

My Dear Friends,

My prayer for you and your loved ones, at this most difficult time, is that you are coping as best you can and taking good care of yourselves while we work our way through this Coronavirus.

The world has never seen anything like this before. And this is a time when our trust and faith in God will be tested, like never before. How are you going to react?

With Hope

With Trust

With Prayer

With Mercy

With Love

With Compassion

With Generosity

With an open heart to God's holy will for each one of us.

All these powerful acts are crucial to us on our faith journey. It's through actively living out the commands of Jesus that we can have a powerful impact on the support we give to our brothers and sisters.

I know many of you have already begun to take care of your families, parishioners, neighbours and friends and I want to thank you for this but I would also like to encourage you to take care of yourselves. By looking after ourselves first, we will be able to look after each other. Please, please remember that we need to keep our social distance in order to protect each other and ourselves.

The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, having consulted the Ordinaries of the Dioceses, has agreed that **the cessation of public liturgies should begin from this Friday evening, 20th March 2020.** Because of the situation the Church finds herself in, the obligation for the faithful to attend Holy Mass on a Sunday or Holy day of Obligation is removed, until further notice.

I will be offering Holy Mass **privately** every day and your pre-booked Mass intentions will be offered during this Mass. Please continue to drop your Mass intentions through the presbytery letterbox for any intentions you would like

Bishop Patrick has created a YouTube channel, so that during this time Mass and other devotions will be live-streamed from the chapel at Bishop's House. This can be found by searching for 'Bishop Patrick McKinney' on YouTube and it will also be linked to his Facebook and Twitter accounts. **He will also be streaming Sunday Mass at 10am this coming Sunday, 22nd March and each Sunday during this period.** Other devotions will be advertised on his social media channels.

Bishop Patrick also invites us to join him **this Friday evening, March 20th at 7pm for a half hour period of Adoration, praying for all who are suffering or affected by this virus.** I encourage you to share this with other parishioners as a small way of remaining united in prayer as we begin this time in the diocese without public Masses. I know that the Cathedral is also planning to stream Masses and there may well be churches doing this in other parts of the diocese.

Celebration of Holy Mass here at Our Lady's

As I said earlier, I will continue to celebrate Mass within the parish without the faithful daily. The continuing celebration of Mass ensures that the faithful can join in Spiritual Communion with the priests of the Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states (1364): *As often as the sacrifice of the Cross by which 'Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed' is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out.* This daily celebration of Mass, even if it is now on my own, is a powerful way of interceding on behalf of you my parishioners and on behalf of everyone in our diocese. Liturgical resources for those at home, including those for making a "Spiritual Communion" with the priest, will be available on the CBCEW website and will soon also be put on the Nottingham diocesan website.

Our Lady's **church will be open** for private prayer, Stations of the Cross and Adoration on the following days and times:

- Monday to Friday 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm
- Saturday and Sunday 10.00 am – 12 Noon

I have added instructions that are now in place for the celebration of the Sacraments and sacramentals of the Church at this time to our website under the parish news section and you can view this by selecting your subject choice.

I need to take care of myself so that I can be of service to you, I will also rely on you to keep me safe by not putting me in unsafe situations. So if you need me for anything, I am available but please ask yourself the question “Do I really need Fr John or do I just want Fr John? And I too need to put the same questions to myself.

This suggestion came from a parishioner “that every evening at 8pm we all light a candle whether we're on our own or with our families and pray together that this nightmare will soon be over - let's hammer on heaven's door!” I have added several prayers to the website that you can use.

You may have things you would like to suggest to keep us going during Lent to the joys of Easter.

Post them, send them, and share them!

In the meantime, if you need support please contact the office.

With my deepest love and prayers to you all at this most challenging time in our history!

Fr John Martin

Parish Priest of Holy Cross and Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Churches.
[Serving the Communities of Hucknall, Bestwood and Bulwell](#)

The following instruction is now given for the celebration of the Sacraments and sacramentals of the Church at this time:

Baptisms

Baptisms should be deferred until such time that the public health advice is that congregations can gather safely. In case of necessity, baptisms should be celebrated with all the hygiene precautions that have been laid down by the Church in its COVID-19 advice.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Confession may be offered on request as long as hygiene and social distancing requirements are observed (e.g. a physical barrier between the penitent and the priest such as a grille and cloth). The use of Rite II and Rite III of the Rite of Penance is not permitted as this, by necessity, requires the gathering of people in our churches.

First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion

These celebrations should be postponed until a time that allows for families and friends to gather safely within our churches.

Confirmation

The celebrations of Confirmation should be deferred until such time that the public health advice is that congregations can resume public worship.

Marriage

If possible, the celebration of the sacrament of Matrimony should be deferred until such time that people can gather in numbers safely. However, if this is not possible and only in the most pressing of circumstances, then those present for the marriage should be restricted to the celebrant, bride and groom and immediate family, and if necessary, the legal Registrar.

Anointing of the Sick

No pastoral visits should be made to people who are self-isolating until the isolation period ends. However, do offer phone support. When anointing the sick, the Oil of the Sick can be applied using a cotton bud which can be burned afterwards (one end for anointing the head and the other for the hands) and the priest extends his hands over the sick person for the laying on of hands, without physical contact. This has been confirmed as a valid mode of celebrating those sacraments which involve “laying on of hands.” Visits to people in care homes or hospitals should follow advice from the staff on infection control.

Sacraments of Initiation at the Easter Vigil

No decision has yet been made. This will be dependent on the forthcoming decisions of the Bishops' Conference for the Holy Week ceremonies.

Funerals

It is so important that great pastoral sensitivity is shown to the grieving relatives at this most difficult time for them. **No Mass or service can take place in church.** The funeral service will take place at the graveside or at a crematorium, subject to the conditions laid down by the cemetery or crematorium authorities. Arrangements should be made for a Mass to be celebrated *in memoriam* at a later time when congregations are allowed to gather.

Prayers

Praying can be a great and exciting way of rediscovering the power of family prayer. Sit and watch the Mass together, talk about how it differs from when you attend Mass in a church. What can be learnt from this new experience? What does this new experience do for you, in your prayer and relationship with God? How can you grow deeper as a family and individually to develop your prayer life with the person of Jesus?

- Where does the Rosary or the Divine Mercy Chaplet fit in your prayer life?
- How often do you meditate? What is Meditation?
- Stations of the Cross?
- Reading the Word of God in the Year of the God Who Speaks?
- Make a list of the people who you need to pray for and those who have asked for your prayer and those who have no one to pray for them?

There are so many tools and ways in which we can pray. All we need is the desire to open our hearts and leave the rest to Jesus, the power of his Holy Spirit and the help of his blessed Mother Mary to guide us. My friends, allow this precious time to teach us something great, the power of Family Prayer. On 29th March we are to rededicate England to Our Lady's Dowry.

Rededicating England

In the past, England was given as a gift to Our Lady, a donation reflecting the great love of her people who sought Mary's prayers and protection. The gift to be given in 2020 will likewise reflect that same love of the Mother of God, but what will be offered will not be the country of England, but the gift of the personal faith of the people of this country as we seek once again the prayers and protection of the Mother of God. In particular, we ask Our Lady, Star of the New Evangelisation, to assist the Church in bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to the people of today by the witness of the Catholic community. In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope St Paul VI reflected on the power of witness: 'Above all the Gospel must be proclaimed by witness. Take a Christian or a handful of Christians who, in the midst of their own community, show their capacity for understanding and acceptance, their sharing of life and destiny with other people, their solidarity with the efforts of all for whatever is noble and good. Let us suppose that, in addition, they radiate in an altogether simple and unaffected way their faith in values that go beyond current values, and their hope in something that is not seen and that one would not dare to imagine. Through this wordless witness these Christians stir up irresistible questions in the hearts of those who see how they live: Why are they like this? Why do they live in this way? What or who is it that inspires them? Why are they in our midst? Such a witness is already a silent proclamation of the Good News and a very powerful and effective one. Here we have an initial act of evangelization.'

To this end on Sunday 29th March 2020, the Sunday after the Solemnity of the Annunciation, at 12 noon, the time of the Angelus, individuals will be invited to recite the new prayer based on the Angelus called the Angelus Promise. This may take place during Mass, or a Liturgy of the Word, or in one's home, or people may wish to make a pilgrimage on that day to a shrine or their cathedral.

The Act of Dedication will begin after the recitation of the Angelus Promise with the reading of the words of Archbishop Arundel: 'The contemplation of the great mystery of the Incarnation has drawn all Christian nations to venerate her from whom came the first beginnings of our redemption. But we English, being the servants of her special inheritance and her own dowry, as we are commonly called, ought to surpass others in the fervour of our praises and devotions.'

The Angelus Promise

R: The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

V: And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

As God once called Mary, so today he calls me to seek his Word in my life.

Hail Mary full of Grace...

R: Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

V: Be it done to me according to thy Word.

Mary's simple "yes" opened her heart to God's grace and all things become possible. Let my "yes" take away fear as I embrace God's will and like Mary 'ponder these things in my heart'.

Hail Mary full of Grace...

R: And the Word became flesh (bow or genuflect)

V: And dwelt among us.

Mary's faith-filled "yes", conceived first in her heart, led to the birth of our Saviour; as I commit myself to my faith-filled "yes" today, I accept my Saviour into my heart, bringing his life to my world.

Hail Mary full of Grace...

R: Pray for us most holy Mother of God

V: That we may be made worthy of the promises of God.

Let us pray:

O Holy Mother of God, pray for us and assist us as we dedicate ourselves this day. Your "yes" at the Annunciation brought our Saviour Jesus into the world, and you invite us to contemplate the great mystery of the Incarnation, sharing your joy in announcing that 'the Word was made flesh and lived among us'. May our "yes", this day, open our hearts to serve our sisters and brothers in this your Dowry, that they too may share our joy in the Good News that God walks among us. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen.

'As followers of Jesus Christ, we must learn to follow and to follow we must learn to trust. A physical pilgrimage through unfamiliar territory is a great lesson in trust; one must accept whatever the road has to offer: the accommodations, fellow travellers, the weather, the inconveniences, the hardships, the annoyances. A pilgrim heart looks to the journey with willingness, openness, and a good sense of humour. If we choose to trust that God has called us on this journey and he is directing it, we can relax and be open to the lessons he is seeking to teach us. We trust that God will walk the way with us, no matter what happens. He doesn't promise to make the way easy; he simply says, "I will be with you."

(Message of Pope Francis to pilgrims to Loreto) Mgr John Armitage Rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham



Pope Francis' prayer for Coronavirus

O Mary, you always shine on our path, as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in
Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do
as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried
our sorrows. You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need, and we
are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy
and to feasting after this time of trial,

to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain
the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O
glorious and blessed Virgin.

Communication

Communication is everything at the best of times and it is at times like this. We really need to be on the ball with one another so that no one is left out or forgotten. If you can, please check our Parish Website or Facebook.

For Holy Mass, you can watch live stream on one of the following:

The Bishop's YouTube or Twitter

Saint Barnabas Cathedral

EWTN

Walsingham

There are also ways in which you can communicate with each other; it's so important to keep in contact with one another. Please remember there is an army of volunteers waiting and willing to help anyone in need. Please, please stay in touch, look for and reach out to one another.

Phone call

Text

Skype

Email

Church

Opening times of the church for Private Prayer, Stations of the Cross and Adoration:

- Monday to Friday 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm
- Saturday and Sunday 10.00 am – 12 noon

Charitable Support

Our Poor Clare Sisters rely on donations of food to keep body and soul together. I know you won't, but please do not let us overlook them and their needs.

My friends, let us also remember that the church bills need to be paid, so where you can, please don't forget to drop through the letter box your collection offering. I am also aware that this is going to be a financially difficult time for many of you so please let's look out for one another at this time.

If you have food to spare, please remember the Food Bank!

Health and Wellbeing

Social distancing are the steps we can take to limit the spread of COVID-19 by reducing our social interactions. Everyone should take these steps as much as possible and it is particularly important for those people who are at a greater risk of severe illness from coronavirus.

The higher risk groups are people who;

- Are aged 70 or older (regardless of medical conditions)
- Are under 70 with an underlying health condition listed below (i.e. anyone instructed to get a flu jab as an adult each year on medical grounds):
 - Chronic (long-term) respiratory diseases, such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), emphysema or bronchitis
 - Chronic heart disease, such as heart failure
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - Chronic liver disease, such as hepatitis
 - Chronic neurological conditions, such as Parkinson's disease, motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), a learning disability or cerebral palsy
 - Diabetes
 - Problems with your spleen – for example, sickle cell disease or if you have had your spleen removed
 - A weakened immune system as the result of conditions such as HIV and AIDS, or medicines such as steroid tablets or chemotherapy
 - Being seriously overweight (a body mass index (BMI) of 40 or above)
 - Those who are pregnant

Social distancing measures are

- Avoiding contact with someone who is displaying symptoms of coronavirus;
- Avoiding non-essential use of public transport, varying travel times to avoid rush hour, when possible;
- Working from home, where possible;
- Avoiding large gatherings and gatherings in smaller public spaces such as pubs, cinemas, restaurants, theatres, bars, clubs;
- Avoiding gatherings with friends and family. Keep in touch using remote technology such as phone, internet, and social media;

- Using telephone or online services to contact your GP or other essential services.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

Self-isolation is for those people who have symptoms of COVID-19 and their household.

Symptoms of COVID 19 are a new persistent cough and/or a temperature.

If you live alone, you should stay at home for 7 days from the start of your symptoms.

If you live with other people, then everyone in your household must stay at home for 14 days.

If another person in the house develops symptoms, they must continue to self-isolate for 7 days from when they first showed symptoms.

Self-isolation means that you must stay at home; you cannot go to work, go to the shops or socialise. You should not have visitors to your home.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Sick, Housebound and Vulnerable

There are many parishioners offering their voluntary services to help out in whatever way they can. If you need support please contact me and I will make sure that you get the help you need.

Masses and Mass Offerings

As I will be offering Holy Mass **privately** each day, please continue to drop your Mass intentions through the presbytery letterbox.

So you can be spiritually united in the Sacrifice of the Holy Mass, I will be celebrating Mass **privately every day**.

There are four funerals taking place in the coming two weeks. Please keep these families in your prayers as there will be no Requiem Masses; only Graveside or Crematorium Services for these people.