

26 June 2020

Dear brothers and sisters

Greetings as we approach another Sunday when we will celebrate Ss Peter and Paul, transferred from the 29 June which is Monday.

It was on the shoulders and in the words of these two apostles that the infant church managed to grow and flourish during the first century; creating a community of believers and continuing the life and teaching that Jesus had begun. If you are unable to watch a television Mass you may like to pray and read from St Matthew's gospel Chapter 16 verses 13-19 or Paul's second letter to Timothy Chapter 4 and verses 6-18. They were both truly men of faith and courage.

It is also true that we will need 21st century apostles if the church is to grow and flourish after this present pandemic. It is certainly a moment to remember Peter's successor Pope Francis as he reminds us that the challenge of the recovery will fall hardest on the weakest members of society, both in this country and in the less developed parts of the world.

As you know our church has been open for two and half hours everyday since 15 June. This is due to the generosity of a handful of parishioners who have been on hand to clean the church each day and then be on hand as stewards to make sure we comply with the government regulations.

We are being told that there will be further relaxation on the 4 July and we can probably meet for Mass, but under what conditions? That has not been spelled out yet.

It will certainly mean under carefully controlled conditions, the continuation of a one-way system, only a limited number of people at a time and the need to clean all the benches between Masses. So, the appeal is if you have some free time, even 40 minutes on one day of the week that will help with the process and allow the church to be open for longer.

If you would like to help, be in touch by email phone or a note through the door. Monica, the secretary is still on Furlough, so communication is difficult but once the collections pick-up she will be back on duty. More volunteers to help will mean the church can open for longer.

Lastly, please see the letter below from Cardinal Vincent

Keep well
Keep safe
Keep smiling

Fr Chris and Community

Archbishop's House

Westminster

25 June 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters.

I welcome the statement by the Prime Minister earlier today, that places of worship are now able to resume collective acts of worship from 4 July. This is welcome news for members of all religions in England. I thank all who have worked hard to bring this about, not least my fellow religious leaders.

As Catholics we now look forward to being able to celebrate Mass together again from 4 July. We have waited with patience and longing for this moment, understanding the importance of protecting the health of people in our society. Now we are full of anticipation that we will be able again to take part together in the Eucharist, which lies at the centre of our faith.

It is important that we continue to abide by the guidance, given by the Government, on appropriate social distancing and the other measures to avoid all unnecessary risk. Our own detailed guidance will be distributed around dioceses and parishes so everyone can be confident that they may come to Mass securely and understand the part they are to play in protecting each other from any remaining risk of infection.

The past few months have been a time of fashioning new patterns of prayer, new ways of exploring and enriching our faith and vigorous ways of reaching out to those in need. We can build on these, forgetting nothing of the graces we have been given. Yet now, with the experience of opening our churches for individual prayer already gained, this return to the more normal patterns of worship will be of great importance to all Catholics.

This time of our 'Eucharistic fast' has made our hearts grow in longing for that moment when we can come together and receive again the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. That moment is now very near and for that we thank God.

+ Archbishop Vincent