

The Newsletter of the parishes of



St. Alban at Pelaw



St. Patrick at Felling



Our School

www.stalbansgateshead.org

In Gateshead in the week 1st to 7th December there were 164 recorded cases, a decrease of 118 compared with the previous week, which equates to 81 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 134 cases over the same period.

Details for Christmas are on page four of the Newsletter.

3rd Sunday of Advent,
13th December, 2020

**We need everyone to
keep Gateshead safe**

Tier 3: Very High Alert

Dear Parishioners

Whilst it is welcome news that we are able to celebrate a public Mass in those of our churches that are able to reopen, we must still follow the Government and Diocesan guidelines which are in place for your safety and well being.

For St. Patrick's Church, this involves adhering to the maximum capacity of 70 people for a parish Mass and the need to provide a team of five volunteer stewards, to welcome you, look after you whilst in the Church and clean the Church afterwards.

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.

For the foreseeable future we are able to offer you Mass in St. Patrick's Church on

Tuesday mornings at 10.00 (no booking required)

and

Sunday mornings at 10.30 (**booking is required**)

*Booking for this Sunday, 13th December is now closed,
so please do not attend unless you have been assured of a place
as we will be unable to welcome you into the Church.*

You must reserve a place for Sunday Mass in advance

To ensure your health and safety 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 Mass next Sunday, 20th December, telephone

07526 232124

on Tuesday, 15th December between 17.30 - 19.00

or on Wednesday, 16th December between 10.00 - 12.00

or on Thursday, 17th December between 17.30 - 19.00

or on Friday, 18th 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 or by email and can only be made for the approaching Sunday and Christmas Masses (see page four). **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. Under Tier 3 Restrictions you must only sit with members of your own household or bubble—the rule of six being the limit in any one bench. 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.

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 Fr. 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 Kathleen Hughes and Joan McAtominey
- and Peter Morley who has died. "Receive Lord into tranquillity and peace the soul of your servant whom you have called from this life. May he be taken up into glory with your Son in whose great mystery of love we are all united.

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

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 70 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, change or a 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](#) (Ctrl+click to access 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](#) (Ctrl+click to access website)

Mass Intentions

With the exception of Tuesday and Sunday, when there is a public Mass in St. Patrick's Church, I continue to celebrate Mass privately each day. The following Intentions will be remembered this week.

Monday: Joan and Eddie McAtominey

Wednesday: LDM Brannigan Family

Friday: George, Molly & Lindsay Bradley

Tuesday: 10.00 in Church: Hughes, Knock and Kelly Families

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

Saturday: Fr. "P's" Intentions

Sunday: 10.30 in Church - booking is necessary: 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.



Advent Alms 2020

Moira Ashman, the Chief Executive of St Cuthbert's Care has sent the following note:

This year, due to the very trying ongoing circumstances, St Cuthbert's Care has been invited to deliver an online Advent Appeal via the Diocesan website. If you would like to support our charity's work, the diocesan link can be accessed here [St. Cuthberts Care](#) (Ctrl+click to access website) I am mindful of the financial pressures the pandemic has placed on many, so please, only support us if you feel able to do so. Thank you.

Donation

Fr. Patterson is very grateful for a Donation of £40.00 recently received for St. Patrick's parish funds.

News from our School

This week, we would like to share a prayer with you written by Jude, aged 8.

Dear God, I am so happy that Jesus is coming this Christmas. He will show us how to forgive, care and love each other. He will bless the sick and teach us to treat others with kindness. I hope that the poor and homeless, will be fed and have shelter this Christmas.

On leaving the Church - Please be responsible and adhere to the law.

Under Tier 3 Restrictions, you must not mingle outside the Church after Mass. Parishioners are asked to disperse immediately on leaving the Church. Fr. Patterson urges those of you who come to Mass to follow this advice and in doing so set an example for others to follow and, of course, prevent the possible transmission of the coronavirus.

Northern Catholic Calendar

Copies of our Diocesan Year Book will be available to collect after Mass next Tuesday at a cost of £3.00. *Please bring the correct money in an envelope and place it in the box provided.*

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.

Please enjoy Christmas by Staying Safe and behaving sensibly

As we are aware, from 23rd to 27th December, people are allowed to form a Christmas bubble of three households.

At a recent Downing Street Press Conference, Professor Chris Whitty, the Chief Medical Officer for England, who revealed he would be "on the wards" over Christmas said: "Would I want someone to see their family? Of course, that's what Christmas is about. But would I encourage someone to hug and kiss their elderly relatives? No, I would not."

"It's not against the law - and that's the whole point. You can do it within the rules that are there, but it does not make sense, because you could be carrying the virus and if you've got an elderly relative, that would not be the thing you'd want to do in the period where we are running up to a point where we actually might be able to protect older people. So I think people just have to have sense. The fact that you can do something - this is true across so many other areas of life - doesn't mean you should."

Professor Whitty also said it was "not a secret" that Christmas would increase the risk of transmission. "Take it really seriously during Christmas. Don't do stupid things. Don't do unnecessary things just because the rules say you can. Think sensibly."

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

The NHS App 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. 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.

Planning for Christmas

We are all aware that Christmas is going to be very different this year, socially and spiritually. The Tier 3 Restrictions which 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.

As you are aware no Mass nor Service can take place in any Church without the presence of stewards to ensure all the guidelines for your safety and well-being are in place and being followed. After each service the Church must also be sanitised. A team of six stewards must be present for any Mass to take place safely in St. Patrick's Church.

Having consulted with our volunteer stewards about their willingness and availability to assist us over Christmas, we are able to offer

Mass on Christmas Eve at 17.30 and

Mass on Christmas Morning at 9.45.

As our numbers are restricted to 70 people at each Mass, **you will need to book a place to be able to attend Mass on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.** The facility to book for this period is outlined below. To enable as many people to attend as possible, given the restrictions imposed on us, you may only book for either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, not both.

There is a possibility that we will not be able to accommodate everyone who wishes to attend on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. If that is the case, the Bishops of England and Wales urge those who cannot be accommodated to attend Mass on Boxing Day (The Feast of St. Stephen) or on Sunday, 27th December.

Once again, thanks to the generosity of our stewards, we will be able to offer Mass on Boxing Day, the Feast of St. Stephen, at 10.00 for which booking will not be necessary—but *seating will be allocated on a first come first served basis.* Booking will be necessary for Mass on Sunday, 27th December.

Remember too our Christmas Masses 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 protocols you are asked to follow are in the attached document "Attending St. Patrick's Church during Tier 3 Restrictions."

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.

You may reserve a place for Mass on:

- Sunday, 20th December at 10.30
- Christmas Eve, 24th December at 17.30
- Christmas Day, 25th December at 9.45
- Sunday, 27th December at 10.30

by telephoning

07526 232124

on Tuesday, 15th December between 17.30 - 19.00

or on Wednesday, 16th December between 10.00 - 12.00

or on Thursday, 17th December between 17.30 - 19.00

or on Friday, 18th December between 17.30 - 19.00

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The Church doors will open 20 minutes before Mass is due to begin. Please do not come any earlier but do allow yourself sufficient time to complete the necessary health and safety protocols. You may have to form a socially distanced queue outside.

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