



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF AUCKLAND

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PASTORAL LETTER LITURGY PROTOCOLS FOR COVID DELTA ALERT LEVEL 2

Dear Brother Priests and Parishioners,

As you will know, at present Metropolitan Auckland remains at Alert Level 4 while other parts of the Diocese are now operating at Delta Alert Level 2 in terms of the present pandemic lockdown restrictions.

During this Alert Level 2 phase of the pandemic, the restrictions are slightly tighter than they were previously. This time the maximum number permitted for an indoor gathering is now just 50 (previously 100) and there is to be 2 metre spacing between individuals attending or between household bubbles if they are present.

After a Zoom meeting with my Council of Priests on 14 September, I am now issuing the following liturgy protocols for Auckland Diocese.

We are aware that church gatherings can be epicentres for new outbreaks of the coronavirus so my hope is that if we can strictly follow the following protocols at Level 2, we can show our determination to do what we can to make New Zealand Covid-free.

There will be no Sunday Masses during Level 2.

If parishes feel they can provide **weekday Masses** at Level 2, while also keeping the Government advice for Worship and faith based gatherings on the Ministry of Health website, they are welcome to do so:

- *No more than 50 people present with the required 2 metre spacing between worshippers;*

- *Worshippers must manually sign in or scan a QR code when entering the church;*
- *The wearing of masks is strongly recommended (as when going to the supermarket or other such venues);*
- *No Holy Water in fonts;*
- *No physical contact at the Sign of Peace;*
- *No Communion from the chalice;*
- *Receiving Communion in the palm of the hand is strongly recommended.*

Thanks for your patience and co-operation during these challenging days. Hopefully we will soon be able to return to life at Alert Level 1.

And do not hesitate to get vaccinated when the opportunity arises.

Yours sincerely in Christ

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✠ Patrick Dunn
Bishop of Auckland