



St Theresa's Presbytery  
High Lane  
Stansted Mountfitchet  
CM24 8LQ

St Bede the Venerable 2020

Dear Friends

Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!

Last Thursday, we celebrated Ascension Day. It is such a shame that we could not meet together in Church to celebrate this great day. This Sunday we have the wonderful Feast of Pentecost that we will be unable to be together for. But next year will be different!

The governmental task force meeting that happened on Friday of last week have not yet published their findings. This was when leading members of faith groups, including Cardinal Nichols met government representatives in a virtual meeting which has been described as "productive" by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Robert Jenrick. This task force was set up in response to the Prime Minister's announcement on the 10<sup>th</sup> May that places of worship could reopen as early as the 4<sup>th</sup> July, subject to further scientific advice. This is, of course, not what we wanted to hear. I think it strange that places of worship can be closed with little or no consultation within hours of it being decided by the government, and yet it takes weeks of negotiation to open them up again! My attitude to this may be one of many reasons reason why I have not been chosen to sit on the government task force.

Regarding the opening of our Church, I am afraid to say that this is all we have for now so please continue to pray for that process. It still looks likely that churches could be open for private prayer before July, but please do continue to pray for a positive outcome.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all those who responded so positively to last week's letter. I knew that many of you would want to help the Church to open up again in the near future. I don't have the final count yet, but I am hopeful that we will have enough to be able to move forward when the easing of the lockdown on places of worship is enacted. We are well ahead of the curve on this in our parish, even beating the advice from Bishop Alan which only came a few days after my letter last week. We have already purchased alcohol gel, gel dispensers, specialist cleaning materials, disposable gloves, and red and white tape for taping off areas. So, we are good to go when the starting pistol sounds. If you haven't yet volunteered and are not in the 'at risk' category, could you please let me, Deacon Des, or Clair our Administrator know in the next few days.

Do please continue to pray for each other, be assured of my prayers for all of you, and please pray for me and for Deacon Des too.

With my love and blessing

Fr Lee