

Extraordinary Newsletter for the Catholic Parishes of St John Vianney & St Monica and St Cuthbert, Blackpool

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THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD (B) – 10th January 2021

NEW NATIONAL LOCKDOWN FOR ENGLAND

My dear Parishioners,

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 4th January of a further national lockdown in England, the subsequent Westminster government guidance made it clear that places of worship are permitted to remain open for communal worship. This decision is seemingly based upon two major factors: 1) the recognition that our churches are safe and our attendances at this time are very small; Indeed, the safety measures in our churches have been affirmed by *Public Health England (PHE)* in its current advice to the Westminster Government and 2) that the service we offer is essential in assisting with people's mental and spiritual health.

Many will be aware that questions have been asked, in recent days, to, and by, some local authorities as to why churches are allowed to remain open in England. Some have even called for the closure of places of worship but have provided little or no published scientific evidence to accompany such calls. The point offered about people not gathering outside places of worship is, however, something we wholeheartedly support and continually re-emphasize in this newsletter (see no. 10 opposite).

Moreover, it is clear, from the comments I personally receive from so many of you, that our churches and liturgies continue to make a significant contribution to the personal support, resilience and inner strength of people in the face of so much anxiety, uncertainty and isolation.

After careful evaluation of the guidance from central government, the episcopal conference and our diocese, I **have determined that both our churches shall remain open for the public celebration of Mass** at this time. The situation is, however, being kept under regular review.

At the same time, and so as to ensure that the highest standards of safety are maintained, I am making a modest reduction in the number of Masses in our Mass schedule for the time being (including suspending Eucharistic Adoration and Benediction). This also means, immediately changing, at least for now, the weekday Mass time at St Cuthbert's from 10.00am to **12 noon**.

Meanwhile, we must all remain extremely vigilant in each of our safety measures,* already firmly established at both St John Vianney's and St Cuthbert's.

As ever, we rely on your steadfast support and prayers in these most testing of times,

Fr. Etienne, *Parochial Administrator*

*OUR SAFETY MEASURES FOR THE PANDEMIC

The episcopal conference has asked us to ensure that our celebrations of Mass are as **brief as possible** with a short homily and no prayer of the faithful (bidding prayers) at this time. Moreover, we must all remain extra vigilant in our strict adherence to the following measures:

- 1. Please do not come to church if you have symptoms of COVID-19 yourself or if you live with someone with such symptoms or if you are 'shielding', self-isolating or feel in any way particularly vulnerable.** Given that the obligation to attend Mass remains suspended perhaps consider attending a quieter Mass during the week. Ultimately, individuals will continue to make their own decision about whether to come to church or to pray at home.
- 2.** Do always, wear your (mandatory) face covering in church ensuring that both your nose and mouth are covered - remembering, that some may have medical exemptions.
- 3. Wrap up Warm** - we need to have fresh air circulating to ensure your safety from COVID-19, so the church doors will often be left open during Mass (yes, even in winter!)
- 4.** Once you have sanitised your hands, please leave your name and number on the Track & Trace List or use the app on your mobile phone with the QR code on display.
- 5.** Do keep a physical distance from others as you come into church and at all times in the building. Spread out in church and **sit strictly in households/bubbles**. Please **do not move the benches or touch the bench-ropes**.
- 6.** For the duration of the pandemic, there is no sign of peace. Please do not wander round church greeting people and under no circumstances go into the sacristy.
- 7.** For Holy Communion, which for the duration of the pandemic, is under the form of the Sacred Host only, come out calmly, bench by bench (starting from the front), forming **one single-file queue** in the centre aisle and keeping well-spaced behind the person in front, using the full spacing available at the front (i.e., at St John Vianney's around the altar steps) returning to your original place down the side aisles as per usual.
- 8.** At Holy Communion, unloop one's face covering and consume the Sacred Host and then replace the face covering before moving immediately back to your original place. Upon your return try not to cross by others.
- 9.** There is **no congregational singing** in church, so if you hear the organ at Mass please do not start singing.
- 10.** Leave church using the one-way system **without any congregating (or obstruction) whatsoever at entrances, exits, in porches and in our car parks. There should be no mingling of households/bubbles at this time.**

CLEANING OF OUR CHURCHES

The cleaning of both our churches takes place after every Mass/service and now more intensively on the (new) sanitisation day for each church (see below):

OUR MASSES & CONFESSIONS

Please note the times and location carefully:

Saturday 9th January

5.00pm – 5.20pm (SJV) Confessions

5.30pm (SJV) Mass for John Docherty RIP

Sunday 10th January

THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

9.00am (SJV) Mass for Annie Parkinson RIP

10.00am (SC) Mass for Rick Astley-Clemas RIP

11.00am (SJV) Mass for the people of our parishes

No Confessions & Benediction at St John Vianney's today

Monday 11th January

9.15am (SJV) Latin (EF) Mass for LISCF

Tuesday 12th January

St Aelred of Rievaulx

9.15am (SJV) Mass for a private Intention

Confessions (SC): 11.30am-11.50am

12 noon (SC) Mass for Vera Cottingham RIP

Wednesday 13th January

St Kentigern

9.15am (SJV) Mass for the healing of Dorothy Douglas

followed by Confessions: 9.45am-10.15am

10.00am (SC) Requiem Mass for Norma Farricker

Thursday 14th January

9.15am (SJV) Mass for Linda McEvilly

Day for church sanitisation (SC) – No Mass at SC

Friday 15th January

12 noon (SC) Mass for Vera Cottingham RIP

Day for church sanitisation (SJV) – No Mass at SJV

Saturday 16th January

Confessions (SC): 11.30am-11.50am

12 noon (SC) Mass for Norma Farricker RIP

Confessions (SJV): 5.00pm – 5.20pm

5.30pm (SJV) Mass for a safe pregnancy & good health

Sunday 17th January

SECOND SUNDAY OF THE YEAR (B)

9.00am (SJV) Mass for Alban Lee RIP

10.00am (SC) Mass for the people of our parishes

11.00am (SJV) Mass for Edward McLoughlin

No Confessions & Benediction at St John Vianney's today

MASS INTENTIONS

Please do continue to present us with your Mass intentions well ahead of time and in writing. The Mass is the most powerful prayer we can offer as the Offering of the Church.

OFFERTORY COLLECTION

Your offerings can still be pushed through the presbytery letterbox or arranged by parishioners with their bank - via bank transfer/standing order. For details go to: <https://catholicsinsouthblackpool.com/contact/giftaid/>

CURRENT CHURCH OPENING TIMES

At this time, our churches are open around the time Mass/Service times only. This means that:

ON SUNDAYS

St John Vianney's and the next-door car park opens from 8.30am and closes at 12noon

St Cuthbert's opens at 9.30am and closes immediately after the 10.00am Mass.

FROM MONDAY TO FRIDAY (only on days when there is a morning Mass in that particular church)

St John Vianney's and the next-door car park opens at 9.00am and closes at **10.00am**.

St Cuthbert's opens at 11.30am and closes immediately after the noontime Mass.

ON SATURDAYS

St Cuthbert's opens at 11.30am and closes immediately after the noontime Mass.

St John Vianney's church and the next-door car park opens at 5.00pm and closes again immediately after the 5.30pm Mass.

N.B: Should there be a Requiem Mass on a given day, there will not be the usual scheduled Mass on that day.

Moreover, on a day when there is a funeral, the church in question will open 30 minutes before the time of the funeral, closing immediately afterwards.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Please pray for Molly Ince, Gerry O'Garr and all our parishioners who are sick, especially for all those suffering from COVID-19 and for those caring for them.

Please be in *direct* contact with Fr Etienne, should you wish to be placed on this list yourself. However, data protection regulations do require third parties offering a name for this list to also present us with **written consent from the person concerned**.

PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD

We pray for our recently-deceased: Norma Farricker, Vera Cottingham, Doreen Caveney and also for Monsignor James Hook. May they each rest in peace.

LANCASTER DIOCESAN DIRECTORY 2021

Copies of the new Diocesan Directory are now **on sale** at £4.00 upon request to the priests.

ST JOHN VIANNEY & ST MONICA'S PARISH CENTRE & FIELD

These facilities remain closed to all users (and have been since 23rd March 2020) due to the ongoing pandemic and especially now given the latest lockdown. This situation will be reviewed again at the end of February.

OUR OWN WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

In these days, please do keep an eye on our parish website: <https://catholicsinsouthblackpool.com/> and our accompanying Facebook and Twitter accounts for the latest news and developments in the Catholic Church and for our two parishes.