

Parochial House
Myshall

27th June 2020

Dear Parishioners,

We welcome the news that the Government has brought forward the date allowing us back to Public Worship from 29th June from the previously suggested 20th July. We can once again pray together as a Eucharistic Community and receive the Lord in the Blessed Eucharist. We have gone through, and indeed are still going through a very strange experience! We must salute those who have guided us as a country and to show our appreciation to all those who worked on the frontline, those working in healthcare and those who provided essential services to our communities. We must keep reminding ourselves that we need to be responsible, that the health and welfare of our society rests in the hands and efforts of each of us. Covid is still here, we must live with it! We are entering into a "new norm!"

In the Parish, we are preparing to go back to public worship on the weekend of 4th and 5th of July. We need to acknowledge that this may be a nervous time for many. I ask each of you to be responsible and gentle with yourself, as you plan to come back to church, return in your own time! The dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days is extended for the time being. When you feel ready and comfortable coming to church, we look forward to having you at the Lord's table, uniting with the community in prayer and communion. Until then, remember you are not forgotten!

We are currently preparing our churches for opening for public worship, the new norm in church is going to be strange for all!

The seating capacity of our churches are going to be significantly reduced, while the maximum number allowed in a church is currently fifty no matter how large the church building is, however the two meters rule dictates that at present the capacity of Clonegal Church is **39** people and Kildavin Church is **24**, family units may sit together, therefore increasing capacity to a max of fifty.

As we come back to Church, we require the assistance of stewards and you are requested to take guidance from stewards, they will try to ensure that our places of worship are safe for all of us.

You may be asked to sit in an area of the church unfamiliar to you, seats will be provided to people as they come in, ensuring that once seated, their social distance will not be compromised by others.

A hand sanitizer will be provided at the entry of the Church. However, you are also encouraged to have a personal supply to use during mass and before receiving the Blessed Eucharist. You are also encouraged to wear a face mask entering and exiting the building.

We will only have one entrance and exit open, the main aisle door, where there will be a sanitizing station, and stewards will guide you to the seats, filling the church from the top.

When the church has reached its capacity according to Government Guidelines, Parishioners may be asked to stand outside, remembering to maintain social distance in the Church grounds. Mass will be relayed over the loudspeaker outside. It may be important to be prepared for the weather!

The distribution of Holy Communion will also be different. You are requested to receive the Eucharist only on the hand. Holy Communion will be brought to your seat rather than the congregation coming to the altar. Holy Communion will also be brought to those who are outside the Church.

The stewards will guide our leaving of the church, ensuring that all will be able to maintain social distance. Everyone is requested to maintain social distance in the church grounds and carpark.

The Offertory Collection, the passing of baskets will also have to be suspended. There will be a collection station at the door of the church for envelope and offertory donations. Should you wish to complete a Standing Order to the Parish please contact Fr. O'Byrne. The Parish is more dependant than ever on the financial support of all parishioners.

The church will be sanitized regularly, with a fogging machine and a department of health approved sanitizing agent. Outside Mass times, an area for private visits to the Church will be designated.

As Sunday Obligation is suspended at present, you are encouraged come to Mass during the week. During the week Mass will be celebrated at 7pm in Clonegal on Monday and Thursday evening, at 7pm in Kildavin on Tuesday and Friday evening. I will celebrate Mass at 8.15pm on these evenings in the Parish of Myshall. Attending just one Mass in the week is encouraged; this will help people to be equally spread out over the week. It is encouraged that Weekend celebrations, Friday Kildavin 7pm, Saturday Clonegal at 6.30pm and Sunday Kildavin at 11.30am, be left for those who are at work during the week. This weekly Mass schedule will be reviewed at the end of July

Blessing of graves: Traditionally we would have had Cemetery Masses and the blessing of graves in the parish on the first two weekends of July, such gatherings are not possible at this time. I will bless the graves the week leading up to the tradition date for the cemetery Mass, the blessing will be recorded and posted on the Clonegal Kildavin community face book page with some prayers, you are encouraged to watch and to join with others in a virtual prayer for all our departed loved ones.

Once again, the importance of personal responsibility must be emphasised, this protects self and those who feel nervous about coming back to Church. Responsibility is our statement of care to others.

I would like to thank you for your support of the Parish and request that you pray with me that we may be blessed and safe as we return to public worship, I thank you for your care, support, co-operation and patience over this very difficult time.

Yours in Jesus Christ the Lord,

Thomas O'Byrne PP