

# The Newsletter of the parishes of



St. Alban at Pelaw



St. Patrick at Felling

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord  
10th January, 2020

**We need everyone to  
keep Gateshead safe**

**National Lockdown**

Dear Parishioner

I suspect few of us were surprised at the Government's decision earlier this week to impose a National Lockdown on our country in the light of the rapid growth in the transmission of the coronavirus, the increasing number of people dying and the threat the spread of the virus poses, not only to ourselves, but to our National Health Service.

The message is very clear. The single most important action we can all take is to [Stay at Home, to protect the NHS and to help to save lives](#). (Ctrl+click)

One of the anomalies in the Government Guidance is that Places of Worship *may* remain open for communal worship.

Since St. Patrick's Church reopened in September 2020, we have taken all the appropriate precautions consistent with the advice of public health authorities, the Bishops' Conference and the Diocese to ensure our Church is Covid-19 safe.

However we should be aware that when we enter any public space we assume the risk of contracting Covid-19. Our Church is no exception despite the precautions we have put in place which cannot totally eliminate the risk of infection. As the new variant of the coronavirus is more easily transmissible, this risk of infection is heightened which is why we are all being asked to "Stay at Home" and limit our contact with members of other households.

As the number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 continues to rise in our neighbourhood, there have been 995 confirmed cases in Gateshead since 1st January, I have consulted with some parishioners, some of our volunteer stewards, fellow priests and I have spoken to Bishop Robert and I feel it would be prudent, until the National Restrictions ease, to suspend the celebration of Mass in St. Patrick's Church with the exception of Funerals. Some of you may be aware that the churches in Washington, and the churches in Penschaw and Birtley have already closed as have some in Sunderland.

I have also taken into consideration the following statement issued by the Bishops of Northern Ireland:

*"...we are very concerned at the current serious public health position in which Northern Ireland finds itself: with the extremely high level of transmission of the Covid-19 virus; the continuing escalation of numbers in hospital and intensive care; the number of associated deaths; and, the increasingly unsustainable pressure on our healthcare staff. The clear message from health officials is that this situation is going to worsen significantly over the coming weeks.*

*We recognise the efforts of so many in our parishes who have been working to ensure that our gatherings for public worship are as safe as possible..... At this time, however, we acknowledge and support the unequivocal message from public health authorities that the movement and gathering of people should be minimised and that as many people as possible stay at home for the sake of health, life and the Common Good.*

*In light of... the current serious and worsening situation, and in line with clear public health guidance that people should stay at home, we have decided that for a limited period..... the celebration of Mass and other liturgies should take place without the physical presence of the faithful.*

*We make this decision reluctantly, conscious that not being able to gather for public worship can cause pain for all the faithful, but in the hope that this limited period of sacrifice will be for the protection of life and health and for the greater good of all."*

It has not been an easy decision for me to make, but I do this with your spiritual and physical well-being in mind and that of our local community. I also have to consider the well-being of our volunteer stewards and their families. A team of five must be present for any service held in the Church to ensure your safety and to sanitise the Church afterwards and I am anxious about having to place them in a potentially vulnerable environment.

As the situation in our own country is similar, if not worse, than the situation in Northern Ireland, St. Patrick's Church will be closed from 12 noon on Monday, 11th January, for all acts of communal worship with the exception of funerals until the situation eases. I will monitor the situation on a regular basis and keep you informed via the Newsletter.

In the meantime I urge all of you to



May the Lord continue to watch over us and protect us from harm.

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
- and Fr. David Milburn, one of our retired priests, Ralph Curry and Emma Hinds who have died. "Receive Lord into tranquillity and peace the souls of your servants whom you have called from this life. May they be taken up into glory with your Son in whose great mystery of love we are all united.

**In Gateshead in the week 29th Dec to 4th January there were 956 recorded cases, an increase of 378 compared with the previous week, which equates to 473 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 576 cases over the same period.**

### Your financial support

Fr. Patterson wishes to thank you for your offerings during the Christmas season and continues to be grateful to those parishioners who regularly contribute to parish funds either by bank transfer, bringing their offerings to Mass or by dropping their 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.

*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

### 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.

The Tweet below is from  
a senior intensive care registrar



Dr Samantha Batt-Rawden   
@sbattrawden



We tried. We really tried. NHS staff pleaded with people that Christmas is not worth it. Now 1 in 30 people in London have COVID and ICUs are overwhelmed. My heart is broken   
[@TheDA\\_UK](#) [@SadiqKhan](#) [@MayorofLondon](#)

### 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

I will continue to celebrate Mass privately each day. The following Intentions will be remembered this week.

Monday: Emma Hinds (**Private Funeral Mass, by invitation only**)      Tuesday: Brian Quigley

Wednesday: Vincent McCormack

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

Friday: Kathleen and Bill Harland

Saturday: Fr. "P's" Intentions

Sunday: 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.*