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TO: Holders of marriage licenses in the diocese
FROM: Bishop Bruce Myers
DATE: Thursday 23 April 2020
RE: COVID-19 and weddings

As usual, a number of weddings have been planned for the approaching summer. What is unusual, of course, are the complications created for weddings and other typically large gatherings by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Because it remains unclear how long social distancing directives will remain in place, what their degree might be, and in which regions of Quebec they might apply, my recommendation is that any weddings currently scheduled for this summer be postponed until such time as social distancing measures are relaxed by civil authorities.

If an upcoming wedding is postponed but has already been published with the Quebec Registrar of Civil Status, that office will need to be informed as soon as possible of the change. They can be reached at 877 644-4545 or by email at etatcivil@dec.gouv.qc.ca.

If it is pastorally appropriate that a wedding take place on a date already arranged this summer, it may still be celebrated, but only in the presence of the presider, the couple, and two witnesses, each maintaining the physical distances indicated by public health authorities. In such an instance one of the witnesses could record the ceremony for the benefit of those unable to attend in person. Please inform me if a couple wishes to proceed in this manner.

Whether a wedding is delayed or not, marriage preparation with couples can and should proceed, either by telephone or videoconferencing.

These guidelines will be revisited as the situation evolves, guided as always by the advice of public health authorities, care for the common good, and out of a particular concern for the most vulnerable in our midst. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to be in touch with me or with Vicar General Edward Simonton (esimonton@quebec.anglican.ca or 819 679-9957).

Sincerely yours in Christ,