



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

#57 UPDATE: GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

COVID-19 Implications for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Information Updated: 11 March 2022, 5:00pm

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.

These guidelines are in accordance with Victorian pandemic orders which have been extended from 11:59pm Wednesday 12 January for three months. The declaration was made under section 165AE of the *Public Health and Well Being Act 2008*.

We welcome the opening up of our places of worship and opportunities for gathering but remain mindful and respectful that many in our community remain feeling cautious. We also look forward to the time when all people can join together in various locations, and for the many activities that truly unite us fully as communities.

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 participating in online Mass continues to be a great source of comfort on Sundays.

VICTORIA	
Face Coverings	<p>From 11:59pm Friday 25 February 2022, face coverings are not mandatory within Places of Worship or workplaces.</p> <p>Please note, however, that health officials have emphasised that face coverings are recommended for workers who “serve or face” members of the public and in large gatherings. As always, our priority is care for others and especially those most vulnerable. In our circumstances, there are particular times when Clergy, ministerial leaders, parish staff and volunteers are in close contact with a broad range of our people, many of whom are still feeling anxious or who experience other health challenges which makes them vulnerable. We ask you to keep this in mind at all times and use face coverings in those situations as appropriate.</p>

<p>QR Code Check in requirements</p>	<p>As of 6:00pm Friday 18 February 2022, QR code check-in to Places of Worship and Parish Offices is no longer required. We understand this to also include when the faithful are using other facilities within the Parish (for example, hospitality to visitors following Mass or the celebration of a Baptism, Children’s liturgy etc).</p> <p>Please also note below in regard to vaccination requirements for Staff and Volunteers.</p>
<p>Numbers/Density</p>	<p>There are no limits on participants or density requirements at Places of Worship for Weddings, Funerals, and general Worship – including opening for private prayer.</p> <p>Whilst we warmly welcome our full opening, please also note that you can reduce risks by maintaining 1.5 metre distance from others where possible and providing sanitiser at key locations (including the approach for reception of Communion).</p>
<p>Vaccinations</p>	<p>There are no longer vaccination requirements for the public at Places of Worship nor any requirement for organisers to check vaccination status for attendees at Places of Worship for Weddings, Funerals, general Worship or for parish social activities.</p> <p>Workers at Places of Worship (staff and volunteers) must still be up-to-date with their vaccinations and are required to show evidence of their vaccination status to their employer in order to continue working outside their home.</p>
<p>Liturgical considerations</p>	<p>Holy Communion is to be distributed to the faithful under one species only (i.e., the Sacred Host). At concelebrations involving a number of priests, communion for them should be by intinction of the Sacred Host in the Precious Blood.</p> <p>Those who distribute Holy Communion should wear a face covering and sanitise their hands before doing so.</p> <p>Where there is physical touch as part of a Rite of the Church (for example, baptisms, confirmation and anointing of the sick or dying) the use of cotton buds is no longer mandated, but hands should be sanitised well before and after the Rite.</p> <p>Blessed Easter Water may be put in Holy Water stoups, but care should be seen that the water is changed regularly (at a minimum of once a week).</p> <p>The use of hymn books and other worship aids are permitted as part of the liturgy.</p>

Maximise Ventilation	It is recommended that windows and outside doors be opened, where possible, to maximise ventilation and to improve indoor air quality. Reduce or eliminate recirculated air and increase the use of outdoor air where possible.
COVIDsafe Plan	<p>All workplaces and Places of Worship must still have a COVIDSafe Plan that supports a community to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and should be regularly reviewed to ensure it is current. Signage in public spaces reminding attendees about sanitising.</p> <p>The current changes provide a good opportunity to review what is in place. For guidance please visit: https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covidsafe-plan</p>
Cleaning of Facilities	Places of Worship will not need to be deep cleaned between use, but good hygiene standards should be maintained according to a Parish COVIDsafe plan. This includes the continued availability of sanitiser throughout the venue.
Care Facility Visitors	Please work with the care provider in determining what is required and permitted.
Hospital Visitors	
Work	As of 11:59pm Friday 25 February 2022, public health recommendations for Victorians to work and study from home will be removed.