

A Pastoral Letter to the People of the Diocese - June 8, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Peace and grace of our loving God be with you!

These past few months have been difficult for all of us. I share your heartache that we have not been able to gather for Sunday Eucharist. The recent approval to come together for weekday Eucharistic celebration limited to 15 people is only marginally helpful. I want you to know I have laboured hard to seek agreement to re-open our churches for fuller participation especially on Sundays.

Over the past month and a half, I have communicated with the Chief Public Health Officer and/or her deputy, as well as writing to the Premier. I have prepared a detailed Safety Protocol to ensure that we could come together in a safe manner. I have advocated that we be allowed to gather for Sunday worship up to a maximum of 30% capacity of our churches. Unfortunately, despite the Public Health Office acknowledging that our Protocol was the “most rigorous” of those received, the dialogue with the province has not been fruitful. Public Health Officials seem determined to impose a fixed number (50) as an upper limit in Phase 4 . For small churches fifty in attendance may be adequate but not for larger churches such as St. Mary’s, Souris, St. Simon and Jude, Tignish, St. Paul’s, Summerside and all the churches in Charlottetown.

My experience in trying to present a realistic approach to Sunday worship, during the “new normal”, leads me to question just how important a person’s faith is seen by the government officials. Is it as important as economic opportunity i.e. re-opening restaurants? Is it as important as re-opening sporting activities and barber shops? Is it as important as opening our borders to seasonal dwellers?

The truth is, as you know, that our faith and the ability to actively celebrate it has significant implications for emotional and psychological well-being. Stated simply celebrating faith together has health benefits! Mandating that faith communities gather in relatively small numbers is divisive. That is, it divides a community, forcing the doors of the church to be closed to many more than are able to enter. This does not strike me as just or reasonable.

If assemblies of worship are able to adhere to Health directives (of sanitizing, social distancing, no clustering of people coming and going, and minimizing any physical contact in receiving Communion etc.) why is it untenable that faith communities be able to function in numbers that are communally acceptable? I am confident that parishes can meet the health standards with 30% in attendance; and all the while collecting personal data from participants to facilitate effective tracking and tracing.

I want to assert that faith communities have a right to function, and to function well. I want to protect our people and keep them safe as much as the Public Health Officials. Yet I believe that the Province of Prince Edward Island, given its unique situation in controlling Covid-19, needs to be more open and understanding of faith communities of all types who long to gather for worship in their churches.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop Richard Grecco



The Saint John-Paul II Pastoral Unit
Stella Maris, St. Anne's & St. Augustine's Parishes, Prince Edward Island

Body and Blood of Christ ✕ June 14, 2020

This Weekend's Liturgy

1st Reading Deuteronomy 8.2-3, 14-16

2nd Reading 1 Corinthians 10.16-17

Gospel John 6.51-52

Weekly Mass Schedule

Monday No Mass

Tuesday 7pm St. Augustine's

Wednesday 9am and 10am Stella Maris***

Thursday 9am St. Augustine's

Friday 9am St. Anne's

Saturday 9am and 10am Stella Maris*** for Alfred Cormier

Sunday No Mass

***By reservation, call Lorraine Lemay 902-360-2060

Fr. Raj Santiago: 902-393-0572

rajstaugin@gmail.com

Pastoral Associates:

Jacinta Doiron 902-621-0638

Marion Murphy 902-621-0725

Carol Probert 902-963-3089

Anne-Marie Vessey 902-964-3442

Lorraine Lemay 902-360-2060

Communion at Home: If you know of anyone who should be receiving communion at home because of inability to attend church, please contact one of the pastoral associates.

Hospital or Home Visits: If you have a family member or friend in the hospital, at home or other care facility who would like to see a priest please call Fr. Raj

Mass Requests: Contact Fr. Raj for all Mass requests

Baptisms: Contact Fr. Raj for Baptismal Preparation.

Last Week's Collections & Donations

St. Augustine's: N/A

St. Anne's: N/A

Stella Maris: \$850.00

Donations (Special Collection): \$2600.00

*Thank You for Your Donations to Our Parishes!
Please consider including your Parish in your will.*

OUR PRAYER LIST

Annabelle 6 weeks (heart), Brian, Evan, Grace, John, Laura, Theresa, Alfred Barriaylt, Helen Doiron, Roy Doiron, Beatrice Doucette, Donnie Doucette (Roxy), Tyrel Doucette, Albert Gallant, Dale Gallant, Edmond Gallant, Stella Gallant, Vic Greenwood, Paul LeBlanc, Naomi (age 13), Monique MacLeod, Baby Cole Peters, Kelly Power, Dane Simpson, Susie Smith

To have a name added or removed from the prayer line please contact

Marion Murphy 902-621-0725

Angela Gallant 902-393-0960

Rose Gallant 902-963-3516

Fr. Raj Santiago 902-393-0572

Bulletin Announcements: Email bulletin notices to bulletins@jp2pastoralunit.com or call Francis @ 902-886-2761. Deadline for weekly bulletin is Thurs. at 4pm.

Confessions: Fr. Raj is available in the vestries after weekday masses for the sacrament of Reconciliation. All are encouraged to experience the Mercy and Love of the Ever Forgiving Father

Our God is the God of surprises.

Pope Francis

www.jp2pastoralunit.com/bulletins.php

Blessings Fellow Parishioners,

Time is quickly passing and it is hard to believe it has been almost 3 months since we have come together to worship. As we begin the next phase of opening things up, permission has been granted to resume weekday masses. Of course like everything else, there are restrictions, guidelines and proper protocol that must be followed and adhered to. We ask for your support and patience as we begin to implement our operational plan. PLEASE NOTE this plan may change frequently in order to accommodate our parishioners, while adhering to the guidelines as implemented by our Diocese and Health PEI. We have agreed to begin with 5 weekday masses to see how things go and if the need arises Fr. Raj is prepared to celebrate more masses with us to accommodate as many as possible. There will be 2 held in St. Augustine's, 2 in Stella Maris and 1 in St. Anne's. In the interim for the morning mass, we ask that our parishioners restrict themselves to only attend at their respective church they would normally attend for Sunday Worship. So if you attend Sunday Morning Mass in St. Anne's then you would have the opportunity to attend the scheduled weekday mass in St. Anne's, the same for Stella Maris and St. Augustine. The only exception is the Weekday evening Mass. Parishioners from all 3 churches will have the opportunity to attend.

At this time, permission has only been granted for indoor mass; therefore, we are restricted to the maximum limit of 15. This includes Fr. Raj. With the limited restricted amount, and if numbers warrant, a schedule may have be set up to accommodate all. Until we have an idea of how many would like to have the opportunity to attend, please be kind and patient with us and fellow parishioners as we work together ensuring all have an opportunity at some point to come together with others to Worship God. It is very important to protect yourself and other Parishioners; therefore if you are not feeling well, please stay home. If you are at an

increased risk due to a compromised immune system and/or have underlying medical conditions, we strongly encourage you to please stay home. Those who are self isolating are asked to refrain until you have been completed your 14 day isolation period.

When you arrive physical distancing MUST be maintained. Keep the required 6 feet distancing between you and your fellow parishioner. Unfortunately no handshaking or hugging permitted. PLEASE NOTE: in order to ensure proper sanitation is maintained, only one entrance will be utilized. You will be greeted by a fellow parishioner who will be recording your name and number. They also will provide you with some hand sanitizer. All books have been removed. Pews and the floors have been marked off to ensure we maintain physical distancing. Please respect these markings. When you depart, please maintain social distancing. It is imperative we follow these guidelines to ensure the continuation of weekday masses. For your reference, please see below a compiled list of the rules stipulated by the Diocese and Health PEI.

This is the new norm for all of us; therefore, please understand we are all working together to ensure all of our parishioners needs are met to the best of our ability within the restrictions provided. As stated above this plan may change on short notice so we thank you in advance for your patience and support

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact myself at 902-621-0638 or Fr. Raj at 902-393-0572.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jacinta Doiron

President of John Paul II Unit Pastoral Council

- Limit the size of the gathering to no more than 15 people indoor, and 20 people outdoors, including staff and volunteers; follow guidance on gatherings.
- Advise people who are self-isolating or with COVID-19 symptoms to stay home.
- Implement measures to reduce physical contact; physical distancing must be maintained at all times between individuals from different households.
- No handshaking or hugging.
- Seating should be arranged or marked to ensure social distancing (e.g. some rows of pews may not be able to be used).
- Stagger arrival and departure times and use visual cues like floor markings to encourage two metre (six feet) physical separation through corridors and entrances/exits.
- Multiple people should not touch the same object, such as tongs, a cup, a font, or collection.
- Avoid providing attendees with shared items that cannot be easily cleaned and sanitized between use, such as books and programs.
- Any person who may be within six feet of another person outside of their household should wear a non-medical mask, and practice hand hygiene before putting on the mask and before and after removing the mask.
- No singing or playing of wind instruments permitted among choir or members of congregation. One designated singer or instrumentalist may sing or play music provided there is a minimum 12 ft (3.5 metre) distance from everyone else; recorded, piano or string music could be considered as an alternative.
- Microphones should not be shared.
- Associated activities including education programs, meetings, meals, etc. are not covered by this guidance – please refer to guidance for those areas.
- Organizers must record, at a minimum, the name and phone number of one person per household and the number of individuals from the household present. The organizers must keep these records for one (1) month for contact tracing purposes.
- Where washroom access is provided:
 - Ensure hand washing stations or hand sanitizing products are available for use, and re-stocked as needed,
 - Frequent cleaning and disinfection must take place throughout the gathering, and
 - Consider limiting the number of available stalls and urinals to discourage overcrowding in washrooms.
- Print and post signage outlining policies and procedures such as:
 - Physical distancing expectations,
 - Hand hygiene,
 - Respiratory etiquette (coughing and sneezing), and
 - Cleaning and disinfection practices and expectations.
- Print and post signage to notify individuals that they should not attend if they have symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, stuffy or runny nose, weakness, and/or acute loss of sense of taste and smell.
- Families from the same household may sit together in a single pew.
- The 6' physical spacing applies within each available pew; that is, individuals must sit 6' feet apart. Only family/household (as above) may sit together
- The Offertory Procession shall be omitted.
- The Presider shall not invite an exchange of Sign of Peace.

Prayers of the faithful

For Pope Francis, Bishop Richard, Fr. Raj and all priests, seminarians and religious as they demonstrate for their congregations acts of mercy, compassion and justice. *We pray to the Lord.*

For all politicians as they work to help their constituents cope with the restrictions imposed by the pandemic. *We pray to the Lord.*

For all essential workers. May they stay healthy and realise how much they are appreciated. *We pray to the Lord.*

For all business operators as they open for business and work to keep people healthy. *We pray to the Lord.*

For all people in our country who live in poverty, and for all the world's peoples who lack the ability to nourish their family. *We pray to the Lord.*

For all members of our parish community who are unwell at this time including Kelly Power, Ida McCourt, Cicilly Coady, Deedee Morisson, Dale Gallant, Gerry Corcoran, Cleon Widam, Father Tingley, Father Egan. May God give them the courage to face their challenges with hope and faith. *We pray to the Lord.*

For members of our parish community who have died including Ricky Peters. May they be welcomed into God's loving embrace. *We pray to the Lord.*

Unit Notices

A very effective way to counteract medically assisted death is to provide enough quality palliative care. During the month of May you are encouraged to pray daily for equal access to palliative care for all Canadians and for the good people who provide this service.

Transfer of 1.4 acres of Stella Marie's Church land to North Rustico Municipality to Build new Rink: Peace of Christ! Hearty greetings from Fr. Raj. My dear Brothers and Sisters! I hope we all are putting up a good

fight with brave and positive attitude as everyone seems to have accepted the new situation. As most of us know North Rustico town municipality is planning to construct a new rink with different facilities for the benefit of the Local and surrounding community, they are in need of a piece of land just touching the church and have made a request for this land. As it is going to benefit the community and all the more we have very close co operation and co-ordination with the town office they have donated an 1.6 acres of land to the church for the cemetery use, it would be our reciprocal to transfer this 1.4 acres of land to the town. So the parish finance committee is in favour of transferring the land to the town. And here by I let everyone know that. If anyone of you have any concerns or opinion in this regard please feel free to express your views and let me know by the end of this month. You may contact me through my email rajstaugustin@gmail.com or phone #9023930572.

Stella Maris Notices

Greetings Dear Parishioners of Stella Maris Catholic Church, and to friends of our Parish As we continue to celebrate the risen Christ, amid the beginnings of spring, a new life is emerging for all of us. From this day forward we will be called upon to make sacrifices and to help each other as we, and the world, grapple with life threatening virus' and the effects they cause. Our future will look very different when this current pandemic has been eradicated. Prior to Covid-19, we took for granted our parish family would be able to gather in prayer, in the house of the Lord, without fear for our health and well being. Now, however, the reality of a "Global Pandemic" dictates how we may gather in the future.

Since the advent of Covid-19, Stella Maris has joined churches of all denominations throughout Canada by discontinuing to celebrate mass as per usual. To date churches have offered online services via television or other forms of media. While there have been no liturgical

celebrations in Stella Maris Church, our doors have and will remain open daily from 10:00am to 5:00pm for individual worship or to access the Knights of Columbus "Food Bank" located in the back of the church on the main level. As directed by PEI's health officials, social distancing is strongly encouraged when accessing the Church or Food Bank. It should be noted the food bank is well stocked with food and supplies available to those in need.

The Knights of Columbus Food Bank is able to offer this assistance through donations of food and money from generous parishioners, as well as from friends of Stella Maris Parish, St. Augustine's Parish and St. Anne's Parish who live outside our Pastoral Unit.

To our parishioners and friends, while Covid-19 has put a halt to most business pertaining to the operation of our parish, there are still bills to be paid. Our church survives primarily through funds received from Sunday collections, and supplemented through special fundraisers and other donations. With our inability to gather as a church family, so has our ability to hold fundraisers or to offer a collection plate to help maintain our church and grounds. Understandably, our current economic situation dictates whether or not you are in a position to continue to contribute with your weekly collection envelope. If you are able, please forward your contribution to any member of the Property and Finance Committee or mail your contribution to Stella Maris Catholic Parish Church - PO Box 7, North Rustico, PE COA 1X0. Again due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this year our Annual Parish Collection will be postponed so as not to impose an extra burden on parishioners during this time of economic uncertainty. However, if you are able, and wish to make an additional special offering to our parish church, your faith gesture will be greatly appreciated.

As many are aware, there is an effort within our community to build a new rink and fitness centre to be located on land adjacent to our church. A portion of that property is presently

under title to Stella Maris Parish. Previously, this 1.40 acre parcel of land has been used for recreation purposes, including baseball and is located between our church and the present day North Star Arena. This extra piece of land is needed in order to accommodate the proposed Centre. In order to move forward on this initiative, it is imperative for the organizing committee to have free and clear title to the 1.40 acre parcel of land in question.

Your Property and Finance Committee has expressed their approval for this land transfer, thereby allowing for progress to continue on this project. It is the Committee's feeling such cooperation will benefit the community at large, while at the same time have little effect on our Church family.

However, if parishioners have questions or concerns with regard to the transfer of this 1.40 acre parcel of land over to the Town of North Rustico, please contact Father Raj via e-mail (rajstaugustin@gmail.com) or by telephone at 902 393-0572.

According to PEI's Covid-19 recovery phases, Islanders will be allowed to gather with no more than 15 people indoor and 20 people outdoors, including religious gatherings, beginning on June 12th. As we grapple with the effects of a post pandemic world, let us be open minded on how we can serve God in the future and on how we can celebrate as a Parish community.

Yours in Christ
Stella Maris Property & Finance Committee
Andre Lavoie - Chair
Eileen Gauthier
Donnie Blacquiere
Gavin Gallant
Margaret Goulding
Norman Gallant
Paul Blacquiere

St. Augustine's Notices

Wondering What To Do With Your Church Envelopes? The world pandemic is keeping us out of our churches & not able to give our normal Sunday offering. The property & finance committee has decreased expenditures as much as possible. However there are still some expenses. There have been some people questioning how they can make their donation given the circumstances. The committee met & decided to try doing it this way: When you have a donation for the church please call Fr. Raj at 902-393-0572 & make an appointment to see him to give him your donation. It should be in your church envelope or in a plain envelope with your name, parish & donation amount clearly marked on it. This will allow you to be properly credited come income tax receipt time. If you would like a pack of church envelopes please let Fr. Raj know. Take care & please let us know if we can help you during these difficult & unusual days.

Diocese Notices

www.dioceseofcharlottetown.com

Until further notice, beginning on Monday the diocesan Centre will only be open from Monday to Friday, 10am until 2pm.

Electronic Masses: St. Mary's Holy Family, Kensington at 9am <https://www.facebook.com/dioceseofcharlottetown>

St. Pius X Charlottetown 10:30am <https://www.facebook.com/stpiusxpei>

St. Theresa the Little Flower Morell 9am <https://www.facebook.com/pg/Holy-Trinity-Pastoral-Unit-PEI-103197078005559>

St. Paul's Summerside 9:30am <https://www.facebook.com/stpaulspei/>

Immaculate Conception in Wellington/Richmond 10am <https://www.facebook.com/ICSASP/>

St. Simon & St. Jude in Tignish at 10am https://facebook.com/profile.php?id=100011014302253&ref=content_filter

Sacred Heart Alberton 9am <https://www.facebook.com/sacredheartpei>

St. Anthony's Parish in Bloomfield 11am <https://www.facebook.com/St-Anthonys-News-Events-301586473999914/>

St. Dunstan's Basilica in Charlottetown 10:30am. <https://www.facebook.com/events/227362231819572/>

Holy Redeemer in Charlottetown 9am <https://www.facebook.com/holyredeemerpei/videos/>

The PEI Right to LIFE Association is hosting a Virtual Baby Bottle Drive from Mother's Day to Father's Day. Please support us in advancing pro-life values, and helping Island women and babies in need. See our website: www.PEIRight2life.ca to donate. Build a team if you like with your friends or parish and inspire some friendly competition! We also have real baby bottles if donating online is not an option. If you would like one, please call or email: 902-894-5473 / office@peiright2life.ca

Community Notices

During this difficult time, please take note that North Rustico Home Hardware will be closed on Saturdays. Also, store hours will be Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm. Thank-you for your support and understanding.

Cymbria Lions Club: Due to the ongoing COVID-19 concerns, the Cymbria Lions Club facility will remain closed until further notice. You are welcome to use our parking lot to access the free WiFi provided by Red Sands Internet. Simply connect your device to "Red Sands Internet Guest WiFi". Please remember to practice social distancing. Everyone please stay safe, we will get through this together!

Rendez-vous Rustico 2020: Considering the actual situation, the board of directors has decided to cancel the Rendez-vous Rustico 2020. However please stay in tune because we want to organize some activities this summer.

Thank you everyone for their kind generosity during the passing of Wilbert. During a pandemic people have been there to support us & we can't thank the parish community enough for all their love & support. *Ruth and Family*

My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink

The Word This Week

The Eucharist the Body and Blood of Christ is a mystery with so many layers and a depth that takes more than a lifetime to penetrate. It is not just a thing that we receive however reverently it is a person, a relationship, a belonging and a transformation that we consume, that becomes part of us: Receive what you are the Body of Christ. The readings invite us to reflect on how our celebration of the Eucharist brings Christ's words to our reality: who eats my flesh and drink my blood lives in me and I live in him. The people of the Old Testament had God living in their midst, walking with them on their journey, feeding and nourishing them with the gift of manna from heaven. Jesus walks with us, not looking on from afar, journeying in communion with us living within us, as we eat and drink the gifts he extends from the Last Supper. And as Saint Paul reminds us, our communion with the One Christ is also a communion with each other God lives in us as the Church, as we become His Body.

