

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

5th July 2020 - Fourteenth Sunday of the Year (A)

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Parish Priest: Fr. Liam Gallagher

Assistant Priests: Fr. Pawel Sobol, Fr. Damian Esene

Deacon: Rev. Ian Black

Parish Office hours: 9.00am – 12.00pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

Catholic Schools

St Francis Primary School: Queen's Road, Maidstone, ME16 0LB 01622 771540

St Simon Stock Secondary School: Oakwood Park, Maidstone, ME16 0JP 01622 754551

WHEN CAN WE COME TO MASS AGAIN?

Frequently we are asked when Mass will be beginning again. It is with great excitement that in this next phase of lockdown easing, we are now allowed to practice public worship, however this is only providing that certain strict regulations are in place first. These regulations are quite challenging and it is stressed from Archbishop John Wilson that a parish can only host public worship if these regulations are implemented. So please do not think that once a parish opens its doors for Mass, everything will be the same as it was before. Like in so many aspects of life, things have changed. Much needs to be considered first.

Seating in our church is currently re-arranged with the 2 metre radius regulation. We are permitted to make it 1+metre which would increase our capacity but face coverings would then be compulsory. It would still mean that numbers will be limited as to how many can enter the church at any one time which leaves the question: how do we tell people who have come to Mass that there is no room to come in? It is either first come first served and refusing people at the door, drawing names out of a hat or booking online. We are reminded that the Sunday obligation of attending Mass is still suspended so it could be that people are encouraged to attend weekday instead of the Sunday to ease the strain.

The celebration of Mass will be more limited, designed to reduce the time that people spend together in the same environment. Without going in to too much detail, there can be no singing, brief preaching, and receiving communion carried out differently. Our other consideration is that our live streaming Mass is carried out with a camera and temporary equipment at the front of the altar which would bring an obstruction to the people who were in the church - so can that carry on? Certainly not in the same way. Many people from within the parish and around the world have expressed much appreciation for our live streamed Mass so it