



DIOCESE of  
PARRAMATTA

**Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia  
Diocese of Parramatta**

Bethany Centre, 470 Church St, Parramatta NSW 2150, Australia  
PO Box 3066, North Parramatta NSW 1750, Australia

T: 02 8838 3400 F: 02 9630 4813

E: peter.williams@parracatholic.org

W: parracatholic.org

24 July 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

**Re: COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Update**

NSW Health has revised the COVID-19 compliance measures for places of worship, weddings and funerals, effective today 24 July 2020.

We share the following information so that parishes can adhere to the guidelines.

**Religious services, wedding and funerals**

There is a cap of 100 people at religious services, weddings and funerals held at places of worship. The four-square metre rule and 1.5m physical distancing requirements will continue to apply.

**Examples**

- A church with an internal church floor space of 800 square metres, under the new guidelines can only have 100 people attend Mass, weddings or funerals at any one time
- A church with an internal church floor space of 200 square metres, under the new guidelines can only have 50 people attend Mass, weddings or funerals at any one time.

In both examples above, adequate social distancing must also be observed.

Choirs are not permitted at weddings.

**Congregational Singing**

NSW Health advises that congregational singing is particularly high risk and should be avoided.

**Registering the Parish as a COVID-19 Safe Organisation**

Parishes must have a COVID19 Safety Plan and be registered as a COVID Safe Organisation. More details are outlined below.

## Other Gatherings

Please have strategies in place to manage gatherings (e.g. morning teas) that may occur immediately outside the premises at the conclusion of services. You may need to suspend or adjust how you do this, to ensure appropriate physical distancing.

Please organise for people to disperse quickly after a service.

## What You Need to Do

1. Ensure that all services, funerals and weddings comply with the above measures – with immediate effect.
2. Update your COVID-19 Safety Plan using the **new NSW Government COVID-19 Safety Plan template** dated 24 July 2020. The template can be found here : [https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-07/covid-19-safety-plan-places-of-worship\\_1.pdf](https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-07/covid-19-safety-plan-places-of-worship_1.pdf) .

The Diocese of Parramatta is able and ready to assist you with this.

3. Register as a COVID-Safe parish at <https://www.nsw.gov.au/register-your-business-as-covid-safe>.

This is now a **mandated** requirement.

To register as a COVID-Safe organisation, your parish will need to attest and agree to have updated and completed a Safety Plan, be responsible for the implementation of the plan and to keep a copy of the plan at the parish premises. It must be available for inspection by an authorised Government Officer as required.

Breach of any of these orders referenced under the Public Health Act is a criminal offence and can attract penalties.

As has occurred in some parishes, we expect police may conduct random inspections of places of worship for COVID-19 safety compliance. Please ensure you are up to date with your COVID-19 plans and registrations as outlined above.

## Assistance by the Diocese

The Diocese of Parramatta is standing by and ready to assist you. Please call Adrian Middeldorp, Jasmine Sammy or Christina Gretton on 8838 3400 for assistance with any matter concerning this correspondence.

With my prayers during these troubling times



Very Rev Peter G. Williams  
Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia