



COMMUNIQUE
For immediate release

NEW DIOCESAN GUIDELINES in response to the Covid-19 pandemic

To all diocesan members,
To all pastoral personnel and parish leaders,
To the presidents of the assemblies of the Fabrique,

Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, March 23, 2020.

After consultation with the members of the Bishop's Office and in solidarity with government directives, I am communicating other directives for the entire Diocese of Valleyfield.

- 1- All churches and chapels are closed until further notice. Their access is forbidden, even for personal prayer. The parish's office remains close.
- 2- The Holy Week services and the Sunday celebration of Easter are cancelled in the churches of the diocese. The Chrism mass will be celebrated at another date when gatherings will be allowed again.
- 3- Even though the offices of the Easter Triduum and the celebration of Easter are cancelled in the places of worship in the diocese, I will preside, in private, the Holy Thursday Mass, the celebration of the passion and death of the Lord on Good Friday, the Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday Mass. These celebrations will be televised so that contact can be maintained with the diocesan community and the liturgies of the Easter Triduum can be celebrated in union of heart and prayer. The times and channels of broadcast will be communicated to you in the coming days.
- 4- The diocesan community will also be able to join in the Eucharistic celebration on Resurrection Sunday, summit of the liturgical life and central expression of our faith, on the usual networks: Le Jour du Seigneur (Radio Canada), Salt and Light.
- 5- It goes without saying that charitable activities (such as the Hunger Supper on Good Friday) or public demonstrations of faith (such as the Walk for Forgiveness) will not be held.
- 6- All celebrations of confirmation (young and adults) are postponed until the fall 2020, as long as it is possible.
- 7- It is important, even necessary, to continue to offer SPIRITUAL ACCOMPANIMENT, especially in these troubled times of anxiety and uncertainty. Pastoral personnel must remain in service and give witness to the care and compassion of Christ the Good Shepherd. Hence the importance of continuing the

ministry of welcoming and listening and of making known, in our networks, the ways and resources for celebrating Sundays and Holy Days at home.

8- COVID-19 has disastrous economic effects and causes significant drops in income. In spite of this, the sense of sharing and international solidarity must continue to be exercised. I therefore invite you to support Development and Peace's Share Lent Campaign and the collection for the Holy Land by sending your donations to your parishes or diocese (by mail or electronically). We must also continue to support the campaigns of food banks, economic aid or blood drives. Our generosity must continue. At a time when the borders between countries are closing, it is essential that we break down in our hearts the borders of fear, withdrawal and selfishness that can be erected there.

9- I invite you to consult our website which offers a great deal of information, liturgical and spiritual resources as well as updates on new developments in the COVID-19 situation.

10- I appeal to you, dear diocesan men and women, to scrupulously respect the health and government regulations. Thank you for continuing to support your parishes which are in urgent need of your spiritual and financial support.

+ Noël Simard, Bishop