restrictions on non-worship church gatherings

As announced on February 15, the Province is easing some Covid-19 restrictions. At this time, **the requirements for worship services remain the same: proof of vaccination is not required** to attend worship services. However, **face coverings must be worn** by all people aged 5 and older except in certain specific situations, and **attendance is limited to 50% of the seated capacity** of the space used for the service.

Under the new “*Gathering and Events*” Order (<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/office-of-the-provincial-health-officer/covid-19/covid-19-pho-order-gatherings-events.pdf>), gatherings for wedding receptions, funeral receptions, and for the purpose of acknowledging or celebrating a significant event (eg, baptism receptions) are now allowed. Therefore, **gatherings such as the following may be held according to the requirements for worship services. However, we strongly recommend that they are held virtually whenever possible:**

- Receptions immediately following liturgical services
- RCIA, catechism or youth group programs
- Parish Pastoral or Finance Council, CWL or Knights of Columbus meetings

If such gatherings are held in person, Pastors/Administrators may choose to apply the requirements for non-worship gatherings if they so desire.

For other non-worship gatherings in church buildings, all requirements of the latest “*Gatherings and Events*” and “*Face Coverings*” Orders of the Provincial Health Officer must be followed, including face covering requirements and proof of vaccination requirements (as verified by the BC Vaccine Card Verifier App), as applicable. As a reminder, **the Pastor/Administrator must be satisfied that the organizer of non-worship gatherings is aware of the conditions and requirements of the Orders and has the capacity to fulfill them.**

As before, **essential gatherings** such as drug and alcohol support group meetings, or the distribution of food or other supplies to people in need, **may happen in church buildings without any restrictions.**

We have posted a revised version of the *General and Liturgical Directives* that includes these updates (<https://www.rcdvictoria.org/news/responsetocovid19-0>). Please do not hesitate to contact the Chancery with any questions or concerns.

As always, we thank you for your prayers and patience as we journey together through these days.