**Parish Life Coming out of Lockdown – Please Take the Time to Read**

With the easing of restrictions, we can begin to consider what aspects of parish life can resume. Many of you are just beginning to attempt coming back to Mass, still feeling anxious or wary of being amongst groups of people. A major key to enabling more and more feel safe on church property is to do things gradually, ensuring recommended safety measures are followed. With regards to attending Mass, those who have been attending, do feel safe. Activities in the hall, apart from private functions, have yet to begin. Some of these require volunteers. Much of this newsletter will be dedicated to explaining what is needed before some of these can resume and to outlining a way forward regarding the celebration of Mass.

**Celebration of Mass from 11th September** The Sunday ‘obligation’ has not yet been reinstated. Please note the following changes that are able to begin due the relaxation of restrictions. Please also read the guidelines below that will be in place.

**1. Mass times** These will be:

Saturday, 6.00pm;

Sunday 8.30am, 10.00am, 11.30am and 6.00pm;

Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9.30am;

Tuesday 6.00pm.

The weekday Mass times will be subject to change should there be a funeral. There will no longer be a Saturday morning Mass.

**2. Changes to Elements of Mass**

* The Offertory Procession and collection will be reinstated, with participants asked to sanitise their hands before touching the vessels. Similarly, the offering boxes at the candle stands and walls will be re-opened.
* All the readings, bidding prayers, the Gloria and Creed will be reintroduced.
* Singing will resume at Sunday 10.0am and 11.30am Masses.
* Use of hymnbooks and parish Mass books is now permissible.

**3. Liturgical Ministries:** will resume, initially on a ‘sign up’ basis from this weekend on lists in the sacristy. Those who have known e-mail addresses serving pre-pandemic will have or will soon receive an e-mail asking if they wish to continue. (Please check spam/junk folders). If anyone hasn’t received an e-mail, please contact Anna either by e-mail (northfieldscat@rcdow.org.u) or by leaving a message – text or voice –on 07787 048144. If you wish to know more about what is involved, similarly contact Anna.

**a) Eucharistic Ministry**: only one minister per Mass until further notice to assist the celebrant to distribute Communion under one kind only. Meeting on **Sat. 18th Sept, 10.am**. Venue TBC.

**b) Readers**: 2 readers, one adult and one young reader, at weekend Masses is now possible.

**c) Altar Servers**  Please contact either Anna or Deacon Andrew (andrewgoodall@rcdow.org.uk) if you wish to continue, stating your preference of Mass. Details will follow as soon as possible regarding a rota.

**d) Music Ministry:** will resume at 10.00am and 11.30am Masses. Details regarding rehearsals will follow in due course. Participants will be required to sanitise chairs after use, using the sprays provided.

**e) Children’s Liturgy** will **not** resume until it is known how many are continuing. Anybody interested in becoming involved, again please contact Anna. A training session and meeting will be arranged as soon as possible to discuss the way forward.

**Devotions and Celebration of Infant Baptism**

**a) Rosary, Exposition**: will be reinstated in the near future. Watch this space!

**b) Infant Baptism** These will continue to take place out of Mass on the second and fourth weekends of each month but increasing to 2 families at each celebration where possible.

**Repository** will reopen at weekends once there are sufficient volunteers.

**Guidelines**

As we go forward the ‘rule of thumb’ is that of being mindful of others and keeping each other safe. Some restrictions are eased, but please take note of the following

1. You are still encouraged to wear **face coverings** (unless exempt).

2. **Sanitise** hands on entry and exit.

3. **Test and trace** is still in operation.

4. **Stewards** will still be on hand to welcome you and answer queries. For weekends, it is hoped that this develops into the resurgence of a ministry of welcome. Please consider if you and/or your family would like to be involved in this important role

5. **Seating**. You can now sit where you so wish, using only the benches in main body of the church, being mindful of keeping some distance between you and others. Some people may still be nervous or anxious about being indoors in a group setting – please respect their anxieties. **Please do not congregate in the aisles or the back of the church.** At 10.00am and 11.30am Masses, alternative seating arrangements may need to be made for those in wheelchairs as the space that has been used will be used by music ministry.

6**. Receiving Communion**: this will still be ushered for the time-being and is still under one kind in the hand. With the introduction of Eucharistic minsters, both sides of the church will be ushered to receive, alternating sides, beginning at the front.

7. **Lighting of votive candles**: you may now do so but please ensure your hands are dry after applying sanitiser before lighting a candle due to the high alcohol content.

*(continued overleaf)*

8. **Movement Around the Church**

* The car park will continue to be closed on Sunday mornings to allow for safe movement of Mass attenders leaving the church.
* Please continue to observe the one-way system.
* Leaving the church after Mass: the font (Our Lady) side of the church to continue to leave via the far aisle by the side door; the lectern (Sacred Heart) side to leave via the main aisle and out through the double doors, using the foot operated sanitiser on the way out.

9.. **Cleaning**: a ‘deep clean’ will take place once a week (possibly Wednesdays after Mass), with sanitising of ‘high touch’ areas only at all other times. New volunteers still needed to ensure the safety of all and to enable those who have been volunteering for the past year to have a break. Teams of around 4 people minimum needed to begin a new regular team rota. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Rosa on the parish email northfields@rcdow.org.uk or by leaving a message on the office Ansa phone 0208 567 5421 with your contact details. **This role is of vital importance.** Updated information outlining the cleaning regime will be given to volunteers in due course.

**New Young Readers and Servers** Please be patient with expressing interest in beginning training for these 2 ministries. Information will be given as soon as we are in a position to offer them.

**Parish Groups and Activities**

**Music Tots, Parents and Toddlers and Youth Club**  The resumption of these groups all depend on there being sufficient numbers of volunteers to help lead them according to Safeguarding and Covid guidelines.

**Parents and Toddlers/Music Tots** There will be an initial gathering of anybody interested in attending and/or leading this group to share how the group may run safely on **Wednesday 15th September,** 9.30am, Parish Hall. Aspects to consider: numbers that can be safely accommodated, length of session, use of toys, cleaning regime, etc.

**Youth Club** This is one group that initially won’t be able to operate as it did pre-pandemic largely due to numbers. It has been suggested to begin with Year 6 children. Before a date can be considered for starting up, volunteer leaders will be needed, all of whom need to undergo a diocesan DBS check before starting their role. If you are interested in seeing this group restart, please contact Rosa in the parish office with your contact details at northfields@rcdow.org.uk.

**Coffee Mornings** will not immediately restart. A close consideration of guidelines is needed to ensure they would run safely and smoothly. Watch this space!

**Parish Hall Cleaning** There is similar importance attached to a weekly clean of the hall as for the church. As the hall comes more and more into use, the more important that clean becomes. Again, it is hoped to re-establish a rota of teams, comprising of around 3 people per team. Please contact Rosa in the parish office.