



Media Advisory:

Catholics Return to Sunday Mass for the First Time in Three Months As COVID-19 Restrictions Ease

TORONTO, ONT. (June 19, 2020) – This will be a special weekend for Catholics across the Greater Toronto Area, as they return to publicly-celebrated Sunday Mass for the first time after three months of church closures to slow the spread of COVID-19.

The Sunday Mass is deeply sacred for Catholics, who will joyfully return to the more than 200 parishes in the Archdiocese of Toronto this weekend. [Temporary changes to the Mass](#), along with many volunteers who have been [trained to sanitize churches between Masses](#), will help the faithful remain safe and healthy at church.

Cardinal Thomas Collins, Archbishop of Toronto, has celebrated Mass for the faithful via livestream from St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica every day since the COVID-19 shutdown began. Last Sunday, His Eminence concluded his livestream Mass by dramatically opening the doors and gates to the cathedral and welcoming people in for private prayer.

“Catholics are meant to be at Mass in community with one another and our Lord,” said Cardinal Collins. “This period of closure has been a painful yet necessary one out of love for our neighbour. It is with great rejoicing that we will return to our parishes while doing so in a safe and thoughtful manner.”

Working journalists are invited to join us at one of two locations:

- Cardinal Collins will celebrate Mass at **10 a.m. on Sunday, June 21 at St. Michael's Cathedral Basilica (65 Bond St., Toronto)**. He will be available for interviews **from 8:45-9:30 a.m. and from 11 – 11:30 a.m.** Sunday Masses will also take place at the cathedral at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- Many parishioners of **Our Lady of Grace Parish in Aurora, Ont. (15347 Yonge St, Aurora)** will see their new church for the first time as they return to Mass this weekend. An ongoing renovation project has seen Mass celebrated in the church hall since May 2019. The reopening of the church happens to coincide with the resumption of Mass. Father Frank McDevitt, pastor of Our Lady of Grace, will be **available for comment at 9:30 a.m.** and media are invited to stay for the **10 a.m. Mass**.

The Archdiocese of Toronto is Canada's largest diocese, stretching from Toronto north to Georgian Bay and from Oshawa to Mississauga. It is home to 2 million Catholics and 225 churches, with Mass celebrated in more than 30 languages each week. On average, the archdiocese opens one new church every year.

– 30 –

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