



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE  
OF MELBOURNE

## #51 UPDATE: GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

### COVID-19 Implications for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

**Information Updated: 20 October 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 11:59pm Thursday 21 October 2021, the following measures will be applied across Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne. These will be in place until otherwise advised, and except where particular LGAs might be placed under different restrictions for limited periods of time.**

Regional Victoria comprises those areas outside the 31 designated local government areas (LGAs) of Metropolitan Melbourne: *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>

**NOTE: The information for these latest Guidelines has been sourced from the Premier's Statement of 17 October; the updated Victorian Roadmap released 19 October; and the DHHS website. It is presented in good faith, and we acknowledge that some items may change as specific directions are further confirmed.**

	<b>Regional Victoria</b>	<b>Metropolitan Melbourne</b>
<b>Curfew</b>	<b>No Curfew</b>	<b>No Curfew</b>
<b>Face Coverings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must be worn indoors and outdoors by Victorians aged 12 years or over except if at home, or if an exception applies.</li><li>• Recommend primary school aged children wear face coverings indoors and outdoors except at home or if an exception applies.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Must be worn indoors and outdoors by Victorians aged 12 years or over except if at home, or if an exception applies.</li><li>• Recommend primary school aged children wear face coverings indoors and outdoors except at home or if an exception applies.</li></ul>
<b>Religious Gatherings and Ceremonies</b>	<b>Fully Vaccinated:</b> Indoor cap of 30 with DQ4. Outdoor cap 100 with DQ2.	<b>Fully Vaccinated:</b> Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 50 with DQ4.

	<p><b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b> Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 20 with DQ4.</p> <p>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</p> <p>The Archbishop has indicated that at least one (if not more) 'Unknown Vaccination Status' Masses should be offered in each Parish per week to enable the faithful to attend.</p>	<p><b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b> Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</p> <p>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</p> <p>The Archbishop has indicated that at least one (if not more) 'Unknown Vaccination Status' Masses should be offered in each Parish per week to enable the faithful to attend.</p>
<b>Funerals</b>	<p><b>Fully vaccinated:</b> Indoor cap of 30 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 100 with DQ4. (caps not inclusive of those necessary to conduct funeral)</p> <p><b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b> Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 20 with DQ4. (caps not inclusive of those necessary to conduct funeral)</p> <p>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</p> <p><i>Refer to email sent to Parishes and Clergy 18 August 2021. Pall Bearers must be from the permitted number of mourners or from the Funeral Service provider.</i></p>	<p><b>Fully vaccinated:</b> Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 50 with DQ4. (caps not inclusive of those necessary to conduct funeral)</p> <p><b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b> Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 20 with DQ4. (caps not inclusive of those necessary to conduct funeral)</p> <p>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</p> <p><i>Refer to email sent to Parishes and Clergy 18 August 2021. Pall Bearers must be from the permitted number of mourners or from the Funeral Service provider.</i></p>
<b>Weddings</b>	<p><b>Fully Vaccinated:</b> Indoor cap of 30 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 100 with DQ2.</p> <p><b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b> Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 20 with DQ4.</p> <p>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards this cap.</p> <p>(caps not inclusive of marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding)</p>	<p><b>Fully Vaccinated:</b> Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 50 with DQ4.</p> <p><b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b> Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4. Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</p> <p>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards this cap.</p> <p>(caps not inclusive of marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding)</p>
<b>Leaving Home</b>	<p><b>No Stay-at-Home requirement.</b></p> <p><b>Removal of travel limit across area with same restrictions.</b></p>	<p><b>No Stay-at-Home requirement.</b></p> <p><b>Removal of travel limit across area with same restrictions.</b></p>

	Movement between Metro Melbourne and Regional Victoria restricted to specified purposes.	Movement between Metro Melbourne and Regional Victoria restricted to specified purposes.
<b>Private Gatherings in the home</b>	Permitted for up to 10 visitors per day, including dependents.  Vaccination strongly recommended.	Permitted for up to 10 visitors per day, including dependents.  Vaccination strongly recommended.
<b>Public Gatherings (park, beach etc)</b>	Permitted for up to 20 people outdoors, including dependents.  Vaccination strongly recommended.	Permitted for up to 15 people outdoors, including dependents.  Vaccination strongly recommended.
<b>Care Facility Visitors</b>	For permitted purposes only. (Refer Govt Guidelines)	For permitted purposes only. (refer Govt Guidelines)
<b>Hospital Visitors</b>	For permitted purposes only. (refer Govt Guidelines)	For permitted purposes only. (refer Govt Guidelines)
<b>Work</b>	If you can work from home, you should work from home. <b>Office work permitted up to 25 per cent return or up to a limit of 10 people if the workplace is 40 or less, whichever is greater.</b>  Density quotient of 1 person per 4sqm rule applies	If you can work from home, you must work from home.  Authorised workplaces and workers are permitted to attend onsite work.  <b>A permit is required when leaving the home for authorised work or permitted higher education</b>

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

## **VICTORIA**

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 and anxious, and that density quotients will prevent our full communities gathering as they would wish.

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

Where applicable, the following Liturgical Guidelines will apply noting the difference in allowances between Metropolitan Melbourne and Regional Victoria

<p><b>Places of Worship and Religious Gatherings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In <b>Metropolitan Melbourne</b> Worship and Prayer services may welcome  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. OR Outdoor cap of 50 with DQ4.  <b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b>  Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4, OR Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</li> <li>• In <b>Regional Victoria</b>, Worship and Prayer services may welcome  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoor cap of 30 with DQ4. OR Outdoor cap of 100 with DQ4.  <b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b>  Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4, OR Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</li> <li>• <i>Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</i></li> <li>• <b>A COVID Check-in Marshal must be present.</b> For role of a Marshal please visit: <a href="https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals">https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals</a></li> <li>• Places of worship must use electronic record keeping through the Victoria Services QR Services App.</li> <li>• Proof of vaccination, or vaccination exemption, status to be sighted via the Victoria Services App (Tick indicator). Vaccination Exemptions can be linked to your Victoria Services App.</li> <li>• For those with hard copy certificates, record should be taken of Name, Contact and Acknowledgement of vaccination proof or vaccination exemption. This record must be kept securely for 28 days.</li> <li>• Bookings systems – such as Trybooking or Genius, are recommended to assist in monitoring permitted numbers.</li> <li>• Face coverings must be worn indoors and outdoors unless an exception applies.</li> <li>• Hygiene precautions must be maintained at all times.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Where permitted, outdoor religious gatherings must be held in an outdoor space that is near to the place of worship hosting the service. Note number capacity regulations listed above. This means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- a service could be held on the grounds of a place of worship or in the car park.</li> <li>- a public outdoor space, like a park, close to the place of worship.</li> <li>- A marquee or covering may be used but must have no side coverings and allow free airflow.</li> </ul> <p>You may need a permit from your local council. You can find your local council using <a href="#">Know Your Council</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- schools that want to host an outdoor religious ceremony should do so near their place of worship. Schools can find further information on <a href="#">advice for schools</a> and through Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>General Liturgical Guidelines</b></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</p>

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.

### **FACE COVERINGS and SANITISING**

- In **Metropolitan Melbourne** and **Regional Victoria** - 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. It is recommended that Primary School aged children wear face coverings where possible.
- Sanitiser must continue to be used regularly throughout Liturgies, 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.

**SINGING** (see reference further below)

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

**In Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne:**

- All participants must wear a face covering when indoors at all times (except if at home) and unless under 12years 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 (or singers where further numbers permit): 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.

	<p>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.</p> <p>The following directions are recommended:</p> <p><b>The Priest or (minister) and Communicant.</b>  <b>In Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne as follows:</b>  Face Coverings are to be worn for the distribution of Holy Communion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communicants are only to receive the Host, there is to be no sharing of the Chalice.</li> <li>- Instructions on receiving Holy Communion should be given to communicants at the time of the Fraction Rite.</li> <li>- Minister sanitises hands before beginning distribution.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- The communicant then enters into dialogue with the minister: “Body of Christ”; “Amen.” from the 1.5 metre distance.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- The communicant replaces their face covering and returns to their seat.</li> <li>- 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.</li> <li>- Minister must sanitise their hands after completing distribution.</li> <li>- 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.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Singing</b></p>	<p>Singing is permitted under certain conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In <b>Regional Victoria, and Metropolitan Melbourne</b>, 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.</li> <li>- Face coverings must be worn by cantors or choirs indoors. They may be removed during the period of singing but must be replaced and worn otherwise.</li> </ul>

	<p>Further recommendations when singing can take place include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Singing outside, or in a well-ventilated room (with windows open).</li> <li>- Physical distancing of at least 2 metres between each person while singing.</li> <li>- Short performances (of less than an hour).</li> <li>- Singing softly.</li> <li>- Fans, free standing or ceiling, are not recommended for use in enclosed indoor spaces for singing. Performers should be 5 meters from the audience where practical.</li> </ul>
<b>Private Worship</b>	<p><b>Places of worship may be open for private worship in Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to current vaccination requirements, set times should be established for private worship clearly indicating whether the time allocated is for fully vaccinated or ‘unknown vaccination status’ groups</li> <li>• Covid Marshals must be present to monitor numbers, assist with QR Code registrations and sight vaccination status.</li> <li>• Face coverings must be worn by anyone attending indoor prayer.</li> <li>• Number caps for general worship and density quotients for must be adhered to, as well as distancing, hygiene precautions. All factors should form part of the parish COVIDsafe plans.</li> <li>• Note record keeping requirements below.</li> </ul>
<b>Record Keeping</b>	<p>All venues for faith organisations, must apply the appropriate density quotient rule and use electronic record keeping through the free Victorian Services App.</p> <p>A Covid Marshal must be present at worship and prayer services to assist with registrations and vaccination monitoring.</p> <p>Proof of vaccination, or exemption from, records must be kept for those who do not use the Victoria Services App, including Name, Contact, and Vaccination status. These records must be kept securely for 28 days.</p>
<b>Signage</b>	<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> <p>Signage at entrances should indicate if the current service being held is for Vaccinated or Unknown Vaccinated participants.</p>
<b>Cleaning</b>	<p>Faith organisations should ensure shared spaces and public spaces are cleaned with disinfectant regularly, with high touch surfaces cleaned twice each day. Shared equipment should be cleaned between uses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weddings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In <b>Metropolitan Melbourne Wedding celebrations</b> may welcome:  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. OR Outdoor cap of 50 with DQ4.  <b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b>  Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4, OR Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</li> <li>• In <b>Regional Victoria, Wedding celebrations</b> may welcome  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoor cap of 30 with DQ4. OR Outdoor cap of 100 with DQ4.  <b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b>  Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4, OR Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</li> <li>• Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</li> <li>• Caps not inclusive of marrying couple plus those necessary to conduct wedding.</li> <li>• <b>A COVID Check-In Marshal must be present.</b> For role of a Marshal please visit: <a href="https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals">https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals</a></li> <li>• Places of worship must use electronic record keeping through the Victoria Services QR Services App.</li> <li>• Proof of vaccination, or vaccination exemption, status to be sighted via the Victoria Services App (Tick indicator). Vaccination Exemptions can be linked to your Victoria Services App.</li> <li>• For those with hard copy certificates, record should be taken of Name, Contact and Acknowledgement of vaccination proof or vaccination exemption. This record must be kept securely for 28 days.</li> <li>• Booking systems – such as Trybooking or Genius, are recommended to assist in monitoring permitted numbers.</li> <li>• Face coverings must be worn by all participants indoors, except the Bride and Groom who do not need to wear face coverings during the ceremony.</li> <li>• Face coverings can be removed for photos, but people must be encouraged to stay 1.5m away from others.</li> <li>• Hygiene precautions must be maintained throughout.</li> <li>• A photographer is not counted as a guest under the wedding gathering limits. There is no limit on the number of photographers or videographers for each wedding. When taking photos, a photographer should always stay 1.5 metres away from others.</li> <li>• Following a wedding, the church must be cleaned.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funerals</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Metropolitan Melbourne Funeral celebrations</b> may welcome:  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4. OR Outdoor cap of 50 with DQ4.  <b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b>  Indoor cap of 10 with DQ4, OR Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</li> <li>• In <b>Regional Victoria, Funeral celebrations</b> may welcome  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoor cap of 30 with DQ4. OR Outdoor cap of 100 with DQ4.  <b>Unknown Vaccination Status:</b>  Indoor cap of 20 with DQ4, OR Outdoor cap of 20 DQ4.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children under 12 months old are not counted towards caps.</li> <li>• Caps not inclusive of those necessary to conduct the funeral.</li> <li>• <b>A COVID Check-In Marshal</b> must be present. For role of a Marshal please visit: <a href="https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals">https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals</a></li> <li>• Places of worship must use electronic record keeping through the Victoria Services QR Services App.</li> <li>• Proof of vaccination, or vaccination exemption, status to be sighted via the Victoria Services App (Tick indicator). Vaccination Exemptions can be linked to your Victoria Services App.</li> <li>• For those with hard copy certificates, record should be taken of Name, Contact and Acknowledgement of vaccination proof or vaccination exemption. This record must be kept securely for 28 days.</li> <li>• Booking systems – such as Trybooking or Genius, are recommended to assist in monitoring permitted numbers.</li> </ul> <p><i>Refer to email sent to Parishes and Clergy 18 August 2021 confirming that Pall Bearers must either be part of the permitted number cap or be provided by the Funeral Service provider.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Face coverings must be worn by all participants including those conducting the funeral and any technicians or musicians.</li> <li>• Hygiene precautions must be maintained throughout.</li> <li>• Permission is granted to hold the funeral liturgy in a funeral parlour if the family so wish. This is to be a Funeral Service and not a Funeral Mass.</li> <li>• Following a funeral, the church must be cleaned.</li> </ul>
<b>Baptisms</b>	<p><b>Baptisms may be celebrated under the latest indoor and outdoor Religious Gatherings and Ceremonies limits determined for Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne (listed above). Gatherings must adhere to the vaccination status guidelines.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All participants must wear a face covering when indoors at all times, unless under 12 years of age or have a lawful reason not to. Although it is recommended that Primary School aged children wear face coverings. Even with a face covering, participants should keep at least 1.5 metres distance between themselves and others (unless they are people that live with each other).</li> <li>• Face coverings can be removed for photos, but people must be encouraged to stay 1.5m away from others.</li> <li>• Baptism by immersion or baptisms using already blessed water are to be avoided. Fresh water is to be used in every individual instance of baptism, and immediately drained afterwards.</li> <li>• Fresh water is blessed and used for each baptism.</li> <li>• The child to be baptised is held by the parents throughout.</li> <li>• The welcoming blessing of the child is done by the priest without physical contact with the child.</li> <li>• The two anointings are done using single-use cotton buds.</li> <li>• The water is poured by the priest on the head of the child from above.</li> <li>• The dressing of the child in a white garment is done by the parents.</li> <li>• The lighting of the candle is done by the person holding the candle.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A COVID Check-In Marshal</b> must be present. For role of a Marshal please visit: <a href="https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals">https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals</a></li> <li>• Places of worship must use electronic record keeping through the Victoria Services QR Services App.</li> <li>• Proof of vaccination, or vaccination exemption, status to be sighted via the Victoria Services App (Tick indicator). Vaccination Exemptions can be linked to your Victoria Services App.</li> <li>• For those with hard copy certificates, record should be taken of Name, Contact and Acknowledgement of vaccination proof or vaccination exemption. This record must be kept securely for 28 days.</li> <li>• Booking systems – such as Trybooking or Genius, are recommended to assist in monitoring permitted numbers.</li> <li>• Hygiene precautions must be maintained throughout</li> <li>• Following a Baptism indoors, the church must be cleaned.</li> </ul>
<b>Penance</b>	<p><b>In Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne, First and Second Rite of Reconciliation may be celebrated in line with all applicable vaccination, density, distancing, and hygiene regulations.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management of times should enable the Sacrament to be available for all people (vaccinated or unknown vaccination status). Clear signage indicating this is essential.</li> <li>• To enable privacy for people attending the Sacrament, consideration should be given for Penance to be offered during particular times either before or after Mass, or set times of Private worship, so that Check-in doesn't intrude on the private nature of attendance.</li> <li>• Face coverings must be worn indoors at all times.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• <b>A COVID Check-In Marshal</b> must be present. For role of a Marshal please visit: <a href="https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals">https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals</a></li> <li>• Places of worship must use electronic record keeping through the Victoria Services QR Services App.</li> <li>• Proof of vaccination, or vaccination exemption, status to be sighted via the Victoria Services App (Tick indicator). Vaccination Exemptions can be linked to your Victoria Services App.</li> <li>• For those with hard copy certificates, record should be taken of Name, Contact and Acknowledgement of vaccination proof or vaccination exemption. This record must be kept securely for 28 days.</li> </ul>
<b>Confirmations</b>	<p><b>Confirmations may be celebrated in Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne in line with all applicable vaccination, density, distancing, and hygiene regulations.</b></p> <p>- In consultation with the Auxiliary Bishop or Regional Vicar, parish priests are delegated to determine locally whether Confirmation will be conferred within Mass or without Mass.</p>

- Locations for consideration include: inside the parish church (according to permitted numbers); outside the parish church (provided due reverence can be observed); or in a suitably prepared and decorated school hall according to the permitted single-class numbers (parents would not be permitted).
- Each local community can determine the days and times most suitable for their celebrations. The Office of the Vicar General is to be kept informed of the schedule.
- In consultation with the Regional Vicar, in parishes with large numbers of candidates, a parish priest may enlist another parish priest from a neighbouring parish to assist with some sessions.
- When possible, pastors should provide live-streaming services of the celebration of the Order of Confirmation. This will offer the Confirmandi and families happy memories about this important celebration.

### **B. The Celebration**

- The Sacrament is to be celebrated using the approved Rite of Confirmation (within Mass or Outside of Mass).
- **All participants, including the celebrant, must wear face coverings unless they are under 12 years of age or have a lawful reason not to.**
- Conduct all standard protocols for preparing and sanitising the liturgical space before and after the celebration.
- The Priest is to follow the health and safety guidelines enumerated in the Archdiocesan guidelines for the celebration of the Mass.
- Prior to the start of the liturgy, a small table should be placed appropriately that would hold the Sacred Chrism, a purificator, sufficient cotton swabs (1 for each candidate), and an empty container (with a lid) to act as a receptacle for the disposal of the swab.
- The Priest, the candidate for Confirmation (if over the age of 12), and the proxy sponsor/sponsor are to wear a face covering throughout the sacramental action.

### **C. Gestures during Confirmation**

#### *The Laying on of Hands:*

This is to take place by a gesture of extending your hands over and above the heads of the group of candidates to be confirmed, as the Prayer of Confirmation is said. There is to be no physical contact with anyone to be confirmed.

#### *Anointing with Chrism:*

- The Sacred Chrism to be used during the Sacrament should be poured into a separate vessel than the one in which the Chrism is kept. The vessel must be sanitised properly before use.
- The Priest is to sanitise his hands prior to the anointing with Chrism.
- A single-use cotton swab, dipped into the Chrism, must be used to anoint. There is to be no physical contact with the one being anointed. The tip of the cotton swab is used to anoint on the forehead. The cotton bud is to be immediately disposed of after each single use in the container provided. A new cotton bud is to be used for each person to be anointed.
- The Priest should use sanitiser as often as needed.
- Any leftover Chrism in the vessel should be disposed of in the liturgically proper manner. It should not be returned to the container in which the Chrism is usually stored.

- If needed, more Chrism can be obtained from the Cathedral in the usual way.

*Gesture of Peace:*

The gesture of peace (e.g., handshake, the touching of the cheek), no longer envisaged in the current Ritual, is to be dispensed with entirely. The gesture is not to take place. The words of the exchange of peace, however, are still to be said.

*Other Actions:*

All other gestures or symbolic actions involving physical contact or sharing are not permitted (e.g. lighting of candles; presenting of symbols for confirmation; issuing of certificates; etc.).

*Sponsor/s:*

If the density quotient for a church does not allow large enough numbers to be present, it is encouraged that one proxy sponsor stand in the place of the sponsors for all the candidates to be confirmed in a single Liturgy. If adequate spacing and capacity allows, each candidate may have their individual sponsor present along with family. The sponsor is to remain near to the one to be confirmed, but no physical contact is to be made. The sponsor is not to place their hand upon the shoulder of the one to be confirmed and must wear their face covering at all times unless they are a member of the household.

*Other Considerations*

- If pictures are requested by the Confirmandi for their families, it should be taken in a planned and orderly manner so as to observe physical distancing at all times.
- Simple gatherings after the celebration of Confirmation may take place and must follow the directives under Social Gatherings.
- When recording in the Register the name of the priest who has confirmed, note is to be made of the delegation granted by the Regional Vicar, if appropriate. The same applies in notifying the Parish of Baptism of the one confirmed. It is the Sponsor's name, not the name of the proxy sponsor that should be registered.

As with all current allowances:

**A COVID Check-In Marshal** must be present. For role of a Marshal please visit: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/covid-check-in-marshals>

- Places of worship must use electronic record keeping through the Victoria Services QR Services App.
- Proof of vaccination, or vaccination exemption, status to be sighted via the Victoria Services App (Tick indicator). Vaccination Exemptions can be linked to your Victoria Services App.
- It is noted that those under 16 years of age are not required to produce proof of vaccination status.
- For those with hard copy certificates, record should be taken of Name, Contact and Acknowledgement of vaccination proof or vaccination exemption. This record must be kept securely for 28 days.
- Booking systems – such as Trybooking or Genius, are recommended to assist in monitoring permitted numbers.

<b>Livestreaming</b>	In both <b>Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne</b> , technicians are included in the number limits and must adhere to density quotients and distancing and vaccination requirements. Face coverings must be worn indoors.
<b>Gathering on Church Sites</b>	<p>Clergy are urged to use their common sense in relation to particular situations of their Parish. Please err on the side of safety in these circumstances and if you or your people are uncomfortable, make appropriate adjustments.</p> <p><b>In Regional Victoria</b>  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoors, 30 cap with DQ4. OR Outdoors, 100 cap with DQ2.  Masks mandatory at all times</p> <p><b>In Metropolitan Melbourne</b>  <b>Fully Vaccinated:</b>  Indoors, cap of 20 with DQ4. OR Outdoors, cap of 50 with DQ4.  Permitted for groups of 10 for essential support (such as food banks).  Vaccinated status does not apply.  Masks mandatory at all times.</p> <p>Mandatory QR Code entry and vaccination record keeping must be in place in line with other gatherings.</p> <p>Food or drink may be served at such meetings or gatherings, <b>for example providing congregants with tea, coffee, and refreshments.</b> It is recommended that single use items are used to serve food or drink, and that only designated people serve or distribute food or drinks. (For example, one designated person uses the urn to dispense hot water for tea, or one person serves food using tongs and gloves). No self-serve buffet-style set ups should be used.</p>
<b>Public Gatherings in Public Spaces</b>	<p>In <b>Regional Victoria</b> 20 people are permitted to gather, and in <b>Metropolitan Melbourne</b> 15 people are permitted to gather, in public spaces, including dependents.</p> <p>Vaccination is strongly recommended.</p> <p><b>A public place</b> means an area that everyone can access, for example a local park or the beach. Face coverings must be worn outdoors.</p>
<b>Home Visits</b>	<p>In both <b>Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne</b>, home visits are permitted for up to 10 visitors per day, including dependents.</p> <p>Vaccination is strongly recommended.</p>
<b>Hospitals or Care Facilities</b>	<p>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.</p> <p>In both <b>Regional Victoria and Metropolitan Melbourne</b>  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</p>

	dependents of a visitor are in the group and care for the dependents cannot be arranged.  (Refer Govt Guidelines)
<b>Ministering to COVID-19 Patients</b>	Health officials will be able to guide what is possible and permissible.