

Saint Edmund's Parish Pastoral Council

Minutes of an extraordinary meeting held on 2nd July 2020

Present: Father Vincent, Tricia Davies, Christine Martin, Tony Matthews, Helen Murphy, Rob Pickford, Albert Pace, Martin Hinnigan.
Paul Blake (Clerk).

Apologies: Kathleen Joyce.

The meeting opened with a prayer at 7.00.p.m. with Father Vincent taking the Chair.

The meeting had been called to discuss the arrangements for the re-opening of the church for public worship. Guidance in connection with this had been received from The Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, Bishop Declan, and HM Government. A parish risk assessment had been submitted and approved by the Diocese. The parish had agreed to implement '2 metre social distancing' without the necessity to insist on the compulsory wearing of face coverings. The capacity of the church had been agreed at 40+, (40 individuals at 2 metres plus additional persons within the same household or 'bubble').

After discussion, and reference to the various guidelines, the following measures were agreed:

The public celebration of Masses will recommence from Saturday 18th July. There will be three public Masses each week: Saturday at 6.00.p.m., Sunday at 11.00.a.m. and Thursday at 10.00.a.m.

Parishioners will be invited to 'pre-book' places for each Mass and this will be organised by Christine Martin via email and telephone. Information about this will be posted on the parish website, communicated to as many parishioners as possible via email, and a notice displayed at the church door. Parishioners are to be reminded that the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains suspended.

The opening of the church for individual private prayer on Saturdays from 10.00.a.m. to 12 noon will cease from Saturday 18th July.

Re-ordering of the church and porch, including the removal and storage of some benches and all items from the porch will take place, since the new arrangements with limited capacity are expected to be in place for very many months. This will avoid the need for any 'roped off' areas or benches to implement social distancing.

The main sacristy will be closed to all persons except Father Vincent. Signs will be posted on the sacristy doors to indicate this. No servers or sacristans will be used.

Access to the toilet in the server's sacristy will be via the outside door. Signage, paper towels, hand sanitizer, and wipes will be provided. Children visiting the toilet during Mass will need to be accompanied by an adult.

There will be only one reader at each public celebration of Mass and readings will be provided on paper sheets to avoid the need for readers to use the lectionary. The reader will need to remove the sheets used after each Mass and take them home.

Two stewards will be needed at each public celebration of Mass to oversee social distancing, use of hand sanitizer, arrival seating and welcoming, the Communion Procession and exit from the church. Doors will be secured open so that touching of door handles is minimized; in addition to the main doors the rear fire exit door and windows should be open. Stewards will initially need to organise the leaving of parishioners to maintain social distancing using both the main doors and the rear fire exit door. Stewards will invite parishioners from one bench at a time to come forward for Communion in a single line, maintaining social distancing.

Cleaners are needed to clean the church after each public celebration of Mass. Guidelines on how this is to take place and the appropriate materials are available.

Monies collected in the offertory basket will be retained in the safe for a week and counted the following week.

Hard copies of the weekly bulletin sheets will not be available until September, but downloadable files are provided by Redemptorist Publications which could be photocopied. It is desirable that a weekly newsletter be produced which could include the names of sick and housebound parishioners. Since the Prayer of the Faithful will not be used at Masses it could, if space permits, be printed in the newsletter. Stewards are not to hand newsletters and/or bulletins to those arriving at Masses and parishioners using them should not return newsletters and/or bulletins to the table in the porch for re-use but take them home.

Teresa Quinn who prepares the rotas will be invited to seek volunteers to act as stewards and cleaners and prepare rotas for each public celebration of Mass showing two stewards, two cleaners and a reader.

The meeting ended with a prayer at 8.30.p.m.