



St John Fisher Catholic Church

North Harrow



St John Fisher Catholic Church, 80 Imperial Close, Harrow, HA2 7LW
Tel: 020 8868 7531 e-mail: harrownorth@rcdow.org.uk www.stjohnfisheronline.org.uk

Stewards Update – June 2021

Whilst it is disappointing that the Government has postponed Stage 4 of the re-opening of services and venues there are clear signs of hope that the end of the pandemic may be approaching. However that is not the case in other parts of the world and we should continue to pray for those less fortunate than ourselves.

We continue to have a responsibility to all members of our community to enact the guidelines set out so that we can remain safe and ensure that there are no future restrictions. The current arrangements for midweek and weekend masses will remain in place until at least 19th July when the full re-opening of services and venues, including places of worship in England, (Step 4) will hopefully take place.

A reminder of these are as follows:

Main Guidelines for Parishioners

- ✚ **Masks** must continue to be worn by all adult parishioners whilst in the church (excluding exemptions).
- ✚ **Hand gel** must be used by all parishioners on entry to the church and before and after receiving Holy Communion.
- ✚ **Social distancing** measures remain in place; parishioners should continue booking weekend masses and be invited to book into all masses to comply with 'Test & Trace' policy. Arrangements for parishioner seating will remain as now.
- ✚ **Lifecycle events (Funerals, Weddings etc.)** attendance is now limited to the number of people that can be accommodated under the social distance rules for weddings as well as funerals

Steward Tasks

- ✚ Ensure parishioners are booked in at all services, are wearing a face mask and sanitise with hand gel before entering the church.
- ✚ Parishioners are seated as per the current social distancing process
- ✚ The procedure for receiving Holy Communion is unchanged with one steward directing parishioners to the Sanctuary via the one-way system and parishioners being responsible for sanitising their hands before and after Holy Communion.
- ✚ At the conclusion of mass two stewards, at either side of the church, will direct parishioners to leave from the rear benches upwards using the doors at either side of the porch as per the current arrangement.

Cleaning Tasks

- ✚ Those benches and kneelers used by parishioners will still need to be cleaned after each mass, but not the floors under the benches
- ✚ The Wednesday 'deep clean' will include cleaning floors, the sanctuary and porch area.

Stewards Rota

The recommended number of stewards required at weekend masses will remain unchanged for now, except for **12pm** mass on **Sunday** which requires **two** stewards.

We also feel it is timely to re-introduce on a limited scale some aspects of our worship that have been cancelled due to the pandemic; these will not require stewards to manage but you should be aware of them. They include:

- ✚ **Private prayer** will be re-introduced and the church will remain open after Mass until 1pm, except on Wednesdays when cleaning takes place. Parishioners will be responsible for signing in and cleaning the benches after use. No stewards will be required to manage private prayer.
- ✚ **Holy Communion** will be offered on the tongue as well as in the hand; to manage this in a safe manner, Holy Communion will be given in this way by myself or Fr Axcel after the end of Mass; those parishioners wishing to receive Holy Communion on the tongue should remain seated at the end of Mass.
- ✚ Parishioners can light **Votive candles** at the end of each service. This may have an impact on social distancing, but we believe this can be managed if everyone exercises common sense.
- ✚ **Bidding prayers** will be re-introduced during the Mass

We continue to be reliant on all of you to help to guide your fellow parishioners, at all Masses, to follow the correct procedures and to reassure those that need it, that St John Fisher continues to be a safe place to worship.

Once again, I thank you for your continued support whilst we transition out of the current restrictions. The last 15 months have been extremely difficult but have been helped by the efforts of so many of you in supporting your parish and your fellow parishioners. We can't yet fully relax our guard and whilst some restrictions are in place we will continue to manage the situation.

One of the useful things introduced lately has been the **Stewards' WhatsApp Group**, if you haven't joined it yet, I encourage you to do so by emailing Rob Browne (robbrowne150@gmail.com) with your mobile/smart phone number.

A new stewards' rota will be published shortly.

Wishing every blessing on you and your families,



Fr Graham Stokes
Parish Priest

17th June 2021