



Our Lady of the Airways Parish

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COVID-19 PROVINCIAL LOCKDOWN MEMORANDUM

TO: The People of Our Lady of the Airways Parish
FROM: Father Thomas and the Pastoral Team
DATE: March 5th, 2021
SUBJECT: Revised Parish Update - Continued Provincial “Lockdown”

“Lent stimulates us to let the Word of God penetrate our life and in this way to know the fundamental truth: who we are, where we come from, where we must go, what path we must take in life...” - Pope Benedict XVI

This afternoon we received additional communication from the Archdiocese of Toronto concerning our current lockdown. The communication stated: “As of Monday, March 8, 2021, Toronto and Peel will return to the colour-coded framework with the Grey (Lockdown) designation. Under current provincial guidelines, this does not change the situation for places of worship with restrictions of no more than 10 people in the church, including the priest and those assisting with the liturgy.”

The communication also contained some thoughts from His Eminence, Cardinal Collins, which I wish to share with you. Under the heading, “Additional Initiatives”, His Eminence wrote:

“I am deeply troubled by two aspects of the current situation:

- a) The province has relaxed restrictions for retailers in the Grey (Lockdown) zones, permitting them to operate at 25% capacity while places of worship continue with a hard cap of 10 people.
- b) Despite a formal request one month ago, the province has not met directly with a group of interfaith leaders to discuss issues of concern and opportunities for collaboration.

While I do not believe the government is intentionally suppressing religious freedom, it appears that places of worship are not being treated equitably with these latest restrictions. It is now appropriate for us to respectfully amplify our concerns by asking the faithful to connect with their Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) as well as Premier Ford.

The archdiocese has produced a simple webpage, accessible at www.aplacetoworship.ca - visitors can very easily send a pre-written or self-edited letter to their MPP with a copy to Premier Ford. I encourage all parishes (even in areas where 30% capacity is permitted) to participate in the initiative. Additional details are attached. I will be using the archdiocesan e-mail list to ask the faithful to participate. We have also shared this resource with our ecumenical and inter-faith partners so you will note that the materials are not specifically Catholic in nature and speak more generally of places of worship.”

I encourage each of you to please support the Cardinal’s initiative.

Our church will remain closed at this time. Priests will continue to celebrate private Mass daily for the intentions of parishioners and for those suffering from Covid-19. During this Lenten Season, we continue to encourage you to view online/televised Masses. A full list is available at the Archdiocesan website at www.archtoronto.org. Or you can also watch our parish weekend Masses on our YouTube channel.

Weddings, funerals, and baptisms (without Mass) will still take place, with the restriction of 10 persons maximum. **Confessions will continue to be available by appointment only. Please call the office to set an appointment with a priest.**

PARISH UPDATES

- If you have not picked up your 2021 offertory envelopes, please call the office in order to set an appointment for curbside pick-up.
- The 2020 tax receipts were mailed out to parishioners in early February.
- If you wish to be added to our pandemic email list in order to receive regular parish updates, please email us your request.

VIRTUAL STATIONS OF THE CROSS AND REFLECTION (via Zoom Video & Audio Conferencing)

- All are welcome to join us Friday evenings from 7:00pm - 8:00pm during Lent for a virtual gathering of the Stations of the Cross and Reflection with Fr. Thomas.

This year's Lenten season has been unlike any other in recent memories. Given the pandemic, it is easy to feel as if we have been on a long desert journey, one filled with great challenges and difficulties. We can be tempted to give up and complain. Let us, however, continue to bear this period with great patience and trust. We continue to remind you to reach out and help those who are vulnerable or alone among us. It does not take much to be a source of joy and comfort to those who are in need. We will continue to pray for you and all your loved ones.

May the Suffering Servant, Jesus Christ, bless you and keep you safe during this Lenten Season!



Rev. Thomas Lim
Pastor



Rev. Canisius Raj
Associate Pastor



Enza Lamberti
Pastoral Associate