

OUR MOST HOLY REDEEMER AND ST THOMAS MORE

LETTER TO PARISHIONERS

Sunday, 28th June 2020

PARISH SUNDAY MASS: As you are probably aware the recent announcement of a further relaxation of the regulations in place to combat the coronavirus pandemic means that we will once again be able to gather for Mass from Saturday evening, 4th July. However various restrictions remain in force. The need for social distancing will mean that Holy Redeemer can only welcome 54 parishioners to Mass at one time. Therefore there will be an extra Mass on Sunday morning at 9.00am, in addition to the Masses at 6.30pm on Saturday evening, 10.00am, 11.00am, 12.15pm and 6.30pm on Sunday. However, there will still not be sufficient places for every parishioner to come to Mass every Sunday.

However, I would ask you to remember that the obligation on Catholics to attend Mass on Sunday remains suspended at present. In order to regulate the numbers in church it will be necessary for those who wish to come to Mass to give their name in advance to the Parish Secretary. It would be helpful if this were done by midday on the Friday before the Sunday on which you to attend Mass. It may well be that no place is available at the Mass you wish to attend. Parishioners are asked to be patient and understanding as this situation is one none of us has had to deal with before.

The Church will be closed at the end of each Mass, so please leave as soon as Mass ends. In order to maintain social distancing at the entrance, those waiting for Mass to begin are asked not to gather together around the doors of the Church. Please follow the directions of the stewards as to where to sit, processing to receive Holy Communion and leaving the church in an orderly and safe manner. In accordance with the guidelines issued by the Bishops' Conference, Holy Communion should be received in the hand and consumed immediately. Similarly, no printed material will be provided in church, but the Sunday scripture readings are available on universalis.com.

In the present circumstances, Monday to Saturday the church will be open daily at 9.45am and Mass will be celebrated at 10.00am. After Mass, the church will remain open for individual prayer until 12.15pm,

STEWARDS: We **need** volunteer stewards to assist with the re-opening of our beautiful church. There are three qualifications: stewards should be parishioners, between 18 and 70 years old, and not clinically vulnerable. To volunteer or get further information, please contact Charles McFarland 020 8767 7132 or cpmm@hotmail.co.uk Please help if you can.

- **To book a place at Mass on Saturday evening and Sunday: before midday Friday please contact the Parish Secretary: 020 7352 0777 x2 or chelsea2@rcdow.org.uk**
- **Sunday Mass: Saturday 6.30pm, Sunday 9.00am, 10.00am, 11.00am, 12.15pm, and 6.30pm**
- **Please wear a face covering, maintain social distance and follow the directions of the stewards.**
- **Volunteers needed to assist as stewards, please contact Charles McFarland 020 8767 7132 or cpmm@hotmail.co.uk**

These arrangements may be amended in the light of experience, so please always check the parish website holyredeemerchelsea.com "Newsletters" for the latest announcement. As the four Catholic Archbishops in England have said in their latest statement: "We cannot return immediately to our customary practices. This next step is not, in any sense, a moment when we are going 'back to normal.'"

I ask you all to be patient, and use this time, when we cannot celebrate the sacraments as we would like, as an opportunity to reflect on our good fortune in having so many churches nearby and, normally, being able to go to Mass when we want to. There are many parts of the world, and increasingly of this country, where Mass is celebrated only infrequently and/or the churches are few and far between.

Volunteering: Last week there was an article in “The Times” (11.06.20, p21) reporting that researchers at Harvard University “have suggested that volunteering should be prescribed by doctors as a ‘way of simultaneously enhancing health and society’”. As we emerge from lockdown, some of us still find we have more time on our hands than we are used to. Below are two opportunities to reap the benefits the scientists identify.

Refreshment Hub: During the lockdown period Central London Catholic Churches are providing a Refreshment Hub service for the homeless in Trafalgar Square from 10.30am until 1.15pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday. If anyone would like to volunteer to assist, then please contact Charles McFarland 020 8767 7132 or cpmm@hotmail.co.uk.

Fr James: We were looking forward to return visit by Fr James Buah Nkwantibisa, the priest from Ghana who came to help out last summer. Recently I was talking to him. He is in good health and has many happy memories of his visit here and the friends he made. Unfortunately the restrictions implemented to deal with the Covid 19 pandemic, both in Ghana and in the UK, mean he will not be able to come this year. Fr James and I agreed that we will keep in touch and plan for him to visit again in 2021.

PRAYERS: Please pray for the repose of the soul of Luzviminda “Luvy” Oxida who died recently. Her funeral took place at Putney Vale Crematorium on 25th June.

SOS Prayerline: 020 7434 9211 Because nothing is impossible to God, people are available to pray for you seven nights a week, 7.00pm to 11.00pm. If you would like to get involved in this apostolate as a volunteer, please contact: evangelisation@stpatriksoho.org.

If you are unable to visit Holy Redeemer during the hours the church is open, please look at the websites of other local churches to see when they are going to open their doors.

Please keep praying for everyone affected by the coronavirus, directly or indirectly.

Canon Paschal Ryan

paschalryan@rcdow.org.uk

ST PETER AND ST PAUL: This year we celebrate the feast day of these two great missionary apostles on Sunday 28th June. There is a wonderful tradition in this country of the veneration of these martyred leaders of the Church, both executed and buried in Rome, being linked with our present day affection for and devotion to the Holy Father, the Bishop of Rome. In our own church these two saints look down on our prayer from niches on either side of the sanctuary, and perhaps remind us of the two statues which similarly oversee the congregation at the Masses celebrated by the Pope in St Peter’s Square. In England one does not have to venture far to find a church or school dedicated to either St Peter or St Paul, or indeed to both. How characteristic of the English that they should take the heraldic symbol of St Peter, the crossed keys, and use it to name pubs up and down the country! Not even the Reformation and Oliver Cromwell’s Puritans could destroy this memorial of a time when England was Catholic. So as side by side pubs and churches tentatively open their doors, let us both give thanks to God and raise a toast: “Pro Patria et Petri fide” (for the land of our fathers, and the faith of Peter).