

## **SUMMARY OF GUIDELINES IN ST ANTHONY'S CHURCH FOR THE RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC LITURGY**

### **Social Distancing**

One of the main messages from the Health and Social Care service, in the event of public gatherings with the easing up Lockdown, is that there will be the greater risk of transmission of the virus. There will be the temptation for parishioners to meet up with people they haven't seen for a while, and forget to keep socially distanced from each other.

### **Maximum Number of Attendees**

The maximum number of attendees should be adhered to. This means 95 spaces for Single/couples/family group of 4. This number includes the seating in the gallery.

### **Reminder Signs**

There are new signs up on the church walls with reminders to keep 2 metres apart from other people/family bubbles. They are in Blue and Pink and have a yellow shield sign. These should be pointed out to those attending the church.

There will be a greater need for stewards to ensure that there is the proper distance between groups/people.

The floors were marked with tape to remind people of keeping 2 metres apart, and stewards and parishioners need to be reminded to keep to these positions whenever moving around the church.

Parishioners are reminded to keep 2 metres apart, use hand sanitisers when entering and exiting the church, and use a face mask throughout the celebration.

This is particularly important for the procession towards Holy Communion. Family bubbles can remain together, but other groupings should remain 2 metres apart in the aisle.

### **More emphasised role of Stewards**

Stewards are asked to encourage parishioners to come out of their pews in an orderly fashion, and remind parishioners to keep 2 metres apart in the aisle, either between singles or family bubble groups.

Parishioners should keep wearing their face mask throughout the services, and only remove prior to receiving Holy Communion, either by taking it on their hands (diocesan advice) or on the tongue, but if on the tongue, the celebrant should sanitise their hands after each person.

At the end of the celebrations, parishioners are to be leave and be reminded to use hand sanitiser and not congregate in groups outside, but leave as safely as possible.

The need to keep numbers to the maximum per gathering, and the use of a one-way system while moving throughout the church is important. Parishioners are asked to follow the instruction from the stewards.

### **Use of Scanning Thermometer**

Although some people can be infected with the virus without exhibiting symptoms, it is good practice to check the temperature of each person who enters the church. We have not yet implemented this practice. It will soon be put into place.

## **Track and Trace Recording**

Another highly recommended procedure is this taking of name and contact details of attendees, one per grouping, so that if someone is found to have been present with the virus, that attendees can be contacted immediately and asked to isolate for 10 days.

A steward should be chosen either:

- A) to record these names on the sheet provided, or,
- B) encourage parishioners with a smart phone, (one from each family or bubble) to scan the QR code on the porch and church walls, which will take them to the Google Attendance Form and asked to fill in Last Name, First Name and Contact Telephone Number and Submit. These details will automatically be recorded without contact, and the details kept for a maximum of 21 days.

The more that this method can be encouraged and used, the more it will become second nature. But the practice has been encouraged since the opening of the first Lockdown, though hadn't been implemented here in St Anthony's, until the Christmas masses.

## **Cleaning**

Cleaners are highly encouraged to make full and careful use of the PPE and cleaning materials when cleaning after any services. This includes face mask/surgical mask, plastic apron and gloves. The careful removal of the PPE after cleaning should be ensured, then placed into the bins provided and the bags brought back into the sacristy. Please make sure you wash your hands with sanitiser before you leave the church.

## **Signing of the Volunteer Sign in sheet**

In compliance with diocesan guidelines, the Sign In sheet for volunteers should be signed by all volunteers who work as stewards/cleaners for each celebration. This can be found in the Red Covid-19 folder in the sacristy.

## **From the guidance issued by the Diocese, the following should be observed:**

Parishes are required to REVIEW AND REFRESH the Risk Assessment and Checklist (copies attached) before recommencing the public liturgies. You should also carefully retain other documentation such as cleaning schedules etc. as indicated in the Risk Assessment.

### **[This has been updated for St Anthony's Church]**

The obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days remains suspended. Parishioners who can, should be encouraged to attend on other days, and at this time, be discouraged from attending Mass more than once a week to allow for others to attend. There should be no increase in the number of scheduled Masses, particularly on a Sunday.

A social distancing measure of 2 metres should continue to be observed for the time being. The capacity of the Church should be calculated on this basis and noted as required in the Risk Assessment. Members of the same household/bubble are permitted to sit together without the need to observe 2 metre distancing.

Where toilet facilities are provided, these must be regularly cleaned and appropriately restocked with hand wash, disposable towels, etc. Signage should be put in place recommending that 5 minutes be left between use.

Doors and windows should be left open and mechanical ventilation systems (where available) operated, before, during and after celebrations to improve ventilation.

ALL persons, including clergy and parish staff/volunteers (except those medically exempt) must wear face coverings while inside the Church. The Celebrant/reader etc may remove their face covering when necessary but should remain 2 metres from others.

[Concelebration can be permitted so long as clergy remain 2 metres apart on the sanctuary, and a separate paten and chalice used for Holy Communion. Processions should be omitted and simple entrance and exit encouraged]

We continue to recommend that **1 cantor and 1 musician** is the best option for liturgical music and that congregational singing should be discouraged for the time being.

Informal gatherings outside the church, before or after celebrations should be discouraged.

### **Isolation Space/Room**

In the event that someone is showing Covid-19 symptoms, a special area should be identified and used for isolation. For small congregations the front porch of St Anthony's can be used to isolate the parishioner until an ambulance arrives. The rest of the congregation should leave the church from the side door.

### **1) Baptism**

a) There is no regulation limiting the number of persons who may attend a baptism ceremony. The total number of persons present should not exceed the safe capacity of the Church as determined in your risk assessment.

b) Where possible, only one child should be baptised per ceremony, if multiple children, from different families are to be baptised at the same ceremony, household groups/bubbles must be seated separately and should not mingle inside the church.

c) Make the Sign of the Cross over the child's head without touching. Use a cotton bud to administer the holy oils. A fresh jug of water should be used for each child to be baptised (water should not be reused from the font.)

### **2) Sacrament of Reconciliation**

a) Provision should be made for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, either at advertised times or by request.

b) A suitable space, either in the body of the Church or in a well-ventilated room should be identified as a confessional area, having due regard to the need for privacy.

c) Both priest and penitent should wear a face covering during the celebration of the sacrament.

### **3) Sacrament of Marriage**

a) Public health regulations limit the number attending a marriage ceremony to 25 persons (this includes children under 12 and the officiant) If a nuptial Mass is to be celebrated, all the usual mitigations relating to Mass are to be observed. The bride and groom are exempted from the obligation to wear a face covering while inside the Church.

### **4) Funerals**

a) Public Health Regulations limit the number attending a funeral service to 25 persons.

b) Funeral directors have been provided with detailed guidance regarding the conduct of funerals and priests/deacons should familiarise themselves with this guidance. The up-to-date version can be found at: [www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/interim-guidance-for-funeral-directors.pdf](http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/health/interim-guidance-for-funeral-directors.pdf) Funeral directors can also advise of the current arrangements in place in cemeteries and at the crematorium.

c) Wakes and post funeral gatherings remain limited. Up-to-date guidance can be found at: <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you>

### **5) Sacrament of the Sick**

a) When making an urgent sick-call to a private house, priests should request that only the sick person and those necessary for the sick person's care be present during the visit. Others should be asked to wait outside/in another room during the visit.

b) The priest and others present (including the sick person, if it is comfortable and appropriate for them to do so) should wear a face covering for the duration of the visit.

c) The priest should carefully sanitise his hands before and after the visit.

d) The 'laying on of hands' should be performed by extending the hand towards the sick person without touch.

e) The anointing with oil should be carried out using a cotton bud which should be safely and reverently disposed of after use.

f) Visits should be brief, and the priest should spend no more than 10 minutes with the sick person.

g) Priests should continue to presume for the time being that there is a risk of Covid transmission in such settings and act accordingly.

## **CELEBRATION OF HOLY WEEK LITURGIES – GUIDANCE FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE**

### **Palm Sunday**

The third form (simple entrance) should be used. Where, for pastoral reasons, palms are to be blessed this should be done (using the prayer of blessing provided in the Missal) after the homily. Palms should be distributed as the faithful leave the church (by volunteers wearing face masks etc.)

### **The Chrism Mass**

Bishop Treanor will celebrate the Chrism Mass at 11.00am on Holy Thursday. He will be joined by clergy and lay faithful representatives from each Pastoral Community and religious. Attendance will be by invitation only and clergy and faithful are invited to join in this celebration via the live stream on the Cathedral webcam.

The Cathedral staff request that the clergy representative from each vicariate bring with them the bottles for the holy oils. You are kindly asked to ensure these are cleaned beforehand.

### **Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper**

The washing of feet is to be omitted.

At the end of Mass, the procession to the place of repose is to be omitted and the Blessed Sacrament is to be kept in the Tabernacle.

In these exceptional circumstances, all priests are granted the faculty to celebrate Mass in suitable place, without the presence of the faithful. Priests who are unable to celebrate Mass should pray Vespers of the day.

### **Good Friday**

A special intention should be inserted into The Solemn Intercessions. It is recommended that it be inserted between Intercessions IX and X.

The Adoration of the Holy Cross by kissing is limited solely to the principal celebrant. Faithful present may be invited to venerate the cross from their place by means of a genuflection or profound bow.

Priests who are unable to celebrate The Passion of the Lord should pray Vespers of the day.

Where you have streaming or webcam facility, you are encouraged to celebrate other devotional practices such as The Stations of the Cross, Prayer around the Cross and Tenebrae.

### **The Easter Vigil**

The Vigil is only to be celebrated in the Cathedral and Parish Churches.

For the Baptismal Liturgy, only The Renewal of Baptismal Promises is maintained, all other elements are omitted.

Those who have absolutely no possibility of uniting themselves to the Paschal Vigil celebrated in a Church should pray the Office of Readings for Easter Sunday.