

Archdiocese of Dublin

Clarification for Parishes regarding Level 5 Restrictions

04/03/2021

Dear Father,

Further to questions raised at some of the deanery meetings during the week, I have been asked to clarify the following matters:

- The sacrament of Baptism must be celebrated only in exceptional circumstances, that is in danger of death.
- Under current restrictions all religious services continue to take place online. In the interest of health and safety priests and parishes ought not to succumb to requests to distribute Holy Communion before or after Mass, in or outside churches. Drive-in Masses are not permitted as no gatherings of people outdoors or indoors are permitted. Holy Communion can only be distributed in the church to mourners attending a Funeral Mass, to those celebrating the Sacrament of Marriage and to the essential ministers that make celebration of Mass online possible, (e.g., Minister of the Word, Sacristan).
- Arrangements for the celebration of First Holy Communion and Confirmation should not be made until Government / HSE / diocesan guidelines indicate that it is safe to do so.
- Churches remain open for private prayer only. Liturgies and devotions (exposition of the blessed sacrament, rosary, stations of the cross) can take place in closed churches, online only.

These queries arose at the deanery meetings via Zoom earlier this week. I hope these clarifications will help solidarity between confreres and parishes so that together we can overcome the threat of the coronavirus in the community. Hopefully we will be able to return to public worship and the celebration of the Sacraments as soon as possible thus strengthening and supporting faith communities on our pilgrim journey.

+Dermot Farrell

Archbishop of Dublin