



CHANCERY OF THE CATHOLIC METROPOLITAN ARCHDIOCESE OF KUALA LUMPUR

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31st December 2020

Chan/MC/22/2020

CHANCERY NOTICE **COVID-19 Protocol Update**

1.0. The National Security Council (MKN) has extended the CMCO for Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Seremban district to the 14th of January 2021 due to the high rate of new positive cases which is anticipated to continue for some time. Although the situation has improved in other localities within the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, we understand that the situation remains fluid due to interstate travel.

2.0. In view of the current developments and seeing the current spiritual and sacramental needs of the faithful, His Grace, Most Reverend Julian Leow, the Archbishop of Kuala Lumpur, upon consultation with the Archdiocesan Crisis Task Force has decided to issue this update on the protocol to be observed by parishes within the Archdiocese.

3.0 The following directives will take effect from the 4th January 2021.

3.1. The current directives will be based on the colour zoning of parishes. In the cases of parishes which have territories located in a red zone (although other areas are located in a non-red zone), the entire parish is to be treated as a red zone. For the purpose of consistency, the Archdiocese will follow the colour zoning issued by the Ministry of Health (KKM).

3.2. All public Masses in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, regardless of whether the parish falls within a red zone or non-red zone, remain suspended until the 14th of January 2021. The Archbishop continues to dispense those unable to attend public Masses from the obligation to attend Masses on Sunday and other days of obligation.

3.3 Sacrament of Confirmation

3.3.1. Archbishop Julian Leow and the two Vicars General, Msgr Leonard Lexson and Msgr Mitchel Anthony, will proceed to visit parishes to confer the sacrament of Confirmation. The various parishes will be notified of their respective dates.

3.3.2. Archbishop hereby delegates the faculty of conferring confirmation on the Parish Priests, Assistant Priests and Resident Priests of parishes located in red zones who have more than 30 candidates for confirmation.



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3.3.3. In the red zones, only 20 persons (including the ministers of the sacrament of confirmation mentioned under 3.3.1 and 3.3.2 and a couple to act as proxy sponsors for all the candidates) are allowed for each session. To accommodate all candidates where the total number exceeds 20, the Parish Priest should arrange for several Masses where the sacrament could be conferred. Due to the limited seating capacity, presence of sponsors and family members should be dispensed with. Online streaming can be done for the benefit of family, friends and sponsors.

3.3.4. Parishes are to adhere to Appendix F - Celebrating Baptisms/ Confirmations - under the Archdiocesan Guidelines for Celebrating Sacraments under the CMCO and post CMCO period.

3.4. Funerals and Weddings

3.4.1. Funerals and weddings are to be restricted to 20 persons in red zones (including the minister, couple and witnesses for the wedding).

3.4.2. For non-red zones, parishes are to follow the MKN limit of 30 persons (including the minister, couple and witnesses for the wedding).

3.5. Baptism of children can be resumed but guests are to be restricted to immediate family members and sponsors. Group baptisms should be limited to a maximum of 2 families.

3.6. Parish Response Team

In collaboration with the Archdiocese Crisis Task Force, Parish Response Teams should start preparations to ensure they are ready to respond when public Masses are resumed to a situation where a Mass attendee may subsequently test positive for COVID-19.

4.0 Rationale of our Protocol - Apart from looking at the pastoral needs of the faithful and recognising the mobility of the faithful who may travel from one area to another, the Archdiocese seeks to follow the recommendations of the Archdiocesan Crisis Task Force and established public health standards which seeks to protect the most vulnerable in our community.



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From the medical point of view, the tighter the controls are, the less chance of spread of disease. Therefore, less chance of ill patients overwhelming the fragile public hospitals. The government understands that more stringent public health controls however do come at a cost, mainly to the economy and to personal liberties, and by extension, to the mental health and well-being of society. Thus, the official directives may be guided by these factors rather than by public health priorities.

How does all this impact us? We have to recognise that our decision to keep churches closed, especially in hotspots, is unfortunately incongruent to what is currently being allowed in the country. Nevertheless, we need to recognise that we are called to a higher standard, where personal rights are always matched by duties towards the common good, which in this case is to seek to curtail the spread of this pandemic within the community and prevent our hospitals and medical staff from being overwhelmed. For this reason, the Archbishop humbly seeks your cooperation in making the necessary sacrifices according to the dictates of Christian charity.

Rev Fr Michael Chua
Chancellor
Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur

