

Message from Archbishop Smith re resumption of public Mass - No date set yet

The Catholic Bishops of Alberta remain committed to the gradual reinstatement of public celebrations of the Mass and welcome the recent release of the *Guidance for Places of Public Worship* document as part of the provincial government's relaunch strategy. These guidelines are being carefully considered by the task force that the Bishops have established under the direction of Archbishop Richard Smith of Edmonton and Bishop William McGrattan of Calgary.

The task force is drafting for the Bishops a set of directives for the gradual reintroduction of Masses in public. The Bishops will present these to Alberta's Chief Medical Officer of Health. The proposed directives will take into consideration the information that will be received from the Telephone Town Hall with the Premier and the Chief Medical Officer scheduled for Thursday, May 21. No date will be set for the resumption of public liturgies in our Catholic churches and institutions until the Bishops are satisfied that their own directives can be fully and properly implemented.

Any announcement of the date for the gradual reintroduction will be made at least five days before the first scheduled Mass. Parishes by then will have received diocesan guidelines which help ensure the safety of everyone.

“It is critical that we understand the risks and take steps in minimizing the spread of COVID-19 through prudent planning,” said Bishop McGrattan. “The health and safety of our parishioners, priests, and church staff are of utmost importance. Each and every life is a precious gift from God, and we are called to do everything in our power to protect them. This has been a tremendous sacrifice on the part of the faithful who strongly desire to celebrate the Eucharist in their parish communities. We are grateful for their cooperation, their patient endurance, and especially for their prayers.”



✠ **Richard W. Smith**
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