

The Newsletter of the parishes of



St. Alban at Pelaw



St. Patrick at Felling



Our School

www.stalbangateshead.org

In Gateshead in the week 16th to 22nd February there were 214 recorded cases, a decrease of 32 compared with the previous week, which equates to 106 cases per 100,000 people. The average area in England had 100 cases over the same period.

2nd Sunday of Lent
28th February, 2021

**We need everyone to
keep Gateshead safe**

National Lockdown

Dear Parishioner

When the Government imposed a National Lockdown on 5th January, the Public Health message was very clear Stay at Home, Protect the NHS and Save Lives.

One of the anomalies in the Government Guidance is that Places of Worship *may* remain open for worship despite the message to "Stay at Home." Because of the high rate of the transmission of the virus in our region at that time, and after consultation with others, I felt it would be prudent to suspend the celebration of Mass in St. Patrick's Church until the National Restrictions eased; and some seventy or so parishes in the Diocese did the same.

The local situation has improved as the following data reveal:-

On 5th January, (Lockdown), the 7 day rolling total of cases in Gateshead was 893

On 26th February, the 7 day rolling total of cases in Gateshead was 194

On 5th January, the 7 day rolling total of people who had died in Gateshead was 7

On 26th February, the 7 day rolling total of those who had died in Gateshead was 9

On 19th January, the number of patients in the local hospital with Covid was 86

On 16th February, the number of patients in the local hospital with Covid was 44

As of 19th February, the estimated "R" number for the healthcare region of the North East and Yorkshire was between 0.7 to 1 with a daily infection growth rate range of -5% to -1%

In the light of the gradually improving situation, the Prime Minister's announcement, the fact that a growing number of our community are receiving their vaccinations and given that the Government guidelines permit us to leave home to attend a place of worship, having consulted with our volunteer stewards we agreed that

**St. Patrick's Church will reopen for Mass - *initially on a Sunday only* -
commencing Sunday, 14th March at 10.30.**

All the necessary Covid Restrictions will still be in place. **It will be necessary to reserve a place.** Details of how to do this will be published in next week's Newsletter.

We will explore opening the Church for Mass on a Tuesday following the removal of the "Stay at Home" restriction which is due to take place on 29th March according to the Government's Roadmap

Please remember, the Public Health Message is that we are still legally required to "Stay at Home." You are under no obligation to attend Mass. The Sunday obligation is still suspended. You should not come to Church if you have received a letter to say that you must shield nor if you are experiencing any signs of Covid-19 or feeling unwell in any way. Remember too that if you have received your first dose of the vaccine it takes 3 to 4 weeks to develop antibodies and the vaccine does not give you total immunity. So please consider the wisdom of coming to Church.

While we will attempt to take all the appropriate precautions consistent with the advice of public health authorities, the Bishops' Conference and the Diocesan Authorities, 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.

Unfortunately we still do not have sufficient volunteers to reopen St. Alban's Church to ensure it would be Covid secure and fully compliant with all the guidelines which continue to be required by the Government. Hopefully, in the light of the Government's Roadmap, we can begin to explore how we can reopen St. Alban's Church once the Covid restrictions have been lifted. I will outline my hopes in the coming weeks. The Bishop will be meeting with priests via Zoom in the next couple of weeks which may provide more guidance for us. I will, as always, keep you informed.



In the meantime, please continue to look after one another and pray that the Lord will watch over us and keep us safe from harm.

May God bless you all.

Fr. Patterson.

Please keep in your prayers this week:

- all our parishioners who are sick, housebound or in hospital
- Fr. Kevin Daly who is currently unwell
- all those near and dear to us whose memories we cherish at this time
- and Fr. Tom Cunningham (one of our retired priests) and Manus McDermott 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."

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 on the [Cathedral website](#)

Alternatively, you may like to follow Mass from the [Holy Name, Jesmond](#) celebrated live at 10.00 on Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Mass Intentions

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

Monday: Manus McDermott

Tuesday: Sheila Robinson

Wednesday: Emma Hinds

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

Friday: Rita Turnbull

Saturday: Fr. "P's" Intentions

Sunday: For the intentions of all our parishioners

As 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.

In keeping with the public health message 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, St. Patrick's Church will remain closed until the situation improves.

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.



As of Friday 19th Feb
122,415 people have
died of the coronavirus
in our country

May they
Rest in Peace

Let us pray

Gracious God, as we remember before you the thousands who have died from the coronavirus, surround us and all who mourn with your compassion. Be gentle with us in our grief, protect us from despair and give us grace to persevere and face the future with hope. We make this prayer in Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

To support you during Lent.

You may like to join Bishop Robert Barron in a "Reflection on the Way of the Cross" found [here](#)

You may also pray The Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary with Bishop Barron found [here](#)

The Diocese offers daily reflections for your Lenten journey at home which you can find [here](#)

Lenten Mass

Bishops from all over Europe will join together during Lent to celebrate a series of Masses for the victims of Covid-19. The continent has suffered over 770,000 deaths from the virus. The initiative, promoted by the Council of European Bishops' Conferences, aims to offer a sign of communion and hope for the entire continent.

Since the start of the pandemic, bishops from across Europe have added their voices to that of Pope Francis to reiterate the Church's closeness to all those struggling with coronavirus – the victims and their families, the sick, health and social care workers, the volunteers and all those on the front line at this challenging time

Cardinal Vincent Nichols, as President of our Bishops' Conference, will celebrate Mass on Tuesday, 2nd March, 2021 in Westminster Cathedral at 17.30 which will be live-streamed on the [Westminster Cathedral Website](#)

Bishop Robert will celebrate Mass in [St Mary's Cathedral](#) on Tuesday at 12.05pm which will also be livestreamed and can be viewed here.

Do not wreck this now

This was the sombre warning from Professor Jonathan Van-Tam during the Downing Street briefing on Friday evening. He told us that despite the gradual decrease in recorded cases of the coronavirus throughout the country, the recent fall in the number of cases was now slowing and in one in five local authority areas cases are still rising. "It is not a battle we have won yet," he went on to say.

Prof Van-Tam said Britons could not afford to let their guard down and "take your foot off the brake" by relaxing adherence to social distancing rules by meeting relatives and friends. "We are not yet collectively as a country in the right place," he warned. "All the rules still apply until we are in a much safer place. "It's a bit like being 3-0 up in a football game and saying 'We can't lose this'. But how many times have you seen the other side come back and win 4-3? Do not wreck this now, we are so close"

Prof Van-Tam urged all those who had received the first dose of their vaccination to continue following the rules. He said: "Much as it is encouraging and much as I am upbeat about vaccines, and how they are going to change how we live and what the disease is like between now and the summer, there is a long way to go. My inbox in the last week has been besieged with people writing in saying, I've had the vaccine, 'Can I now start to break the rules?' 'Can I go and see my grandchildren and do X, Y and Z?' And the answer to that is no. We are not yet collectively, as a country, in the right place."

Prof Van-Tam continued: "All the patients that I vaccinate ... I say to them, 'Remember, all the rules still apply to you and all of us until we're in a much safer place'. It doesn't change because you've had your first dose of vaccine. So, please don't be tempted to think, 'Well, one home visit might be alright now the weather is getting better, going to be a nice weekend - one small gathering in your house won't really matter'. I'm afraid it does matter and the data speak for themselves.

So my key message tonight is look, this is all going very well but there are some worrying signs that people are relaxing, taking their foot off the brake at exactly the wrong time." Do not wreck this now!

Listen to what he had to say [here](#)



Cafod Family Fast Day

Our Third World Group have been able to send a donation of £100.00 to the Cafod Family Fast Day Appeal. Thanks to everyone who has helped to make this possible.

Should you wish to support Cafod's Lenten Appeal you may find details [here](#)

News from our School

On Monday, 1st March, our School takes on Academy Status as part of the Bishop Wilkinson Trust. Please pray that this move will help us to develop the already high standard of education we are able to offer our children.

Your ongoing financial support is welcomed and needed

Fr. Patterson renews his thanks to you for your offerings during these difficult times especially to those parishioners who regularly contribute to parish funds by bank transfer helping to meet the regular financial commitments of our churches.

Whilst we are being urged to "Stay at Home," it may not be wise to drop your envelopes through the presbytery letter-box, unless your daily exercise route happens to take you past the presbytery. Please be sensible. **For security reason, envelopes should not be put through the letterbox of St. Alban's Presbytery.**

The parish is still able to reclaim the tax from Gift Aided offertory contributions made by bank transfer. 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