





ST. ELPHEGE'S CHURCH
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Parish Office: Tuesday-Friday 9am -4pm
Parish Administrator: Fr. Patrick Udotai
Secretary: Mrs. Sandra Tsiboe

14 JUNE 2020

The Federation of St Elphege's & Regina Coeli Catholic Schools:
Executive Head of Schools: Mrs. Frances Hawkes
Head of St Elphege's School: Mr. Martin Jones | Tel: 020 8669 6306
Head of Regina Coeli's School: Mrs. Tessa Christoforou | Tel: 020 8688 4582

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST (CORPUS CHRISTI)		
SUN 14 <i>Solemnity, Holyday of Obligation, Gloria</i>	10:30 am	Jeremy Ravendran (RIP) Mary Ryan Nolasco Almeida
MON 15 <i>Feria</i>	10 am	Celisa Menezes
TUE 16 <i>Feria</i>	10am	Reconciliation of Sloban Stanford family
WED 17 <i>Feria</i>	10am	Nishal Witjeratne (RIP)
THU 18 <i>Feria</i>	10am	Frances and Mary Dale
FRI 19 <i>The Most Sacred Heart of Jesus (A)</i>	10am	Grace O'shea (Private Intentions)
SAT 20 <i>The Immaculate Heart of the blessed Virgin Mary</i>	10am	Kiyara Witjeratne (Bday)

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS	
	Please remember in your prayers for those who have recently died ... and those whose anniversaries are remembered at this time and all those who mourn the loss of loved ones. May they rest in perfect peace. Amen
	Please remember and pray for the sick, the isolated and their carers, especially those within our own parish Community: Rosemary Day, David Uzor, Kosenat Tetteh, Susie King, Jackie Van Elswick, Doreen Charlish, Margaret O'Flaherty, Rosaline Jordan, Anne Jagelman, Mary Scott, Brenda Kavanagh, Luke DuCasse', Monir Jacob, Alex Coffey, Eddie Hamilton, Amanda Burrett, Stan Czastka, Guy Saide ,B.Novicki ,Maggie Deleaney , Cynthia Lobendhan ,Theresa Mittcosbe, Frank Kinsella ,Tracy Killick.

NOTICES

Parishioners who need prayers for their families in this turbulent time should kindly contact the Parish Priest on 02086475079

GUIDANCE ON RE-OPENING OF CATHOLIC CHURCHES FOR INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

The doors of our churches have been closed since 23rd March 2020, following the clear instruction from the Government. Bishops, priests, and people share a deep desire to re-open our churches as soon as the Government allows us to do so. Re-opening must, of course, happen in a safe manner, and it is likely to take place in stages. Each stage will be accompanied by guidance to ensure this can happen safely and effectively. These guidance notes are intended to assist Parish Priests to be ready to re-open their churches as soon as permission is granted. They focus on what is needed to open churches safely (i.e. providing the least possible risk of transmission of the virus) for private prayer as a first step. This guidance has been compiled with detailed public health advice and scrutiny and complies with the Principles established by Government

PRINCIPLES

The Principles established by government to enable safe re-opening of churches below have been incorporated into this guidance:

- i. Protecting those at higher risk (e.g. the elderly, those extremely vulnerable and shielding or clinically vulnerable and accessing annual flu immunisation);
- ii. Enhanced cleaning of premises - more regularly and no sharing of items;
- iii. Social Distancing - including when using outdoor spaces.
- iv. Face coverings for reassurance.
- v. Hygiene (hand-washing) or hand sanitising facilities for all;
- vi. Managing children

What is “Individual Prayer?” Individual prayer within a place of worship is defined as a person or household entering the venue to pray on their own and not as part of a group, led prayer or communal act. They must be socially distanced from other individuals or households. Collective or communal prayer and regular scheduled services are not permitted at this time. This includes any minister of religion or lay person leading devotions or prayer.

How is the COVID-19 virus spread? The Government guidance states that the spread of COVID-19 is most likely to happen when there is close contact (within 2 metres or less) with an infected person. It is likely that the risk increases the longer someone has close contact with an infected person. Respiratory secretions (droplets) containing the virus are likely to be the most important means of transmission; these are produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

Opening and operating safely: hand hygiene, cleaning, and social distancing

The Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales are working with our Public Health advisors, Public Health England and the Government in order to provide clear directives for the opening of our churches safely which minimises the risk of virus transmission. Considering the above understanding of virus transmission, the proposed directives are:

1. At least two stewards must be present in the church throughout the time it is open for prayer; the stewards must ensure that hand sanitisation occurs at entry and exit points, social distancing is maintained by people in the church and if a pre-determined capacity is reached, they prevent others from entering the church. (Through, for example, a “one in, one out” policy.) People with cold or flu-like symptoms should be asked not to enter.
2. Stewards themselves should practice good hand hygiene through either regular hand washing or the use of alcohol-based hand sanitiser. They should not eat or drink or touch their face unless they have immediately washed their hands beforehand and should maintain social distance within the church. They should ensure any cuts or grazes on their hands are completely covered with waterproof dressings. They should not physically assist people
3. Unless necessary, for example in an emergency for first aid. In this case there are some basic steps which stewards should be aware of:
 - a. Be aware of the risks to yourselves and others in helping someone.
 - b. Make sure you wash your hands and use an alcohol gel, before and after helping someone. Ensure that you do not cough or sneeze over someone when you are helping them.
 - c. Wear disposable gloves or cover hands when dealing with people and dispose of them securely.

- d. Dispose of all waste from first aid safely in tied bags in bins.
- e. Do not touch a wound with your bare hand.
- f. Do not touch any part of a dressing that will come in contact with a wound.

It would be an additional infection control measure if people could enter and leave the church via separate doors. If this is not possible, stewards should do all they can to ensure people keep an appropriate social distance while entering and leaving church (eg by having an entrance line and an exit line).

- 4. Alcohol hand gel should be provided at the doors, with notices asking people to sanitise their hands as they enter and leave the church.
- 5. Places where people can sit or kneel in prayer should be two metres apart from one another in all directions. Benches should be blocked off, or seats rearranged, to facilitate this social distancing. People who are part of the same household can sit together but those not from the same household should maintain social distancing while in church.
- 6. The church must be cleaned fully at least once a day, using appropriate cleaning products and paying particular attention to touch points (door handles, collection boxes etc). Areas that are likely to be touched frequently (such as door handles) should be cleaned more often

- a. Cleaning an area with normal household disinfectant or detergent (including on pews) will reduce the risk of passing the infection on to other people.
- b. Those doing this work must wear disposable or washing-up gloves and aprons for cleaning. How these are disposed of or cleaned is important.
- c. The cleaning method for surfaces and touchpoints should be by using a disposable cloth or disposable paper tissues; first clean hard surfaces with detergent and water or detergent spray; not polish spray on its own. Pay particular attention to frequently touched areas and surfaces, such as bathrooms, grab-rails in corridors and stairwells and door handles. Anti-viral spray cleaner which does not harm wood and other fittings is available from suppliers.
- d. Those doing this work must practice good hygiene: wash their hands regularly with soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after removing gloves, aprons and other protection used while cleaning

If it is known that there has been an exposure to the virus, disposable cleaning materials should be double-bagged, then stored for 72 hours then thrown away in the regular rubbish after cleaning is finished. If not disposable, they should be washed at 60 degrees or above before re-use.

Guidance on re-opening Catholic Churches for Individual Prayer

- 7. Toilet facilities in churches should remain closed to prevent any risk of transmission of infection. If facilities for hand washing only can be provided, and these can be cleaned frequently, then these can be opened to allow people to wash their hands but only if liquid soap can be provided and air driers or disposable paper towels are used. Cloth towels should not be used.
- 8. Only printed materials intended to be taken away from the church by the user can be made available. Hymn books, missals, devotional materials etc which may be re-used should be removed from the church.
- 9. Physical veneration of relics or objects such as statues, crucifixes and shrines is not permitted. There should be no holy water in church stoups. Care should be exercised when lighting candles on votive stands using existing candles as a source of ignition, not lighters, matches or tapers. For electric candle stands, clean the row of buttons frequently.

Face Coverings Government has advised that cloth face coverings (and not surgical masks) could be worn for reassurance by people in enclosed areas but are not strictly necessary. Churches do not need to supply face coverings. People should not see their voluntary use disrespectful to prayer or the sacred space.

Children While children are unlikely to become very ill, they are capable of both being infected by the virus and of spreading it. Parents or guardians bringing children into a church should not be discouraged from doing so, but it will be important for parents to manage their children appropriately, particularly ensuring they touch as few surfaces as possible for their own safety.

Vulnerable People It remains a person's own choice to come to church to pray. Churches may wish to consider setting aside a section only for people who are more vulnerable to serious disease if infected, and clearly signposted as such, or otherwise having a designated time only for people who are more vulnerable and wish to pray privately.

Individual prayer only This advice concerns only the opening of churches for private prayer. Further detailed advice will be issued in due course when public worship is safe to re-commence. This advice cannot be followed for other activities that may take place on parish premises, such as groups that would meet in church halls, because at present these must remain closed. This is because group gatherings at the time of writing are not permitted by law, and social distancing cannot be monitored in an effective way with groups that meet socially or for other activities in our premises.

The importance of these measures These measures may seem burdensome, or even a little daunting. They are however necessary, not least because if any churches are seen to be operating in a way that may increase the spread of the virus, there is a risk that stricter measures such as prohibition or enforced closure notices could be reimposed by local authorities or even national administrations. It is our hope that with priests and their parishioners working effectively together, we will be able to open churches safely for private prayer, as a significant step towards the resumption of the celebration of Mass and the sacraments.

Rev. Canon Christopher Thomas

1st June 2020

Draft Revision 6