

- ♪ Music is and always will be an integral part of the Mass. Catholic liturgy is a sung liturgy and the beauty of its music raises our hearts and voices in praise and worship to God. This holds true now and always.
- ♪ Our care for one another and the safety procedures we must put in place because of the Covid-19 pandemic have implications for the experience of music in our celebration of the Mass and other liturgies for the foreseeable future.
- ♪ The following offers guidance to parishes and to music ministers. It speaks into an ever changing context and, therefore, is not set in stone. Music ministers, together with their parish team, should review how things are going after a few weeks and make any necessary changes. This review should take into account new permissions that may arise.
- ♪ **For now, it is not permissible for choirs to rehearse physically together or to sing together as a group at Mass.**
- ♪ The music ministry at public worship can be led by a cantor and an instrumentalist, all the time observing hand hygiene, physical distancing and good respiratory etiquette.
- ♪ Surfaces should be cleaned appropriately before and after use, for example organ keyboard and seat, microphone and stand.
- ♪ While congregational singing is not encouraged, it is not banned. People can sing quietly as opposed to ‘belting out’ a hymn, as a cantor sings. Musical choices will assist this. Just as people will continue to make their spoken vocal responses within Mass they can sing their acclamations (for example, the Alleluia) in a lower register than normal.
- ♪ When choosing what to sing, the first priorities of music remain as they always have been: the alleluia, the acclamations and the psalm. At this time the Gloria and the Lamb of God should be recited rather than sung.
- ♪ Sung music during Communion time will help people focus on the gift of the Eucharist they are receiving or echo a central message from the readings that we were fed with in the Liturgy of the Word.
- ♪ An opening hymn may need to continue only until the priest celebrant has reached his chair.
- ♪ Instrumental music or silence can be used for the preparation of the altar and instrumental music for the recessional.
- ♪ Music ministers should check in with their parish team in regard to the intended length of the Mass and to discuss the parts of the Mass that will be sung.
- ♪ This is a wonderful opportunity to encourage cantors to emerge from our choirs! Let us all support one another in this invitation to service.
- ♪ As a diocese, we thank all music ministers for the gift of their ministry and we look forward to that day when our choirs can once more lead God’s people in song.