



ST PAUL'S CHURCH, POYNTON

WORSHIPPING SAFELY IN OUR CHURCH

PARISH MASS ARRANGEMENTS FOR 9TH AUGUST 2020



RETURNING TO WORSHIP TOGETHER

Under Government and Diocesan guidelines and approval, we are being allowed to open up our church for socially distanced worship. This obviously can only be achieved, like the miracle of faith itself, if everyone involved plays their part. Please read and follow carefully the information contained in this briefing guidance and adhere to the instructions of those volunteer stewards who will meet, greet, and direct you at the front entrance to church. In this way, with God's help, we will attain a safe first step back to our worship together.

A NOTE OF CAUTION

It would be misleading to think that because we have come through the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic that the worst is over. It is clear from the Government and Diocese advice that we are all still at risk. In particular, we would caution anyone who falls into the following categories to join us (if possible) by watching Facebook Live rather than attending church:

- Those of you who are over 70 with or without COVID-19 symptoms.
- Anyone, who has underlying health conditions that would make them vulnerable to COVID-19
- Those of you who have had symptoms of, or have been in contact with someone suspected of having, COVID-19 in the last fourteen days.

RE-OPENING CHURCH FOR MASS

To hold Sunday Mass at 10am on 9th August at St Paul's Church, the number of seats will be much less than usual and must be booked (see **BOOKING YOUR SEAT** below).

Our Sunday Mass will be conducted strictly under the current regulations and guidelines that apply. Organising any future Masses will require your support, particularly those willing to volunteer in the key roles of Stewards who ensure a safe environment in the Church.

To meet social distancing requirements, unfortunately, the congregation will be limited to around 60 people (including volunteers) seated on the pews in the nave. No other rooms or parts of the church will be open or accessible to the congregation at this time, including the toilet, piety stall, Upper Room, etc.

This Mass will also be available via live video streaming provided by the Parish's Facebook Live page.

Also note that since the COVID-19 pandemic began, Roman Catholics have been freed from their obligation to celebrate Mass every Sunday.

BOOKING YOUR SEAT

Seats are allocated strictly by pre-booking before 11am on Friday 7th Aug. To book please ring our parish booking number on 07729 283 978 (mobile charges will apply). You will be asked for the number of people in your group, full names of those in your group, and the preferred contact details.

If you decide, having made a booking that you need to change the booking, or that you will not be able to attend then please cancel by ringing the telephone booking number before 10am on Friday 7th Aug to allow another person to take that seat.

ARRANGEMENTS IN COMING TO MASS ON 9TH AUGUST

1. Remember that when the Church opens for Mass, it will only open for that purpose. Doors will be open from 9:45am and close soon after the Mass ends.
2. Please do not arrive earlier than 9:45am to reduce the risk of a group forming outside of the church.
3. The church should be entered through the front doors, and exit will be through the side door. If you have serious mobility constraints or use a wheelchair, on arrival please arrange with one of the stewards to make your entrance using the side door.
4. Father Peter Burke will be leading the Mass on 9th August, but his attendance will be solely for the purpose of leading the Mass. If you have need of spiritual and other guidance not related to this Mass, please contact him directly via the parish website www.stpaulspoynton.org.uk, email or by telephone.

THE USE OF HAND SANITISER, DISPOSABLE GLOVES AND MASKS

1. Those attending Mass must wear their own face-covering.
2. Hand sanitiser will be provided for all attending Mass and dispensed on entrance and exit.
3. The parish will provide appropriate PPE for our Stewards.

ENTERING AND MOVING AROUND OUR CHURCH

1. Social distancing should be maintained throughout your visit to, in and from the church.
2. We will be providing safe spacing markers within the church.
3. Upon arrival you must wait to be seated by the stewards so that you are socially distanced; the church seating will be allocated on arrival, progressively from the front to the back. We appreciate parishioners usually have a preference to where they usually sit, however your cooperation is appreciated as we need to ensure social distancing is observed at all times (and not just when you are at your seat).
4. Please remember that the church will have been opened up specifically for Mass and that all other areas of the church are off limits, e.g. all areas around the altars, sacristy, including the lighting of candles and access to the toilets will be closed.
5. Missals, newspapers and paper versions of the newsletter will not be available.

DURING MASS

- Once seated, naturally, you may engage straightaway in your own private prayer.
- Once it appears that the congregation is fully settled Mass will commence.

LEAVING CHURCH

- At the end of Mass, please remain in your seat; a steward will direct you to exit in an orderly fashion.
- Communion hosts will be distributed in the hand as you leave church.
- When exiting the church, please maintain your social distancing. Always remember that standard lockdown guidelines apply in all circumstances, and that this should not be treated as a social gathering.

A FINAL NOTE

We are aware that Mass with these constraints cannot replace the Mass and praying together as part of a congregation we enjoyed before the pandemic; however, please remember, that no matter where you pray, whether you speak to God in church or elsewhere, He will always hear you.

Hopefully we will soon be able to sit together in full worship, until then be assured, you will always be in our thoughts and prayers as much loved members of our parish family.

Love and prayer, Fr. Peter Burke Parish Priest