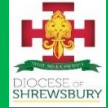




**COVID-19
St Winefride's
Bishops' Conference
(Step 3 Guidance 17th May 21)**



CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OF ENGLAND AND WALES

Covid-19 Route Map: Step 3 Guidance has been released by the above. Some salient points are outlined below, where text is in italics, these are my comments. For the complete guidance, please use the link to the bottom of the notes.

Mitigations

It is important to mitigate against the risks of virus transmission. Although the vaccine rollout programme is very successful to date, over 68% of adults having had one dose and 35% two doses, the risk of transmission is still live. Therefore, it is recommended that two key measures to help reduce aerosol and droplet spread remain in place for now:

Social Distancing and Capacity of Churches

It is possible and advisable now to make a reassessment of the Covid-secure capacity of churches based on the principles of combination prevention, specifically:

- Continuing use of physical mitigations, especially face coverings continue to be worn and hand sanitiser used on entry
- Evaluation of the virus prevalence in the local area
- Good ventilation of the sacred space
- Local percentage of the population vaccinated
- Any covid-19 variants of concern in the local area
- Seating arrangements for family groups and bubbles.

Based on these considerations, some churches may conclude they can safely increase the Covid-secure capacity of the building factoring into the calculations the mitigations of coverings, ventilation and vaccines listed above (eg by making spacing 1m where there is good ventilation and good mitigation measures). In some churches, this reassessment may bring the Covid-secure capacity up to 50% of that of the building.

The safe number for St Winefride's church has been calculated at 46.

At this number, it allows two people per bench, sitting at either end of the bench for those benches not chained off.

If this procedure is followed, no stewards would be needed for this attendance number.

Above this number stewards are required to allocate seating according to bubble size to allow maximum usage of the church seating. Generally this will allow 70 people (with appropriate seating of family bubbles).

Congregational Singing

Indoor congregational singing is still prohibited at Step 3

There are provisions for “single small group of singers” “only where essential to an act of communal worship”. These will be addressed only if necessary due to the size and shape of the church.

Acts of Worship

There are guidelines for these contained within the reference document, they cover;

Celebration of Holy Mass
Celebration of Holy Baptism
Celebration of Confirmation
Celebration of the Sacrament of the Sick⁸ (Not Covid-19 cases)
Celebration of Ordination
Celebration of Marriage
Celebration of Funerals

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/05/CBCEW-COVID-Step-3-Guidance-v.pdf>