



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

St Martin of Tours 2020

Dear Friends

As I write this week's letter we are approaching the end of the first week of the lockdown version 2. The Masses during lockdown remain strange with the Church being empty of people, but this was made slightly easier with the presence of Deacon Des to Deacon the Mass, something which we were denied during the last lockdown. We also had the great benefit of his wonderful homily on Remembrance. I am also comforted by the idea of people participating in the Mass via the livestream broadcast on our parish YouTube Channel. We are still hopeful that by this weekend accessing the Mass via the livestream will become even easier when our technical difficulties will hopefully be solved, and we can make full use of Church TV services. Please do pray that this might be so.

I would like to encourage you all to make use of this time of separation from the sacraments and not to allow the flame of faith to be dimmed during these dark winter days. We need to remain strong in our faith by, first of all, maintaining our life of prayer. We can do this in a number of ways: for those who have access to the live stream Mass, do please try to make time each day to pray the Mass. If you have a Missalette, do please follow the readings and the prayers of the Mass. For those who don't have access to the livestream Mass, just take a brief moment during the morning to orientate your heart and mind to the Mass taking place at St Theresa's. The times of the Masses during lockdown are Sunday to Friday 10:00 a.m. and Saturdays at 12:00 noon. Do please make your act of Spiritual Communion each day, the prayer is on the newsletter. We have been asked by Cardinal Vincent Nichols to make 6:00 p.m. a time when we can join together as a people to pray in a national time of prayer. This takes place each evening at 6:00 p.m. We are asked to pray for our families, our parish, for an end to the pandemic, and in this month of November for the Holy Souls in Purgatory. We are also blessed during this period of lockdown to have Deacon Des lead us in the Rosary, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on Wednesday and Friday evenings at 7:00 p.m. Again, this will be livestreamed for those who have access to this, but even if not, do please let us join our prayers together at this time and on these days to pray as a parish family.

Secondly, can I ask that we not just look inwards, at our interior life of prayer, but allow our prayer to help us turn our focus outwards away from ourselves into the world and towards others. To keep a life of charity during this lockdown is as essential as keeping our life of prayer going. It has been heartening to see some of the things that have been happening in the parish, especially those who have worked so hard getting the Teams4U Christmas shoe box scheme running again this year despite all the obstacles that this pandemic. Despite not being able to meet together Brian, Eileen, and Helen, and others in the community have filled 218 boxes of love. I know that so many have contributed to this again this year, so on behalf of our parish community and beyond, thank you.

We can all do a little bit to help, even if it is just a telephone call to a person who may be alone or isolated, the offer to get a few things from the shop. This too is a wonderful expression of our faith. The early Christians stood out most clearly in their community, not because of the way they dressed, or by their manner of speech, but in the way they loved each other. This love (charity)

does mark us as being different to the rest of society, do please let it be our hallmark during these dark times.

As ever, do please be assured of mine and Deacon Des' continued prayer and support for you, and do please keep us in your prayers too.

God bless you all

Fr Lee