



MEMORANDUM

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To: All Clergy, Parishes
From: Neil MacCarthy, Director, Public Relations & Communications
Date: March 15, 2021
Re: Latest information regarding Funerals, Meetings & Parish Halls

Thank you for your ongoing patience as we work collectively to implement changes in the midst of the fluid situation. I wanted to provide some additional information and reminders based on changes to the Grey (Lockdown) Zone announced Friday by the provincial government:

- **Funerals (NEW)** – since the announcement Friday, the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) has amended its restrictions for the Grey Zone. Funeral home staff may now provide full services for funerals in the Grey Zone (and all other color designations including the Red Zone) with participation of up to **50 people** (including the celebrant and any others assisting). Note this number **does not** include funeral home staff. We recommend that parishes dialogue with their local funeral home prior to making arrangements with families for additional clarity.

Should parishes exceed the 50 person restriction (up to 15% capacity in Grey and up to 30% capacity in Red and all other color zones), funeral homes have been directed by the BAO to place the casket at the church entrance and return to their vehicles. Upon completion of the service, church personnel/family members are to return the casket to the church entrance at which point the Funeral Home will take possession and return the casket to the hearse for delivery to the cemetery. Once again, we recommend that parishes dialogue with their local funeral home prior to making arrangements with families for additional clarity.

- **Parish Halls** - A reminder that parish halls should not be used for sacramental celebrations in the Grey Zone as previously directed.
- **Meetings in the Grey & Red Zones** - No meetings should take place in parish halls or other church spaces at this time. The only exception would be those deemed as essential services eg. Alcoholics Anonymous/Narcotics Anonymous Meetings. These meetings should be restricted to 10 people and ensure that all appropriate health and safety measures are in place (use of masks, hand sanitizer, physical distancing, etc.). Virtual meetings should replace in-person meetings wherever possible.

Thank you for your co-operation in implementing these measures as appropriate.