



CHANCERY OF THE CATHOLIC  
METROPOLITAN ARCHDIOCESE OF KUALA LUMPUR

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**CHANCERY NOTICE**

**Guidelines for Celebration of Holy Week Liturgies 2022**  
**in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur**

Beginning 1 April 2022, as Malaysia enters the “Transition to Endemic” phase, the government has eased its COVID-19 restrictions for congregational prayers at places of worship. In view of the country’s gradual return to normalcy and in tandem with the easing of restrictions, the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur endeavours to move in a similar direction as we approach the upcoming Holy Week liturgies.

Even as we progress to this new phase, we are cautious and mindful of the need to do so in a careful, controlled, and incremental manner to protect the health and safety of our congregants. While we aspire to celebrate the Holy Week liturgies as we did in pre-pandemic times, we remain concerned with the prevailing daily infection rates. As such, our proposed easing measures serve as important safeguards for all the community of faithful, especially the vulnerable groups that include our elderly and children.

In consultation with the Archdiocesan Crisis Task Force, Archbishop Julian Leow D.D. has issued some guidelines for the liturgies in the upcoming Holy Week celebrations (kindly refer to the Appendix below).

The celebration of the Paschal Triduum is the apex and heart of the whole liturgical year. As we come to celebrate the Holy Week liturgies after two years of stringent restrictions, we praise and thank God for the opportunity to return and come back together to worship as church.

In anticipation of fully reopening soon, the Archdiocese seeks your continued cooperation and diligence in exercising personal responsibility and adherence to the necessary protocols of this new phase.

Wishing everyone a Blessed Holy Week and a Joy-filled Easter.

**Rev Fr Dr Clarence Devadass**  
**Chancellor**  
**Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur**

<b>1. Celebrations in Church</b>	
<b>1.1 Seating Capacity</b>	<p>Effective 1 April, the seating capacity limit of 30% will be increased to 50% subject to good ventilation<sup>1</sup> and adequate physical distancing (this is to mitigate uneasiness among parishioners around their safety if others were seated too close to them while in the church).</p> <p>The increase in seating capacity will be incremental in the coming weeks.</p> <p>Pre-allocation of seats for the sole purpose of contact tracing is not required based on the government's requirement to activate MySJ Trace.</p> <p>As required in the initial phases, churches are no longer required to lock their gates/doors once the Mass has begun.</p>
<b>1.2 Pre-registration</b>	<p>Pre-registration may be implemented on a needs basis and at the discretion of the respective parishes. This is mainly for the purpose of managing the number of attendees based on the seating capacity available at the different parishes within the Archdiocese.</p>
<b>1.3 Outdoor Seating</b>	<p>The use of parish halls and covered outdoor seating areas are encouraged to accommodate more people while ensuring full compliance to the appropriate safety protocols and avoiding situations of overcrowding.</p>
<b>1.4 MySejahtera</b>	<p>Checking-in with the MySejahtera app will continue as a requirement before entering the church.</p>
<b>1.5 Face Masks</b>	<p>The wearing of face masks at all times while in church remains mandatory.</p> <p>Those who may have breathing difficulties while wearing a face mask should refrain from coming to such public gatherings and are encouraged to participate in the online services from home.</p> <p>Increasing the seating capacity would only be sustainable if everyone wears the mask as properly instructed.<sup>2</sup></p>

<sup>1</sup> cf. <https://covid-19.moh.gov.my/garis-panduan/gp-umum-covid19/gp-pengudaraan-kualiti-udara-dalaman>

<sup>2</sup> cf. <https://kpkesehatan.com/2021/05/23/panduan-ringkas-pemakaian-pelutup-muka-berganda-double-face-mask-oleh-centers-for-disease-control-and-prevention-cdc-amerika-syarikat/>

<b>1. Celebrations in Church (cont.)</b>	
<p><b>1.6 Vaccination</b></p> <p><i>Any change to the entry requirements into church will be communicated in a subsequent Chancery notice.</i></p>	<p>Those intending to attend public celebrations in the Church are strongly encouraged to be FULLY VACCINATED<sup>3</sup> for their own safety and of others.</p> <p>Based on the latest announcement by the Minister of Health on 30 March 2022, entry into church for public gatherings is allowed ONLY to individuals who have completed at least their primer dose(s)*.</p> <p>*Primer dose(s): Individuals who have completed one dose of the <i>Johnson &amp; Johnson</i> and <i>CanSino</i> vaccines OR individuals who have completed two doses of the <i>Astra Zeneca</i>, <i>Pfizer</i> or <i>Sinovac</i> vaccine and have respectively passed the 14-day threshold from when the vaccine was received.</p>
<b>2. Palm Sunday</b>	
<p><b>2.1 The Procession</b></p>	<p>In order to avoid crowds gathering, priests are requested to not have any procession that involves the congregation.</p> <p>Kindly use the alternative forms for the ‘Commemoration of the Lord’s Entrance into Jerusalem’ as prescribed in the Palm Sunday liturgy.</p>
<p><b>2.2 Palm Branches</b></p>	<p>The congregation may be invited to bring their own palm branches.</p> <p>However, if the church wishes to distribute palm branches, this must be carefully coordinated and distributed, keeping in mind the potential risk of overcrowding and/or rush.</p>
<b>3. Maundy Thursday</b>	
<p><b>3.1 The Washing of Feet</b></p>	<p>The Washing of Feet is omitted for the safety of all. This ritual is an option under the rubrics of the Roman Missal.</p>
<p><b>3.2 The Transfer of the Most Blessed Sacrament</b></p>	<p>Wherever possible, the transfer of the Blessed Sacrament to the Altar of Repose should be carefully planned.</p> <p>The Altar of Repose must be in a space/area with good ventilation where members of the faithful who wish to pray may do so safely.</p>

<sup>3</sup> cf. <https://covid-19.moh.gov.my/vaksin-covid-19/makluman/2022/03/definisi-status-vaksinasi-bermula-1-april-2022>

<b>3. Maundy Thursday (cont.)</b>	
	Depending on the size of the space/area, the number of people praying at any one time should be regulated.
<b>3.3 Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament</b>	The adoration must conclude by 12:00 midnight.
<b>4. Good Friday</b>	
<b>4.1. The Adoration of the Cross</b>	<p>There will be no individual adoration of the Cross at the Good Friday service.</p> <p>To allow the congregation to adore the cross, the priest will hold up the Cross from the sanctuary (towards the direction of the congregation) for a brief time and invite the people to adore the Cross from wherever they are (kneeling, bowing in the direction of the Cross).</p> <p>Only the presiding priest is permitted to kiss the Holy Cross in the Good Friday service.</p>
<b>5. The Easter Vigil</b>	
<b>5.1 The Service of Light</b>	
<b>a. Gathering Outside Church</b>	<p>Only the priest(s), altar servers and other relevant individuals with specific roles shall gather outside the church for the blessing of the fire and preparation of the Paschal Candle. The rest of the congregation shall remain seated inside the church/hall.</p> <p>Where possible, a video projection of the Service of Light is recommended for the congregation.</p>
<b>b. Lighting of the Paschal Candle</b>	<p>If an appropriate place outside the church is not available, the preparation of the Paschal Candle and its lighting could also be done on the sanctuary. The procession of priest and altar servers is to be omitted. The chant, "The Light of Christ" (all three times) can be done from the sanctuary.</p>
<b>c. Candles</b>	<p>The congregation should be encouraged to bring their own candles. If candles are distributed by the church, this should be carefully coordinated so as to avoid overcrowding and/or rush.</p>
<b>5.2 The Baptismal Liturgy</b>	<p>The Baptismal Liturgy will proceed keeping in view the health, safety, and hygiene of the priest and those to be baptised in mind at all times.</p>

## 5. The Easter Vigil (cont.)

	<p>Baptism is <b>ONLY</b> to be done by pouring water onto the candidate's head.</p> <p>The individual laying of hands when conferring the Sacrament of Confirmation is to be replaced with the priest extending his hands over the candidates (no physical contact).</p> <p>The anointing with Sacred Chrism should be done by using a fresh cotton swab for each candidate.</p>
<b>5.3 Distribution of Holy Communion</b>	<p>Holy Communion is <b>ONLY</b> to be given out on the palm of the hand, and in one species (consecrated host).</p>
<b>5.4 Holy Water</b>	<p>Holy water fountains at the entrances of the church will remain empty as it has been during the pandemic.</p> <p>Collection of holy water from the baptismal font should be avoided to prevent the risk of contamination.</p> <p>Parishes may consider preparing small bottles of holy water for the faithful to take home.</p>

*\* Guidelines above will be subject to revision as per latest announcements issued by the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur or relevant government authorities.*

