



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

#45 UPDATE: GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

COVID-19 Implications for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Information Updated: 21 August 2021, 12:00pm

The following Guidelines are approved by Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne, to assist Clergy and Faithful with questions pertaining to specific areas of liturgy and ministry in the Archdiocese of Melbourne during this time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The restrictions in place are compulsory as issued under lawful direction of the Chief Health Officer of Victoria, where a State of Emergency remains in place until **16 December 2021**.

As of 1:00pm Saturday 21 August 2021, the following measures will apply Statewide across Victoria until 11:59pm Thursday 2 September, or otherwise advised.

Curfew restrictions will not be in place for Regional Victoria, which comprise those areas outside the 31 designated local government areas (LGAs) of Metropolitan Melbourne as follows: *Banyule, Hume, Moreland, Bayside, Kingston, Mornington Peninsula, Boroondara, Knox, Nillumbik, Brimbank, Manningham, Port Phillip, Cardinia, Maribyrnong, Stonnington, Casey, Maroondah, Whitehorse, Darebin, Melbourne, Whittlesea, Frankston, Melton, Wyndham, Glen Eira, Monash, Yarra, Greater Dandenong, Moonee Valley, Yarra Ranges and Hobsons Bay.*

To check your region please visit: <https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/councils>

	Regional Victoria	Metropolitan Melbourne
Curfew	No Curfew	A Curfew will be in place from 9pm to 5am, whereby a person is not permitted to leave their home except for limited reasons.

	Statewide Victoria
Face Coverings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must be carried at all times.• Must be worn indoors and outdoors except if at home or if an exception applies.• Exception for food and drink limited so that face coverings can only be removed to eat and to drink non-alcoholic beverages (in reference to hotels and bars). <p>Recommendation only for Metropolitan Melbourne: that primary school aged children wear face coverings indoors and outdoors except at home or if an exception applies.</p>
Religious Ceremonies	No in-person gatherings permitted.

	<p>Broadcast permitted for up to 5 people. These must be the same 5 people each time.</p> <p><i>Refer to email sent to Parishes and Clergy 17 August 2021 clarifying Bubble allowances.</i></p>
Funerals	<p>Indoors and Outdoors: Permitted with no more than 10 mourners (and those necessary to conduct the funeral). Children under 12 months old are not counted towards this cap.</p> <p><i>Refer to email sent to Parishes and Clergy 18 August 2021 confirming the allowance of 10 mourners only. Pall Bearers must either be part of the 10 permitted mourners or be provided by the Funeral Service provider.</i></p> <p>No catering - service of food or drink, may be held afterwards on church property.</p>
Weddings	<p>Indoors and Outdoors: Not permitted unless end-of-life or for deportation reasons.</p> <p>Involves only 5 persons (including the two persons being married, celebrant, two witnesses).</p>
Leaving Home	<p>There will be 5 reasons to leave home: (NOTE CURFEW INFORMATION ABOVE for Metro Melb.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shopping for necessary goods and services (one person per household, once per day, a support person can accompany if required; within 5km); - Caregiving or compassionate reasons; - Authorised work or permitted education, or work interstate (if you can work from home, you must work from home); - Exercise (up to two hours, with one other person plus dependents if they cannot be left unsupervised; within 5km); - Receive a vaccination; - Other specified reasons (specific exemptions refer DHHS website).
Private Gatherings in the home	<p>Private gatherings are not permitted except for partner and single person bubbles.</p>
Public Gatherings (park, beach etc)	<p>Not permitted.</p>
Care Facility Visitors	<p>For permitted purposes only. (refer Govt Guidelines)</p>
Hospital Visitors	<p>For permitted purposes only. (refer Govt Guidelines)</p>
Work	<p>If you can work from home, you must work from home. Authorised workers are permitted to travel to and from work even when curfew is in place.</p> <p>A permit is required when leaving the home for authorised work or permitted higher education. For Regional Victoria, workforce permits will be required to leave the house for authorised work from 11.59pm Monday 23 August.</p>

Under no circumstances should anyone awaiting a COVID-19 test verification, including Clergy (even without presenting symptoms) attend a church or parish setting until a diagnosis is confirmed. Additionally, under no circumstances should anyone attend who is closely connected to people who are awaiting test results or who have tested positive.

VICTORIA

For the time being, all Catholics in Melbourne continue to be dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass until further directed by the Archbishop. We continue to carry the happy obligation to keep Sunday holy, whether we can attend Mass or not, and can do so by any kind of prayer with members of our household and parish, reading holy scripture, and encouraging one another in our faith. Prayerfully watching an online Mass continues to be a great source of comfort on Sundays.

The following Liturgical Guidelines will apply.

<p>Places of Worship and Religious Gatherings</p>	<p>Statewide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No in-person gatherings are permitted. Broadcast permitted for up to 5 people (must be the same 5 people). • Where applicable (Funerals and Livestreaming), Places of Worship must use electronic record keeping through the free Victorian Government QR Code Service. coronavirus.vic.gov.au/qrcode. • Face coverings must be worn indoors and outdoors unless an exception applies. • Hygiene precautions must be maintained at all times. • Places of Worship can continue to be open for essential public support services. Essential public support services include food banks, help for people experiencing homelessness or other essential activities. A distance of at least 1.5 metres must be kept between people.
<p>General Liturgical Guidelines</p>	<p>These Liturgical Guidelines are intended to assist Clergy and faithful in the reverent and joyful celebration of Holy Mass while maintaining the health and safety precautions offered through health and government authorities. It is by carefully observing the directives and precautions outlined in this document that the celebration of Mass, even with continued limitations of restrictions, can take place prudently. We look forward to gathering together with all our people to safely celebrate the Eucharistic Sacrifice, but in the meantime, we will follow these guidelines with diligence, using common sense and respect for others.</p> <p>FACE COVERINGS and SANITISING</p> <p>Statewide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All people must carry a face covering when they leave home unless they have a lawful reason not to. Face coverings must be worn indoors and outdoors, except if at home or if an exception applies. • Where worship is permitted for Funerals and Livestreaming, sanitiser must continue to be used regularly throughout the Liturgy, and celebrants must visibly sanitise before and after the distribution of Holy Communion. • For Clergy: A reminder that face coverings must be worn as you enter for Mass. They may be removed during the celebration of Mass but are to be placed back on for the distribution of Holy Communion and at the conclusion of Mass as you process out. <p>SINGING (see reference further below)</p>

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Statewide

- All participants must wear a face covering when indoors at all times (except if at home) and unless under 12 years of age or have a lawful reason not to.
- The reader may lower his/her face covering for the readings. This applies as well for the Universal Prayer.
- This same direction is extended for a cantor where permitted: when the cantor is singing, the face covering may be lowered. It must be worn at all other times.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

- The hosts to be consecrated for the faithful should be placed on a separate Paten (or Ciborium) to the Paten holding the host that the priest will consume.
- All concelebrating priests must intinct, thereby receiving the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

HOLY COMMUNION

The following information is designed to allow for the distribution of Holy Communion at Mass in a safe manner for both ministers and communicants. All liturgical norms that govern the ordinary distribution of Holy Communion are observed in these norms, preserving the integrity of the celebration and distribution of the Eucharist.

Receiving Our Lord in the areas where we may now gather is a moment of great significance and of personal intimacy with Jesus, and the Church wants to ensure it is done with dignity and respect.

The Sacrament may be received without restriction both on the tongue and in the hand at the decision of the person who is distributing Holy Communion. The Archbishop leaves it to each minister distributing the Sacrament to determine whether they feel comfortable doing so on the tongue at this stage. Everyone is asked to be patient – we have a number of clergy and people who are in a high-risk category for their health due to age or other factors, so the lifting of this provision is subject to the minister in each circumstance. Ministers are asked to show care and regard for communicants, most of whom have not been at Mass in any regular way for most of the year.

The following directions are recommended:

The Priest or (minister) and Communicant.

Statewide:

Face Coverings are to be worn for the distribution of Holy Communion.

- Communicants are only to receive the Host, there is to be no sharing of the Chalice.
- Instructions on receiving Holy Communion should be given to communicants at the time of the Fraction Rite.
- Minister sanitises hands before beginning distribution.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each communicant comes forward to a place approximately 1.5 metres away from the minister and removes one side of their face covering and sanitises their hands at a sanitation station provided nearby. - The communicant then enters into dialogue with the minister: “Body of Christ”; “Amen.” from the 1.5 metre distance. - Minister places the host slightly above the outstretched and flat hands of the communicant who receives the Blessed Sacrament then steps to the side to place the host on their tongue. - The communicant replaces their face covering and returns to their seat. - During the distribution of Communion, if the minister makes physical contact with the communicant, the minister will be required to sanitise his hand thoroughly. For such sanitisation to be possible, a table with hand sanitiser should also be placed in proximity to the minister distributing Communion. - Minister must sanitise their hands after completing distribution. - Those receiving Holy Communion on the tongue should be requested to present last. It is advised that sanitation take place between each communicant in this instance.
Singing	<p>Singing is permitted under certain conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statewide (Funerals) face coverings must be worn by the congregation when singing indoors at all times. This will create difficulties for singing, and congregants should be encouraged to either refrain from singing, or to do so softly. - Face coverings must be worn by cantors indoors. They may be removed during the period of singing but must be replaced and worn otherwise. -
Private Worship	<p>Statewide Places of worship are not open for private worship.</p>
Record Keeping	<p>All venues for faith organisations, must apply the appropriate density quotient rule and use electronic record keeping through the free Victorian Government QR Code Service.</p>
Signage	<p>Where a place of worship has a publicly accessible space, faith organisations must display signage at each public entry to each indoor and outdoor space, indicating maximum capacity, COVIDSafe hygiene and physical distancing requirements.</p>
Cleaning	<p>Faith organisations should ensure shared spaces and public spaces are cleaned with disinfectant regularly, Shared equipment should be cleaned between uses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reusable and communal resources such as service sheets, religious texts, etc. may be used but must be cleaned between uses. It is recommended that single use print outs be used, or people should be encouraged to bring their own items of significance. • Devotional items may be left in place but must be venerated in ways that do not involve touching or kissing them (such as by bowing or other faith appropriate action).

Weddings	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Weddings (indoors or outdoors) are not permitted unless end of life or for deportation reasons. Involves only 5 persons (including the two persons being married, celebrant, two witnesses).</p>
Funerals	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Funerals (indoors and outdoors) are permitted with no more than 10 mourners (and those necessary to conduct the funeral). Children under 12 months old are not counted towards this cap.</p> <p>Pall Bearers must either be part of the 10 permitted mourners or be provided by the Funeral Service provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face coverings must be worn by all participants including those conducting the funeral and any technicians or musicians. • Hygiene precautions must be maintained throughout. • Permission is granted to hold the funeral liturgy in a funeral parlour if the family so wish. • Following a funeral, the church must be cleaned. • No catering -service if food or drink may be held afterwards on church property.
Baptisms	Not permitted unless in danger of death.
Penance	<p>Not permitted in places of worship. May be celebrated as part of care and compassion for an individual in certain circumstances, and for those in danger of death.</p> <p>If there arises an urgent need to impart sacramental absolution to several people together out of grave necessity (eg. to a group of persons in a hospital setting who are dying from Coronavirus), then permission is to be sought from the Regional Vicar. The provisions of Cans.961 and 962 are to be met and applied for validity.</p>
Confirmations	To be postponed.
Livestreaming	<p>Statewide</p> <p>Broadcast permitted for up to 5 people. These must be the same 5 people each time. Technicians are included in the number limits and must adhere to density quotients and distancing. Face coverings must be worn indoors.</p> <p><i>Refer to email sent to Parishes and Clergy 17 August 2021 clarifying Bubble allowances.</i></p>
Gathering on Church Sites	<p>Statewide</p> <p>No permitted gatherings on church sites.</p>

Public Gatherings in Public Spaces	Statewide Not permitted
Home Visits	Statewide Private gatherings are not permitted except for partner and single person bubbles.
Hospitals or Care Facilities	For permitted purposes only, which includes to provide care and support for a resident’s or patient’s physical and emotional wellbeing – and to provide end of life support. Statewide No more than two visitors per day unless visit is for end-of-life reasons. For end-of-life visits, two visitors are permitted at a time with no maximum daily limit. A group may exceed the “two visitors at a time” rule if dependents of a visitor are in the group and care for the dependents cannot be arranged. (Refer Govt Guidelines)
Ministering to COVID-19 Patients	Health officials will be able to guide what is possible and permissible.