



The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark CIO

Risk Assessment for Parishes Re-opening Churches for Individual Private Prayer

<b>Parish:</b>		<b>Address:</b>	<b>Parish Priest:</b>
<b>Deanery:</b>			
<b>Parish Priest in the vulnerable category? Yes/No?</b>		<b>Does the Parish intend to open for private worship? Yes/No?</b>	
<b>Area to Consider</b>	<b>Actions to take</b>		<b>Confirm Completed (or status)</b>
<b>Understanding</b>			
Opening of a Church Building	I understand that a church can only be opened for individual prayer if the conditions outlined on this Risk Assessment are fulfilled. There is no obligation to open any church if these conditions cannot be met. If there is any doubt about whether the requirements can be fulfilled, it is better to remain closed.		
Individual Prayer	I understand that individual prayer within a place of worship is defined as a person or household entering the venue to pray on their own and not as part of a group, led prayer or communal act. They must be socially distanced from other individuals or households. Collective or communal prayer and regular scheduled services are not permitted at this time. This includes any clergy or lay person leading devotions or prayer.		
Sacraments	I understand that no Sacraments, including Confession/Reconciliation, may be celebrated in the Church at this time and that confessionals must remain locked.		
	I understand that there can be no timetabled or group events in the church, including meetings of prayer groups, communal rosary and Benediction. Nothing which encourages people to gather at a particular time is allowed. The Blessed Sacrament may be exposed on the main altar for silent, personal prayer, as if one were paying a visit to pray before the Tabernacle. The Blessed Sacrament will need to be exposed before the church opens and must remain exposed until after the church is closed.		
Opening Times	I am clear that all the requirements outlined must be in place whenever the church is open.		

THE TEAM		
There are sufficient staff or volunteers (Team) to support the management of opening for private prayer.	Members of the Team have been deemed fit for work and are not classed as clinically vulnerable, self-isolating or shielding.	
	There will be stewards at the entrance and exit doors of the Church at all times it is open.	
	Where there is a team rota, volunteers should far as possible, work in the same team throughout the whole period.	
	At least two stewards must be present in the church throughout the time it is open for prayer	
	The stewards have been made aware of the maximum capacity of the church.	
	Stewards will practise good hand hygiene themselves through regular washing or sanitising.	
	Stewards will complete an inspection of the church each morning before opening, to ensure that all facilities and equipment are in place and that the church is compliant.	
	Guidance has been given to stewards on 'catch it, kill it, bin it', effective hand hygiene, and actions in the event of a First Aid emergency as outlined in <i>CBCEW Guidance on Re-opening of Catholic Churches for Individual Prayer</i> .	
	Stewards must ensure that hand sanitisation by visitors occurs at entry and exit points; that social distancing is maintained by people in the church; and that if predetermined capacity is reached, stewards must prevent others from entering the church (for example, through a one in, one out process)	
	Stewards are reminded to maintain social distancing themselves and not to physically interact (shake hands, hugging, etc.) with parishioners with the exception of a medical emergency situation (see: <i>CBCEW Guidance on Re-opening of Catholic Churches for Individual Prayer</i> )	
	Stewards should not eat, drink, or touch their face, unless they have immediately washed their hands beforehand.	
	Stewards should ensure any cuts or graze on their hands are covered complete with waterproof dressings.	
	One of the stewards could be the Parish Priest (or Assistant Priest). All stewards must be already known to the Parish Priest and be current volunteers in the parish.	
	Where possible, one of the stewards should be trained in Safeguarding from another role in the parish community.	
	Parish Priests should keep a rota of who was on duty at any given time, and also keep in the parish office, with the rota, the names and contact details of all stewards.	

	Diocesan Safeguarding posters are clearly visible in the church, with up to date contact information. Stewards need to know this information so they can provide details of their local Safeguarding Office to anyone who appears to be concerned for themselves or another person.	
	At this time, no person under 16 is allowed to enter a church building unless accompanied by a responsible adult.	
<b>PURCHASE OF SUPPLIES</b>		
Adequate supplies of materials to support hygiene	There is hand gel of no less than 65% alcohol in the key identified areas.	
	There are adequate welfare facilities for team in terms of hand wash facilities/hand sanitisation.	
	Stewards have adequate protective equipment – single use gloves.	
	Cleaners have adequate protective equipment – rubber gloves and aprons.	
	There are adequate cleaning materials – detergent, sanitiser, disposable cloths or paper towels.	
	There is tape (or other means) to mark out social distancing.	
<b>THE CHURCH</b>		
Entry and Exit Points	The entry and exit points are clearly identified – One in and one Out.	
	Anyone with cold or flu-like symptoms should be asked not to enter.	
Ventilation	Doors and windows wherever possible to be opened to increase natural airflow through Church.	
Hand sanitisation stations.	Hand sanitisation stations are available at entry and exit points.	
	Signage posted requesting parishioners to sanitise hands on entry and exiting the Church.	
Seating	Cordon off pews that are not to be used to maintain 2m distancing for sitting or kneeling in church.	
Toilets	Toilets will remain locked at all times.	
Other areas of Church	Access to the Sacristy is restricted to all non-Clergy, and Confessionals are not used.	
Veneration of relics, statues, images, icons etc.	Physical veneration of relics, statues and shrines is not permitted. Statues, icons must be cordoned off by 2m to ensure they cannot be touched.	
Holy Water stoups & Vessels	Ensure the Holy Water stoups, and any other vessels containing Holy Water, remain empty.	
Social distancing	Where applicable, mark out the required 2m radius social distance on the floor, also mark the pews and at the entrance to the Church. Stagger seating to ensure 2m radius distance is maintained.	
Maximum Capacity	Determine area of usage and identify on a floor plan of the Church.	
	Determine your maximum capacity ensuring 2m social distancing is maintained.	
Timings for individual prayer	Determine your schedule for individual prayer.	
Use of candles	Parishioners are prohibited from bringing their own candles.	

	Shared matches or lighters should not be used to light votive candles, but candles lit one from another. Care should be taken when lighting votive candles. If electric candles are used the buttons should be cleaned regularly.	
Live streaming Mass Services	The Church must be closed for individual prayer during a live stream Mass or any other live streamed service.	
Printed materials	All shared printed materials are removed, including Mass books, hymn books, devotional items, CTS leaflets etc.	
	Only limited single use material is available and parishioners instructed to take it away with them.	
	Any printed material left by a parishioner will be removed and safely discarded.	
Flushing the Water System	All taps, toilets, and other water storage devices have been run well to flush the systems before any of the volunteer team use them.	
Ventilation	There is as much ventilation as possible in the church. Keeping doors open decreases transmission risk and, with open windows, allows fresh air into the church.	
<b>CLEANING REGIME</b>		
In order to maintain a safe environment a strict cleaning regime will need to be implemented.	Cleaners are reminded of the required 'catch it, kill it, bin it' and effective hand hygiene.	
	The Church will have a thorough clean at the end of each day as a minimum, with particular attention being given to areas that may be frequently touched. This will be in accordance with <i>CBCEW Guidance on Re-opening of Catholic Churches for Individual Prayer</i> .	
	Cleaners will wear rubber gloves and aprons when cleaning.	
	Disposable clothes or paper towels will be used for cleaning.	
	Any items left behind by Parishioners will placed into separate plastic sacks and be removed to lost property.	
	Cleaners are advised of the benefits of undertaking decontamination when returning home by changing clothing and appropriate bathing or showering before mixing with members of their own household.	
	COVID- 19 Awareness Poster is displayed at the entrance to and the exit from the church.	
<b>PARENTS &amp; CHILDREN</b>		
	Whilst parishioners or visitors should not be dissuaded from having their children accompany them in church, the efficient management of children who wander away from distracted parents will be managed appropriately to reduce large areas becoming contaminated by frequent touching of multiple surfaces by unsupervised children.	
<b>PARISH SCHOOLS</b>		

To maintain social distancing and safeguarding principles to protect pupils and parishioners.	If there is an adjoining Parish school that shares the same access or exit routes, then the Parish and school will discuss and agree on a suitable timetable, so that school and church users do not mix and that social distancing and safeguarding practices are maintained at all times.	
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**Declaration:**

I have read and understood the CBCEW Guidance on Re-opening of Churches for Individual Prayer and understand that it is mandatory in the Archdiocese of Southwark.

(Tick box)

I understand it is my responsibility to monitor the effectiveness of this Risk Assessment and review as required.

(Tick box)

I understand it is my responsibility that before the church can open, this Risk Assessment is completed and approved by the Archdiocese.

(Tick box)

**Following the completion of the Risk Assessment, I confirm that all of the requirements of this Risk Assessment have been fulfilled and that my church will be able to open for private prayer.**

**OR**

**Following the completion of the Risk Assessment, I confirm that all of the requirements of this Risk Assessment cannot be fulfilled and that my church will not be able to open for private prayer at the present time.**

*(Please delete that which does not apply)*

Signed:

Date:

Please forward a copy of your completed risk assessment to your Area Bishop/Episcopal Vicar for approval.

[bishoppat@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:bishoppat@rcaos.org.uk); [bishoppaul@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:bishoppaul@rcaos.org.uk); [johnotoole@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:johnotoole@rcaos.org.uk)

A copy must also be forwarded to the diocesan property team at [property@rcaos.org.uk](mailto:property@rcaos.org.uk)