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Hello Everyone,

As you may have seen, the Victorian Government has announced an **easing of COVID restrictions for Regional Victoria from 11.59 pm tonight (August 9)**.

Religious gatherings and ceremonies are permitted for up to **100 people indoors** and up to **300 people outdoors** (plus those required to conduct religious ceremonies).

In general, a **density quotient** of 1 person per 4 square metres applies. However, a venue smaller than 100 square metres can have up to 25 people per venue before the density quotient applies. In other words, even very small churches are permitted to have up to 25 people for a religious gathering. For a gathering of more than 25 people, the number would be calculated at 1 person per 4 square metres. **COVID Check-in Marshals** must ensure attendees check-in.

Funerals (indoor and outdoor) are permitted with up to **50 people** attending, plus those necessary to conduct the funeral. Children under 12 months old are not counted towards this cap. **COVID Check-in Marshals** must ensure attendees check-in.

Weddings (indoor and outdoor) are permitted with up to **50 people** attending, plus those necessary to conduct the wedding. **COVID Check-in Marshals** must ensure attendees check-in.

Masks must be worn indoors and outdoors except if at home or if an exception applies.

I rejoice once more that we will be able to gather for Mass and other celebrations. I renew my thanks to those people in each parish who have been helping us to come together when permitted, while attending to the COVID-safe directives. I thank you all for your patience as we make the adjustments needed so that we can pray as a community while keeping everyone safe.

God bless you all.

Bishop Paul