

March 18th, 2020, Archbishop Cutler

Dear Friends,

Following the advice of both Federal and Provincial Health Officials for people to stay home if at all possible, the Synod Office will close as of 5:00p.m. today (March 18 2020). Synod Office Staff will continue working but will do so from home. It is a peculiarity of our office phone system that we cannot retrieve voice messages remotely, however all staff will continue to have access to their email. Response time may be slowed. We will continue to provide what services we can. This will include payroll. We are currently planning for this closure to last until April 3. A decision regarding extending the office closure will be made on or before April 3 2020.

VSSTs and Task Groups may still meet. However all such meetings will be by electronic means. People wishing to use the Diocesan "Zoom" account must book their meeting time through Jan Connors: [jconnors@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:jconnors@nspeidiocese.ca)

Allotment: Yesterday the Parish Relations Task Group agreed to waive the March Allotment payment for all parishes. To be perfectly clear, the decision is that Allotment for March is waived. If you've already paid it there will be a credit for it. If you haven't paid it there is no need to pay it. If you haven't paid February that is still due. Parishes are still responsible for all salary and salary related costs.

Pre Authorised Remittances (PAR): The diocese offers an opportunity for parishioners to make financial offerings to their parish directly from their bank account. If you want more information on this process and how to sign up for it, please contact Tammy Cummins. [tcummins@nspeidiocese.ca](mailto:tcummins@nspeidiocese.ca)

Parish Annual Returns: All parishes are normally required to submit their annual returns to the Synod Office by March 31. At this time, we are extending that deadline to April 30. If your parish annual meeting elected new lay and youth delegates to Synod: the "Certificate of Election" must be forwarded to the Synod Office as soon as possible.

Insurance Questions: Parish officers with insurance questions should follow the usual process. Our Diocesan Insurance Advisor is available by phone and email. Our insurance plan does not provide business interruption insurance for this eventuality.

More About Funerals: Yesterday the Chief Medical Officer of Health for Prince Edward Island advised that there should not be more than 20 persons present at a funeral. The different Funeral Homes are developing their own protocols; please check their websites for additional information. ....