



## PARISH OF SACRED HEART AND HOLY SOULS

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### CHURCH RE-OPENING FOR MASS Frequently Asked Questions

#### **Will I be able to come to Mass at Holy Souls from Saturday 4th July?**

Yes, the first public Mass celebrated in our church since the 'lockdown' will be the Vigil Mass at 5pm.

#### **When will the Mass take place?**

Starting from the 5pm Mass on 4th July we are hoping to celebrate public Mass every day:

**Saturday Vigil:** 5pm

**Sunday:** 8.30am, 10am and 12noon

**Monday to Saturday:** 10am

All this is subject to having enough stewards and cleaners for the celebration of each of these masses.

#### **How many people are you able to accommodate at each of the masses?**

Having assessed the capacity of our church based on the recent government instruction of 1 meter plus social distancing we will be able to have maximum of 200 individuals at any one Mass. This means that once the full capacity is reached nobody else will be admitted into the church.

#### **What if I'm unable to get to Mass on Sunday?**

It's very important to remember that during this time of pandemic and until further notice Sunday Obligation remains suspended. Nobody is obliged to come to Mass on Sunday and those shielding are still advised to stay at home. For the time being we are also asking people to consider coming to Mass during the weekday if they are able to do so, in order to reduce the pressure on our Sunday Masses.

#### **When should I arrive at the church for a Mass?**

Please arrive 15min before the beginning of the Mass as the church will be closed for cleaning.

## **Will I have to wear a face covering?**

Yes! Everyone over the age of five will have to wear a face covering or mask in order to be admitted to Mass. This is a mandatory requirement and you will not be allowed to attend a Mass if you do not, unless there is a medical reason.

## **I've always sat on the 4th pew. Can I continue to sit there?**

No, upon entering the church the stewards will lead you into your seat. Please sit wherever you are asked to go and do not move your seat. It is very important we fill the church in a systematic way, starting in the front and going towards the back. This will allow for social distancing and also greatly reduce the pressure on our cleaners.

## **Will the Mass be celebrated as normal?**

The experience of coming to Mass will be very different for some time. Apart from the different points already mentioned above, the Mass will be much shorter. There will be no congregational singing, homilies will be short (I'm sure you won't object to that) and there will be no bidding prayers. While all these things are very important, the main focus at this moment is to make Mass as available as possible whilst still maintaining the church as a safe environment for people to come and worship.

## **What about Holy Communion?**

Since the Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith it is important to make sure we mitigate any risks attached to coming to Holy Communion in this time of pandemic. Based on the instructions from the Archbishop the following steps will be taken:

- Communion will only be distributed by the priests in front of the sanctuary. The priest will sanitise his hands before Communion and should his hand come in contact with a communicant.
- It is important that you join the queue for Holy Communion only after being prompted by a Steward.
- Make sure you maintain social distancing from the person in front of you in the queue.
- When the time comes for you to come forward please take off your mask and receive on the hand with your arms fully outstretched. Once you place the Host in your mouth, put your face covering back on and follow the direction of the arrows back to your seat.
- Communion will be offered only under one kind and in complete silence.

Please also remember that there is no pressure for you to receive Holy Communion. If you wish not to receive or you cannot receive for whatever

reason, join the queue and, instead of coming forwards to the priest, follow the arrows back into your seat.

### **Will you still be live streaming after July 4th?**

Yes! As you know we have been fundraising for a permanent camera system and we are hoping this will be in place as soon as possible. If you are unable to come to Mass you will be able to watch the Masses at home.

### **Will I be able to go the toilet?**

No, for the time being the toilets are closed.

### **Will I be able to visit Holy Souls for private prayer outside of the Mass times?**

Unfortunately, for the time being, we are unable to open the church both for Mass and private prayer. Each time the church is open, whether for private prayer or for Mass, it has to be cleaned. At the moment we do not have enough cleaners and stewards to manage both and we are concentrating all our attention to making Mass as available as we can.

### **Do you need more volunteers?**

Yes, we need your help now more than ever. For each of the Sunday Mass we will need a team of 4 stewards and 4 cleaners. Likewise of each of the weekday Mass we will require 2 stewards and 2 cleaners. While this comes to the total of 56 individual volunteers slots, this number can be greatly decreased if people double up as stewards and cleaners or/and are able to do more than one shift a week.

If you have some spare time on Sunday or weekday please consider volunteering. Those over the age 70 are now able to volunteer, if they are fit and well and not in any clinical category or being asked to shield.

### **What if you don't get enough volunteers for a Mass?**

If there isn't enough stewards or people to clean the church public Mass cannot go ahead. This is why we need a strong team of volunteers to rely on.

### **Can Confessions be now heard?**

On Saturday 4th July we will hold outdoor confessions (weather allowing) in the car park by the church's side entrance between 10am - 11am. Once we have evaluated how well this has gone, we will plan more opportunities like this for the future. Please remember you can always ring us ask us to hear your confession on individual basis.

**Can funerals now be held in church?**

Yes, funeral Masses and services can be held in the church from 4th July, although there can be no singing and number will have to be limited.

**When will Baptisms and Weddings be able to take place again?**

At the moment we have no further guidance on this.