

Guidance on the use of booking systems for Mass

In various BCOS COVID-19 guidance documents, reference is made to the need for parishes to consider the use of a 'booking' system if available places at Mass are reduced and demand exceeds capacity. As well as enabling parishes to manage bookings, such systems also allow parishes to record details of those who have been present in church in case names are later needed for any "contact tracing" required by Public Health officials if there were to be an outbreak which can be traced back to a church.

This paper outlines one FREE online system (**EVENTBRITE**) which would meet the needs of both parishioners and parish priests/administrators in those parishes where the management of bookings for different Mass times could get quite complex¹.

While there are various software packages which would enable you to devise your own online booking system, **EVENTBRITE** is "pre-packaged" to provide these benefits:

Benefits for the parishioner	Benefits for the parish
simple online booking of a guaranteed place at Mass on a specific date and time	The total number of places available at any Mass can be set.
automatic email confirmation that a place has been reserved (or denied if all places are taken up)	The deadline for 'bookings' can be set (up to 1 hour before Mass begins).
the option to reserve a maximum number of places at a Mass	Each place must be reserved for a specified person whose name and contact number is recorded (You can also ask for address details).
the option to print ticket(s) and bring to church or simply to check your name at the door.	A printed list of all names 'registered' for the Mass can be printed for checking at the door.
	You can require all attendees to bring a ticket (printed or on mobile phone) to gain admission. Or they can simply give their name at the church door for check-in.
	You can provide the booking link on the parish website and social media platforms.
	The system can keep a record of attendance at each Mass, if this is required.
	After creating an event for your first Mass, you can add the date for the following Sunday, replicating the same details from the first Mass.
	Eventbrite is compliant with GDPR legislation; users are advised about how personal data is used.

¹ For anyone unable to arrange online access, provision could be made for telephone calls to a designated phone number where voicemail would record the necessary details which could later be added to the online booking system.

Basic steps to get started on a booking system for Mass

- Step 1: Create an **account** at [eventbrite.co.uk](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk)
- Step 2: Create an **event**: Name (eg., “Sunday Mass”); Location; Date and Time (choose “Recurring Events” if more than one Mass per day)
- Step 3: Schedule the event date and time (best to do first week only, initially)
- Step 4: Add an image and description (eg., “Sunday Mass in St’s Church”)
- Step 5: Create your **“Ticket”** (specify the number of places available and the last time possible for reserving places). Also set the “Ticket Sales End” time (eg., “2 hours before Mass begins”). Under **“Advanced settings”**, set the maximum number of places which can be reserved by one person.
- Step 6: **Publish** your event (which makes it open for bookings). Links to the Mass on this date are provided for use on your website and social media platforms.
- Step 7: Go to **“Order Options”** to specify that you wish to obtain information for “Each Attendee” so that you collect details of all attendees (eg., name, email, phone number; other details can be required under “customise”). Enter any “instructions” (eg., “Please give your name at the door” or “Please bring your ticket(s) with you.”)
- Step 8: Also, under **“Registration Options”** on this page, enter the instructions for those who are trying to book places (eg., “You must give the name and a contact number for each person who is included in your booking.”). You can also enter a message for anyone trying to book a place after all places have been reserved.
- Step 9: Go to **“Order Confirmation”** to enter any message you wish to be seen when confirming that places have been successfully reserved. Here you can also choose to include “printable tickets” with the order confirmation.
- Step 10: Go to **“Event type & Language”** to choose “Registration Event” rather than “Ticketed Event”.

To obtain a check-in list of those who have booked places at a Mass:

- Step 11: Go to **“Manage Attendees”** and select “Orders”. At the top of the page, in the Report Type box, choose **“Attendee Summary”** from the drop-down list. Then select the specific Mass.
- Step 12: Select **“Attendee List”**, then choose “Surname” to sort the list in alphabetical order and click on “Download list as a PDF”. This can be used to check names at the door.
- Step 13: The Attendee List can be used to enter on the system details of who was present at any Mass. There are also options provided to use a mobile phone, tablet or laptop to check in people electronically.