



ARCHDIOCESE *of* KINGSTON

REVISED COVID-19 PROTOCOLS EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY

The Assembly of Catholic Bishops has revised and reissued the *Worship Safe* guideline. The *Worship Safe* guideline was developed early in the pandemic to articulate protocols and practices in parishes that safeguard the good health of clergy and the faithful.

Note: As challenges to control Covid-19 continue to persist, these directives may change at any time and will require us to adapt or change our procedures.

- Physical distancing of two metres (six feet) remains the requirement for attendance in church and parish facilities, including seating, however, groups of people from the same household may be seated together.
- Wearing a face mask remains required. (Unless a person is exempted). Masks should be fitted properly to the face.
- Cleaning procedures for pews, washrooms, confessionals, reconciliation rooms are relaxed to require only regular cleaning in accordance with pre-Covid-19 routines, with the only exception being when someone with suspected or known Covid-19 has attended, in which case, the space should be disinfected as per the pandemic manual requirements.
- Churches should be well ventilated when possible. This will vary according to the space, but it should be treated with importance. Ventilation may involve opening windows and utilising fans. Fan placement is important and will vary upon room configuration. Avoid placing fans in areas where they may impede access or cause contaminated air to flow from one person to another.
- Missals and prayer books may be replaced in pews.
- **Hymn books will not be replaced** as the earlier restrictions on singing continue.
- Bulletins, envelopes, pamphlets, and newspapers may again be distributed as per preCOVID-19 practices.

- Votive light stands may be re-opened, subject to notices requiring appropriate distancing of two metres (six feet).
- Crying Rooms and Small Chapels/Devotional Areas may be used again if proper distancing is maintained.
- The preference continues that, confessions should be heard outside of the Confessional to allow for proper distancing, cleaning and contact tracing (if it becomes necessary). Where Confessionals are used, both priest and confessor will be required to wear masks. Priests should employ double masking or the use of the N95 mask to further lower the risk of contamination.
- Collections may again be taken up using baskets in the traditional fashion. All Ushers involved in taking up collections should ensure that they wear masks while undertaking this task and use a collection basket with a long handle to maintain the two metres (six feet) distancing.
- Hand Sanitizing – It is no longer necessary for all entering a church to use hand sanitizer, though churches are encouraged to provide hand-sanitizers should people wish to use it. The priests and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should continue to use hand-sanitizers.
- Altar servers may be utilized again, if they maintain the two metres (six feet) distance between each other and the priest. Altar servers and the priest need to wear face masks when distance cannot be maintained. Altar servers from the same household do not need to maintain physical distancing.
- Deacons may return to their ministry at the altar while observing all relevant health precautions. Deacons do not receive communion from the chalice.
- Communion procedures are unchanged despite the lessening of restrictions in other areas. Both the person distributing communion and the communicant must be fully masked *unless a medical exemption applies*.
- Holy Water fonts at the church doors are not reopened.
- The dispensation from the Sunday Obligation remains in effect.