



Dear parishioners,

8th January 2021

As we continue to hope and pray for an end to the Coronavirus pandemic, this letter is being sent in view of your understandable concerns about coming to the church for private prayer and Mass.

In an excerpt from the email sent to you on Tuesday 5th January, and according to the Government Lockdown Guidance in terms of Communal Worship and Life Events, the following guidance is provided: 'You can leave home to attend or visit a place of worship for communal worship, a funeral or event related to a death, a burial ground or a remembrance garden, or to attend a wedding ceremony. You should follow the guidance on the safe use of places of worship and must not mingle with anyone outside of your household or support bubble when attending a place of worship.'

In the first instance, for anyone who is shielding or classed as vulnerable, please do follow the guidelines as set out by the Government for yourselves and your loved ones. For anyone who is nervous or worried for themselves or their family being in public spaces or coming to the church, please bear in mind that you are not under any obligation to come to Mass as our Sunday obligation continues to be lifted during this time. You may choose to come to Mass during the week as the numbers are much lower when compared to weekend attendance, but you are not obliged to.

If you do choose to come to Mass, please note that for your safety, we will be strictly adhering to the following measures:

1. Please remember to bring your mask if you can and put it on before entering the church.
2. On entering the church, please sanitise your hands and give the steward your name to check against the booking list.
3. Please follow the steward's direction on where to sit; this will be your seat for the duration of Mass or the length of time you stay in the church for prayer.

Please note that we will be adhering to a social distancing of 2 metres, both when seated and when processing to and from Communion and when leaving the church.

4. During Mass, there will be no singing.
5. Please wait for the steward to direct you when to come up for Holy Communion or to receive a blessing. You must join in with the communion procession as this prevents anyone from crossing or passing in front of someone else.
6. At the end of Mass, you must remain seated until the steward has directed you how and when to leave the church. You must not interact with anyone outside your bubble either inside the church or when you leave the church. Please do not stop to meet with anyone in the church carpark or around the church building.

It is a time when difficult decision making has been presented to every individual and family, in our homes, in our parish, and in homes and parishes all over the world.

The church must always do her best, especially in times such as these, to provide pastoral care for souls – even if that may be for one or two people who will attend Mass.

For anyone who understandably decides they cannot attend Mass in person, the Livestream is thankfully available to all, visit www.churchservices.tv We are so grateful for the blessing to be able to bring the Mass into your homes this way during these times.

Urgent request for Stewarding: Those of you in the parish who are able to come to Mass, and who are not deemed vulnerable in any way, please consider helping with the stewarding at Mass. Contact the parish office for details 01474705361/ hartley@rcaos.org.uk on how to help, we would need 6 people to come forward immediately, as some of our most faithful stewards are having to take extra precautions.

Thank you all for your faith, your continued support, and your hope in hope. God bless you all.
Father Patrick.