



**Diocese of Saint John Protocols  
for the Public Celebration of Masses  
and Other Religious Services  
in the “Orange Level” of GNB Health and Safety Measures  
Addendum to [Current Protocols Dated May 15, 2020](#)**

**Maximum 50 Persons at Mass  
25 Persons for Weddings, Funerals, etc.  
Mandatory Masks/Face coverings**

In the current “Orange Level,” churches “can operate under a COVID-19 operational plan. In-person services are limited to 50 participants, or fewer depending upon the size of the facility, with two metres of physical distancing. Continuous mask wearing is required. No singing is permitted. Other indoor religious observances, funerals, celebrations of life, marriage ceremonies, receptions and social gatherings of more than 25 people are prohibited.” (GNB- Orange Level, January 5, 2021)

If a parish has a separate hall, or a meeting space, a second gathering of maximum 50 is possible for that Mass. Separate entrances, exits, and washroom facilities are required to maintain separation from the two gatherings.

Contact tracing is required for all public gatherings. One contact per household or grouping is required (this may be provided by pre-registration or upon entry into the church). The contact information collected is to be stored for 21 days, after which it is to be destroyed. The personal information collected is to be used for contact tracing only and cannot be used or shared for any other purpose.

Parishioners are **REQUIRED** to wear masks/face coverings in parish churches, halls and offices for the duration of their stay. Face shields are not a substitute for masks/face coverings.

For the distribution of Holy Communion, parishioners are asked to approach the priest while wearing their mask. After receiving the host they are then to move to a designated spot, 2 meters away, to consume the host, replacing their mask fully before returning to their seat.

For the distribution of Holy Communion, the priest will be the only minister of Communion. No extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are to be used, unless the priest himself is not physically/medically able to distribute Communion. In this case, one extraordinary minister of Holy Communion can be appointed, following the same hygiene practices below. The priest will wash/sanitize his hands prior to distributing Communion. The Precious Blood is not to be distributed to the faithful.

Parishes are encouraged to have the distribution and reception of Holy Communion at the appropriate time during Mass. The priest is to purify and then sanitize his hands before distributing Communion to

the faithful. If the distribution of Holy Communion is not feasible during Mass (due to logistics of flow of traffic), Communion immediately following the closing blessing is possible.

Congregational singing during the "Orange level" is not permitted. Only instrumental music and/or one cantor is permitted. Wind instruments are not permitted during this phase.

Altar servers are not permitted.

Meetings in parishes are possible, maximum 25 persons, with strict two metre physical distancing, contact tracing and continuous wearing of mask/face coverings. If possible, please consider having meetings via a digital platform or conference call.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian Riesbeck". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

✠ Christian Riesbeck, CC  
Bishop of Saint John

January 5, 2021