

天主教香港教區

秘書長辦公處

香港堅道十六號

電話：(852) 2523-2487, 2525-8021 (內線 441, 669)

傳真：(852) 2521-8781 電郵：chancery@catholic.org.hk

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF HONG KONG

CHANCERY OFFICE

16, CAINE ROAD, HONG KONG

TEL: (852) 2523-2487, 2525-8021 (EXT. 441, 669)

FAX: (852) 2521-8781 EMAIL: chancery@catholic.org.hk

CHANCERY NOTICE

CLARIFICATIONS ON THE *SPECIAL PASTORAL PROVISIONS FOR PARISHES TO COPE WITH THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC* (ANNOUNCED ON 4 FEBRUARY)

Some Church members have queried whether the newly announced pastoral provision (see item 1 of related Chancery Notice) for the reception of Holy Communion complies with the restrictions on social gatherings currently enforced by the Government. The following are some clarifications:

1. The Diocesan Curia has consulted the Home Affairs Bureau, which confirms that our pastoral provision for giving Holy Communion to the faithful does not infringe the current restrictions on social gatherings.
2. On the basis of previous consultations of the Diocesan Curia with the Home Affairs Bureau, the faithful have been able, whenever public Masses are suspended, to go to churches or chapels to pray, to visit the Blessed Sacrament, or to take part in the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. *They can do so as individuals, without communal prayers, singing or mutual interaction, and on condition that they observe all the prescribed anti-pandemic precautions (wearing face masks, using hand sanitizers, keeping social-distancing in the seating arrangement, and avoiding group gatherings inside the church or chapel).*

While the above provisions, together with the participation of online Masses and *spiritual* Communion, to some extent meet the spiritual needs of the faithful, they still lack the Eucharist, the spiritual nourishment that they need most. The latest pastoral provision for receiving Holy Communion is meant to satisfy such a spiritual need.

3. A *Simplified Communion Rite* has been provided for parishes by the Diocesan Liturgy Commission. It is similar to a rite for individuals to receive Holy Communion, without mutual interaction with one another. The rite itself is brief, without scripture readings, homily or singing (except for the Lord's Prayer, which may be sung).
4. As a supplementary note to the aforementioned Chancery Notice, it has to be pointed out that during a Communion rite on a weekday or a Sunday, if there are quite a lot of participants, they can be divided into smaller groups (for example, some at the front and some at the back of the church or chapel, or at the four corners of a sufficiently large church) to be served by priests or extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion. A parish can also avail itself of its hall or some other open spaces within the church compound (e.g., the church lobby). To avoid over-crowding, assistants assigned by the parish priest can, if necessary, restrict the number of those coming into the church for the Communion rite, so that one group can enter first, followed by other groups successively. (Note: Similar arrangements have been adopted in other dioceses.)
5. In order to safeguard the common good, parishes are reminded to strictly observe all the precautions enforced by the Government.

Given at the Chancery Office,
8 February 2021.



Rev. Lawrence LEE
Chancellor