



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE  
OF MELBOURNE

## #62 UPDATE: GENERAL LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

### COVID-19 Implications for the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

**Information Updated: 26 November 2022, 11.59pm**

The following Guidelines are approved by Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne, to assist Clergy and Faithful with questions pertaining to specific areas of liturgy and ministry in the Archdiocese of Melbourne during this continued time of COVID-19.

These guidelines are in accordance with the announcement by the Victorian Government to lift the pandemic declaration as of 11.59pm Wednesday 12 October 2022.

As of the **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, 27 November 2022**, the general dispensation from our Sunday and Holy Day obligations is lifted for all Catholics in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. As always, the ordinary individual exemptions remain in place (e.g. for reasons of ill health, family care of the vulnerable etc.).

We welcome the opening up of our places of worship and opportunities for gathering but remain mindful and respectful that many in our community remain feeling cautious. The guidelines encourage the continued use of good gathering practice that supports the care of our people.

### As of 11.59pm 26 November 2022

	VICTORIA
<b>Face Coverings</b>	<p>Face coverings remain optional within Places of Worship. However, we are all encouraged to be sensitive to the well-being of others when in close proximity.</p> <p>Clergy and Extraordinary Ministers are not required to wear face coverings for the distribution of communion. However, face coverings should be worn when visiting vulnerable or immunocompromised parishioners, or members of the community.</p> <p>Face coverings are still required in sensitive settings such as hospitals and care facilities.</p>
<b>Vaccinations</b>	<p>There are no longer vaccination requirements at Places of Worship, associated workplaces or parish activities.</p> <p>Vaccinations are still required in some settings including public, denominational and private hospitals, as well as public sector aged</p>

	care facilities, day procedure centres and throughout ambulance services.
<b>Liturgical considerations</b>	<p>Holy Communion may be distributed to the faithful under both species (i.e., the Sacred Host and Precious Blood).</p> <p>Sanitising hands before distribution of Holy Communion is still recommended.</p> <p>Where there is physical touch as part of a Rite of the Church (for example, baptisms, confirmation and anointing of the sick or dying) the use of cotton buds is no longer mandated, but hands should be sanitised well before and after the Rite.</p> <p>Holy Water stoups may be filled, but care should be seen that the water is changed regularly (at a minimum of once a week).</p> <p>The use of hymn books and other worship aids are permitted as part of the liturgy, and Collection Plates may be returned.</p>
<b>COVIDSafe Plan</b>	All workplaces and Places of Worship that have onsite operations are still required to have a COVIDSafe Plan.
<b>Care Facility and Hospital Visitors</b>	Please work with the care provider in determining what is required and permitted.