

TITLE: Procedure for commencing Ceremonies within Church Building in the Parish of Iskaheen & Upper Merville	
Reference: St Columba's Church, Drung	Revision Number: 1
Page 1 of 3	Authors: Fr. J Farren PP & Parish Pastoral Council
Approved by: Fergal Tuffy, Chairperson, Parish Pastoral Council	
Effective from: 13 <sup>th</sup> July 2020	Review Date: 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2020

## 1.0 Statement

- 1.1 This document covers the procedures to follow for the safe commencement of Religious Ceremonies inside Church buildings in the Parish of Iskaheen and Upper Merville during the COVID-19 Pandemic, with a maximum of 50 people socially distanced and remaining in the Church for a maximum duration of 1 hour. This will commence on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- 1.2 As a parish community we are delighted to be back celebrating the liturgies together, but we must be mindful that we are responsible for the safety of ourselves and each other by following the Government and HSE COVID Guidelines.

## 2.0 Purpose

- 2.1 To set out clear procedures that must be followed to ensure the safety of the public and ensure the least risk of COVID-19 transfer by following HSE, Department of Health and Government Guidelines for all attending ceremonies in the Churches in the Parish of Iskaheen and Upper Merville.

## 3.0 Scope

- 3.1 This describes the procedure to be followed in order to open the Churches in the Parish of Iskaheen and Upper Merville for public ceremonies adhering strictly to HSE, Department of Health and Government Guidelines, in a safe manner from 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.

## 4.0 Informing parishioners of COVID-19 procedures in the Parish of Iskaheen and Upper Merville

- 4.1 It is important to point out that, although the Churches are now opening, there is no obligation to attend Mass during the pandemic.
- 4.2 Fr. Farren will announce the procedures at all on-line Masses prior to Church opening for public Masses.
- 4.3 Social media will be used to inform parishioners of the procedures to be followed for public Masses.
- 4.4 Do not attend Mass if you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19 (Coronavirus).
- 4.5 Parishioners will be asked to provide name and contact details at each Mass for contact tracing purposes.
- 4.6 There will be stewards available to explain and advise on the procedures.
- 4.7 When the Church has reached the maximum allowed capacity, a 'Church Full' sign will be placed outside to inform any other arrivals – please respect our stewards who may have the difficult task of refusing entry when numbers would exceed Government and HSE COVID Guidelines."

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## **5.0 COVID training of stewards**

5.1 All stewards will attend a training session.

## **6.0 COVID-19 signage**

6.1 HSE COVID signage will be displayed in the Church, Church grounds and Church car parks.

## **7.0 Church preparation for public Masses**

7.1 All cloth seating will be removed.

7.2 Booklets and pamphlets will be removed.

7.3 No missalettes for Masses.

7.4 Newsletters will not be available.

7.5 Areas not being used will be taped off.

7.6 Seating will be marked for social distancing of 2 metres.

7.7 Floors will be marked for social distancing of 2 metres.

## **8.0 Methodology for contact tracing of people attending ceremonies**

8.1 Names and contact details will be taken at Masses.

8.2 These names and contact details will be stored securely for a period of one month and then shredded.

## **9.0 Procedures for Church cleaning before and after ceremonies**

9.1 Wipes will be available for each parishioner to clean the area they are sitting in.

9.2 Take wipe home to dispose of after use.

9.3 Churches will be cleaned after Masses.

## **10.0 Parishioner arrival and departure plans**

10.1 Church doors will remain open for the arrival and departure of parishioners.

10.2 On arrival all parishioners must sanitise their hands.

10.3 Parishioners will be asked to adhere to the 2 metre social distancing when going to and leaving their seats.

## **11.0 Hand sanitising**

11.1 Hand sanitiser will be available and all parishioners are expected to use it.

11.2 WARNING: Hand sanitiser must not be used on or near candles.

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## **12.0 Parishioner face covering procedures**

- 12.1 It is recommended that all parishioners wear a face mask during Mass for their own safety and the safety of others.
- 12.2 The wearing of face masks may become mandatory if social distancing is reduced.

## **13.0 Seating allocation to conform to 2m social distancing**

- 13.1 Seats will be marked at a social distance of 2 metres apart.
- 13.2 Seats unavailable for social distancing purposes will be 'taped off.'
- 13.3 Stewards are available to show parishioners to their seats.

## **14.0 Distribution of Holy Communion**

- 14.1 Holy Communion will be received in the hand only.
- 14.2 The priest and Eucharistic ministers must wear face masks.
- 14.3 Coeliac parishioners should inform the priest or steward before Mass.
- 14.4 The priest will advise parishioners on the procedure for going forward to receive Holy Communion.
- 14.5 Parishioners will be asked to follow the 2m social distancing markers on the Church floor while waiting for Holy Communion.

## **15.0 Using Church toilet facilities**

- 15.1 Parishioners will be asked to clean and sanitise the toilet after use with the cleaning materials provided.
- 15.2 The toilet will be cleaned after Mass has ended.

## **16.0 If a member of the congregation becomes ill during ceremonies**

- 16.1 The ill parishioner will be brought to the Church isolation room by the steward.
- 16.2 The steward will then contact the parishioners next of kin or the emergency services.
- 16.3 The parishioner will remain in the isolation room until next of kin or medical assistance arrives.
- 16.4 The isolation room will be deep cleaned after the parishioner has left.

## **17.0 Policy for lighting candles**

- 17.1 Anti-bacterial wipes will be available at each candle lighting station.