

Dear Parishioners of St Joseph's & St Charles,

I am pleased to inform you that the church has passed its diocesan inspection and that the bishop has given permission for St Joseph's church to reopen.

Our Masses this coming week will be:

Saturday, 11 July, at 5.00pm &
Sunday, 12 July, at 8.30am & 10.00am

ALSO

Tuesday, 14 July, at 7.00pm &
Friday, 17 July, at 10.00am

The social-distancing rules mean that only every third bench in our church is available for seating. We can accommodate a minimum of 2 people on each of those 27 benches. This gives a minimum number of 54 individuals who can attend Mass, though some benches containing households or 'social bubble' groups can obviously contain more. The crucial number here is 27. **Once those 27 benches are full of 2 or more people then the church is full.**

When the church is full you may not enter the church. However, if you wish, you may remain outside as the main doors of the church will still be open and you can follow Mass there. As people leave the church you may then enter by the porch to receive Holy Communion

What does this mean for seating in the church?

Any attempt to claim or think of 'my place' must be abandoned for now.

The three sections of the benches will be allocated for seating thus:

Centre aisle: For individuals only. (Funerals & Weddings excepted)

2 individuals must sit at the opposite ends of the bench.

Side aisles: For households or 'social bubble' groups (families, etc).

On these benches you are asked to fill up the bench from the wall first.

Please follow the directions of the stewards.

Do I need to book?

Not at present BUT we will record your name and telephone number should you need to be contacted with regard to HM Government's 'track & trace' system.¹

N.B. Remember, you can choose to attend one of any of the 5 Masses next week – there is no Sunday obligation. I suspect the weekdays will have fewer people and therefore carry less risk. Perhaps that will be a good day for you to come?

HM Government regulations only permit 30 people to attend a wedding or funeral.

- We have to operate a one-way system for entering and exiting the church. You enter by the church porch as usual and will leave via the north side aisle (*Lady altar*) only. Those with restricted mobility or in wheelchairs must wait until everyone has left and then leave by the porch.

- You are encouraged to use the hand-sanitiser provided on entering or leaving the church.
- The church doors will remain locked until approximately 15 minutes before Mass.
- The toilets are not in use.
- The undercroft (crypt) and sacristy are out of bounds unless you are authorised to enter.
- There will be no pieces of paper available for you, e.g. newsletters or Mass sheets, so you might want to bring a missal if you have one.
- The distribution of Holy Communion will follow the one-way system.
- For now, votive candle are not available (hopefully coming soon!)
- A box for any offering you wish to make will be available at the sanctuary.

Please remember **that the obligation to attend Mass does not apply at present**. This means you do not have to come to Mass for now. Live-streamed Masses will continue to be broadcast. HM Government strongly advises that those who are aged 70 or older and those who are vulnerable or shielding **should not return to places of worship until after 1 August**.

There is no need to be anxious or agitated, either for themselves or others, and you should feel under no pressure to come. Know whenever it is that you do return that we shall be delighted to see you. Through the Lord we are all still in spiritual communion with one another and one of the Masses of Sunday will, as always, be continued to be offered for all our people, present or not.

Finally, you **MUST NOT** attend Mass if

- You are unwell.
- Somebody in your household has coronavirus symptoms, for example a cough or high temperature.

Again, could you please pass on the above to anyone you know who does not have access to the internet or e-mail. Thank you.

Our Lady of Walsingham, *pray for us*

St Joseph, *pray for us*

St Charles Borromeo, *pray for us*

With my prayers,

Rev. Mark McManus

Parish Priest

9 July 2020

1. The record of your attendance must be kept for 21 days. It will then be destroyed.