



The Right Reverend David Edwards
Bishop of Fredericton

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Dear Friends,

First of all, thank you for meeting with me last week via Zoom. It was good to see you and hear of the ministry which continues in our diocese. I am very grateful for the ways in which you are seeking to minister in these difficult circumstances and recognize that for all of us this time is very stretching in many directions.

During the last few days, the question of Holy Week and the Easter season has arisen, not just among us, but also during a Zoom conference amongst the Provincial House of Bishops. We can be sure that things will be very different this year.

As you may have read Bishops across the country have declared a Eucharistic Fast in their dioceses until restrictions are reduced by the civil powers. This admonition has included the celebration between two or three people. The Diocese of Toronto, for example, seems to have gone down the Ante-Communion root. In other places the idea of "Spiritual Communion" is being emphasized. I am sure we will have differing views about this, but a document to help us think it through is attached.

As you know I have not introduced the idea of a Eucharistic Fast for the whole diocese and at this point have no intention of doing so. I believe that we can make our own decisions about whether or not to celebrate the Eucharist. That being said, my previous guidelines (see attached) remain in place for Holy Week and Easter Day services and for the foreseeable future, unless there is a radical and unexpected change in government (provincial and/or federal) directives.

I fully appreciate that for many of us this is frustrating and assure you this is not something I take lightly. I am sure that some of us would want to do something different during this holy time and I understand that. Please do not. I believe that for the safety of everyone it is important that we continue as we have been.

As of today, there is a plan in place to have a series of talks by different clergy broadcast via the diocesan website throughout Holy Week. Other things will be done, but they are still in the planning stage, please watch the website.

My main hope is that we will be able to be creative as possible within the constraints to enable everyone to have a blessed Holy Week and Easter season.

May God The Holy and Blessed Trinity bless us all at this time,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David", is located at the bottom left of the page.