

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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DIOCESE OF GRAND FALLS

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Dear Friends,

Once again we are facing a new phase of the Covid-19 virus in Newfoundland and Labrador and we are required to make some prudential judgements.

It is clear that there is 'community spread' in the St. John's area and possibly on the Avalon Peninsula and Government Ministries have closed public institutions in these areas. At the same time, these same Government Ministries have not taken the same action for the areas west of these areas.

At the time of writing this note there has been no direction from the Ministry of Health giving advice to Communities of Worship and so our Protocol could remain in effect.

However, I believe we should take action where needed. Therefore, to be consistent with other public institutions, I mandate that all churches in our Diocese on the Avalon must close immediately and remain closed until the Ministry of Health assures us that community spread is no longer a concern.

The question about closing Churches in areas where Government Ministries have not closed public institutions remains very important.

I have spoken with several Priests and others whose advice I respect and there is growing consensus that I should mandate the closure of all Churches in the Diocese. The overwhelming consideration is the trend of the spread and the growing conviction that the virus will continue to move westward.

The choice therefore facing me is this: do I wait until the virus is present and spreading in one of our communities before I close a church or do I anticipate the inevitable and proactively make the decision to close?

And so, **effective immediately**, all Churches in the Diocese of Grand Falls will close to the public. This decision will be reviewed going forward.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Anthony Daniels', with a small cross at the beginning.

Most Reverend Robert Anthony Daniels
Bishop of Grand Falls