

COVID Update – November 2021

My Sisters and Brothers in the Lord -

I want to give you the latest COVID material from the Bishop and the Diocese which I received last week. It is very important that we all understand where the Diocese stands and our role in the implementation of the new policy.

The Diocese of Ottawa has offered parishes under its jurisdiction TWO options as we go forward through the darkness of COVID, heading for the light. I want to give you both of these :

OPTION ONE: That the parish DOES NOT ASK for PROOF OF VACCINATION (the present policy). If we accept this option, then we will carry on as we have been for the last while – physical distancing, limits on numbers allowed for worship, full masks, no gathering after for a social time. These are the markers for our diocesan Yellow Stage under which we are currently operating. Staying with this option may mean that not everyone who has currently returned to in person worship will be able to attend every Sunday as we are reaching our social distancing capacity.

OPTION TWO: That the parish ASKS for PROOF OF DOUBLE VACCINATION. If we accept this option, then there will be no limits on capacity, no social distancing required and social gatherings with food and drink would be permitted after services. Masks would still be required. Social distancing will still be encouraged as much as possible.

So, we as a parish must now decide which route we wish to walk. I am suggesting that we make a decision by the end of NOVEMBER 2021 in order that we may enter our new year on Advent Sunday ( November 28<sup>th</sup>) with a clear understanding and commitment to the path we wish to follow. I ask you to read these two options carefully, consider your personal situation, think of the implications of the two options for you and the community and let either of our Wardens (Karen Talgoy or Kay Stanley) know **by November 14**. This way, we have time to adjust our physical setting dependent upon the option most chosen by you.

Would that we could return to some form of the “old normal” but while we can see light through the trees, we aren’t out of the woods of COVID yet! You are all in my thoughts and prayers as we continue to faithfully witness to Jesus in our lives and in the life of our community.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

Father Michael Fleming