

With the increased use of Zoom as a platform for teleconferencing, webinars and virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, concerns have arisen about “Zoom Bombing”. This is the term used for individuals or groups who gain access to Zoom meetings to which they were not invited, often for the purpose of harassing attendees or disrupting proceedings.

Given the emotionally stressful times we are living in, it is especially important to protect the safety and well-being of the faithful—even in a virtual setting. The following are some security measures which may help guard against uninvited participation in your personal, Parish, Metropolis, or Archdiocesan meetings or events.

1. Avoid using your Personal Meeting ID for meetings. Instead, use an ID that is exclusive to a single meeting. Zoom’s support page offers a video walk-through on how to generate a random meeting ID.
2. Use the Zoom “Waiting Room” to see who is waiting to join before allowing access. Zoom offers a support article on how to use this feature.
3. Disable other options, including the ability for others to Join Before Host and remote control (it should be disabled by default, but check to be sure—see below) using the Settings icon on the upper right side of the page.
4. Disable screen-sharing for non-hosts via the host controls at the bottom of your screen, Click on the arrow next to Share Screen, then click Advanced Sharing Options. Go to Who can share? and click on Only Host.
5. Once the meeting begins and everyone is in, lock the meeting to outsiders (see our tips below) and assign at least two meeting co-hosts. The co-hosts will be able to help control the situation in case anyone bypasses your efforts and gets into the meeting. To deputize your co-hosts, go to the Settings icon, then to the Meetings tab. Scroll down to Co-host and make sure it is enabled. If Zoom asks you for verification, click Turn On.

The measures above will greatly reduce the likelihood of unwelcome guests. However, they are not foolproof. Before ending the meeting entirely, try the following to eject disruptive participants:

1. Go to the Participants List in the navigation sidebar, and scroll down to More. Click Lock Meeting to stop further participants from entering the meeting and remove specific participants.
2. Mute them by going to the Participants List, scrolling down to the bottom, and clicking Mute All Controls. This makes it so the unwelcome participant can’t use their microphone.