



Catholic Diocese of Ndola

Bishop's Office

MEMO

To: Vicar Foranes
All Priests
Religious Men and Women and
All the Lay Faithful of the Catholic Diocese of Ndola

From: Bishop

Cc: Diocesan Senior Management
Acting CEO – Radio Icengelo

Date: Thursday, 17th June 2021

Subject: **Guidelines on the manner of conduct during the Third Wave of the Coronavirus and Preventive Measures in the Diocese in this Period**

Following the spike of the third wave of the pandemic of Covid – 19 which is on the rapid rise in the country and in particular in our Diocese, I wish to remind all in the Diocese to carefully adhere to and observe the provided guidelines by the Ministry of Health of the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

In line with the measures pronounced by the Government of the Republic of Zambia on Wednesday, 16th June 2021, I provide the following measures for the **period of 21 days** effective today:

- 1. Masses and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:**
 - a. Celebration of daily Weekday Masses be reduced to once a week; each parish must decide the specific day;
 - b. **Only two Sunday Masses** will be celebrated in all parishes, while strictly observing the social distance sitting capacity of each particular parish. Once the social dance sitting capacity is filled up, no more worshippers must be allowed.
 - c. Singing during Mass must be reduced to a very a minimal if not done away with in this period.
 - Radio Icengelo to resume live streaming of Daily Masses on radio and Facebook; Priests kindly make yourselves available to celebrate these Masses at the Radio Station when called upon without fail.
 - Parish Priests, kindly ensure that the Health Guidelines are strictly observed.
 - d. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is suspended in this period.



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2. **Funerals:**

Here we revert to the earlier practice, that is:

- a. Priests will celebrate Vigil Masses for the deceased without the body of the deceased in Church, that is a day before burial with a few people only; fifty (50) at most. On the day of burial, the body of the deceased will be taken from the mortuary straight to the graveyard for burial; where possible, the body may be blessed before being taken for burial
- b. There will be no body viewing of the deceased during burial;
- c. Family members of the deceased and others who had close contact will stay home after burial for fourteen (14) days before joining the Christian community for worship.

3. **Small Christian Communities' and Lay Groups' Meetings:**

- a. Meetings of Small Christian Communities in all parishes will go ahead for the sake of keeping the parishes running in this period since their numbers seem not to be too many;
- b. Instead, Lay Groups' meetings and all other gatherings are suspended at all levels: Parish, Deanery and Diocese in this period;
- c. Only Parish Executive Meetings shall be held for administrative purposes and such meetings shall not exceed one (1) hour.

4. **Catechism Classes and Holy Childhood Masses:**

- a. All Catechism classes are suspended in this period in all the parishes;
- b. Meanwhile, parents are reminded and encouraged to take the responsibility of transmitting the faith to their children. It is the duty of parents to teach their children.
- c. Masses for the children are also suspended in this period.

5. **Celebration of Sacraments in Parishes:**

The celebration of the following sacraments that are in themselves close and physical contact sacraments (Baptism, Confession, Confirmation and Anointing of the Sick) is suspended in the parishes in this period.

The sacrament of Matrimony will be celebrated with not more than fifty (50) people present strictly.

6. **Bishop's Pastoral Visitation Programme and Appointments:**

The Bishop's Pastoral Visitation Programme is suspended forthwith. Furthermore, all physical appointments and engagements with the bishop are also suspended in this period.



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7. Covid – 19 tests and General Precaution:

Everyone is encouraged to do voluntary tests for Covid – 19: There is no shame in advising other people correctly on the status of oneself regarding the Covid – 19 disease. Anyone not feeling well should immediately abstain from taking part in any communal liturgical celebration.

I urge you to religiously follow the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Health and the Zambia National Public Health Institute (ZNPPI). These include the following:

- a. *Wearing your masks properly in public;*
- b. *Washing your hands thoroughly / sanitizing regularly;*
- c. *Observing physical distance;*
- d. *Avoiding unnecessary travel;*
- e. *Avoiding large group gatherings (and limiting the number of people at funerals and weddings, while observing the Covid – 19 Protocols, etc)*
- f. *Sharing information with others on Covid – 19 prevention; and*
- g. *Seeking Medical attention and Guidance in good time.*

It is important for all to continue abiding by the given guidelines for the smooth running of the ecclesial matters. Furthermore, everyone must be alert to the fact that the resurgence of new infections we have experienced recently is a threat to the human life as it were. I promise to review the above guidelines after the 21-day period elapse.

Let us remain a faith community that takes responsibility for each other's well-being. As we face and combat the Covid – 19 pandemic, let us unite in prayer. Entrusting you all to the maternal intercession of our Lady and Mother, Mary, the Immaculately Conceived!

Rt. Rev. Dr. Benjamin Phiri, JCD
Bishop of Ndola

