



**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF PORT OF SPAIN**

Health, Safety and Environment Team
c/o Archbishop's House, 27 Maraval Road, Port of Spain

HSE Bulletin # 26

July 14th, 2022

Since March 2020, the Archdiocesan HSE Team appointed by His Grace, Archbishop Jason Gordon, has been issuing guidelines aimed at providing information that can assist in minimising the spread of COVID-19. We do hope that our interventions are useful to members of our flock and to others who access them.

Although the mandate to wear face masks comes to an end on July 17th 2022, the Ministry of Health recommends that the following groups of people should continue to have their noses and mouths covered when in public:

- Immunocompromised individuals
- Persons with underlying medical conditions
- Obese persons (Body Mass Index {BMI} greater than or equal to 30)

The Ministry also recommends that masks be worn in the following settings:

- All retail settings inclusive of supermarkets, groceries and malls
- Public transportation and transportation hubs
- Ports of entry
- Mass gatherings
- Pharmacies
- Schools/educational establishments
- Workplaces
- Places of worship
- Beauty salons, barbershops
- Spas (when possible)
- Care homes for children and the elderly
- Cinemas and theatres

Upon careful consideration of the current rates of local transmission of COVID-19 and the high-risk demographic profile of our church-going population, the HSE is in agreement with the recommendation from the Ministry of Health that face masks be worn by all worshipers visiting our chapels, churches and parish halls.

We will continue to monitor the local pattern of new COVID-19 cases across the country in the coming weeks and update the guidelines as appropriate.

Given that this request is designed to benefit everyone of us, we ask the cooperation of all.

The Health, Safety & the Environment (HSE) team wishes to highlight ongoing infection prevention and control measures when utilising any indoor space within the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Port of Spain:

1) HAND WASHING

- All worshipers must wash their hands with soap and water or sanitize using an alcohol-based sanitizer before entering the building.
- Lectors and ministers serving on the altar are guided to re-sanitize their hands before reading from the Lectionary as well as before and after the distribution of Holy Eucharist.

2) PHYSICAL CONTACT

- Worshipers from different households should not make direct physical contact with one another i.e. avoid crowding together in the aisles and entryways, no shaking of hands for the Sign of Peace nor joining hands to pray the Our Father during Mass.

3) NO OFFERTORY PROCESSION

- The altar bread, wine, water and vessels should be laid out before Mass and remain on the altar in preparation for the Consecration.
- Following the collection, one individual may present the Offertory to the celebrant at the foot of the altar.

4) CLEANING & SANITISING

- Parishes are encouraged to maintain a schedule of routine cleaning of their indoor facilities and regular sanitising of microphones, kneelers, pews, doorknobs, railings, toilets and other high-touch surfaces between all public gatherings.

5) VENTILATION

- When people are gathered indoors, maintain adequate (natural) air circulation by opening doors and windows and utilising oscillating fans and vents on air conditioning appliances.

- **END** -