

Private Prayer in Church during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Can I go to church to pray privately?

At the current time and under certain conditions, yes. This may change at any time depending on local public health information and directives.

Personal conditions

You must stay home if you:

- 1) have traveled out of Canada in the last 2 weeks; and/or
- 2) have signs of illness, either yourself or in your household, or if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

You should stay home if you:

- 1) are elderly, or have underlying health conditions;
- 2) live with someone who has underlying health conditions; and/or
- 3) have recently travelled to a community with a high number of active cases of COVID-19.

Church conditions

You can go to church to pray if:

- 1) your church is open (please call first);
- 2) you use hand sanitizer upon entry and ensure that your area of the pew is sanitized before and after prayer;
- 3) you avoid touching surfaces with your hands or passing items from person to person;
- 4) you leave at least 2 metres of space between you and others; and
- 5) the number of parishioners present is no more than 1/3 of the capacity of your church to a maximum of 30.

***Important Note:** Your parish may require that you wear a mask, so please check before visiting. Please also consider wearing a mask anyway, in order to protect your pastor and fellow parishioners.

What if personal or church conditions do not allow you to pray in your church?

You are not alone. Our entire faith community is sharing this suffering.

Our Lord, who dwells in our hearts, is always with us.

While we wait for our beloved churches to welcome us back once this trying time is over, we can meditate on the words of Jesus in Matthew 6:6:

But whenever you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.