



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

Monday of Sixth Week of Easter 2020

Dear Friends

Christ Is Risen! Alleluia!

We have heard recently from government announcements that churches are likely to be permitted to be open for services from early July, that is if things go well in the intervening period, and the R rate does not increase. The Bishops have been lobbying the government regarding the opening of churches for private prayer before early July: maybe in allowing churches to open for this in June. As we are aware golf courses have been allowed to open in this past week, and people have begun to go back to work in a limited capacity. So, I am hopeful the government will listen to the wishes of the faithful who wish to return to their places of worship, even in a limited capacity.

The Bishops have been seeking to point out to the Government that the spiritual needs of people are much more important than people's entertainment or leisure needs. They are seeking to show that churches can be made compliant with the directions regarding infection control. Cardinal Nichols has been appointed to the government task force regarding this. I think this is very good news indeed.

Discussions are currently ongoing about the practical issues especially regarding stewarding and cleaning. I hope I have made it clear that I am very much interested in opening up St Theresa's again as soon as possible, whilst keeping everyone safe. I have been in church with a tape measure, making exploratory calculations on how we might be able to open and keep socially distanced. Plans are in place for when this might come about.

I'm sure many of you are asking the question - What can I do?

Well, now that you ask:

Volunteer: One of the important factors will be the number of willing volunteers we have in the parish to steward (to ensure social distancing takes place, and to limit the number of people in Church at any one time) and/or clean. The difficult and sensitive issue is that of age! The current advice is that those who are either in an at-risk category or who are above the age of 70 cannot be part of this volunteer workforce. That means even those of you who feel very fit and are a septuagenarian or older cannot be on the list! I am sorry about that. We do need to have a good list of volunteers to show we can cope with the requirements and thus be able to open St Theresa's, should we be given the go ahead by the government.

So, it is over to you. If you would like to volunteer your services to provide a daily clean and /or to steward, can you please contact Clair via the parish email with your name and contact details, and the times and days you could be available each week, or if you have any questions as to duties to contact myself or Deacon Des. Once we have a list, we can sort out a rota and ensure that we can open our Church for those who wish and are able to attend; firstly, for private prayer, and later for a return to attend Mass.

We are currently looking to make permanent the live streaming of our daily Mass. The first step in this process has been securing a faster internet connection, this is due to take place during the first week of June, and hopefully we will see the benefits of this especially during the Sunday Mass. Our next step is to have a camera installed and to connect to the existing microphone system, this is in the investigation stage. I will keep you posted on how this is progressing.

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