

COVID-19 Update

June 19, 2020

This week the Ontario Government announced that all areas of the Diocese of Hamilton will have moved to Stage 2 of the Governments' reopening plan effective Friday June 19, 2020. While this is very welcomed news, we must all remember that the State of Emergency still exists throughout the province. The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act that was put in place on March 17, 2020 is still in effect. The limitations on funerals is still 10 people. As part of the gradual reopening of the Province, the Government has allowed this figure to be increased to a maximum of 50 people for outdoor services, and 30% capacity of indoor facilities if certain safety requirements can be met.

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton will be working with Funeral Homes throughout the area to help facilitate these requirements. All attendees at burial services and visitors to the cemetery are expected to follow all published safety guidelines. Services for entombments within our mausoleums will be restricted to the lessor of 30% capacity or 20 people. Indoor or outdoor services being arranged without the use of a Funeral Home will be subject to the same restrictions. Services for Covid19 entombments will continue to be conducted outside of the mausoleums and are limited to 20 people. Further instructions will be provided to families prior to the burial service.

All of our cemeteries remain open to visitors as they have throughout the State of Emergency. With the movement to Stage 2 we will no longer be restricting visitor access to the cemetery grounds during a burial service. We look forward to removing the temporary blockades that have been in place at some of the entrances to our cemeteries.

While the mausoleums remain closed to visitors at this time, we are making plans for their eventual reopening. The staff of the Catholic Cemeteries are currently in the process of arranging visitation appointments for families who have had entombments in our mausoleums during the State of Emergency. These appointments will be limited to three visitors, and will be subject to certain safety restrictions. We intend to begin booking appointments for other visitors in the near future. As the current pandemic situation continues to improve we look forward to further easing the restrictions on visitors to our mausoleums.

The Catholic Cemeteries of the Diocese of Hamilton would like to thank all of our families for their patience and understanding during this very difficult time. In following the rules and guidelines put forward by the Government of Ontario and the Bereavement Association of Ontario, we have been able to ensure the safety of our families, our visitors, and our staff. We all pray that this will continue to be the case.