

Guidance for Stewards at Saturday/Sunday Masses

The attendance and vigilance of stewards is essential to ensure the safety of our congregations at Masses and is also vital to ensure that we comply with the Government's and Bishops' Guidance on the Opening of Churches for Public Worship. The Bishops' Guidance makes it clear that the presence of two stewards at each Mass and the cleaning of the church after each Mass is a requirement.

Our Preparation for the Opening of the Cathedral for Masses

Our Cathedral has been meticulously prepared in readiness for Masses being celebrated again. There has been a thorough and deep clean of the Church and equipment such as hand sanitiser, gloves, aprons, face coverings and cleaning fluid has been purchased and is available for the use of stewards. It is located at the back of church.

There has been an assessment of the number of people who can safely be accommodated after taking account of the social distancing rules. In the case of the Cathedral this means that for Masses normally the benches in the nave are to be used, and to preserve the 2-metre distance rule, we will only use alternate benches. Sometimes the side aisle benches can be used but again only using alternate benches.

The occupancy of the benches is calculated as follows:

- For a family/household of 3-6 people they will sit together in one bench
- For individuals to a maximum of 2, they will occupy one bench sitting at a distance of 2 metres separation (unless they are a couple).

All communally used items, such as hymn books, have been removed.

Entry into the Church

Stewards may wish to wear face coverings or gloves for personal protection. We should be aware that face coverings might become compulsory depending on legislation – so we must follow the latest guidelines on this.

The role of one of the stewards is to point out the hand sanitising materials which should be used by people entering the church and to control the social distancing of the congregation coming into the Church. The stewards should see that the gates are open to let people in to

Church 20 minutes before Mass is due to start. People coming to Mass should wait in the Porch and, if necessary, outside of the Church in a socially distanced manner.

People will usually have booked for a particular Mass and this will be evidenced by a text on their mobile phone. Stewards should ask whether a person has booked and, if necessary, check the text while observing social distancing if possible.

There may be some attending who have booked through the Cathedral Office. Stewards should be given a list of those booking in this way and should check the name against the list.

Those who have booked should wait until they are collected by the second steward who will take them to a seat.

If someone arrives who has not booked for Mass, it may be possible for them to book at the gates. They will need to use the usual booking procedure which is available right up to the time that Mass begins.

If and only if there are places which are not filled, may stewards allow in people who have not booked. If you let in people who have not booked, it is essential that you record their name and telephone number for Track and Trace purposes.

All other people should be told that the maximum number of people have come into Church taking into account the requirement of social distancing, and they should politely be asked to book for another Mass this week or next week. The details of how to book are available on a notice outside the Church.

The gates should be closed 5 minutes after the start of Mass and no-one else should be admitted to the Church. The steward looking after the entrance into Church should then take their appointed seat at the back of the Church.

In the Church.

The reason for having two stewards is that the second steward deals with the seating of people in the Church.

Stewards should see that people are directed to alternate benches and that the benches are filled:

- In the case of a family/household of between 3-6 people, they occupy one bench
- In the case of individuals – there are two people only to a bench sitting at 2 metres apart – this means at either end of the bench.

One toilet, the disabled toilet, is open during the times of Masses and there is hand sanitiser to use prior to entry to the toilet area and on leaving.

Arrangements for Communion

The priest will give instructions to the congregation that Communion will be distributed at the end of Mass after the final blessing.

At this point, the steward should indicate that people remain seated until directed to go to Communion.

The order in which people go should usually be those seated in one side of the nave first, followed by those from the other side – all in a socially distanced fashion. Then people in the side aisles should be asked to go to Communion.

After receiving Communion people should be directed to leave by the South Door and, if necessary, the steward should assist anyone who finds the steps difficult – or suggest that they leave via the West Door.

Cleaning

We need to clean the benches which have been occupied after each Mass in preparation for the congregation at the following Mass.

It is assumed that stewards at the earlier Mass are willing to assist in this task unless they have said that they are not willing or able to clean after Mass.

Gloves, face covering, aprons and cloths and cleaning liquid is available at the back of the Church.

Other questions

What should I do if I find that I cannot steward for the Mass I have committed to?

Because it is so very important that we have two stewards for each Mass, we would ask you to let the Cathedral know by an email to office@stmariecathedral.org or phone 0114 2722522 (email preferred) to let the priests know that you cannot attend. Arrangements can then be made for another steward to take your place or for one of the priests to steward.

What should I do if I am not feeling well, have a temperature or cough?

If you are not feeling well, please do not come to the Cathedral. Please email the office at office@stmariecathedral.org or phone 0114 2722522 and let the priest know that you will not be coming to steward.

Should I book for the Mass for which I am stewarding?

No, please do not book a place at that Mass. Stewards have chairs allocated for them at the back of Church and near the South Door and these chairs are not counted in the total numbers allowed for each Mass. Please sit in your allocated seats.

I would like to offer to steward, but I am a bit worried about what to do?

Please do not be worried because a new steward will so far as possible be linked with an experienced steward who will help you and talk you through what has to be done. There will also be a training session to which you will be invited if you wish to come.

I would like to offer to be a steward, but I don't wish to do the cleaning.

This is perfectly alright, just let us know – we will not ask the reason – and we will try and find other people who will clean.

I would like to clean but do not feel I can steward.

We welcome any help at all. We quite understand and are grateful that you will assist in the cleaning of the Church.

Clare Campbell

(Health and Safety Rep)