

QC to cut curfew for dawn masses

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The Quezon City government will further shorten its curfew period starting Dec. 16 to pave the way for start of the traditional Simbang Gabi or dawn masses, Mayor Joy Belmonte said yesterday.

Belmonte has approved the revised guidelines for the general community quarantine, which set the curfew hours between midnight and 3 a.m., from the current midnight to 4 a.m.

“Simbang Gabi is part of our celebration of the Christmas season and our culture, so even if there is a pandemic, we want to keep its spirit alive,” she said in Filipino.

“But we should not forget that we still have the pandemic and we must always be careful to prevent the spread of the virus,” she added.

For those attending Simbang Gabi, Belmonte reiterated existing rules limiting attendance to 30 percent of the venue’s capacity. She also stressed the need to always follow health protocols such as social distancing and wearing of face masks and face shields.

The city banned the traditional caroling and encouraged families to limit Christmas and New Year celebrations to the immediate household.

“We also strongly discourage commingling of multiple households in activities such as large family reunions,” the mayor said, adding that non-essential gatherings of more than 10 persons remain strictly prohibited.

The city government said fireworks displays will only be allowed in designated locations such as the Quezon Memorial Circle and Eastwood, with the events livestreamed online to allow everyone to enjoy without having to go out of their homes.