

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC PARISH NEWSLETTER

25th July 2021 Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

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Email: maidstone@rcaos.org.uk Website: www.stfrancisparish.org.uk

Parish Priest: Fr. Liam Gallagher

Assistant Priests: Fr. Damian Esene, Fr Simon Peter Lubuulwa

Deacon: Rev. Ian Black

Parish Office hours: 10am – 12 noon Tuesday and Friday (email or telephone only)

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

WHAT WE CAN DO NOW

As you know, the easing of restrictions began on Monday 19th July. You may have been wondering how this will affect our activities in church. We have been given guidance from the Bishops of England and Wales about how to apply these new allowances in our worship but with a cautious and careful approach which continues to uphold the wellbeing of everyone. We are sure that the changes we plan to make here at St. Francis will give us the freedom we are allowed but respecting any anxiety that people may feel.

As from Monday 19th July there will be no social distancing rules in Church, which means pews will no longer be taped off and stewards will no longer need to direct people to their seating. The Mass times have changed since COVID and we do not foresee them changing back in the near future, so it does create a better opportunity for people to attend Mass but respecting adequate spacing for everybody. Saturday 6pm, Sunday 8.30am and Sunday 6pm are often very spacious. Whichever Mass you attend, we are sure you will respect the space of people around you and not sit shoulder to shoulder with anybody outside your household unit.

Face coverings are not compulsory but are strongly suggested especially for larger crowds as they help reinforce people's ease in being with a crowd. Hand sanitising will still be available as you arrive and leave. Seating and touchpoints will continue to be sanitised. Thank you to all who so willingly do this for us after every Mass.

Indoor Congregational singing is also permitted but it is recommended that we do so with a face covering on until a later date when we are advised otherwise.

The Church will be open for individual prayer between Monday - Friday 10am - 2pm and Saturday 9.30am - 12pm. We are also ending the one-way system in the Church, so please enter and exit by the main church doors as we always used to before. The Track and Trace Bar Code will still be available which we ask people to use if they have the App. There will be no stewards to remind people about the forms to fill in and we will no longer be supplying them. Please can you either