



CHURCH OF OUR LADY IMMACULATE AND ST ANDREW

16 Nightingale Road
Hitchin
Herts SG5 1QS
Tel: 01462 459126
W.R.C.D.T. Reg Charity Number 233699



12th June 2020

Dear Parishioner

I am delighted to say that after nearly 3 months of the church doors being shut, the government have now said that we can open our doors for private prayer from Monday 15th June.

There are strict guidelines given which include maintaining social distancing at all times and having a steward when the church is open to ensure this is the case. We also have to clean the church daily. Thanks to the generosity of our wonderful parishioners we now have teams in place. We had been working to an opening in July as directed originally by the government and have planned to have the church painted from 15th June – 26th June, so we will be able to open the church from 4.30pm – 6pm daily until 28th June. After that we plan to have the church open from 10.30am-12pm daily Monday- Saturday and 11am-12.30pm on Sundays.

We have prepared the church so that we minimise the risk to anyone who wants to come in for private prayer. I understand that many people may not want to visit the church yet and we will continue to live stream the Masses daily and upload the sound recording and videos so that you can continue to access the Mass at home.

If you do decide to come, we have some simple steps we need you to take to ensure you are not at risk of infection from others and others are not at risk from you. These have been outlined in the separate sheet that is included with this letter.

Thank you for your patience at this time. It has been a difficult time for everyone and we hope that we are now moving towards a time when we can come back for our communal worship of Our Lord and the sacraments that we have been deprived of for so long. Opening the church for private prayer is certainly a welcome first step.

The church (building) has been in imposed isolation for many weeks puzzled by your absence. It has welcomed Fr Andrew, Fr Euloge and myself, each day, for the celebration of the Eucharist and sensed your virtual presence. It now has a feeling of joy and expectation that some of you, at least, will return for prayer and will bless you and your families in a special way. With your presence and prayers, we hope that you will soon be able to be present once again for the Eucharist. Please pray for the Church as it prepares for the future. We have many issues to address, but through prayer and the Holy Spirit, together we will emerge stronger, more faithful to the Gospel and become an even more open and welcoming family community.

We keep you all in our prayers and look forward to the day when we can freely gather together again.

Yours in Christ,

Fr Tom O'Brien a.a.
Parish Priest