

Coronavirus Risk Assessment

This document considers the risks presented by novel coronavirus, COVID-19 in the location specified below. It documents the risk control measures that must be introduced to control the spread of the virus. There has been no attempt to categorise the level of risk. It has been assumed that if the virus is passed from one person to another, while many survive infection, some may die from the disease. All sources of transmission are therefore considered high hazard. I.e. they have a high “potential” of causing harm. A key factor that will influence whether this potential is realised is how stringently the risk control measures are enforced.

If all of the control measures are applied the resulting risk is considered to be sufficiently low to allow people to return to the location. It is imperative therefore that all clergy, employees, volunteers, contractors and members of the public follow the risk control measures and those with responsibility for the location insist and ensure that they do so.

To understand the risk control measures required it is useful to consider how the virus spreads.

- Droplet spread following a sneeze by an infected person. The Government advises that locations should be set up so that a 2M distance can be maintained between people, or 1M with risk mitigation (where 2M is not viable), and that good respiratory etiquette should be practised
- If an infected person touches their nose or mouth and then touches a surface; the virus could survive on that surface for several days if not disinfected and could be transferred to others who touch the surface

This risk assessment and the resulting risk control measures have been based upon current HM Government and World Health Organisation guidance. This has been supplemented by further information from the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health. (The UK professional institute for health and safety practitioners.) It will be updated if guidance changes or infection rate changes. This document will be shared with clergy, line managers and those with responsibility at the location as appropriate so that it is clear why the control measures are needed. The risk assessment will inform a location specific protocol which provides clear instructions about how people can safely return to the location and how they must carry out their activities. In this way everyone can be confident that they can return to a COVID secure environment.

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| Location: Generic Assessment – All churches | Date Assessed: 12 th June 2020 | Assessed by: Michael J. McElroy |
| Task/Activity: Return of congregations to church buildings | Review Date: As updated guidance becomes available. (or November 2020 at latest) | Reference: Generic – 050820 v11 |



| Activity | Hazard | People at risk | Controls required | Site specific controls |
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| <p>Establish which members of the clergy should return to church</p> | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> | <p>Clergy who have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable.</p> | <p>This group of clergy are deemed to be very susceptible to an adverse reaction to COVID-19. <i>As we begin to ease restrictions, this group who are clinically extremely vulnerable should continue to take particular care to minimise contact with others.</i></p> <p><i>If the clergy wish to return to service they should consult with the Vicar General and the Episcopal Vicar for Care for the Clergy to explore if extra risk control measures should be put into place to allow them to return safely.</i></p> | |
| | <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | <p>Clergy who have been confirmed as clinically vulnerable.</p> | <p>Some clergy, including those aged 70 and over and those with specific chronic pre-existing conditions are clinically vulnerable, meaning they are at higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus.</p> <p>As we begin to ease restrictions, this group who are clinically vulnerable should continue to take particular care to minimise contact with others.</p> <p>If the clergy wish to return to service they should consult with the Vicar General and the Episcopal Vicar for Care for the Clergy to explore if extra risk control measures should be put into place to allow them to return safely.</p> | |
| | | <p>Clergy who are living with another member of the clergy who is clinically vulnerable or clinically extremely vulnerable.</p> | <p>This group of clergy need to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their home.</p> <p>As above, these clergy may return to service but they should discuss their return with the Vicar General and the Episcopal Vicar for Care for the Clergy.</p> | |

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| Suspected case of COVID-19 | <p>Contact with persons who may have been exposed to coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners. | <p>Clergy who are suspected to have coronavirus (High temperature, new persistent cough, lack of taste or smell) or who are living with someone else who has or is suspected of having coronavirus, are to self-isolate in accordance with HM Government guidance and contact the online 111 service to arrange for testing.</p> <p>Clergy who have returned from overseas should review the latest guidance from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Depending on which country they have returned from, they may need to self-isolate, even if they do not show any symptoms.</p> <p>Clergy who have returned from overseas should self-isolate if they start showing symptoms of coronavirus.</p> | |
| Confirmed case of COVID-19 | Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners. | <p>If a clergy member tests positive for coronavirus, they should contact the Vicar General and the Episcopal Vicar for Care for the Clergy who will, in conjunction with Curial employees determine which of the following measures are appropriate.</p> <p>All surfaces that the person has come into significant contact with must be cleaned, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All surfaces and objects which are visibly contaminated • All potentially contaminated high-contact areas such as door handles, telephones, etc <p>Public areas where a symptomatic individual has passed through and spent minimal time in (e.g. corridors) but which are not visibly contaminated do not need to be specially cleaned and disinfected.</p> <p>If a person becomes ill within the church it should be cleaned using disposable cloths, and sanitising liquid as soon as possible. The individual must contact 111 for advice on isolation and testing.</p> | |

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| <p>Coming to church and leaving church for both individual prayer and services</p> | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | <p>Clergy, parish employees and parishioners.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A means of controlling the numbers attending church will be established, considering the reduced seating capacity available. This could be 20% of the original capacity. This could include the introduction of a booking system particularly for services where demand will be high. Posters will denote the capacity • Whilst we are anticipating further guidance on Test and Trace the current government guidance states that the opening up of public places following the COVID-19 outbreak is being supported by the NHS Test and Trace service. In line with other government guidance for other venues including in the retail and hospitality sector, you should assist this service by keeping an accurate temporary record of visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your place of worship, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed for contact tracing and the investigation of local outbreaks • Individuals who fall within the clinically extremely vulnerable and clinically vulnerable groups, including those aged 70 and over, are advised to stay at home as much as possible and, if they do go out, to take particular care to minimise contact with others outside of their household. Please click here to see HM Government Guidance on Covid-19: guidance for the safe use of places of worship during the pandemic • If possible, parishioners should be contacted before the church opens to inform them how they must use the church to remain safe • Encourage parishioners to avoid using public transport to come to church. Parishioners should be advised to walk, cycle or use personal vehicles and avoid car sharing with anyone outside of their household. If they need to use public transport they must wear a face covering. Face coverings may be used in church for reassurance • Where possible, adhere to social distancing of at least 2M or 1M with risk mitigation (where 2M is not viable) between households. This means you can space people more closely (with a minimum of 1M) providing a mitigation of risk is also applied. In the case of our churches, this would mean the compulsory wearing of a face covering for members of the congregation. If those on the sanctuary are sufficiently distant from the congregation, there is no need to wear face coverings • Face coverings will be mandatory in Places of Worship from Saturday 8th August 2020. All those who are attending churches must wear a face covering unless they are exempt | |

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| Coming to church and leaving church for both individual prayer and services | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>from doing so. This is for the good of all who gather in the church for Mass as it is an enclosed public space where there are people from differing households who do not normally meet. Priests in the sanctuary, providing they are sufficiently distant (2m or more) from the congregation, do not need to wear a face covering except when distributing Holy Communion (please see below). Other ministers in the sanctuary should wear face coverings and remain socially distant from the celebrant. Please click here to see HM Government Guidance on Face coverings: when to wear one and how to make your own</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a process of queuing outside of church to maintain social distancing prior to processing into church. Floor tape must be used to mark the required social distance • The entrance/exit doors (and windows where possible) must be left open for the duration of individual prayer and services. This will avoid the need to touch the doors and aid air circulation • The Holy Water stoups must not be used • Choir lofts must not be used by the congregation, however can be used by the organist • Hymn books, Mass cards and all piety goods must be removed • Printed newsletters may still be collected but must not be left in church • Stewards welcoming parishioners attending church should inform them about the controls in place in the church to keep them safe and direct them to another steward who will lead them to a seat. At least 1 of the stewards must be DBS checked • Depending upon the size of the church, at least 2 stewards must be present at all times. • Volunteer stewards and cleaners must not be drawn from the clinically extremely vulnerable group. Those who are clinically vulnerable, including those aged 70 and over, could be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus. Those from this group who still wish to volunteer will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the Diocesan Handbook for Re-Opening of Churches and HM Government Guidance on Staying alert and safe (social distancing) which can be found by clicking here • Volunteer stewards must wash their hands regularly and avoid eating or drinking unless they have washed their hands immediately beforehand. All cuts or grazes must be covered with a waterproof dressing • Hand sanitiser must be provided at the entrance and exit points and all parishioners will | |

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| | | | <p>be required to use it upon entry and exit. If a suitable second exit is available it must be used to help to avoid parishioners coming into close contact with others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parishioners with cold or flu-like symptoms must be asked not to enter • Once capacity has been reached for individual prayer, parishioners must be held outside the church to await the opportunity to enter | |
| <p>Moving around the church during individual prayer or for Mass services</p> | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | <p>Clergy, parish employees and parishioners</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posters will be used to remind volunteers and parishioners about risk controls • Social distancing will be achieved by isolating sufficient rows of pews/seats to attain a 2M distance, or 1M with risk mitigation (where 2M is not viable), in all directions and parishioners will be required to maintain social distancing in the remaining pews/seats unless they are from the same household. Low-adhesive tape may be used to indicate the seating positions within the pews • Access of parishioners into the main body of the church will be controlled by volunteer stewards acting as ushers. The pews/seats will be filled from the front and moving towards the back of the church • As parishioners leave the church they must do so whilst maintaining social distancing from other worshippers. Ushers will guide incoming parishioners to the spaces by a suitable route to maintain social distancing • Some main routes will be defined by floor markings which indicate social distancing • Votive candles may still be lit, but shared matches, tapers or lighters must not be used. Candles must be lit from existing lit candles • Statues and relics must not be touched or kissed. This instruction will be displayed on posters next to the statues • Toilets should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission. Steps needed to make the use of toilets as safe as possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Using signs and posters as a reminder of good hygiene ○ Using social distancing marking in areas where queues normally form, and the adoption of a limited entry approach, with one in, one out (whilst avoiding the creation of additional bottlenecks) ○ To enable good hand hygiene make hand sanitiser available on entry to toilets where safe and practical, and ensure suitable handwashing facilities including running water and liquid soap and suitable options for drying (either paper | |

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| <p>Moving around the church during individual prayer or for Mass services</p> | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | <p>Clergy, parish employees and parishioners</p> | <p>towels or hand dryers) are available. Communal towels should be removed and replaced with single use paper towels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Set clear use and cleaning guidance for toilets, with increased frequency of cleaning in line with usage. Use appropriate cleaning products, paying attention to frequently hand touched surfaces, and consider the use of disposable cloths or paper roll to clean all hard surfaces ○ Keep the facilities well ventilated, for example by fixing doors open where appropriate and safe to do so ○ Special care should be taken for cleaning of portable toilets and larger toilet blocks ○ Putting up a visible cleaning schedule that is kept up to date and visible ○ Providing more waste facilities and more frequent refuse collection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If the toilets have not been used recently, they must be flushed and both taps run for 2 mins ● Children must be closely supervised to reduce the likelihood of them touching surfaces ● Ushers will control the exit of parishioners from church following services on a row by row basis, so that social distancing can be maintained ● Before the first admission of parishioners an extended cleaning regime will be instigated using appropriate cleaning products and following the Diocesan cleaning protocol ● Cleaning of the church will be carried out after each day of use ● Where a church is used more than once in a single day, a limited clean of the “touch points” must be carried out between sessions | |

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| Celebration of Mass | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>Priests should remain mindful of their own personal situation with respect to potential exposure to virus transmission. It is permissible for those in the clinically vulnerable group, including those aged 70 and over, who could be at a higher risk of severe illness from coronavirus, to celebrate Mass, but it is strongly advised that they do not distribute Holy Communion and take particular care to be constantly socially distant from the congregation. They should return to the sacristy directly after Mass is ended. HM Government Guidance on Staying alert and safe (social distancing) which can be found by clicking here</p> <p>The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales Guidance for Concelebration at Mass with a Congregation can be found by clicking here.</p> <p>Before Mass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only those necessary should be in the sacristy before Mass. • The celebrant, sacristan, or server should prepare everything for the celebration of Mass with care. Single-use gloves should be worn at this stage. • Particular care should be taken over the preparation of the elements for Holy Communion. The altar breads for distribution to the people should be placed into a clean covered ciborium (a pall can be placed over a dish paten). Sufficient altar breads for each celebration should be placed within at this stage. A separate ciborium/paten should be prepared for each person who will distribute Holy Communion. The cover of the ciborium or dish paten should not be removed until the time for distribution of Holy Communion. • The priest should prepare his own chalice and paten with a large altar bread for consecration which is for himself alone. The chalice should have a purificator and a pall. The purificator should be used only once and then laundered. He should prepare the cruets of wine and water and his own bowl for the lavabo. Again, the towel should be used only once and then laundered • Until further instruction is given on singing, there should be no congregational singing at Mass | |

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| <p>Celebration of Mass</p> | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | <p>Clergy, parish employees and parishioners</p> | <p>During Mass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any worship aids (missalettes etc.) should be for single use and taken with the user when the Mass ends. They should not be left in the church at the end of Mass Servers must wear face coverings whilst in the Sanctuary. Deacons should wear face coverings apart from the proclamation of the Gospel when he should remove the face covering at the lectern and replace it before moving away from it (providing the lectern is sufficiently distant from the congregation) The priest, and if present, deacon and server, should remain socially distant at all times on the sanctuary during the celebration of Mass. This is particularly important at the Gospel (for the deacon’s blessing), the Preparation of the Gifts, and during the Liturgy of the Eucharist Readers should sanitise their hands before and after reading, or be supplied with single-use gloves and should avoid touching the microphones or the Lectionary during the Liturgy of the Word, apart from page turning. Readers may remove their face coverings at the lectern to read and should replace them before stepping away from it providing the lectern is sufficiently distant from the congregation The homily should be brief, to minimise the time that people are congregated in the church building The Prayer of the Faithful should be omitted There should be no offertory procession of the gifts of bread and wine to the altar; the priest should have these on the credence table or the altar before Mass begins There should be no sharing of the collection plate or bag. People should be encouraged to make their donation to the church online or via standing order. Plates or other collecting boxes for cash offerings should be placed at the entrances and exits of churches, and this should be overseen by stewards. The collection should be consolidated into plastic bags, sealed, placed into a secure location and left for 72 hours before counting. Counters should wear gloves when doing this task and the area should be well ventilated and cleaned before and afterwards | |

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| Celebration of Mass | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p><i>The Communion Rite</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of the congregation should not exchange the sign of peace After the prayer and its response “<i>Behold the Lamb of God...Lord I am not worthy,</i>” the priest should hold up the Host to the Congregation and say audibly “The Body of Christ” to which the people should respond “Amen.” In the same way, he elevates the chalice and says, “The Blood of Christ” and again the people respond “Amen.” The priest may need to explain this to the congregation at this point. The priest should receive Holy Communion under both kinds using his own Host and Chalice, neither of which should be shared. There are two options for the distribution of Holy Communion. In both cases, because the people have already acclaimed the presence of the Lord, at the Priest’s Communion, the People’s Communion is distributed in silence with no dialogue between minister and communicant. The priest, and those who are distributing Holy Communion should wear face coverings when doing so It is highly recommended that the priest or other ministers should wear disposable gloves during the distribution of Holy Communion to the congregation <p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once the priest has received Holy Communion, he should put on his face covering and cleanse his hands with alcohol sanitiser before opening the pre-prepared ciborium for the Communion of the people. If there is a deacon assisting, or any other Minister of Holy Communion, they should similarly cleanse their hands and then receive communion from the priest from the people’s ciborium, and under one kind only. They should then put on their face coverings and cleanse their hands again before receiving their ciborium from which they remove the covering or pall if it is still in place At the place where communion is to be distributed, a physical barrier should be placed, for example a prie-dieu (kneeler on the priest’s side) or small table to socially distance the priest distributing Holy Communion from communicants Communion must be given silently in the hand only, with the communicant standing, and avoiding any physical contact People should wait in their pews until instructed to move forward to the priest for Holy | |

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| Celebration of Mass | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>Communion by the Stewards, always aware of the regulations on social distancing in the orderly queue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When parishioners approach the priest, they should do so with arms at “full stretch” so that there is a good distance between the priest and the communicant. Their hands, palms upwards, one of top of the other, should be extended as flatly as possible. The communicants should unloop their face covering and consume the Sacred Host and then replace the face covering before moving back to their pews in an orderly manner Having received Holy Communion, communicants should move back to their pews in an orderly manner Once Communion is complete, the priest returns to the altar and places the unused Hosts, without touching them, into the Tabernacle, he then can remove his face covering before he cleanses the sacred vessels himself in the usual way <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The priest receives Holy Communion as described and immediately cleanses his paten and chalice. He then holds a reverent silence before the Prayer after Communion, giving the Blessing and dismissal. At this point, the priest puts on his face covering, cleanses his hands with hand sanitiser and the other Ministers of Holy Communion who will assist the priest come forward, cleanse their hands and receive Holy Communion under one kind. They should then put on their face coverings and cleanse their hands again before receiving their ciborium from which they remove the covering or pall if it is still in place. They then move to the points for distribution and communicants are stewarded forward in an orderly manner to receive Holy Communion as above, and then immediately leave the Church The remaining Blessed Sacrament is placed into the Tabernacle, the priest then can remove his face covering before the vessels are cleansed in the usual way <p>After the Celebration of Mass</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The procession from the sanctuary at the end of the Mass should ensure good social distancing. The sanctuary party should return to the sacristy after Mass If the clergy wish to greet the people, they should remove their vestments put on a face | |

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| Celebration of Mass | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>covering (if in church) and not engage in any physical contact with parishioners, who should be encouraged to return home and not remain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The celebrant should place the used altar linens into a receptacle for laundry • All sacred vessels should be washed in hot water with a little neutral soap and dried completely before storing • Any discarded printed materials should be removed and bagged for disposal • The church should be closed after the Mass has finished in order to clean the space • If there is cause for concern regarding the possible contamination of clerical vestments worn during the celebration of Mass, these should be washed in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, using the warmest water setting allowed for the fabric and allowing time for them to dry completely <p>Celebrations of Mass Outdoors</p> <p>If there is space for the celebration of Mass outdoors around the Church, which allows for the social distancing guidelines of Government to be fulfilled, and that all of the above liturgical advice can be done safely, then there is no reason why Mass cannot be celebrated outside of a church within the boundary of the parish property. If a Catholic parish school or its grounds is to be used for Mass, a separate risk assessment has to be done, the appropriate school authority (Governing Body or Trust) has to give its permission, and both the parish and school insurers should be informed before the event takes place.</p> | |

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| Funerals | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>Before the Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government guidance on the Opening of Churches for Public Worship requires that the number of people attending Funerals is capped at 30 people or the maximum capacity of the church where this is less than 30 • There should be good collaboration between the family of the deceased, the funeral director and the clergy to ensure that the numbers of people assembling in the church is limited to the immediate family and those very close to the deceased • Any interaction with the family should be done safely – this may mean by telephone, Skype, Zoom etc • It is important to consider the following issues before the service: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who can attend? As a principle, numbers should be minimised as far as possible and no more than 30 people. Alongside the member of clergy, Funeral Director and staff, the government advises that only the following should attend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ members of the person’s household ○ close family members ○ or if the above are unable to attend, close friends <p>It is important that anyone attending should not exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19 or place themselves at risk</p> 2. The usual guidance on hygiene, hand sanitising and people with symptoms not attending church, as set out above applies <p>Preparing the Church for the service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand sanitisers should be signposted, readily available and easily accessible. Notices should be clearly placed advising people of correct hygiene practices • Consideration should be given as to the flow of groups in and out of the church to minimise any risk of compromising physical distancing, avoiding overlap between different groups while also leaving time for adequate cleaning • The church should be well ventilated, preferably by opening windows and doors where possible • If a Requiem Mass is to be celebrated, then the preparations should follow the Guidance for the Celebration of Mass in terms of preparing the credence table and elements for | |

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| Funerals | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>Holy Communion</p> <p>Safeguarding the Priest/Deacon/Minister from infection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clergy should remain mindful of their own personal hygiene, sanitising/washing their hands before and after the service and again after the committal • Physical contact with mourners and the coffin containing the body is to be avoided <p>Physical contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While it is contrary to human instinct and normal pastoral practice, it is important to advise mourners that there should be no physical contact including shaking hands, hugging or kissing outside their own households <p>Reception of Remains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The coffin should be brought into the church on a trolley, supplied by the Funeral Directors, and should be manoeuvred by them alone. There should be no placing of a funeral pall over the coffin or the Christian symbols, flowers or other objects. These may be placed near the coffin by the minister <p>During the Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At this time, there should be no singing. Single-use service sheets can be provided which the participants should take with them as they leave the church • In light of the Government advice, additional people are not encouraged to attend the service • If the family are to participate in the Liturgy of the Word, then they should use hand sanitiser before and after reading from the Lectern or be provided with single use gloves. They should avoid unnecessary contact with any microphone or the prepared Lectionary or the book containing the Prayer of the Faithful. Portable microphones should not be used or passed from hand to hand • If there is a Requiem Mass, it is important for the celebrant to explain to the congregation the mode of receiving communion. He should be assisted by the stewards | |

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| Funerals | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>to direct people safely to receive Holy Communion at the appropriate time. Care should be taken by those moving around the church at this time, especially in the proximity of the coffin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incense should not be used at funerals as this can promote coughing in people which increases the risk of viral transmission. If the celebrant uses Holy Water as part of the reception of the coffin or final commendation, he should take care that it is not splashed onto the congregation or those near the coffin <p>After the Service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The church should be closed after the funeral service has finished in order to clean the space If there is cause for concern regarding the possible contamination of clerical vestments, these should be washed in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, using the warmest water setting allowed for the fabric and allowing time for them to dry completely <p>The Committal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The management of people at the place of committal comes under the local regulations of the cemetery or the crematorium, and these should be observed | |

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| Confession | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <p>The Sacrament of Confession/Penance requires the one-to-one encounter between a priest and the penitent. As such, this must be conducted in as safe a way as possible.</p> <p>Principles</p> <p>The principles used to stop infection transmission during confession are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preventing droplet spread between priest and penitent through physical distance or barriers or positioning and • by means of cleaning and hygiene preventing spread between penitents using the same kneeler or chair by cleaning points that are touched frequently (eg the top of the kneeler) <p>The times of confession, either indoors and/or outdoors, may now be advertised.</p> <p>Outdoors Confession</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social distancing should be observed • Good hygiene through cleaning surfaces frequently touched by penitents should be ensured • Placing the penitent and priest at right angles to each other or back to back would further reduce air spread containing droplets between them • Penitents to sanitise their hands when arriving <p>Confession inside churches or buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within a church, if the church environment allows for confession to take place in an open space (such as a side chapel or other private area), this is preferred • If possible, the priest and the penitent should not sit face-to-face but at right angles to each other or side-by-side, facing opposite directions, whilst still allowing for the spoken matter to be heard • Penitents should have sanitised their hands when entering the church as part of existing measures • It may be possible to place a plastic or glass screen between the priest and the penitent which would allow for a face-to-face encounter. If so, the screen should be made of a solid material | |

| Activity | Hazard | People at risk | Controls required | Site specific controls |
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| Confession | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a grille is used, a cloth curtain (or a piece of plastic film) should be placed over the priest's side to minimise transmission risk • If a chair or a kneeler is used for the penitent, the touchpoints (where the penitent has touched with their hands) should be cleaned with appropriate cleaning products after each penitent; it may make things easier if the penitent were to stand • At this time, the use of traditional confessionals should be avoided if possible, due to the restricted airflow within them. However, if they are to be used, traditional "Roman style" confessionals (penitent kneeling at right angles to the priest speaking through a grille) are best. A plastic film on the priest's side covering the grille will provide a barrier against air droplets. The touchpoints on the kneeler should be cleaned after each penitent • Maximising the airflow through the confessional would be a priority; such as, if possible, leaving the door open • Above all, priests should ensure that through ensuring the regular cleaning of the points that are touched frequently and the positioning of a barrier between penitent and himself, the risk of virus transmission is minimised • Priests should limit the number of confessions they hear each day to reduce their exposure risk | |
| Marriage, Baptism, Adult Baptism, Reception into the Church and Adult Confirmation | <p>Contact with persons suffering from coronavirus</p> <p>Contact with surfaces where live virus may be present</p> | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners | The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales Guidance for Marriage, Celebration of Baptism, Adult Baptism, Reception into the Church and Adult Confirmation should be followed and can be found by clicking here . | |

| Activity | Hazard | People at risk | Controls required | Site specific controls |
|------------------|--|--|---|------------------------|
| Whilst in church | Contracting and spreading of infection | Clergy, parish employees and parishioners. | <p>Basic infection controls should be followed as recommended by HM Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve (not your hands) when you cough or sneeze • Put used tissues in your pocket or bag and take them home with you • Wash your hands with soap and water often – use hand sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available • Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell • Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean <p>People worried about symptoms should use the online NHS 111, only call if they cannot get help online, and NOT go to their GP or other healthcare centre.</p> <p>Clergy must talk to their parishioners regularly to provide reassurance.</p> | |

Further guidance regarding safeguarding and pastoral considerations associated with the re-opening of churches is available in the Diocesan Handbook for Re-Opening of Churches.