



# Archdiocese of Cape Town

Office of the Auxiliary Bishop of Cape Town

## **Change in lockdown status: New requirements for safety in the Church**

Further to the recent directives outlining safety protocols, the announcement made by the State President on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (and verified in the Government gazette dated 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020) necessitates a further directive. The following points will have to be followed:

### **Pubic Masses, Meetings and Gatherings:**

1. With the exception of funerals all gatherings are prohibited until 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021 when the State President will make a further announcement.
2. This means that liturgies attended by the public are not allowed. Masses will have to be conducted privately by priests.
3. Religious communities with a resident priest on the premises may continue to have Mass, but no person from outside the residence may be admitted. Religious communities without a priest resident on the premises may conduct Communion Services.
4. Live streamed Masses are encouraged. It is essential for the correct behaviour to be modelled with the proper wearing of face masks and sanitizing. Medical advice is that behaviour change is a key component in the fight against infections and the more we, as role models people look up to, can model the correct behaviours the more we can be agents of change and promote a healthy lifestyle. Please note that no other person may be present at the Mass.

### **Funerals:**

5. The State has limited the number of person present at a funeral to **fifty** inclusive of the minister and assistants.
  - a) If 50 attendees exceeds the 30% seating capacity of the Church, as the Archdiocese has already stipulated, the 30% capacity must be maintained in order to ensure social distancing, safety requirements, registering etc.
  - b) The briefest possible rite is to be used and speeches and any other non-liturgical items are to be avoided. The homily must be brief. Here we appeal to the pastoral discretion of the priest concerned.

### **Prayer in the home:**

6. We encourage Parish Priests and Administrators to promote the prayers for Spiritual Communion and para-liturgies for home use and to give catechesis on the need to observe the Sabbath even if Mass attendance is not possible. Details of live streamed Masses will have to be published. The dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on holy days of obligations is renewed.

### **Requests for Marriages and Baptisms:**

7. All gatherings are prohibited apart from funerals. Parish priests and administrators ought to deal with requests for marriages, baptisms, etc. in the light of the government regulation and not refer requests to the chancery, as this can give people false hope.

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We hope that after 15<sup>th</sup> January 2021 there will be no further need to maintain the restrictions and wish to thank you for your cooperation thus far. We once again look forward to your cooperation. We would also like to extend the good wishes of the chancery as we transition into 2021. May it be a time of renewed health and vitality.

+ Sylvester David  
OMI

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Bishop Sylvester David OMI  
Vicar General/Auxiliary Bishop



29<sup>th</sup> December 2020