

The Newsletter of the parishes of



St. Alban at Pelaw



St. Patrick at Felling



Our School

www.stalbangateshead.org

In Gateshead in the week 17th - 23rd November there were 520 recorded cases, a decrease of 196 compared with the previous week, which equates to 257 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 152 cases over the same period.

1st Sunday of Advent,
29th November, 2020

**We need everyone to
keep Gateshead safe**

Tier 3: Very High Alert

Dear Parishioners

You may remember that just before the current lockdown, with the agreement of our stewards, we decided to discontinue the Thursday evening Mass and replace it with a Mass on Sundays in St. Patrick's Church at **10.30**. I am grateful to our stewards for agreeing to this proposal—*for without their support and commitment, we are unable to open the Church for Mass.*

Introducing a Sunday Mass alongside the Tuesday morning Mass is still in keeping with the Government guidelines of limiting social contact as much as possible and minimising interactions with other households as we will be offering two Masses each week as we originally planned.

As Places of Worship may reopen for public worship from 2nd December, St. Patrick's Church will reopen for Mass at 10.30 on Sunday, 6th December.

I am afraid we are still unable to reopen St. Alban's Church as we cannot at present provide a Covid safe environment which is deemed essential by the Government and the Diocese before a church can open. The situation will continue to be reviewed.

You must reserve a place for Sunday Mass in advance

To ensure the safety and well-being of everyone, and to prevent breaching our maximum capacity of 70 parishioners in the church for a parish Mass, we will follow Government and Diocesan Guidelines and ask parishioners, who wish to attend Mass on a Sunday, to reserve a place in advance. This should prevent anyone having to be turned away, which I am afraid would have to happen if our capacity is reached. This system has been adopted in many parishes in our Diocese and seems to work satisfactorily.

To reserve a place for Sunday Mass please telephone
07526 232124

*****on Wednesday, 2nd December between 10.00 - 12.00*****

*****or on Friday, 4th December between 17.30 - 19.00*****

This number will be unavailable outside of the above booking times.

Bookings cannot be made via the presbytery telephone number and can only be made for the approaching Sunday and not for dates in advance. **Text messages cannot be accepted as a method of booking.**

You will be asked to provide your name and telephone number to comply with the NHS Test and Trace system and also the number in your family if you are attending as a household. For everyone's safety, **the rule of six still applies in our Church.** On arrival at the church you will be welcomed by a steward and your name will be checked against the booking list.

Mass is at 10.30.

The Church doors will open 20 minutes before Mass is due to begin. Please allow yourself sufficient time to complete the necessary health and safety protocols. You may have to form a socially distanced queue outside. Please read the Information sheet "Attending St. Patrick's Church during Tier 3 Restrictions" which is attached to this Newsletter.

Initially we ask those parishioners who are able to attend Mass on a Tuesday, to consider not attending the Sunday Mass in order to provide the opportunity for those who can only attend on a Sunday to do so. This is only a suggestion and will be reviewed on a weekly basis depending on the demand for places on a Sunday. Do remember that Sunday obligation remains suspended. Due to the restrictions, the format of Sunday Mass will be exactly the same as Mass on Tuesdays. You do not need to reserve a place for 10.00 Mass on a Tuesday morning.

Whilst we would always wish to welcome families back to Church, due to the Covid-19 Health and Safety requirements, we would suggest that children should only be brought to Mass if they are old enough to be able to adhere to the guidelines and can remain seated in their place at all times.

May God bless you and your family *Fv. Patterson*

Please keep in your prayers this week:

- all our parishioners who are sick, housebound or in hospital
- Fr. Kevin Daly and Fr. Jim Dunne, both of whom are active priests in parishes, but are currently quite poorly
- all those near and dear to us whose memories we cherish at this time especially Peter Hughes and John Knock

Parish finances and offerings

Fr. Patterson continues to be so grateful to those parishioners who are able to regularly contribute to parish funds, either by bank transfer or by dropping their weekly offering envelopes through the presbytery letterbox. This helps to meet the day to day financial commitments of our churches.

For security reasons, please do not put any envelopes through St. Alban's Presbytery door. Envelopes for St. Alban's parish should be posted through St. Patrick's Presbytery door only.

If you Gift Aid your offertory contributions and choose to make a bank transfer, the parish can still reclaim the tax on your offering. It would be helpful to enter your name and Gift Aid envelope number as the reference when making the transfer.

Alternatively, you might wish to put aside your envelopes each week and bring them along to church when you feel able to come.

The details for bank transfers and cheques are as follows:-

For St. Alban's HSBC Bank

Account name: DHN Pelaw St Alban

Sort code: 40-34-18

Account No: 92010984

For St. Patrick's HSBC Bank

Account name: DHN Felling St Patrick

Sort code: 40-34-18

Account No: 52010453

News from our School Year 3 led our first Advent prayer service and shared it online with all classes and all our parents too. It was lovely to be together to begin our Advent journey.

Should I come to church?

If you have been confirmed as clinically extremely vulnerable the government is advising that you do not need to shield at the moment, but if you are in this category, you should still try to keep your overall social interactions low, as outlined in the Government Guidance.

Some people, including those aged 60 and over, are described as being clinically vulnerable, meaning that they are at a higher risk of severe illness from the coronavirus. Individuals who fall within this group are advised to minimise contact with others outside their household.

If you fall into either of these categories, or if you feel unsure about returning to Mass, you need to consider the wisdom of doing so.

Please remember, you are not obliged to attend Mass. Sunday obligation is suspended.

You must not come to Church.....

.....if you are feeling unwell or if you suspect that you have Covid-19, (high temperature, new persistent cough, lack of taste or smell) or if you are living with someone who has or is suspected of having Covid-19. You MUST self-isolate in accordance with HM Government guidance and arrange for testing.

Please note, that while we will attempt to take all appropriate precautions consistent with the advice of public health authorities to ensure our Church is Covid-19 safe, parishioners should understand that they assume the risk of contracting Covid-19 any time they enter a public space, since such precautions do not eliminate the risk of infection

Mass to view on line

Mass is live streamed from our Cathedral on Sunday at 11.30 and on weekdays at 12.05. These Masses may be viewed live or anytime later on the [Cathedral website](#)

Alternatively, you may like to follow daily Mass from the Holy Name, Jesmond celebrated live at 10.00. Mass may also be viewed any time later on the [Holy Name website](#)

Mass Intentions

During the coming week I will continue to celebrate Mass privately every day. The following Intentions will be remembered this week.

Monday: Hughes, Knock and Kelly Families

Tuesday: Brian Grace Snr and Brian Grace Jnr

Wednesday: Brian Quigley

Thursday: The sick, their families, NHS staff & Care Workers

Friday: Private Intention (NF)

Saturday: Fr. "P's" Intentions

Sunday: 10.00 in Church: For the intentions of all our parishioners

When you are unable to celebrate Mass with me in Church, you may wish to make this act of spiritual communion:

Lord Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there and unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

A Prayer for Carers, Nurses and Doctors

Lord Jesus, who healed the sick and gave them new life, be with doctors, nurses and carers, as they act as agents of your healing touch. In desperate times, keep them strong yet loving; and when their work is done, be with them in their weariness and in their tears. Amen.

Planning for Christmas

We are all aware that Christmas is going to be very different this year, socially and spiritually. The restrictions we must follow, to reduce the transmission of the coronavirus, will impact on us all. What is important is that we continue to adhere to them for the sake of the common good - a message which lies at the heart of our Christian faith.

It is hoped to have a Mass on Christmas Eve and one on Christmas Day in St. Patrick's Church this year. However we are only able to do so with the help of our Volunteer stewards. As you are aware no service can take place without the presence of stewards and the church must be sanitised after each celebration.

Until such time as Fr. Patterson is able to determine the availability of our stewards, it is still uncertain as to what Masses will take place and at what time they will be celebrated. As our numbers will be restricted to 70 you will need to book a place to be able to attend Mass on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. Further details will hopefully be available next weekend.

Remember too that Mass will be very different. As for every Mass currently celebrated in our churches, the restrictions mean that there will be no singing of carols or hymns, no offertory procession, no sign of peace, no readers nor servers and no children's' liturgy. The details are in the attached document "Attending St. Patrick's Church during Tier 3 Restrictions."

There is a possibility that we will not be able to accommodate everyone on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If that is the case, Bishop Robert urges those who cannot be accommodated to attend Mass on Boxing Day (The Feast of St. Stephen) or on Sunday, 27th December for which booking would be necessary.

Unfortunately it will not be possible to celebrate a Mass in St. Alban's Church this Christmas. Fr. Patterson is still unable to reopen St. Alban's Church as we cannot at present provide a Covid safe environment which is deemed essential by the Government and the Diocese before a church can open. The situation will continue to be reviewed.

Volunteers

A church can only reopen or stay open if there are sufficient volunteers to assist as stewards and cleaners at every celebration.

It is very easy to "sit back and let others do the work" but no church can fulfil the Government and Bishops' Guidelines without an adequate number of volunteers.

If you would be able to help as a volunteer, and haven't already done so, please email Fr. Patterson at felling.stpatrick@rcdhn.org.uk. Ideally you should not be in a vulnerable category to assist as a volunteer and must not be deemed to be clinically extremely vulnerable. The more volunteers we have, the less demanding it will be on your time, as it appears these restrictions are going to be with us well into next year.

Parish News by Email

If you are aware of parishioners who would like to receive the Newsletter and other news from the parish by email, please ask them to email Fr. Patterson at felling.stpatrick@rcdhn.org.uk and they will be added to our contact list.

Printed copies of the Parish Newsletter are available at 10.00 Mass on Tuesday mornings.

Protect your loved ones. Download the NHS Covid-19 App.

If you have downloaded the NHS App, it may be used to register your track and trace details when coming to Mass in St. Patrick's Church. Simply scan the QR Code which is displayed in the Church and is specific to St. Patrick's Church only. Please have your phone ready and the App open before entering the Church so that you do not create a "pinch point" by having to search for your phone in your pocket or bag.

Should you choose to "sign in" using the App, you should leave your phone switched on whilst you are in the Church, but please ensure it is in silent mode! You may of course continue to bring your Test and Trace details in an envelope and place it in the box at the front of the Church. The choice is yours to make.

Those who choose not to download the App or are unable to, should continue to bring their Test and Trace details in the usual way by means of an envelope.