



Web: www.marymotherofgod.co.uk

The Ascension of the Lord

Good Evening Everyone,

I do hope and pray that you continue to keep well and have not been too badly affected by the Coronavirus or the conditions that we have had to undergo over the last couple of months. It has not been an easy time for many and I expect that, like me, you are praying and hoping that sometime very soon things may begin to change slowly but surely.

Over this long period of time, so many wonderful events that we would normally have celebrated together, have passed us by. This coming Thursday, 21st May, is the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord, and then 10 days later comes Pentecost Sunday. We certainly will not be able to celebrate these solemn days together—the Easter Season will have come and gone and we will not have shared one Alleluia together! I hope I don't forget what you look like—in old age my memory is very short!

Today I have received an email from the Cardinal and he is reminding his priests that the time has come for us to begin to prepare for the opening of our churches. When this will be is unknown, the predicted date is 4th July, but with discussions continuing, limited opening may be possible before this. I know that there is a great hunger among you simply to come into the church to pray before the Blessed Sacrament even before we are able to resume the celebration of Mass.

There are many things that we have to do before any of this can happen and we must ensure that our churches are as free as possible of the risk of spreading the virus. Some of you are eager to enter the church, others will be wary. We really don't want people to see our church as a place of risk—we want you to feel safe.

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The Government will produce guidance which will “support places of worship across England to open safely.” This guidance will help us in our responsibilities together with more specific guidance about opening our churches.

Of course, we will have to think about provision for supervision of our church when it is open and we will have to work out routines for the overseeing of entrances and exits. We will have to think about how to manage the numbers of people who will eventually want to come to Mass once these celebrations have restarted, given the need for continued social distancing. How we go about this will have to be worked out. We have a large community here in Ponders End and so not everyone will be able to be present every Sunday, even with an extra Mass.

Further planning for the celebration of Mass will also be needed. How we distribute Holy Communion and the need to ensure that the celebration of Mass keeps people in church for as short a time as possible (oh dear that will be difficult for me—you know how I can go on and on sometimes—someone will have to stand up and tell me to stop—nicely of course).

These will be the next steps on our journey through this extraordinary time but we will make it together with Our Lord’s help and your prayers. We want to practice our faith more fully again. Pray for that day to come soon.

I know it is a time of hardship for many. Jobs have been lost, finances are low, patience has worn thin and there is still apprehension and fear that really difficult times could return. Let us not lose hope but continue to trust in the Lord who always has our best interests and well being in mind. His words: “Do not be afraid, trust in me” give us great comfort. Come to His Sacred Heart and you will find love and security there.

I promise I will keep you informed as to how we progress as soon as I hear more. In the meantime you are always in my prayers and in the intention of the Mass that I celebrate each day. Pray for the sick and housebound and also for those who have died recently especially Margaret Tomalin who died last weekend. May she rest in peace.

I’m also sending you a Novena for the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit which you might like to follow as a preparation for the Solemnity of Pentecost. It should begin on Friday, 22nd, but it doesn't really matter when you start if you don't receive it in time.

God bless you and may His Face shine upon you always.

Fr John

Please forward this email to as many people as you can. Many thanks.