

天主教香港教區  
秘書長辦公處

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CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HONG KONG

CHANCERY OFFICE

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## CHANCERY NOTICE

### DIOCESAN PASTORAL GUIDELINES ON THE RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC MASSES

On the basis of the latest relaxed “Group Gathering” measures of the Government to combat the COVID-19 pandemic [see *Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulation 2020*] as announced on 19 May 2020 (effective May 22), Cardinal John TONG, after consultation with medical professionals, has decided to resume public Masses on weekdays and Sundays, in accordance with the following Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines:

1. Parish churches (applicable also to “affiliated Mass centres” in what follows) may resume public Masses on weekdays with effect from 1 June 2020 (Monday), and public Masses on Sundays from 7 June 2020 (Sunday). During Mass, the faithful may receive Holy Communion.
2. Churches should be well ventilated and seats cleansed and disinfected regularly, with a disinfected carpet at the church entrance.
3. The congregation should be limited to 50% of the normal capacity of the church.
4. When entering the church compound, the faithful should put on a face mask, take body temperature and cleanse their hands with sanitiser. The use of holy water at the church entrance should be suspended.
5. Ushers should see to it that those inside the church keep adequate social-distancing.
6. The use of liturgical booklets and hymnals should be suspended (projectors may be used instead).
7. Sunday collections should be taken up after Mass, with one or several donation boxes provided.
8. The sign of peace should be expressed by bowing heads, instead of shaking hands.
9. For the time being, Holy Communion should be received only “in the hand”. One’s hands should be sanitised before and after receiving Communion.
10. Once the Mass is concluded, the faithful should leave the church compound and avoid socializing.
11. After Mass, the seats in the church should be cleansed and disinfected.
12. The Parish Priest or those delegated by him should see to it that the foregoing Guidelines are duly observed.

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Notes:

- i. If necessary and feasible, while the Mass is being celebrated in the church, those who are not able to actually take part in the liturgy may be allowed, in an open, spacious area nearby (for example, the parish hall or the open area adjoining the church), to attend the Mass online and receive Holy Communion.

If arranging for Sunday Masses is not feasible under the current situation, a parish may fix one or more time slots for giving out Holy Communion to those who have attended Sunday Masses online and are properly disposed, by adopting a simplified rite to be provided by the Diocesan Liturgy Commission.

- ii. If necessary and feasible, a parish may arrange for one or two more Sunday Masses to meet the spiritual needs of the faithful.
- iii. Children, the elderly or the disabled and those who accompany them to Mass may sit together.
- iv. Attending Sunday Mass is an obligation on the part of the faithful. Nevertheless, in so far as the pandemic is not yet completely contained, Cardinal John TONG, as a discretionary measure, permits the following alternatives to attending the Sunday Mass —
- a. Those who have worries that they might get infected by the pandemic if they come to church to attend the Sunday Mass, may attend it online (and receive spiritual Communion) or perform some acts of devotion, such as reading the Bible, etc.
- b. Granted that the seating in churches is being restricted at present, one can take part in a weekday Mass instead of the Sunday Mass.

The above discretionary measure will be terminated once the pandemic is fully contained and the local situation is back to normal. A related announcement will be made.

- v. Members of the faithful who are sick, as well as those who have someone undergoing “self-quarantine” at home, should not go to church on Sunday; instead, they can attend the Sunday Mass online or perform some acts of devotion.
- vi. With pastoral solicitude and bearing in the mind the spiritual needs of the faithful, Parish Priests should make suitable arrangements for weekday and Sunday Masses, or the giving out of Holy Communion. If they face practical difficulties in these matters, they can consult the Diocesan Curia.

Given at the Chancery Office,  
22 May 2020.



*Lawrence Lee*

Rev. Lawrence Lee  
Chancellor