

TO CONTACT THE PARISH/FATHER NEIL

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## **THE RE-OPENING OF THE CHURCHES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF MASS**

### **WELCOME BACK!**

*“ I was glad when I heard them say, ‘Let us go to God’s House!’, and now our feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!” (Psalm 122 v 1 )*

At St.Joseph’s, if you are thinking of returning to Mass and want to be sure of a place to sit in the church, it would be wise to attend the Sunday 8-00a.m. Mass. At present, St.Joseph’s can only accommodate about 58 people. The 6-00p.m. Saturday Vigil Mass was attended by approx. 55 people, whereas the attendance at the 8-00a.m. Mass was about 15. It is anticipated that at the 10-30a.m. Mass it will be difficult to accommodate all those wishing to attend. If you are able to do so, you might consider attending the 8-00a.m. Mass to leave room for others at the 10-30a.m. Mass. We hope to avoid the alternative of having to issue tickets (!) to come to Mass. Thank you for your thoughtfulness and co-operation.

At St.John Kemble, we can accommodate about 12 – but a few more if couples/families sit together. If in doubt about the availability of seating, please give June a ring.

#### **A) YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES. - PLEASE NOTE MASKS MUST NOW BE WORN IN MASS**

Please be aware ( and prepare beforehand! ) the **TOILETS ARE CLOSED** and cannot be accessed - in order to avoid cross-contamination.

- (i) Entrance to the Church is only via the main door (except for disabled access )
- (ii) On entering, hands **MUST** be washed using the sanitising soap/gel provided.
- (iii) **NEW REGULATION - MASKS MUST NOW BE WORN** – but gloves are optional
- (iv) Please place your collection/donation in the box provided. There is no Offertory Procession.
- (v) Please follow the arrows/directions of the stewards. **UP** the central aisle. **DOWN** the side aisles, or, in St.John Kemble, anti-clockwise around the central pews.
- (vi) Every other pew is cordoned off. Three individuals may sit (apart) in a pew ( as marked ), or, in St.John Kemble, two individuals. Families, couples, those sharing a “bubble” may sit together – keeping social distance from others.
- (vii) Readers to wear gloves,
- (viii) Receiving the Blessed Sacrament. Approach the Altar by the central aisle ONLY. Form one queue, standing two metres apart. The Sacrament will be administered to you across the Prie dieu/kneeler. Return to your pew via the side aisle, or, in St.John Kemble, anti-clockwise.
- (ix) At the end of Mass, leave your pew via the central aisle ( all the time being careful to observe social distancing); walk toward the Altar ( genuflect ) and turn right and exit through the Lady Chapel, sanitising your hands on the way out. ( In St.John Kemble, via the backdoor ). Please exit the church slowly and carefully, not congregating with others when sanitising your hands. Conversations/catching up with friends can take place outside the church, observing social distancing.
- (x) The church must be cleaned after every Mass.

#### **B) THE CELEBRATION OF MASS**

There will be no hymns, no holy water, no Bidding Prayers, no Sharing of the Peace, no Offertory Procession, no altar servers. Readers must wear gloves.

Any newsletters/information sheets/booklets that may be provided – **IF YOU TOUCH THEM** – must not be replaced on the table but **MUST** be taken home with you.

**An extra Mass will be celebrated at 8-00a.m.** on Sunday morning for a temporary/experimental period. Please consider attending this Mass to allow space for others to attend the Saturday Vigil Mass and 10-30 a.m. Mass.

**FREE COPIES** of the CTS New Sunday Missal 2020 ( worth £7-95 ! ) are available as you leave church. These were ordered to be handed out for use during the lockdown but the lockdown came first! Please take a copy **BUT (!)** IF YOU PICK UP A COPY TO LOOK AT, YOU **MUST** TAKE IT AWAY WITH YOU – DO NOT RETURN IT TO THE TABLE.

**Prayers before the Blessed Sacrament.** Why not come early to Mass and spend a time of prayer before the Blessed Sacrament? ( If you bring the prayer card with you – you must not leave it behind in the pew! ). PLEASE RESPECT THE WISH OF OTHERS TO HAVE A TIME OF QUIET PRAYER BEFORE MASS AND OBSERVE A REVERENT SILENCE BEFORE MASS. THANK YOU

**Mass Intentions** – This Sunday: ( 9<sup>th</sup> August ) **St.John Kemble** 4-00 p.m. Parish and People; **St.Joseph's** 6-00 p.m. Ann Hanford (RIP); 8-00a.m. Sr.Josephine Brady; 10-00a.m. Suzanne Curtis (RIP) ( Sandra ) Next Sunday –The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (16<sup>th</sup> August ) **St.John Kemble** 4-00p.m. Parish and People; **St.Joseph's** 6-00p.m. Terry Hopkins (RIP) (Sandra); 8-00a.m. Nash Family (RIP) (Nualla & Martin Rees ); 10-30a.m. Janet Jones (RIP) (Geraint ).

**Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time** { Week beginning 9th August } Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August – 9-30a.m. (St.Joseph's ); 11-00a.m. (St.John Kemble ).

**The Parish S.V.P Group/St.Joseph's Community Support Group/Legion of Mary (and others).** I have paid tribute in last week's Homily to the amazing work ( ministry ) carried out in the parish over these last few months keeping us together and providing much needed support. We are very grateful to all those who have kept in contact by phone and helped out with shopping and in other ways, often behind the scene and unknown to others. **THANK YOU TO YOU ALL!**

**A Coronavirus Prayer.** " Lord Jesus Christ, You travelled through towns and villages ' curing every disease and illness'. At Your command, the sick were made well. Come now to our aid, in the midst of this global pandemic, and send down Your blessing and healing upon us and protect our healthcare workers. Bring us through to Resurrection and a New Pentecost. For Thy Name's sake. Amen.

**Last Week's Collection:** St.Joseph's £805-30p (including Diocesan Levy ); St.John Kemble £165-00.

**Candles:** St.Joseph – Barrie Reynolds (RIP); The Sacred Heart – Joan and Harry Thomas

**The Church Driveway** Many of you are probably not aware that we have not been in possession of the church driveway ( in front of the church and presbytery ), which was obtained by Neath Port Talbot from the previous owners in the 1950s. You will be pleased to know that we are nearing completion of purchasing the driveway from NPT, thus securing our ownership and right of way to the church and presbytery (!), and I record our very grateful thanks to Councillor Mrs Sheila Penry (Mayor, Neath Town Council ) for her help and assistance in overseeing and guiding the paperwork through the NPT Legal Department on our behalf, and also to Mrs Clare Tregoning, at Gomer Williams & Co Ltd ( Karen and Doug's daughter ) for thoroughly researching and investigating our claim over many months and generously acting as our Solicitor (without costs ) to obtain the driveway for us; and to the anonymous and generous benefactor for paying the costs of the survey and purchase of the driveway and meeting the legal costs of NPT.

Having already met the challenge of raising funds for removing asbestos from the church boiler room, installing a new boiler, dismantling the chimney, repairing the sanctuary arch and redecorating and refurbishing the church ( a total cost of approx. £25,000 ), we now have the further challenge to raise a similarly larger sum ( approx. £35,000? ) to tarmac and properly drain the driveway.....donations gratefully received!

Also, with regard to the driveway and grounds, we would like to establish a group of volunteers to help Kevin maintain the grounds around the church and presbytery, as we continue to be very grateful to Kevin for his many years of commitment to maintaining the grounds for us and keeping everything in such splendid order, involving many hours of (freely given ) hard work throughout the year.

**Church Flowers and Cleaning** Many thanks to Chris and Babs for beautifully decorating the church for the re-opening and to generous benefactors for meeting the costs. Thanks also to Bella in St.John Kemble, and to all those, in both churches, who have worked hard in cleaning and preparing the churches to re-open. Thanks also for the generous provision of the two free-standing sanitising-gel dispensers at St.Joseph's.

**CAFOD. SUMMER OF HOPE:** As we continue to pray for the most vulnerable people on the planet, CAFOD asks us to consider these simple ideas: to donate part of what we might have spent on a celebration or holiday lost to lockdown; or to give the cost of a haircut or two that weren't possible. ( Lots more suggestions on [www.cafod.org/summeofhope](http://www.cafod.org/summeofhope) ) The pandemic has shown that we are not safe until **everyone** is safe. Thank you. Please donate on line, or by phone via the DEC: 0370 60 60 900. Postal address: DEC, PO Box 999, London EC3A 3AA. ( Sandra )

## The Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2020

How wonderful to be back! It feels like Easter Day! The Resurrection of the church! We entered into lockdown in the middle of Lent and, in many ways, it feels as though we have never emerged from the desolations of Holy Week – until today! Perhaps, in years to come, these past few months will be known as the “long Good Friday” of the Church.

Resurrection is not merely a restoration to life ( the old life ) but resurrection to **new** life! And we must pray that this may be true of us also – that, through the grace of God, we may come together ( as God’s people/the Body of Christ ) with stronger ties to each other, with deeper feelings, with a new hunger and thirst for the life of grace.

We have been through a wilderness experience – and we have been through that **together** – and we have come through on the other side!

On Divine Mercy Sunday, you will remember, I solemnly blessed and re-consecrated our two parishes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament from the front steps of St.Joseph’s Church. And the Lord has brought us through – to this glorious Easter Day in the life of the church! And now we must pray for Pentecost – a new Pentecost in the life of the Church. A deep slumber was forced upon us, a “little death” in the life of the church, but now ( on this Day of Resurrection – this “Easter Day” in the life of the church ) we must pray for Pentecost.

The prophet Ezekiel had a vision – a famous vision - in which he sees bones coming together, and then flesh growing on those bones. He says, “ there was a rattling of bones, and the bones came together, bone to bone. And, as I looked, there were sinews on them and flesh had come upon them, and skin covered them – but, there was no breath in them. Then the Lord said to me, “Prophesy to the breath”, so I prophesied, and the breath came upon them and they lived and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great host”. As the Body of Christ, we have been separated from one another – disjointed – but now the Lord has brought us together again – not to be a lifeless body ( without breath ) but to breathe breath into us! “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit” says the Lord. (Zechariah 4 v 6 ). Remember the words of St.Paul, “Consider your call brethren, not many of you were wise, not many of you were powerful, not many of you were of noble birth – but God chose what is weak in the world, to shame the strong, so that no human being might boast in His presence” ( 1 Corinthians 1 v 26f ). It is all of God! Pentecost can only be a Work of the Holy Spirit! And we must pray that God will now “crown” His mercies to us, not only in the resurrection of the church today ( after this long “Good Friday” ) but with a new Pentecost.

We call upon the prayers of Our Blessed Lady that she petition her Divine Son for us that, from the Throne of His Glory, He may send down the Holy Spirit on us!

*“ Come DOWN, O Love DIVINE! SEEK Thou this soul of mine! And VISIT it, With Thine own ardour glowing! O Comforter draw near, Within my HEART appear, And KINDLE it, Thy Holy Flame bestowing”*

*“Come Holy Spirit! Renew the face of the earth! And enkindle in us the FIRE of Your love!” – to Whom, with the Father and the Son, be glory, honour, majesty, dominion and power, now and for ever. Amen!*