



## **STATEMENT REGARDING COVID-19 (Coronavirus) UPDATE #2**

March 17, 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Today, the Premier of Ontario declared a state of emergency for the province and asked all community partners including places of worship to cooperate in the effort to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) infection.

Accordingly, I provide this update for the clergy and faithful of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough. These measures are in effect from March 17<sup>th</sup> to April 5<sup>th</sup> at which time they will be reviewed and updated as needed.

All Sunday Masses, weekday Masses, and community gatherings are suspended. Priests should continue to celebrate Mass privately for the intentions of the people of the parish.

Funeral Masses and weddings are permitted while ensuring that the congregation does not exceed 50 persons or the limit imposed by legislation or the guideline in force at the time. Baptisms may be celebrated privately with immediate family members present. Communal celebrations of baptism are to be postponed until further notice.

Communal penitential celebrations are not to take place. Individual confessions may still be heard. The sacrament of reconciliation is to be celebrated not in a confessional but rather in another location, where confidentiality may be ensured and where the distance between persons required by the health officials can be maintained.

Community gatherings including funeral receptions, sacramental preparation programs, and large parish events are suspended until further notice. As much as possible, churches will remain open for private prayer and devotion.

Let us pray for all those who are impacted by illness, for their families and care-givers.

Yours in Christ,

†Most Reverend Daniel J. Miehms  
Bishop of Peterborough