

CATHOLIC CHURCH OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

192, Nags Head Road, Ponders End, Enfield EN3 7AR

Tel: 020 8804 2149 Email: pondersend@rcdow.org.uk

Hello Everyone,

I do hope you are keeping well. I'm writing to you to explain the response that is necessary in our parishes as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and the instructions that we have received from Cardinal Vincent Nichols as Chairman of the Bishop's Conference of England and Wales.

Our churches will stop with immediate effect the public celebration of Mass and other liturgical celebrations. This does not mean that our churches will close. They will continue to be open for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and for private prayer. As a result of these restrictions we have had to suspend our catechetical programmes and that will mean that our First Reconciliation, First Communion and Confirmation programmes will continue at a later date and the reception of these Sacraments for our children and young people will be set for later in the year. We are not sure when this will be so please do be patient with us—we will let you know as soon as we are able.

Likewise our Baptismal courses will stop. Baptisms, including those that have been arranged for Easter, for both children and adults, will now have to take place at a later date.

Funerals and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and Holy Communion to be brought to the sick and housebound are sensitive areas and need to be arranged with the Parish Priest and not with the Ministers of the Eucharist. Please contact Fr John for funeral arrangements or Pastoral visits. Great care must be taken when visiting our elderly, sick or housebound parishioners. Loneliness can be a great problem for many people today and the Church can be a lifeline for many of them. Please do try and keep in touch with anyone that have become isolated in their homes because of our current restrictions.

Our parish continues to operate and our bills still continue to come in. Could really encourage you to continue in your giving to the parish in the ways that you would normally do so—either by Planned Giving envelopes, Standing Orders or loose plate donations. For reasons of security, please do not leave any donations in the church but please drop them through the letterbox of the parish house at 192 Nags, Head Road. Thank you for your continued generosity to our parish.

As you know we operate a food bank and a Friday Lunch scheme in our parish as well as distributing many food parcels to our needy families each week. At this time some of our families are in great need and rely on us for some support. Please do continue to help us in

In the outreach from our parish to the needy and struggling members of our local community. Please bring food items to the parish house. Thank you so much for your continued support in this important work.

Although Masses with a gathering of people will be temporarily suspended our church will remain open for prayer. I do encourage you to take advantage of the opening times of our church and to come in and spend a little time in prayer—this is something that we all need to be doing more than ever—praying for protection; praying for Our Lord's love and support in these difficult times and praying for all those who are affected by the coronavirus. The church will be open at the following times:

Sunday: from 7.00am until 12noon, and from 2.30pm until 5.00pm

Monday to Saturday: from 7.00am until 10.00am, and from 3.00pm until 6.30pm

It may be necessary to change these times depending on circumstances. A notice will be attached to the door of the church informing you of any changes necessary.

Fr. John will continue to celebrate Mass privately each day in the church (it will be locked on these occasions) and you will be remembered in the intentions of these Masses. If you have any special intentions you would like to be prayed for then please put them on a piece of paper and drop them through the letterbox of the house. They will be remembered every day.

In these very difficult times please trust in God and remain at peace in His continued love for us. Getting too stressed or upset will not help but could make matters worse for us. Remember to try not to pass your anxiety on to others—that we would be unfair. Let us stand united in prayer and in love for one another.

Please do not hesitate to call, either by phone or at the door of the house, if there is anything you need. I am here to support you as best I can and I will always do my best. Please take care and look after yourselves.

You remain constantly in my prayers and thoughts.

May God bless you and your loved ones.

In Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

