

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ST STEPHEN'S PARISHIONERS – **Updated December 20, 2021**

ATTENDANCE AT SUNDAY MASS SERVICES WINTER 2021-2022

(WHILE COVID-19 PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY PERIOD STILL IN EFFECT)

Pre-conditions for attendance

- In cases where people have health concerns of any kind whatsoever, they are exempt from the obligation to participate in mass, as are all people aged 65 and over.
- Are following the provincial [Instructions for self isolation](#) if you have been in contact with a person affected by COVID-19.
- Stay home if you have flu symptoms.

Before Coming to Mass

- The Church washroom **will not be available** for public use before, during or after mass.
- No parishioner is allowed in the Sacristy before, during or after mass except for cleaning purposes.
- The Choir loft is closed to all parishioners.
- It is mandatory that all parishioners aged 10 and over wear a 3-ply mask (like the blue or white paper masks) inside the Church **at all times** except to receive communion. Two-layered cloth masks are no longer sufficient to meet health guidelines. Exceptions will be according to the criteria published on the [Quebec.ca Coronavirus website](#).

Attending Mass

- The limits on the number of people who are permitted inside places of worship are set by the Government of Quebec and are subject to change as Covid-19 risk levels change. **Please check the St Stephen's website or contact the office to check on current attendance limits.** Regardless of the numbers permitted, the Church must observe a 1M distancing rule when seating people from different households at all times.
- To accommodate all parishioners who would like to attend mass, a number of different approaches may be used depending on attendance restrictions. These will be announced on the St. Stephen's website and through the regular Newsletter.
- **Effective December 20, 2021, all persons attending mass who are over 14 and under 75 years of age must present a vaccination passport and a piece of photo identification in order to participate**
- Parishioners are to park across the street in the church parking lot except those who have mobility/accessibility issues.
- Arrive about 10 to 15 minutes before the mass so that entry can occur in an orderly fashion.
- Enter through the west side door. Parishioners should line up respecting a 1M distancing space between households.
- Parishioners must disinfect their hands upon entry to the church and observe the rules of hygiene and physical distancing.
- Ushers will welcome and escort parishioner to their seats. Parishioners must sit in the seats assigned them for the duration of the service.
- Members from the same household will be allowed to sit together.
- Parishioners are to respect distancing when moving in and around the church and follow instructions and signage. Touch as little as possible in the church. Children must remain in their family pew.
- Ushers will signal when you can move within the Church.

- Communion will only be given in the hand and will be given via the centre aisle or in your pew depending on the public health guidance. People should only consume the host once they are no longer facing the priest.
- Singing is permitted but parishioners must do so softly, with a mask on and be 2M from others not from their household.
- At the end of the mass, ushers will direct the exiting of the church one pew at a time starting with the back pews.
- Parishioners can deposit their envelopes or cash donations during the collection OR they can donate online following links on the website.
- Exit will be through the centre doors.
- Please take all papers, masks, and other personal belongings with you when you leave. **Masks, gloves and tissues should be disposed of at home.**
- Please respect social distancing after mass while exiting the church and returning to your car.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

In addition to following the Instruction for Parishioners, we need volunteers to assist with:

- Becoming an usher to assist during services
- Cleaning the Church between masses and for other events such as funerals.

If you can lend a hand, please send an email to ststephens1879@gmail.com or contact a Warden or a member of the PPC listed on the weekly newsletter.

The protocols being followed have been established by the Archdiocese of Gatineau in conformity with broader public health direction from the Government of Quebec.

We are always willing to look to where improvements can be made, within the guidelines we have been given. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send an email to ststephens1879@gmail.com or contact either a warden or PPC member at the numbers listed in the weekly newsletter.