

Chancery of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore

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CHANCERY NOTICE

Archdiocesan Stance on the Virtual Solemnization of Marriages

In light of the *Covid-19 (Temporary Measures for Solemnization and Registration of Marriages) Bill* that was passed in Parliament on 5 May 2020, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Singapore has reviewed our theological, canonical and pastoral understanding of the Sacrament of Marriage. This Notice lays forth the Archdiocese's position on this delicate matter affecting our Catholic community in Singapore.

While cognizant of the current health pandemic that is gripping the world, we also wish to affirm the importance of the physical interaction of the persons celebrating our sacraments. As Pope Francis reminded the Church in his homily on 17 April 2020, “[t]he Church, the Sacraments, the People of God are concrete.” As far as possible, we must pursue the ideal of the Church which is “always with the people and with the Sacraments”. As such, while the Church appreciates the efforts by the authorities in making marriage more accessible to couples in this difficult time, the Catholic Church in Singapore will not be able to solemnize marriages via video link.

We aim to help our couples celebrate this sacrament in person, while observing all health directives and social distancing measures implemented by our health authorities. This may mean only having the essential persons gathered (the couple, two witnesses and the priest) for the valid celebration of marriage as a Sacrament. The Internet becomes a useful means of reaching out to extended families and friends who wish to join in this celebration in real time.

In this way, the requirements of a canonical marriage can be fulfilled, giving spiritual meaning to the couple on their wedding day while also allowing families and friends of the couple to witness this happy occasion, observing always safety and health requirements.