

13 January 2021

Office of the Rector



Dear Faculty, Staff, Seminarians and Lay Students,

I am writing to you today to provide an update on the response by St. Peter's Seminary to the Ontario provincial COVID-19 state of emergency that was announced yesterday and takes effect at midnight tonight, 12.01 am, Thursday, 14 January.

The core of the provincial order is “stay at home”, limiting travel and worksite presence to essential activities only.

We have received information from our university partners and guidance from the Middlesex London Health Unit. Our paramount concern has been, in our unique circumstances, to find a balance between our ability to deliver on our Mission of education and formation, and managing potential risk to the health of individuals, the Seminary community and the wider community in which we live.

The Ontario hospital system is beginning to reach a critical state. New and more transmissible strains of the COVID virus may be circulating. The standards in student residences are to restrict movement to rooms, hallways and the outdoors — no use of common areas such as lounges, dining halls or indoor recreational facilities.

In light of the uncertain and dangerous health realities around us, we have determined that it is in our collective best interests to maintain our education and formation programs online until the end of the semester. We will not re-open residences until conditions allow.

Only those faculty and staff required by the nature of their work (and in the case of resident faculty because the Seminary is their primary residence) will be on site, according to the practices already in place.

While this news will be a particular disappointment to seminarians who want to return, we will soon provide you with information on enhancements to our formation programs. At this time, as our ordinary daily routine has been brought to a standstill, we trust that Christ Our Lord is guiding us towards a deeper understanding of our vocation. We pray to our Blessed Mother Mary to intercede for us, watch over us and protect us so that with her we can proclaim “my soul magnifies the Lord”.

Some more specific directions from Fr. Peter Keller, Dr. John Dool and department managers will follow. Let us encourage each other to get through this difficult time and keep one another close in prayer.

In Christ,

Rev. Denis Grecco