



Diocese of Armidale

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PARISH & SACRAMENTAL UPDATE: 25TH JULY, 2020

COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN & REGISTRATION AS COVID SAFE VENUE

The Diocesan Chancery Office and all Parishes have a COVID-19 Safety Plan based on relevant NSW government guidelines.

MAXIMUM LIMIT OF 100 WORSHIPPERS AT MASSES & INSIDE CHURCHES

The upper limit of people who are allowed at an inside venue is now limited to 100 people at all times or one person per 4 square metres, whichever is the lesser. People attending Mass are required to supply their name and contact details so that they can be used for contact tracing. The Parish must be registered as a COVID Safe venue.

AT RISK PARISHIONERS

At risk parishioners are exhorted not to attend any Mass or other service in the Parish. Any person who is unwell, any person with co-morbidities (e.g. compromised immune or respiratory systems), and those over 70 years of age should exercise particular caution. In some cases, it may be more appropriate for some individuals to attend a weekday Mass when there are less people present or to receive pastoral care from clergy in their home. They should contact their Parish Priest to discuss their options.

LITURGY

The following must be observed at all Masses:

- Use of a lectern rather than having a server hold the Missal
- Turning pages by the Priest
- When there is a deacon, concelebrant, acolyte or server 1.5 metres distance must be maintained at all times
- No use of hymn books or shared missals or prayer cards
- Printed bulletins are for single use only and must not be reused by other people
- No Procession of the Gifts
- No congregational singing
- No sign of peace
- One or two cantors but not more than this, may sing but they must be separate from the congregation and maintain spatial distancing from the organist and from each other.
- Collection boxes or baskets are to be placed in a suitable place in the Church and not passed from person to person. (Direct debit is encouraged for both collections).

HOLY COMMUNION

Arrangements are in place for spatial distancing during the distribution of Holy Communion. Parishioners are reminded via the bulletin, and at Mass by a reminder just before the distribution of Holy Communion. Distancing is more easily observed when Communicants form one single line instead of two.

Until further notice only the priest and deacon distribute Holy Communion at Mass, unless an exemption has been given in writing by the Bishop. The Precious Blood is not given to the faithful. Priests and Deacons sanitise their hands with instant hand sanitiser immediately before they distribute Holy Communion.

Receipt of Holy Communion in the hand is encouraged. In the rare instances where a parishioner receives Holy Communion on the tongue, there is to be no physical contact. These parishioners are to approach last at the end of the line of communicants.

FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES, WAKES

The maximum number of people who may attend a funeral or memorial service or a gathering following a funeral or memorial service, is the lesser of [one person per 4 square metres](#) or 100 people.

Places of public worship can have up to 100 people subject to the 4 square metre rule and must be registered as a COVID Safe venue. People attending are required to supply their name and contact details so that they can be used for contact tracing.

WEDDINGS

The maximum number of people who may attend a wedding or a gathering following a wedding service cannot be greater than 150 people subject to the [4 square metre](#) rule and registration as a COVID-Safe venue. **HOWEVER**, If the wedding takes place in a place of worship, the number of people attending must not exceed 100 people, subject to the 4 square metre rule. People attending are required to supply their name and contact details so that they can be used for contact tracing.

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

First Holy Communion will occur at a time to be determined in each Parish. Parents and families should check with their Parish for the details. People attending are required to supply their name and contact details so that they can be used for contact tracing.

CONFIRMATION

In those Parishes where the Bishop will not be personally administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Parish Priests have been delegated to do so. Parents and families should check with their Parish for the details. People attending are required to supply their name and contact details so that they can be used for contact tracing.

Yours in Christ,



Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
Bishop of Armidale