

Public Mass During the Coronavirus Pandemic

It is wonderful that we can celebrate public Masses again after the lockdown. However, as the pandemic is a continuing reality, there are several procedures we need to follow to take the best care of one another. These procedures are stipulated by our own diocese and the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, in line with government regulations. The main points are:

1. **Stewards** will be present at each Mass to ensure hand sanitisation and social distancing, and to help people find seating. They will also sanitise the church after each Mass. (A huge thanks to our volunteers!)
2. Stewards will also record names and contact details of everyone attending in line with the government's **Test and Trace** procedures. Alternatively, we have QR codes displayed at each entrance which you can scan with the NHS Covid-19 App.
3. Everyone must wear a **face covering** except children under 11 and those medical or other exemptions.
4. To maintain **social distancing** about half of the seating in our churches is taped-off, and so the capacity of our churches is significantly less than normal. Please therefore consider sometimes **attending Mass on a weekday** if you can, to allow others to attend on Sunday.
5. **Children** must remain in the family pew. If a child is too young to understand and follow social distancing, families are asked not to attend but to continue to live-stream Mass at home. This is needed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all the congregation. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.
6. **Holy Communion** will be distributed at the normal time in Mass. However, it can only be received by the host and in the hand. No words will be spoken at that moment by the priest or communicant. Please hold your hands out flat as far in front of you as you can. The host will be gently dropped into your hand to avoid physical contact.
7. The **collection** will not be taken during Sunday Mass. There is a box at the back of the church for contributions; however, alternative ways of donating are described at https://www.effinghamandfetcham.org.uk/uploads/4/0/8/9/40894629/mb_version_the_vitual_collection_plate_2.pdf
8. Please continue take special care of social distancing **outside church after Mass**.
9. Whilst public Mass is now available, the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays remains **dispensed** by our Bishops. If you prefer to remain at home for your own welfare or that of others, this is perfectly acceptable.
10. All Masses from Our Lady of Sorrows will be **live-streamed**.

Fr Stephen
9 October 2020