

Diocese of Ossory



Ferrybank & Slieverue Parishes

Parish COVID-19 Response Plan 2020

26th June 2020

Updated 29th September 2020

Introduction/Explainer

The COVID-19 Response Plan details the policies and practices necessary for Ferrybank & Slieverue Parishes to meet the Government's 'Return to Work Safely Protocol' and to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace, i.e. our Parish Office & Churches. The COVID-19 Response Plan details how our Parishes will put in place control measures to reduce the risk of spread of COVID-19.

The plan will give an overview of key areas that we must assess to ensure compliance with the protocol and to minimise the risk to Staff / Ministers and others.

All workplaces & Churches including those with public interaction or areas where Staff share a workplace, are required to develop a plan and the use of this guidance and associated checklists will help in this.

The plan needs strong commitment from the Priest & Parishioners and should be developed and put in place in consultation with all working in the Parish. Consultation, supervision, clear direction and information for everyone is key in ensuring the success of the Plan.

Note: This plan is a live working document and it should be reviewed on an ongoing basis and amended to take into account new guidance from www.Gov.ie, www.dbei.ie, www.hse.ie, www.hpsc.ie, www.hsa.ie

Parishes of Ferrybank and Slieverue

A Plan for Reopening our Parish Office & Recommencing Public Worship in our Churches

Our Pastoral Councils & Fr Kieran are happy to announce that from the week beginning 29th June our Parish Office will be fully functioning & Mass will be celebrated publicly once again in our Churches. It is very important that we manage this return to Work & Public Worship carefully so that all those who wish to celebrate their faith can do so safely. We can only return to Public Worship when we are confident that the guidelines and protocols in place for our safety can be implemented and observed faithfully. This will not be easy and may cause some discomfort but please remember they will be adhered to in our Parishes because your safety is our primary concern.

In order to plan for the reopening of our Parish Office and Churches for Public Worship a Covid Response Team has been formed in each Parish.

The coordinators are:

Ferrybank: Ms Barbara Wells & Mr Michael O' Brien

Slieverue: Ms Sile Grant & Ms Breda Lynch

Q's & A's

Can I now visit the Parish Office?

Yes. The Parish office is once again open to the Public. **Before you visit please ensure that you are not displaying any symptoms of Covid - 19 or any illness.** Contact your medical practitioner if you are unsure or in a medically vulnerable category. **Please wear a face mask while visiting the Parish office.** When you arrive please sanitise your hands, ring the door bell and wait to be admitted. Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily. Only one person can enter the office at a time. If the office is already occupied please take a seat arranged to comply with social distancing norms in the waiting area. Once you enter the office you should spend no longer than five minutes before leaving. Please exit as instructed by the Parish Secretary. Hand sanitisation should be carried out on leaving. The Parish Office is sanitised regularly to comply with Covid - 19 protocols. Staff will have completed the necessary checklists and documentation concerning return to work. A contact tracing log is also retained. These measures are intended to keep you safe and to keep our Staff safe also.

Recommencing Public Worship

Saturday Evening Vigil Masses

Slieverue 6 pm

Ferrybank 7 .30 pm

Sunday Masses

Ferrybank 9.30 am, Slieverue 10.30 am, Ferrybank 11.30 am

What should I consider before going to Church?

Our primary responsibility is to ensure the safety of everyone. Therefore we would ask all our parishioners to ensure that if you feel unwell that you refrain from attending Church and consult your medical practitioner. Those who have underlying medical conditions should stay at home and avoid crowded situations as much as you can. If you do come to Church please seek the advice of your medical practitioner before going to and to use face coverings in any public area. Mass or other Church Services. If you are in any doubt do remain at home.

Please be aware that Mass will continue to be transmitted over our Parish radio and live streamed via our webcams:

Ferrybank - <https://ferrybankslieverueparishes.ie/ferrybank-webcam/>

Slieverue - <https://ferrybankslieverueparishes.ie/slieverue-webcam/>

RTE will continue to broadcast daily Mass at 10.30am and on Sunday's

What about the Sunday obligation to attend Mass?

There is no obligation to attend Mass on Saturday evening / Sunday for the moment. However those who wish to attend Mass at weekends should be aware that the option of attending on weekdays is also available. This would ease pressure on numbers at weekends. Our weekday Masses are as follows

Ferrybank: Monday - Thursday 10 am / Slieverue: Friday 10 am. Mass times are subject to change because of funerals etc.

How should I prepare to attend Mass?

Pray of course!

The wearing of face masks is strongly recommended as they provide extra protection for you and others against picking up the virus

Leave home in plenty of time. Family members / those sharing the same household should sit together if possible. If you need to use toilet facilities please inform an usher.

Be aware that if you become unwell during Mass a designated area has been prepared outside of our Churches for this eventuality. Our ushers will assist you in this regard.

You may be asked to sign a contact tracing log

How many people can safely enter our Churches for Mass?

Respecting current guidelines regarding social distancing the following numbers can be safely accommodated in our Churches:

Church of the Sacred Heart Ferrybank & the Church of the Assumption Slieverue have three distinct areas within them with separate entrances / exits for each area. This increases our capacity which would be no more than sixty / seventy people.

What happens when the Church has reached its capacity?

When the Church has reached its safe capacity limit, stewards will inform those gathering that no more people will be allowed enter the Church building. As we approach winter arrangements will have to be made for to cater for excess numbers of people who would usually remain outside.

What should I do when I arrive for Mass or other Liturgical Celebrations ?

Please do not park in areas close to our Churches. Church Grounds should be kept clear. If you need to drop family members or neighbours with reduced mobility to the door please do so and safely remove your car until after Mass.

Please be aware of signage & follow the guidance of the ushers (stewards) at all times.

You may be asked to sign a contact tracing log

Ushers will be wearing face masks and will carry a mark of identification.

Priority entrance will be provided for the elderly & those with reduced mobility.

The doors will be open so please avoid any unnecessary touching of handles or surfaces.

Please keep all doorways clear.

Missalette's will not be provided. Newsletters will only be available as you leave the Church

Immediately on entering you should sanitise your hands at the sanitising stations provided.

Holy Water fonts are empty and will remain unused

You will notice that some rows of seats have been closed

You will be shown to your seat in an open row of seats.

Please sit in the space marked by a seating label attached to each seat

What will happen during & after Mass and other Celebrations?

The Liturgical form of the Mass remains the same with some adjustments to facilitate the Covid - 19 protocols.

There will be no processions during the celebration of Mass.

The Distribution of Holy Communion.

The Priest and Ministers of the Eucharist will visibly sanitise their hands before distributing Holy Communion.

They will also wear face coverings to ensure your safety and that of the minister.

If you are wearing a face mask please be aware that you should safely and respectfully consume the Host before returning to your seat.

In Ferrybank those who wish to receive Holy Communion will be invited by the ushers to come forward row by row. You will come up the centre aisle and return by the left and right side aisles

where this is possible. In Slieverue please remain in your seat and the Minister of Communion will come to you in your seat.

Holy Communion can only be received in the hand.

Holy Communion will be distributed outside the Church also.

Leaving the Church

You will be invited to leave the Church in an orderly fashion and to leave Church grounds immediately. While gathering for a chat outside has always been a great tradition unfortunately it cannot be permitted at this time.

How will Ministry be exercised?

The Minister of the Word and Ministers of the Eucharist will remain in the Sanctuary area of the Church during Mass. Before they can Minister they will be required along with all Staff and Volunteers to complete a F010-2 X Parish Covid-19 Employee /Volunteer Return to Work Form. A Contact tracing Log will also need to be signed.

Choirs will have to wait another while before they can return to service. However an organist and one or two singers may be permitted while observing social distancing guidelines.

Unfortunately there can be no Altar Servers at this time but we may find another role for them while observing safeguarding norms.

The Sacristy will not be accessible to any member of the congregation.

How will Church Collections take place?

Church collection bags will not be passed around during Mass.

Secure boxes will be available at the entrance to the Church and will be supervised by our collectors.

When will the Church be cleaned?

The Church will be cleaned and sanitised after every Mass and Liturgical Celebration.

Funerals & Weddings

A maximum of fifty (50) people can be admitted to a Church for funerals and weddings

COVID 19 Policy Statement

Ferrybank & Slieverue Parishes are committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our Staff/ volunteers/ Ministers and visitors.

To ensure that, we have developed this **COVID-19 Response Plan**.

All in this Parish are responsible for the implementation of this plan and a combined effort will help contain the spread of the virus.

We will:

- continue to monitor our COVID-19 response and amend this plan in consultation with our Staff
- provide up to date information to our Staff on the Public Health advice issued by the HSE and Gov.ie
- display information on the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and correct hand-washing techniques
- provide an adequate number of trained coordinators who are easily identifiable and put in place a reporting system
- inform all Staff / Volunteers / Ministers of essential hygiene and respiratory etiquette and physical distancing requirements
- adapt the workplace to facilitate physical distancing
- keep a log of contact / group work to help with contact tracing
- have all Staff attend an induction / familiarisation briefing
- develop a procedure to be followed in the event of someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 while at work or in the workplace
- provide instructions for all Staff / volunteers / Ministers to follow if they develop signs and symptoms of COVID-19 during work
- intensify cleaning in line with government advice

All in this Parish will be consulted on an ongoing basis and feedback is encouraged on any concerns, issues or suggestions.

This can be done through the Parish Covid Response Coordinators

Ferrybank & Slieverue Parish Office
Ross Road
Ferrybank
Waterford
051 830813

ferrybank@ossory.ie
slieverue@ossory.ie