**A Guide to Live Streaming**   
  
**1. Purpose**   
  
Live streaming serves as a vital pastoral role in the life of the Church. It is used to:

* Enable housebound parishioners to participate in the liturgy and feel connected to their parish community.
* Allow family and friends who cannot attend baptisms, weddings, or funerals to take part remotely, offering comfort and inclusion.
* Provide a focus for private prayer, especially through the visibility of the tabernacle, for those unable to visit the church in person.
* Support evangelisation, allowing those exploring the faith or unable to attend in person to experience the Church’s worship from anywhere in the world.

These uses are consistent with the legitimate interests of the Church and its mission to reach out to all, especially the most isolated.

**2. Scope**  
  
This guidance applies to all clergy, staff, and volunteers involved in the live streaming of Masses or events. It complements the archdiocese’s Data Protection Policy.

**3. Live Streaming Measures**

*Please note that live streaming is optional at the discretion of a parish and is not obligatory.*

Live streaming involves the processing of personal data and must be conducted with care and transparency and in accordance with Data Protection legislation. By following this guidance, parishes should be compliant with the Data Protection regime. The following measures must be in place:

* Clear signage at all entrances and within the church
* Announcements before services begin
* Pew sheets or notices explaining where to sit to avoid being filmed
* A designated non-filming area, clearly marked and communicated

Communion Privacy:

To protect the dignity and privacy of those receiving the Eucharist:

* No filming of Communion queues or individuals receiving Communion

During Communion, the camera must either:

* Be turned away or paused, or
* Display the Archdiocese of Liverpool Spiritual Communion Prayer (see Section 5)

Consent:

* Priests, Ministers and Individuals with liturgical roles (e.g. readers, servers) must be informed and given the option to opt out of being filmed with considerations given to how they can continue in their ministries appropriately.
* Children under 16 and vulnerable adults must only be filmed with explicit consent from parents/guardians or carers.

Safeguarding:

* For some vulnerable groups there are safeguarding implications if services are web streamed, for example those fleeing abuse or children who are looked after and so it is important that these arrangements are in place and clearly communicated in order for people to feel safe and to promote access to all.
* There may be occasions when it is necessary to stop live streaming (e.g. if someone is taken ill during Mass) and this must always be immediately possible.

Recordings:

* It is not reasonable for streamed content to be available online forever and we have therefore set a **retention period of three months maximum** for all events or services that are available online, in whatever format. However, we recognise that some events are special and those involved may wish for them to be available longer or until they download a personal copy. This can be done, but signed consent must be in place.
* Another scenario could be that a parish wishes to keep a special mass, for example, a centenary service. For such an occasion we may consider we have a different reason to retain this service, this could be for historical purposes.

School Masses:

* Usually, schools have a policy for streaming and photography, so they may have arrangements in place. The best way forward is to speak with the school and see if there are any concerns about individual children whose parent/guardians will not have agreed their image can be shared outside the school. They will need to be managed by the school to ensure their image is not broadcast.

**4. Copyright Compliance**

All streamed content must comply with copyright law:

* Use only music and images for which the parish holds the appropriate streaming licenses (e.g. One License, CCLI)
* Do not stream commercial music (e.g. MP3s, CDs) without explicit permission
* Parish musicians should confirm they waive any performing rights
* Do not use images or videos found online unless they are royalty-free or licensed

**5. Spiritual Communion**

During the distribution of Holy Communion, the following prayer could be displayed for online viewers:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already here, and unite myself wholly to You.

**6. Risks of Live Streaming**

Live streaming involves risks such as data breaches, copyright breaches safeguarding issues, and reputational damage. It is essential to follow best practices to mitigate these risks.

**7. Approved Platforms**

Use approved platforms for live streaming, such as YouTube and Church Services TV. Ensure the platform chosen complies with data protection regulations. You should ensure that the Parish has control of any such accounts so it can control the footage, including account passwords.

**8. Lone Working**

When working alone in elevated or remote areas, such as the gallery, inform someone of your location and any medical issues. Ensure you have a means of communication in case of emergencies.

**9. Guidance Review**

This guidance will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

**10. Contact Information**

Helen McLoughlin, solicitor and compliance officer, 0151 522 1024/ [h.mcloughlin@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:h.mcloughlin@rcaol.org.uk)

Lizzie Williams, communications manager, 0151 522 1094/ [e.williams@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:e.williams@rcaol.org.uk)