

Parish Pastoral and Office Guidelines – update – Friday, March 27th, 2020

On-going update of Procedures

In light of further developments yesterday with an increase in identified cases of Covid-19 along with the number of fatalities and also in light of observations and interaction with parishes the following guidelines are coming into place in the diocese. They will tighten up already existing procedures and help us to be as proactive as possible to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of clergy, parish personnel and parishioners. These procedures are effective as from tomorrow, Saturday, 28th of March, 2020.

Parish Offices

Parish Offices are to be closed to the public, but parish business can continue by way of telephone, e-mail etc.

Church Activity

Because there are no public Masses apart from funerals, priests, sacristans, music ministers and parish volunteers should have minimal and if possible no contact with the public in setting up things or in making arrangements. While it would be preferable to make arrangements via telephone, if it is absolutely necessary to meet families in advance of funeral ceremonies priests should only meet a maximum of two members of the bereaved family present and ensure that appropriate social spacing is observed.

Care of Clergy

Priests of senior years or with an underlying condition should ask another priest in the pastoral area to take his place if he has any concerns.

Churches Remain open for personal Prayer

Churches at present can remain open for personal prayer, provided large numbers of people are not congregating there. Regular Masses will continue to be offered behind closed doors and people are encouraged to join in spiritual communion with the assistance of various technologies if available. Doors of Churches and door handles etc should be sanitised frequently.

Courage and Faith

Many thanks to clergy, parish personnel and parishioners for your ongoing patience, faith, courage, and fortitude and for adhering to the guidelines and procedures of best practice at this challenging and difficult time.

