

Dear fellow parishioners of St. Joseph,

We hope this letter finds you happy, healthy, and in good spirits. Yes, it is difficult in these days to be positive and optimistic. Please don't give in to fear and despair. Let's be people of HOPE. As promised, here is a further update following our parish staff meeting yesterday. I'll be brief.

- There are **two attachments** – the diocesan Memo of Jan. 4th with COVID Update and a simple but useful 1-page diagram of what to do if you have contracted or been exposed to COVID.
- There is no change to **religious services**. Churches are open for Masses: our schedule remains the same. Following our priests' recent isolation, daily weekday Masses resume next week.
- No **meetings** will be held in our parish until we move out of Step Two. All scheduled meetings are cancelled or are to be held electronically.
- The **parish office** is open by appointment only. As staff is encouraged to work from home at least until Jan. 27, when you call, it is so important to leave a message with your name, number and a brief message. The appropriate staff member will return your call in a reasonable time.
- On Monday we will resume our **daily scripture reflections** that we sent out by email to all on our contact list. If you know of someone who would like to receive them, please let us know.
- We decided not to **livestream** Sunday Mass: we will see as things develop. We discontinued it because of low "attendance" (few joined our Masses). There are many opportunities for TV Masses at convenient times. We will again send a list of recommended channels. Our church equipment (camera and sound system), without updates, do not allow us to "broadcast" easily or professionally, as it deserves. We will re-visit this decision if/when necessary.
- We encourage you to learn about the **2023 Synod of Bishops**. See the **third attachment** and the website of the Diocese <https://hamiltondiocese.com/synod/#resources> containing a video guide that explains what a synod is and why this one is so important. There's a "survey" or short questionnaire. It takes only a few minutes. Please do your best to participate. Our parish preparation in this synod process is postponed until after Jan. 27th when we will meet in small groups, either online or in person, to discuss the proposed questions.

Thanks to our Youth Minister, Mary Forcier's dedication to **Sacramental Preparation**, children will receive First Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation this year. She has adjusted programs to these uncertain times and is keeping parents, guardians and school staff involved.

Thanks to you who stay connected in prayer to the Lord, and in charity and good works toward one another and to our family of faith at St. Anne Parish.

In thought and prayer.

The Pastoral Team

January 7, 2022