



The Parishes of
St Anne, Ormskirk, and St Elizabeth, Scarisbrick
Parish Bulletin for Fourth Sunday of Lent
22 March 2020

Dear Parishioners

We live in strange times the likes of which have not been seen before. That is stating the obvious but, none-the-less, we mustn't let ourselves be sucked into the atmosphere of paralysis to which we can easily succumb. Let's face reality. We follow all the instructions and guidelines; we don't overreact; we act sensibly. But we remember that the context of our lives is much broader than Lancashire and England. Our eyes are on the Kingdom of God of which we are citizens and our Lord and King is with us always.

Last Sunday St Paul spoke to us through the letter he wrote to the Romans. I was captivated by his words: *The love of God has been **poured** into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us.* We are not alone and always remember what Jesus said so often, '*Do not be afraid*'!

How about these words from Pope Francis which he spoke a few days ago: *Tonight before falling asleep think about when we will return to the street. When we hug again, when all the shopping together will seem like a party. Let's think about when the coffees will return to the bar, the small talk, and the photos close to each other. We think about when it will be all a memory but normalcy will seem an unexpected and beautiful gift. We will love everything that has so far seemed futile to us. Every second will be precious. Swims at the sea, the sun until late, sunsets, toasts, laughter. We will go back to laughing together. Strength and courage. See you soon!*

Now for the practicalities. On Thursday a group of us from both parishes met to discuss the arrangements for the foreseeable future in St Anne's and St Elizabeth's. I hope you will find the following directives which are in line with government orders and have come from the Bishops' Conference, helpful.

Please Note: No public services will take place in our churches.

Holy Mass. Because of the situation the Church finds herself in, the obligation for the faithful to attend Holy Mass on a Sunday or Holy day of Obligation is removed until further notice. Priests will continue to celebrate Mass without the faithful being present. The continuing celebration of Mass ensures that the faithful can join in spiritual communion with the priests of the church. Mass intentions will continue to be said by our priests but we cannot give notice in advance of when the Masses will be said. We shall, of course, record when the Masses have been said.

Daily liturgical resources for those at home, including those for making a 'Spiritual Communion' with the priest will be available on the website of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW).

Here are a couple of examples of **Live-streaming** of the celebration of Mass: The National Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham will continue its full liturgical programme www.walsingham.org.uk Masses will also be live-streamed via the Facebook page of the Parish of St Catherine of Alexandria, Lydiate, and YouTube channel www.youtube.com/channel/UCCCLyIXr6LiConW6RVdSoSA which the parish is in the process of developing; and via St Gregory's webcam (mcnmedia.tv). Weekday masses will be live-streamed at 9.30 am on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and on Wednesday and Saturday at 9 am at **St Gregory's church**, but this is subject to change. Some helpful links: www.st-annes-ormskirk.org.uk; www.liverpoolcatholic.org.uk; www.cbcew.org.uk

Sacramental Life

Baptisms will be postponed except in an emergency

First Holy Communions and Reconciliation are to be postponed until a time that allows for families and friends to gather safely within our churches.

Weddings should be deferred until such time that people can gather in numbers safely. However, if this is not possible and only in the most pressing of circumstances, then those present for the marriage should be restricted to the celebrant, bride and groom, the registered person, and immediate family

The Sacrament of the Sick may continue to be celebrated in an emergency.

Funeral services will take place only at the graveside or in a crematorium with only a handful of people present. A memorial Mass can take place at a later date.

Holy Week and Easter Arrangements in the archdiocese will be announced in due course.

Keeping in touch

Since two of our priests are in the 'at risk category' they may be contacted by e mail or by phone. Fr Hugh will continue to be in residence at St Elizabeth's. The phone number is: 01704 880226

Dear Parishioners, another way of looking at the situation is that it may well provide opportunities for **growing in our faith**. For example we can pray as families, either with 'set' prayers or praying from our hearts. We can develop our own inner life of prayer by just spending a few moments realizing that we are in the presence of the Lord wherever we are. Above all, keep an eye open for our neighbours and fellow parishioners who may be in need. You can contact St Anne's parish office and we shall do what we can to respond to calls.

And ... I am not good at mentioning **money** but our team did strongly recommend that I ask you to remember to continue contributing as best you can to the parish finances. We still have bills to pay! You can pay by banker's order or keep your weekly contribution to one side and drop it off at one of our parish offices when it is convenient for you. However, I suggest you don't make direct contact with whoever is in the parish house. **Better to correspond by post, email or phone.**

And, of course, let us continue to pray for our medical people and scientists and all those caring for the sick and working to find ways of overcoming this virus, as well as all those directly affected by it.

We shall certainly keep you all in our prayers.

Godric OSB