



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
CEO – Radio Icengelo

Date: Thursday, 24th February 2022

Subject: Guidelines on the manner of conduct during the Lenten Period in the reduced era of Fourth Wave of the Covid-19 in the Diocese

Following the reduced number of cases of the pandemic of Covid – 19 though still prevailing in our environment 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 in the past and as we are about to begin the Lenten Season in the Church, I provide the following measures in this period:

1. Celebration of Masses and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

a. Weekday Masses

To enhance the spiritual nourishment of the faithful during the Lenten period, celebration of Weekday Masses that was reduced to three times a week can revert to daily celebration. This will also accord parishes who wish to embark on a 40 day of prayer of the Lenten devotion through the celebration of Mass, to do so. In the same manner, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament shall continue to be celebrated in parishes **once a month**.

b. Sunday Masses

Sunday Masses shall be celebrated in all parishes for **not more than two hours**, while strictly observing the social distance sitting capacity of each particular parish. Once the social distance sitting capacity is filled up, no more worshippers must be allowed. Parish Priests must see to it that Masses are multiplied or increased but for **not more than two hours** per Mass to accord all parishioners an opportunity to worship.

Singing during Mass must be reduced to the minimum in this period as earlier admonished.



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c. Radio Icengelo Daily Mass

Radio Icengelo shall continue to stream live the celebration of Daily Masses on radio and Facebook following the published Mass Celebration Schedule by the Pastoral Office of the Diocese.

2. Ash Wednesday:

This year, Ash Wednesday fall on 2nd March 2022.

a. Manner of Distribution of Ashes:

On the manner of distribution of ashes this year again, I wish to re-emphasize the guidance given by The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments published as a [note](#) on 12th January, 2021 which directed priests to say the formula for distributing the ashes **once** to everyone present, rather than to each person.

Thus, the priest will address all those present and only once as it appears in the Roman Missal, applying it to all in general: **'Repent, and believe in the Gospel,'** or **'Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.'**

I have adapted the manner of applying ashes as follows:

- a. The priests will explain the significance of ashes to the congregants before starting the distribution of ashes;
- b. The ashes will be distributed after the Thanksgiving hymn;
- c. The ashes will be given in the hand using a spoon and the individual congregants will apply the ashes to their own foreheads and to their children or minors under their charge.

3. Way of the Cross:

The celebration of the Way of the Cross will be done with only a few Christians present. Thus, parishes are advised to prepare attendance schedules going by the number of Small Christian Communities they have for their respective parishes to ensure the even distribution of the faithful.

4. Movements within and outside the Diocese:

- a. As we continue to observe the provided preventive guidelines of Covi-19, and furthermore observing the prayerful mood of the Lenten period, movements of Groups at larger scale from one place to another **will only be allowed after the Lenten period** both within and outside the Diocese.
- b. Thus, parish to parish visitations within the Deaneries or Diocese of choirs and other lay groups **has not been permitted** yet not until the Lenten period is over.



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5. Bishop's Pastoral Visitation Programme and Appointments:


The Bishop's Pastoral Visitation Programme which was published for the first Quadrimester of the year remains suspended. However, depending on the prevailing circumstances some enlisted programmes will be authorized to take place. For this to happen, prior arrangements and confirmations have to be made to the office of the Bishop through the Director of Pastoral Programmes. Other appointments to meet the Bishop continues to be by prior arrangement.

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 will review the above guidelines as the need arises.

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

