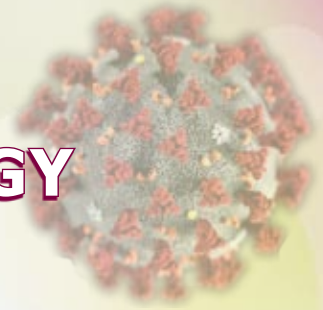




PROTOCOL FOR THE LITURGY AND OTHER CHURCH ACTIVITIES



RC DIOCESE OF PARAMARIBO
05 JULY 2020

This protocol is for everyone going to church to participate in a celebration or needs to use the church building for any other purpose. All are asked to follow these guidelines so that all present can celebrate together in a dignified and safe way.

General

All measures announced by the National Covid-19 Management Team are strictly applicable to all who come together for worship. These are:

- a minimum distance of 1,5 to 2 meters **around** persons should be observed, also in the pews in the church during worship; this applies also to those who are present on the altar (priest, acolyte, lectors, etc.) and for members of the choir;
- taking into consideration the minimum distance of 1,5 to 2 meters around persons, there can be as many people in the church provided the available space allows that; however this is limited to a **maximum of 200 persons!!!**
- wearing a mouth and nose cover is mandatory, also in church; this applies also to those who have a function during the celebration: priest, deacon, lector, acolytes/altar servers, choir members, church wardens, sacristans, etc. The mouth and nose covers are only lifted to consume the sacred host; the one presiding is allowed to take off the mouth and nose cover during the rites on the altar, provided that the gifts on the altar are covered;
- washing or disinfecting hands when entering the church building is mandatory; this applies above all to the ones presiding, sacristans and altar servers/acolytes;
- coughing or sneezing is done in paper handkerchiefs or in the elbow;
- people with flu symptoms (runny nose, coughing, fever, sore throats, etc.) should **not** enter the church building.

Specifically liturgical

The previously announced measures for participating in the liturgy remain in effect. These are:

- when entering the church building there is to be **no use** of holy water to make the sign of the cross; when making the sign of the cross, avoid touching the body; this also applies to the threefold sign of the cross before the reading of the Gospel;
- because of the minimum distance around persons of 1,5 to 2 meters the use of incense is not possible and should be left out until further notice; this also applies to the sprinkling with holy water;

- in the offertory procession, only the ciborium, the chalice and the cruets are carried; it is recommended that those who carry the gifts to the altar wear gloves; otherwise they need to disinfect their hands before picking up the gifts; carrying flowers, candles and other gifts in the offertory procession should be omitted until further notice;
- when praying the Our Father the faithful should avoid holding hands;
- during the sign of peace, all present stay in their spot and there is no shaking of hands; the sign of peace is given with a bow toward one another;
- collections are put in a collection box, which is placed in a clearly visible location in the church building; going around the congregation with collection plates is not allowed;
- the one presiding (priests, deacon or lay minister) should wash or disinfect his/her hands before touching the sacred vessels or other liturgical items; this also applies to the altar servers/acolytes and those participating in the offertory procession;
- there is no communion given on the tongue;
- the one presiding (priest, deacon or lay minister) must wear a mouth and nose cover when distributing communion;
- those who cannot receive communion but wish to receive the blessing from the priest may come forward to do this, but should maintain the minimum distance of 1,5 to 2 m;
- socializing after the celebration is only allowed if there is enough space available **outside** the church building to allow the faithful to maintain the minimum distance of 1,5 to 2 meters around each other; socializing inside the church building is not permitted;
- those responsible must make sure that sanitization of items used in the church is done after every celebration.

Other

- administering the sacraments of baptisms, confirmation and first communion is postponed until further notice; baptism of 1 (one) person is however allowed, provided the general measures are taken into consideration;
- hearing confession should not take place in the confessional but in a well ventilated room where priest and confessant are seated at a minimum distance of 1,5 to 2 meters from each other; when giving absolution the priest is to refrain from touching the confessant;
- anointing of the sick, marriages and funerals are allowed provided the rule of 1,5 to 2 meters is always taken into consideration; congratulations or condolences should be given without physical contact;
- devotional prayer before statues or icons should be done without touching the statues or icons; in case several people pray together the minimum distance rule should be observed.

TOGETHER WE CAN PREVENT THE VIRUS FROM FURTHER SPREADING!

Let us join in prayer for all those who are sick, and ask our blessed Petrus Donders to intercede for us.