

DIOCESE OF BATHURST

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP



On this 31st of March, 2020

Communique from Bishop Daniel Jodoin

I would first like to thank the parish priests and parish employees (secretaries, accountants, janitors) who are all on site and currently working hard to answer your requests and make our communities vibrant. Members of pastoral and management committees, as well as volunteers from various newly - formed aid committees, are also participating in this effort. I would also like to congratulate the work done by the members of our diocesan staff who are very busy responding to requests and needs from all over the diocese and even elsewhere. You are all doing ingenious and creative pastoral work within your communities, under conditions that are not obvious or easy. The faithful count on you. As a Church, we are living through special times, which are added to a history strewn with persecutions, wars, epidemics and martyrs of more than 2000 years. However, each time, thanks to the Risen Christ's presence and to the action of many lay people, pastors and consecrated persons, the Church has known how to rise stronger and purified, always in service of the Lord and the people of God, in accordance with the mission he has entrusted to us.

I now share with you the guidelines to follow regarding Holy Week celebrations, which, as you can imagine, will be different this year.

Holy Week

Considering that the date for Easter cannot be changed and following the government's preventive restrictions on gatherings and travel, the services of Holy Week will not be postponed but will be celebrated differently this year.

The Bishop will celebrate, *without the presence of the people of God*, all the services of Holy Week from the church in Caraquet. These celebrations will be broadcasted on CKLE CJVA 94.1 FM. He will also continue to celebrate Sunday Mass on CKLE CJVA radio at 10 AM until the end of the confinement measures.

The parish priests will celebrate the rites of Holy Week, *without the presence of the people of God, in an appropriate place, avoiding concelebration. The faithful will be informed of the start time of the celebrations so that they may join in prayer from their own homes.*

Here are the celebrations which will be broadcasted on **CKLE CJVA 94.1 FM**:

April 5th – Palm Sunday: Mass at 10 AM celebrated by Msgr Jodoin

Unfortunately, we will not be able to distribute blessed palms in our parishes due to the preventive restrictions currently in effect, but once they are lifted, we will make blessed palms available in one form or another to those who wish.

April 6th – Monday of Holy Week: Rosary and Mass at 6 :30 PM celebrated by Father Patrick McGraw

April 7th – Tuesday of Holy Week: Chrism Mass at 6 :30 PM celebrated by Msgr Jodoin on **CKLE CJVA 94.1 FM** as well as on the **Diocese Facebook page**.

The blessing of the oils will take place in the church in Caraquet in the presence of the Bishop, the Chancellor and the parish priest. Another celebration will take place at a later time in the presence of the people of God and all the priests of the Diocese to allow the priests to renew their vows and give thanks to the Lord for the accomplished ministry of our jubilees.

April 8th – Wednesday of Holy Week: Rosary and Mass at 6:30 PM celebrated by Father Patrick McGraw

April 9th – Holy Thursday: Mass of the Lord’s Supper at 6:30 PM celebrated by Msgr Jodoin

April 10th – Good Friday: Office of the Lord’s Passion at 3 PM celebrated by Msgr Jodoin

April 11th – Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil at 7 PM celebrated by Msgr Jodoin

April 12th – Easter Sunday: Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord at 10 AM celebrated by Msgr Jodoin

Note : To express our joy, and mark Easter Sunday, we will ring the bells of all the churches in the Diocese at 12 noon for 5 to 10 minutes.

Given the current preventive measures in place, we understand that it may be difficult for you to perform your **“Easter duties”** (*which is to say to live the sacrament of reconciliation and to participate in the Offices of Holy Week, at minimum the Easter Sunday Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord*). Pope Francis has issued directives to allow all bishops to issue special dispensations given their respective circumstances. As bishop of the Diocese of Bathurst, I therefore exempt you from your “Easter duties” within the traditional time prescribed this year. You are invited to celebrate your Easter duties at a more opportune time (that is, when the current situation has returned to normal).

Let us always remember, the Church is a family that must remain at the service of its children. A father or mother would never abandon their family, even in the most difficult times. Just think of our ancestors, our parents and grandparents who, often, in miserable conditions and extreme poverty, still

managed to support their families through their ingenuity and their creativity. In the hardest of times, they left it to God, to Providence. A Providence that never disappointed them.

We must follow their example. As such, from the first days of this current crisis, the Diocese of Bathurst gave clear instructions, not to lay off any lay employees or priests. We could not consciously, leave fathers and mothers without income for an unknown period. In addition, the Church is an essential service, serving God, the faithful and all those who have needs, regardless of the circumstances. In times of crisis, more than ever, it is necessary for all staff to be present, in order to do the work required and meet the needs of the community. As our ancestors did, we must put our faith in Providence and put into practice daily our evangelical teaching.

Christ, our good shepherd and Mary, our guiding star, have always guided and protected the Acadian people throughout history. During the dangerous times we are living, let their presence be a source of comfort and hope for you and all the members of your family.

Faternally in Jesus Christ,

+ Daniel Jodoin
Your Bishop

Diocese of Bathurst

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