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**Revised Directives for Churches and Chapels within the
Catholic Archdiocese of Perth
Extension of Phase 4 of Western Australia's COVID 19 Roadmap from
The Most Rev Timothy Costelloe SDB
Archbishop of Perth**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

On **Tuesday, 18 August 2020** the Western Australian Government announced that **Phase 4** of the WA COVID-19 roadmap would be extended until **Friday, 23 October 2020**. The Western Australian Government have advised that the new tentative start date for Phase 5 will now be **Saturday, 24 October 2020**. A final decision on whether Phase 5 can proceed on this date, or if it can be brought forward, will be decided by the Western Australian Government in October 2020. The WA COVID-19 roadmap can be accessed at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/covid-19-coronavirus-wa-roadmap#phase4>

It is incumbent upon each of us to continue to exercise responsibility in adhering to government health advice and directives through diligent citizenship as well as Christian concern and charity. I take this opportunity to again acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of our clergy and all those women and men across the Archdiocese of Perth who have continued to adapt to 'the new normal' in our continued return to our parishes, worship, Catholic agencies and communities of faith. I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to each and every one of you.

The Western Australian and Federal Governments continue to issue ongoing public health advice in relation to COVID-19. The Archdiocese of Perth continues to be guided by this advice through our ongoing commitment to monitoring any threat posed by COVID-19 to Catholic communities across our Archdiocese. Latest information and advice, including health support measures and restrictions can be found at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/departments-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/covid-19-coronavirus-wa-roadmap#phase4>

Latest frequently asked questions relevant to Religious practices can be found at: https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/phase-4-easing-of-restrictions-frequently-asked-questions#religious_practices

I write to share with you a revised series of directives relevant to the extension of Phase 4 which come into effect across the Archdiocese of Perth commencing **Saturday, 5 September 2020**. The website of the Archdiocese of Perth has a dedicated COVID-19 web page on which all statements from the Archdiocese of Perth can be found: <http://perthcatholic.org.au/COVID19.htm>

The following directives apply to the clergy, religious and the lay faithful of the Archdiocese of Perth and commence on **Saturday, 5 September 2020**:



- To remain open during Phase 4 churches and chapels need to maintain high standards of hygiene and undertake frequent cleaning.
- **COVID Safety Plans:** Churches and chapels must ensure that their COVID Safety Plan is available for inspection by authorised officers.
 - Each church and chapel must complete a COVID Safety Plan.
 - If your parish has multiple churches/premises, a COVID Safety Plan must be completed for each church/premise.
 - Each church and chapel must display a COVID Safety Plan certificate at an entry point to the church or chapel.
- **Visitor Registers:** Churches and chapels are not required to keep an attendance register as part of their COVID Safety Plans.
 - Churches and chapels that kept attendance registers previously are required to keep the information in the register until twenty eight (28) days after the State of Emergency has been lifted.
- Hand sanitizers are to be available at each entrance to every church and chapel.
- Clear guidelines must be put in place to direct people on how to enter and exit the church or chapel to ensure that this is done systematically to ensure that appropriate physical distancing is observed.
- Holy Water fonts/stoups in all churches and chapels are to remain empty.
- Pews, seats, seatbacks, top rails, kneelers, doors, door knobs, microphones, sacristies, toilets/bathrooms and all other communal areas are to be cleaned, wiped down and sanitised regularly.
- Parish newsletters or bulletins should not be re-used. Sufficient copies should be made to ensure that people get copies, but then they must either take them home or dispose of them.
- Hymnals or shared copies of texts are not to be used.
- Persons who feel unwell, who have flu/respiratory symptoms, elevated body temperatures or who have been in contact in the previous fourteen (14) days with persons suspected to have, or who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, are not permitted to enter churches or chapels.
- **St Mary's Cathedral, Perth:** please refer to the St Mary's Cathedral website and social media pages for updates relevant to the Cathedral: <https://stmaryscathedralperth.com.au/>
- The number of people allowed in the church or chapel is determined by the WA government's 2 square meter per person rule. This applies to any and/or all celebrations in the Church or chapel.
- Individuals should practice physical distancing, remaining at least 1.5m away from people from other households. This applies to any and/or all celebrations in the Church or chapel.

Masses

Churches and chapels are to put in place procedures to ensure that numbers of attendees at all Masses conform to the Phase 4 directives of the Western Australian Government. The faithful continue to be dispensed from their obligation to attend Sunday Mass. However, all Catholics are encouraged to attend Mass whenever possible in accordance with Government directives. Parishes are encouraged to continue live streaming Masses.



- In view of the now long-standing practice of receiving Holy Communion in the hand, all Catholics receiving Holy Communion at Masses celebrated in the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite are very strongly encouraged, out of concern for the health of others including the celebrant and other ministers, to refrain from receiving Holy Communion on the tongue.
- Offertory gifts are to be in closed vessels or, where this is not possible, vessels should be appropriately covered.
- Offertory processions and Gospel processions are to be omitted.
- The Sign of Peace is to be given without physical contact.
- Collections are not to be taken up during the Mass. Churches and chapels can install boxes or containers for offerings at the entrance to the church or wherever they decide to be appropriate.
- The Precious Blood is not to be shared from the chalice at any Masses and is reserved to the celebrant(s) only. The celebrant and concelebrants are to receive from the chalice by intinction.
- All priests and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are to wash their hands in soap and water, or are to use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser both immediately before and immediately after the distribution of Holy Communion.
- Physical distancing between people in the Communion Procession is to be observed. Churches and chapels may wish to dedicate ushers to facilitate the movement of people at the time Communion is distributed.
- Pews, seats, seatbacks, top rail and kneelers are to be wiped down and sanitised regularly.
- The pulpit, lectern, credence table, ministers' seats and anything handled by multiple people is to be wiped down and sanitised regularly.
- Congregational singing and singing led by a choir and/or cantors may be undertaken at the discretion of the Parish Priest. In determining whether or not congregational singing and singing led by a choir and/or cantors is appropriate, the Parish Priest and his advisors will take full account of the risks to health and relevant Government recommendations.

Rite of Christian Initiation (RCIA)

- Individual parishes may choose to celebrate the Rite of Initiation with RCIA Elect and candidates.
- Please refer to Baptism and Confirmation directives (p.3 and p.4) when celebrating these sacraments with the RCIA Elect and candidates.
- Please contact Dr Carmel Suart, Director of the Office of Christian Initiation, on either 08 6104 3696 or christian.initiation@perthcatholic.org.au for any queries in relation to RCIA.

Baptism

- Fresh baptismal water must be used for each candidate.
- Full immersion baptism is prohibited unless the water in the baptismal pool is drained between candidates. The baptismal pool must subsequently be cleaned and disinfected after each full immersion.
- For the anointing with Chrism at baptism, the celebrant should use cotton balls with a separate one for each candidate. Used cotton balls must be disposed of appropriately after the celebration.



Confessions

- Priests can provide opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, according to the First Rite.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation is to occur in a well-ventilated space and with appropriate social distancing being maintained at all times, including the absolution.
- The Sacrament can be celebrated in the sanctuary but provision for anonymity should be made.

Confirmations

- The temporary suspension of the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation is hereby discontinued.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation may now be celebrated in accordance with the following directives. Each Parish Priest will make appropriate decisions about this matter after consultation with his sacramental team and other advisors. Confirmations may still be postponed until 2021.
- The celebrant is not to put his thumb into the Chrism and directly anoint the candidate.
- For the anointing with Sacred Chrism at Confirmation the celebrant should use cotton balls with a separate cotton ball used for each candidate.
- Used cotton balls must be burned after the celebration and the residue buried in soil.
- For 2020 only at this stage a general delegation for the celebration of Confirmation is granted for to all Parish Priests for communal parish celebrations of the Sacrament. Delegation for the confirmation for single individuals is still to be requested from the Office of the Vicar General.

Weddings

- Churches and chapels are permitted to celebrate weddings.

Funerals

- Churches and chapels are permitted to celebrate funerals.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick (*for individuals*)

- Priests will continue to respond to appropriate requests to anoint people, and will continue to celebrate the sacrament on an individual basis.
- Upon request, and with strict compliance with restrictions in place within nursing homes, aged-care facilities and hospitals, priests will continue to minister the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

- The communal celebration of the Anointing of the Sick is to be temporarily suspended.

Resources

A variety of resources continue to be offered by the Archdiocese of Perth on the dedicated COVID-19 webpage and through the Centre for Liturgy and Centre for Faith Enrichment websites:

Archdiocese of Perth Centre for Faith Enrichment website

- <https://cfe.org.au/>

Daily Mass Livestream

- [Mass on Demand – CathNews](#)
- [Mass for You at Home \(Channel 10 -- aired 6am each Sunday\)](#)



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- [Mass on Demand – Archdiocese of Brisbane](#)
- [Daily Mass -- Archdiocese of Melbourne](#)
- [Daily Mass -- Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn](#)

Mass Readings and Liturgical Resources

- [Readings of the Day](#)
- [Prayers for Time of Pandemic](#)

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- [COVID-19 Information for Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

The Western Australian Government's COVID-19 Roadmap

Current information on the measures being taken to protect the Western Australian community in order to minimise the potential impacts of COVID-19 in WA can be found at: <https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-the-premier-and-cabinet/covid-19-coronavirus-wa-roadmap#phase4>

I assure you of my continued prayers and gratitude as together we as an archdiocese seek to continue to witness and proclaim our Christ-centred hope within a global context that is collectively seeking to respond to the uncertainty and reality of COVID-19.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Timothy Costelloe SDB

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