

Dear Father,

Arising from yesterday's announcement (and our earlier email) regarding the easing of restrictions on religious services [from May 10th](#) the Department of an Taoiseach has clarified a number of issues that have arisen as follows:

Pods of 50

Where the size of the premises/Place of Worship allows for a **capacity of greater than 50** this may be permitted only where:

- social distancing guidelines are adhered to
- the premises can be subdivided into distinct sections (cordoned or marked appropriately) of not more than 50 persons in each section
- there is a minimum of 4 metres between sections
- each section having its own entrance/exit route
- there are separate arrangements for elements of the service involving close contact, for example the distribution of Holy Communion
- strictly no movement of people between sections before, during or after the service
- the premises are well-ventilated

Funerals

There is an increased risk of transmission of the virus where families and communities come together following the death of a loved one.

Therefore, numbers at funeral services (and Weddings) is **capped at 50 regardless of size of premises**.

Notwithstanding the increase in numbers permitted, funerals are still considered **private family events** and all notices in newspapers or on-line should be clear about this.

Funeral services should continue to be live-streamed to help reduce numbers attending.

Attendance at wakes in private homes and at Funeral Homes remains unchanged i.e. immediate family only and people should be discouraged from queuing to pay respects.

Singing

As with previous reopening for religious service congregational singing and choir singing is not permitted.

Solo singing with accompanist is permitted subject to compliance with detailed guidance contained in [HSE Covid-19 Guidance for Religious Services](#).

Outdoor Worship is not permitted in line with Government restrictions on organised outdoor gatherings.

Drive-in Religious Services may take place outside places of worship (e.g. church carpark) where all attendees remain in their vehicles and no sharing of vehicle outside of family unit.

If your parish is considering this option, the utmost respect for the distribution of the Eucharist is essential.

Use of Religious premises for any other purposes/parochial activities/community meetings etc. is not permitted in line with Government restrictions on organised indoor gatherings.

I hope this advice is of assistance,

Kind regards,

✠ Dermot Farrell
Archbishop of Dublin