

Lockdown, Invacuation & Evacuation Policy 2026

PURPOSE:

As part of our health and safety policies and procedures Sacred Heart Parish has a Lockdown, Invacuation & Evacuation policy. Depending on the hazard within or near the church site a decision will be made to implement one of the procedures ensuring all parishioners and visitors are as safe as possible.

DEFINITIONS:

The term '**evacuation**' refers to the orderly removal of parishioners and visitors from the church building; this can be as a result of a fire or other incident within the building.

The term '**invacuation**' refers to keeping parishioners and visitors inside the church building to ensure their safety from an internal or external incident which has the potential to pose a threat to their safety and wellbeing, e.g. toxic fumes in the air.

The term '**lockdown**' refers to the procedure of locking external doors and windows before taking immediate shelter in a secure location. This procedure is typically invoked as a response to a security threat or attempted access by unauthorised person/s with intent to cause damage or harm.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES:

In an emergency situation, such as a fire, the church's evacuation procedure will be implemented with the priority of getting everyone out of the church building safely and calling the emergency services.

- All stewards/fire wardens will be given a copy of the evacuation procedure and clear instructions regarding the fire evacuation procedure will be displayed around the church building.
- New stewards/fire wardens are advised of evacuation procedures as part of their induction training.
- The designated fire wardens during services are: Stewards and Musicians
- Stewards/Fire wardens will be shown all the designated evacuation points.
- A member of the Social Group will take on the role of Fire Marshall during social events
- Procedures to be followed are clearly explained in the appropriate Emergency Fire Procedures Briefing Sheet ie Services, Children's Liturgy & Events see Appendix ONE.
- Procedures to be followed in other emergency situations are explained in the Emergency Response Procedures Briefing Sheet - Services/CLotW/Events see Appendix TWO.

INVACUATION PROCEDURES:

On some occasions parishioners may be outside the building. This may be at the start & end of Masses/services. There should always be a responsible adult outside with any children. A steward recognising a threat or being informed of a threat should shout '**Inside, Inside**'. Parishioners will be ushered inside the building as quickly as possible.

Stewards should continue the shouts if it is safe to do so, checking that no one is still outside. The result should be a chain reaction of shouts that would be heard all around the building.

Stewards should follow the CLOSE principal:

- C** - Close all windows, lock doors where possible
- L** - Lock up
- O** - Out of sight and minimise movement
- S** - Stay silent and avoid drawing attention.
- E** - Endure. Be aware you may be in lock down for some time.

CLOTW Leaders & helpers should ensure all the children are inside and await further instructions.

LOCKDOWN NOTIFICATION:

Parishioners will be notified that a lockdown is to take place on hearing the shout 'Lockdown, Lockdown'

Stewards should continue the shouts if it is safe to do so. The result should be a chain reaction of shouts that would be heard all around the building.

PROCEDURES:

Procedures follow the CLOSE principal:

- C** - Close all windows, lock doors where possible
- L** - Lock up
- O** - Out of sight and minimise movement
- S** - Stay silent and avoid drawing attention.
- E** - Endure. Be aware you may be in lock down for some time.

1. The above signal will activate a process; once inside parishioners will be directed to HIDE.
2. If safe to do so Stewards will lock the front doors, check all other exits are secure, windows & blinds are closed and lights turned off.
3. Once a safe place has been found parishioners should remain where they are. Try to position themselves away from possible sightlines from external windows/doors. Protected spaces are – the toilets and corridor to the Presbytery
4. Mobile phones should be put on silent mode.
5. CLOTW Leaders & helpers, will move children & parents away from windows and doors, move to as safe a position as possible, e.g. behind furniture, under chairs supporting everyone to keep calm and quiet. Protected spaces are – the toilets and corridor to the Presbytery.

NO ONE SHOULD MOVE ABOUT THE SITE UNLESS INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.

6. Parents/carers in the main body of the church should support their children in keeping calm and quiet.
7. Everyone should remain in lockdown positions until informed by Stewards in person of further instruction or that there is an all clear.
8. As soon as possible after the lockdown CLOTW leaders should conduct a register and advise Parish Priest of any unaccompanied children that cannot be accounted for.

LEAD ROLES:

1. Lead Steward to contact the police when it is safe to do so.
2. Stewards will lock the front doors, check all other exits are secure, windows & blinds are closed and lights turned off, if it is safe to do so.
3. CLOTW Leader will check the external exit door is closed, lock the internal doors, close windows and blinds, if it is safe to do so.
4. Parish Priest or Lead organiser to contact the Police when it is safe to do so using the ETHANE principals, see Appendix THREE.

Communication with parents/carers of children attending CLOTW independently.

Parents/carers of children attending CLOTW have been informed that children will not be returned to them during a Lockdown and that CLOTW Leaders & helpers will ensure the children are looked after and that they should prioritise their own safety.

TRAINING

All above procedures will be discussed with Stewards and CLoTW leaders/helpers at least annually. The Emergency Fire Procedures Briefing Sheet & Emergency Response Briefing Sheet have been developed to assist with this.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

Where a steward is aware of a parishioner or visitor who has a disability which may result in them needing help in evacuating, invacuating or keeping themselves safe, they should follow the procedures in the PEEP plan see Appendix FOUR.

Appendix ONE: Emergency Fire Procedures Briefing Sheet ie Services, Children's Liturgy & Events

Appendix TWO: Emergency Response Briefing Sheet – Services/CLoTW/Events

Appendix THREE: ETHANE - Initial actions at a terrorist major incident

E - Exact Location

- confirm nearest junction or exact address
- geographic size of the incident

T - Type of Incident

- explosion, building collapse, firearms incident etc.

H - Hazards

- identify the hazards present or suspected (such as number of attackers, types of weapons etc)
- consider potential or secondary devices
- is evacuation or invacuation necessary and safe?

A - Access Routes

- update with routes that are safe to use by the emergency services
- clarify routes which are blocked
- nominate and search the RVP

N - Number of Casualties

- list type and severity
- approximate number of dead, injured, survivors and witnesses

E - Emergency Services

- list those services present and those required
- conduct a joint dynamic hazard assessment with the emergency services

Appendix FOUR: personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

Approved date	11/2/2026
Review date	February 2027