



Catholic Diocese of Ndola

MEMO

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

From: Bishop's Office

Cc: Diocesan Senior Management
Programmes Manager – Radio Icengelo

Date: Thursday, 8th July 2021

Subject: Guidelines on the manner of conduct in the continued Third Wave Era of the Coronavirus and Preventive Measures in the Diocese

Following the continued spike of the third wave of the pandemic of Covid – 19 which has really taken it's toll on our life as experienced in the country and in particular in our Diocese, I wish to once again remind all in the Diocese to continue carefully adhering to and observing the provided guidelines by the Ministry of Health of the Government of the Republic of Zambia.

As earlier promised in my previous communique to review the guidelines after **21 days**, and in line with the recently pronounced measures by the Government of the Republic of Zambia, I provide the following revised measures in this period effective today:

- 1. Masses and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:**
 - a. Celebration of **Daily Weekday Masses** which was reduced to once a week, continues for the time being in all parishes and institutions, Convents inclusive;
 - b. **Sunday Masses** – which were reduced to only two, can now be increased depending on the population of particular parishes to accord the faithful an opportunity to worship in a well-spaced and health environment keeping in mind the required social distance. I further recommend and encourage parishes to be celebrating Vigil Sunday Masses on Saturdays so as to have even distribution of numbers of worshippers at a given Sunday celebration.
 - c. Parish Priests are urged to keep the celebrations as short as possible, thus the singing during Mass must continue to be regulated to that effect.
 - d. Radio Icengelo Management must work hand-in-hand with the Office of the Director of Pastoral Programmes of the Diocese to devise a permanent programme of live streaming of Daily Masses on radio and Facebook for the faithful in the Diocese. In the meantime, I have extended the celebration of daily mass on radio up to the end of



Catholic Diocese of Ndola

July 2021. I urge the priests in Kitwe to adhere to the published Mass celebration schedule for the same.

- e. **Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament** can resume and continue to be celebrated once a month in all parishes.

2. **Funerals:**

- a. The discretion of individual Parish Priests must play a major role on funerals, as they are the people on the ground. Thus, each individual parish priest will determine how funerals will be celebrated in their respective parishes. What must be avoided is the huge gathering of people at funerals. Priests must ensure that whatever form of funeral celebration they choose (*vigil, requiem mass or memorial after burial*), strict Health Guidelines are followed. Priests may conduct burial rites at the graveyard. I repeat, priests must ensure that the number of the people is regulated at these funerals.

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

- a. Meetings of Small Christian Communities in all parishes are suspended until further notice;
- b. Lay Groups' meetings and all other gatherings that were earlier suspended, shall remain so at all levels: Parish, Deanery and Diocese until further notice;
- c. In both contexts, only Leaders (Executive members) are permitted to be meeting for a short period only. When they meet, they must see to it that the stipulated Health Guidelines are observed. Long meetings are strongly discouraged.

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

- a. All Catechism classes remain suspended in this period. When the Schools will reopen, we shall assess and review this particular guideline;
- b. Masses for the children will only resume once the Schools open and a proper assessment has been done to ensure the safety of our children;
- c. 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.

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) that was suspended, can gradually and cautiously resume to be celebrated.

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

- a. The Bishop's Pastoral Visitation Programme remain suspended until further notice.
- b. Furthermore, all physical appointments and engagements with the bishop are suspended until further notice.



Catholic Diocese of Ndola

- c. In the same vein, the Priestly ordinations of the Diocese that were initially scheduled for **Saturday, 7th August, 2021**, have been deferred to a later date to be communicated in due course.

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 (ZNPFI). 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 pandemic of Covid – 19 is among us as a threat to human life.

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!

Very Rev. Fr. Christopher Chowa
for Bishop of Ndola

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