



CHANCERY OF THE CATHOLIC METROPOLITAN ARCHDIOCESE OF KUALA LUMPUR

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31st August 2021

Chan/MC/19/2021

CHANCERY NOTICE

Updated Guidelines on Celebrating Sacraments under National Recovery Plan (NRP)

1.0. Public Masses and all other public celebrations of sacraments had been suspended since the commencement of MCO 3.0 on the 3rd of May 2021 with the resurgence of a massive new wave of COVID 19 infections. In the past few weeks, with accelerated vaccinations and decreasing number of persons requiring ICU hospitalisations, the government has embarked on the four-phase National Recovery Plan to resuscitate the national economy which has suffered greatly from months of lockdown.

2.0. Although, the relaxation of restrictions on the economic sector and other services is understandable for the revitalisation of the economy and the livelihood of Malaysians, public health authorities continue to remind us to remain vigilant as both positivity and infectivity rates remain exceedingly high, especially with the emergence of highly infectious new variants.

3.0. Despite the relaxations in other sectors, the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur continues to be guided by public health advisories which places public gatherings at the top of the list of high risk environments. At the same time, we also recognise how the sacraments are crucial to the spiritual welfare of the faithful who have been deprived of the sacraments for several months. This spiritual need must, however, be balanced with the safety that must be accorded to our members. One cannot be promoted at the expense of the other.

4.0. His Grace, Most Reverend Julian Leow D.D., the Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, after having consulted the Archdiocesan Crisis Task Force, has decreed that the following Guidelines for Celebrating Sacraments under the National Recovery Plan be adopted and implemented with effect from the 1st of September 2021.

5.0. These Guidelines anticipate a gradual roll-out of the Sacraments over three (3) Levels:



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5.1. Level 1

- 5.1.1. preparation, planning, training, educating;
- 5.1.2. Weddings and funerals will continue as per Chancery Notice dated 12th August 2021. (Please refer to Appendices G & H of Guidelines for details)
- 5.1.3. Confessions and anointing of the sick by appointment may resume at the discretion of the priest (Please see Appendices D & E)
- 5.1.4. Distribution of Holy-communion by way of drive-through (please refer to Appendix N of the Guidelines for details)
- 5.1.5. Parish offices may be opened with shorter office hours and staff should be asked to come in on different shifts to avoid crowding in work space.

5.2. Level 2

- 5.2.1. Weddings and funerals will continue as per Chancery Notice dated 12th August 2021. (Please refer to Appendices G & H of Guidelines for details)
- 5.2.2. All sacraments and services mentioned under Level 1 may continue.

5.3. Level 3

Subject to permission from MKN or the Ministry of National Unity, the sacraments of baptism (infant), first holy communion and confirmation may resume for children below the age of 18 who have not been vaccinated (Please refer to Appendices C & E for details).

6.0. Commencement Dates of Levels 1, 2 and 3

6.1. Level 1 will commence no earlier than the 4th of September 2021 provided that all the necessary arrangements and preparations are in order. The Parish Priest has the discretion to postpone the date of commencement of Level 1 to a later date to allow adequate preparation.

6.2. Commencement dates for Levels 2 and 3 will be notified by way of future Chancery Notices.



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7.0. Briefing for PRT representatives

The Archdiocesan Crisis Task Force will provide an online briefing session on the updated Guidelines for two representatives from each Parish Response Team and clergy.

8.0. Pastoral Care for non-Vaccinated persons

Parish priests should extend special pastoral care to persons who have not been fully vaccinated and therefore prevented from participating in public Masses and other services requiring full vaccination. These can still be accommodated in a drive-through communion exercise.

9.0. There are many clergy who wish to reopen their churches as soon as possible in order to welcome their parishioners home. Likewise, there are the lay faithful who have been anxiously waiting to return to the sacraments. However, the Archdiocese needs to take a responsible and prudent approach, erring on the side of caution, by adopting a phased-in approach to allow time for the procedures set out under these guidelines to be tested and fine-tuned before we proceed to increase the frequency and capacity of our services.

10.0. For the successful implementation of these guidelines, the full cooperation of all parties (priests, pastoral workers, parish staff, parish lay leaders, volunteers and the laity) is required.

Let us not cease in praying for all our frontliners, infected persons, families who have lost their loved ones to this pandemic, repose of the souls of the faithful departed and an end to this pandemic. In all circumstances, "let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection: for the sake of the joy which lay ahead of him, he endured the cross, disregarding the shame of it, and has taken his seat at the right of God's throne." (Hebrews 12:2)

Rev Fr Michael Chua
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur