



Diocese of Galway, Kilmacduagh & Kilfenora

Diocesan Office, Galway Cathedral, Gaol Road, Galway, Ireland

T. +353 (0)91 563566

E. info@galwaydiocese.ie

W. www.galwaydiocese.ie

ADVICE ON COVID-SAFE CELEBRATION OF MASS & LITURGIES

As we gradually return to a more normal liturgical life following the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, we need to remain aware of health and safety issues arising from liturgical practices. An increased number of participants on the sanctuary – readers, altar servers, celebrants, musicians, etc. – leads to increased risk. The movement of participants around the sanctuary area must be considered carefully in order to minimise close contact. Separate lecterns/ambos and equipment (particularly lectionaries and sacred vessels) should be used, so that multiple persons do not touch the same items.

So many churches are streaming now on webcam. The remote viewer's perspective should be taken into account, so they see only the sanctuary area and not the whole church; and what they see on the sanctuary should adhere to the highest standards of hygiene and safety.

The following protocols in particular should be followed.

Entrance Procession	The entrance and recessional procession should be simple and socially distanced, and only include those who are required to be in the sanctuary for the duration of the celebration.
Face Coverings	<p>Priests and other liturgical ministers should wear a face covering, except when at the altar or ambo or when leading prayer from the chair.</p> <p>All concelebrants should wear a face covering during the liturgy, unless they are proclaiming the Gospel or preaching.</p>
Use of the Ambo/Lectern	When multiple persons are using the lectern or ambo (e.g. at funerals/weddings for readings and prayers of the faithful), lectionaries should be removed and each person should have a sheet with their own reading or prayer.
The Offertory	<p>The celebrant/s should sanitise his/their hands at the start of the offertory.</p> <p>There should be no offertory procession or collection. The gifts of life should be left, covered, on a credence table.</p> <p>Collection boxes for offerings should be placed at entrance and exit doors to the church.</p>
Sign of Peace	There should be no physical demonstration of the sign of peace.
The Communion Rite	<p>For the distribution of Holy Communion, priests, deacons and extraordinary ministers must all wear face coverings. After putting on their face covering, they must sanitize their hands before distributing Holy Communion.</p> <p>At the conclusion of Holy Communion, the ministers should sanitise their hands before removing their face coverings.</p> <p>The sacred vessels should be carefully cleaned after each Mass.</p>

CONCELEBRATION OF MASS

Minimum Numbers	The number of priests invited to a concelebrated liturgy should be kept to a minimum.
	Concelebrants should be very aware of social distancing in the sacristy. In a smaller sacristy, they should vest one at a time.
Preparation of Sacred Vessels	Whoever is preparing the sacred vessels for Mass should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser before touching anything to be used in the Mass.
	For each concelebrant, there should be a separate chalice, purificator, paten, and pall.
Liturgy of the Word	Concelebrants should remain in their places during the Liturgy of the Word.
	If a concelebrating priest reads the Gospel, he should sanitise his hands before and after reading the Gospel if a shared lectionary is in use.
Preparation of the Gifts	If there is a server, after sanitising their hands, they should place everything needed for the Mass upon the altar, including the concelebrants' separate chalices, purificators, patens, hosts (covered), and palls.
	If there is no server, a concelebrant may assist, after sanitising his hands.
	The principal celebrant should prepare his chalice and paten and pray the appropriate prayers.
The Eucharistic Prayer	Each concelebrant should have his own copy of the Eucharistic Prayer, either printed on a sheet to be disposed of after Mass, or their own copy of Eucharistic Prayers for concelebration, which should be retained by each individual and not shared.
	Concelebrants should remain standing in their socially distanced places for the whole of the Eucharistic Prayer. This should be prayed <i>sotto voce</i> as per the instruction in the Roman Missal (GIRM n.218). The doxology should not be sung.
Sign of Peace	There should be no physical demonstration of the sign of peace.
The Communion Rite	The principal celebrant should receive Holy Communion under both kinds using his own host and chalice. The principal celebrant should then withdraw, and one by one the concelebrants should approach the station at the altar that has their individual chalice, purificator, paten, and pall. They should consume the host after intinction and return to their seats.
	There should be no crowding at the altar during this period. The chalices and patens should be left as they were found at the altar after the sacred species have been consumed.
	The principal celebrant alone purifies his chalice and the paten/ciborium after the distribution of Holy Communion. Only the server (if there is one) and the principal celebrant should process out after the end of Mass to the sacristy.
	After Mass, the other concelebrants each in turn approach the station where they consumed the sacred species, and purify the sacred vessels they each used. They should then return to the sacristy with them, so that they can be washed. Social distancing should be observed while this is done.
Funerals: Prayers of Final Commendation	OPTION 1: The celebrant should handle the book, thurible and holy water for the final blessing and commendation.
	OPTION 2: The celebrant says the prayers and another priest uses the thurible and holy water.