

REOPENING OF CHURCHES

Dear Parishioners,

I wish to update you on where we are in relation to being able to welcome you back for Mass and the other sacraments. Our primary concern is to ensure your safety when you return. This is also the concern of the government requirements requiring social distancing both outside and inside the church and the sanitising of the church after every Mass and public gathering. We are not allowed to open until both of these conditions are met. So, where are we at the moment?

I estimate we will need a minimum of 5 ushers to supervise both outside and inside the church for each of the projected 10 public Masses in the Church of the Holy Rosary alone. The Monday evening Mass and daily 8am Masses will be available only on church radio and parish webcam as at present. As of now, 20 men and women have offered their help and I thank those people for that. We need many more before we can plan on reopening. Up until now so many of our church volunteers and helpers have been aged 70+. In these present circumstances these good people are advised not to volunteer because they are in the most vulnerable category. Please spread the word in whatever way you can of our need for volunteers. Training will be provided as needed.

The good news about sanitising the church is that we have found a system which meets all the health requirements while requiring only two people to operate. The bad news is that, in common with all such products and systems, there is a delay in importing them due to the sudden surge in demand, as happened in relation to PPE supplies for hospitals and care homes. For these reasons, it is not possible to say when we will be in a position to open the Church of the Holy Rosary for Mass, but it will certainly not be in the week starting June 29.

It is not possible to say when Breaffy and Ballyheane churches will reopen. The very restricted numbers there will need to be addressed when we get the Church of the Holy Rosary open. I ask for your continuing support and understanding for what is a very difficult, demanding and stressful time in trying to get this done properly and safely. Please continue to pray that we will soon be able to welcome you back to your churches.

Fr. Conal Eustace P.P.