

What to expect when you attend St. Patrick's Church

We know that you may be a little hesitant in returning to Church and we want to make sure that you can do so safely and comfortably as social distancing guidelines and public health measures are in place.

You must stay at home if you are unwell or have any symptoms of Covid-19.

If you are vulnerable or feel unsure about returning to Mass consider the wisdom of doing so.

You are not obliged to attend Mass. Sunday obligation is still suspended.

In the light of our risk assessment and because of social distancing, the number of people allowed in church *for a parish Mass* is 70. When we are in a position to be able to offer services other than a parish Mass, the maximum number must follow Government guidelines which is currently 30 people.

When we can offer Mass on a Sunday, there will be a telephone booking system in place to ensure our capacity is not exceeded and no-one has to be turned away. Details will appear in future Newsletters.

The Mass will be different to the way we are used to celebrating it, but it is to ensure everyone's safety.

Thorough sanitising of the Church must take place after each celebration which relies on volunteers. The availability of volunteers will determine the days and times we can offer Mass in any one week.

You may check the times on the parish website <http://www.stpatricks-felling.co.uk/> or  495 2277

Before you arrive at Church

Face coverings



You must bring your own face covering. It is now mandatory for all people entering a church to wear a face covering at all times except children under 11 and those with a medical exemption.

Test and Trace Requirements



To comply with the Government Test and Trace System, please bring an envelope to church **on every occasion you attend** containing your name and a contact telephone number. These will be retained for 21 days in accordance with Government requirements. Place the envelope in the box provided at the front of the Church.



Please be aware that there are no toilet facilities available

When you arrive at Church

The Church will open 20 minutes before Mass. Please do not arrive any earlier. Enter through the top door off Church Street. The parish centre doors and the main doors of the Church will remain closed. You may have to form a socially distanced queue to enter the Church. Please be patient.

On entering, you will be welcomed by a volunteer steward who will direct you to the hand sanitisers. There is no holy water, Mass Books, votive candles nor access to the sacristy or to the rear of the Church.

Seating arrangements

You will be shown to a bench. It will probably not be where you usually sit. Please co-operate with the stewards. What they are inviting you to do is for your safety and for the safety of all other parishioners.

Please remain in your seat at all times. Do not move around the Church.

When you are in your bench, you must adhere to the 2 metre social distancing rule from any parishioners who are also in the bench, unless you are from the same household or bubble. Do not sidle up to anyone else in your bench for a chat!

You must ensure that children in your care adhere to all the guidelines. There will be no Children's Liturgy.

During Mass

To help maintain social distancing, please remain seated at all times during Mass.

There will be no Sign of Peace, Offertory Procession, singing nor altar servers or readers.

Arrangements for receiving Holy Communion

Following the Guidelines of our Bishops, Holy Communion will be distributed at the end of Mass.

The words "The Body of Christ" and the reply "Amen" will only be said once at the beginning of the distribution of Holy Communion. They will not to be repeated for each person receiving Holy Communion, nor will you need to make an individual response.

The volunteer stewards will direct you to approach the altar. Please stand in front of the "prie-dieu" to receive Holy Communion or a blessing after which you are asked to leave the Church immediately and prayerfully. It is important that you follow this guidance. Do not attempt to return to your seat.

You may only receive the Sacred Host in your hand and not on your tongue.

Lower your face covering, using the ear loops, when the person in front of you is receiving the Sacred Host. Avoid skin to skin contact with the minister's hands by extending your arms as far as possible and keeping your hands flat, one on top of the other. Make a slight bow of the head when the Sacred Host is offered to you. No words should be spoken by you or the minister.

Place the Sacred Host in your mouth, replace your face covering then leave the Church immediately. Do not return to your place. Sanitise your hands as you leave.

Leave by the exit at the front of the Church taking everything you may have brought with you. When you return home, or on your way home please make an act of Thanksgiving having received Holy Communion.

Following the advice of our Bishops, due to vulnerability issues, Fr. Patterson will not be distributing Holy Communion nor will he be available either before or after Mass. Eucharistic Ministers, who are not in a vulnerable category, have offered to distribute Holy Communion.

Leaving the Church

Please do not gather in the porch or church grounds afterwards. Government advice is that parishioners should limit their interactions with anyone attending the Church who are not in their household, keeping social distancing at all times.

Offerings/ Test and Trace envelopes/Mass Intentions

A container will be available at the front of the Church for your weekly offering envelopes and loose monies, Test and Trace envelopes and any Mass Intentions you may have. Unfortunately Mass cards cannot be signed.

Stewarding arrangements

Please respect the efforts of our Stewards, all of whom are volunteers. They are a necessary requirement for our Churches to be able to be open and they are there to help you and ensure your safety in keeping with Government Guidelines and those of our Bishops' Conference.

Archbishop McMahon's words:

Let us all take to heart these words of our Metropolitan, Archbishop Malcolm McMahon:

"As we begin to return to Mass we have to provide guidelines to ensure a safe and reverent environment. We all have a role to play in keeping each other safe and healthy. **We are not going back to normal. It is not going back to what it was like before March. We have to think differently.**"

While we will attempt to take appropriate precautions consistent with the advice of public health 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.