



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

#55 UPDATE: GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

COVID-19 Implications for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne Information Updated: 23 December 2021, 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 under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act* and will be in place until 12 January 2022.

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 Thursday 23 December 2021, face coverings will be required for gatherings indoors (except in the home) for people aged eight and over, or for those with medical exemptions.</p> <p>A reminder this will mean:</p> <p>For Clergy: 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> <p>The Reader: may lower his/her face covering for the readings. This applies as well for the Universal Prayer.</p> <p>Cantors and Singers: when a cantor is singing, the face</p>

	<p>covering may be lowered. It must be worn at all other times. Distancing between singers is recommended.</p> <p>Communicants: Each communicant comes forward and removes one side of their face covering and sanitises their hands at a sanitation station provided nearby. Following reception of the Blessed Sacrament they step to the side to place the host on their tongue. The communicant replaces their face covering and returns to their seat.</p> <p>Weddings: 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. Face coverings can be removed for photos, but people must be encouraged to stay 1.5m away from others.</p>
Numbers	There are no limits on participants at Places of Worship for Weddings, Funerals, and general Worship – including the opening for private prayer.
QR Code Check ins	<p>QR code check in is required for all Places of Worship.</p> <p>For those who do not have a device, provision must be made to assist with a check in or to capture name and contact details.</p>
Vaccinations	<p>There will not be any vaccination requirements nor any requirement for organisers to check vaccination status at Places of Worship for Weddings, Funerals, and general Worship.</p> <p>Workers at Places of Worship (staff and volunteers) must still be fully vaccinated.</p> <p>Please note that other activities outside of worship, particularly those activities that involve hospitality, will require full vaccination for participation and will entail QR code check-ins and COVID Marshals. This will apply to varying activities held within the parish-context.</p> <p>People under 18 years of age will no longer be required to show proof of their vaccination status.</p>
Cleaning of Facilities	Places of Worship will not need to be 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**

Hospital Visitors

There are limits on attending high-risk settings, even when fully vaccinated. Please work with the care provider in determining what is required and permitted.