

# Holy Rood & Our Lady's Parishes

## Parish Lockdown Easing

On Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May, the country moved into step 3 of the Government Covid-19 Response Roadmap published in February 2021. The Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales has responded by issuing guidance outlining cautious easements on restrictions. The emphasis is that implementation must be based on the prevailing local conditions for the virus, especially the R number, the prevalence of new variants of the virus, the local rates of hospital admissions and any local public health advice.

Following a risk-assessment of our two parishes, the following summarises the measures that will remain in place, to mitigate against the risks of virus transmission, and the changes which will take place on June 6<sup>th</sup> as our first steps towards easing restrictions.

Hand sanitisation on entry/exit	Remains
Wearing of face covering	Remains
Ventilating buildings well (especially during and between services).	Remains
Sanitising after every service	Remains
Social distancing using existing protocols	Remains
Congregational singing	Not permitted
Holy water stoops	To remain empty
Votive candles	To be re-introduced but social distancing must be maintained
Altar servers	No
Monday morning mass at OL&SJ	Yes commencing Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> June
Live streaming discontinued	Last live streamed mass on June 6 <sup>th</sup>
Veneration of Statues	Yes although touching/kissing not permitted
Incense and Candles	Yes
Reader(s)	Yes – restricted to one
Offertory Procession	No
Sign of Peace	Remains suspended
Holy Communion	Under one kind only - in the hand
Collection	Collection boxes to remain at back of the Nave (HR) or Narthex (OL&SJ)
Capacity of the church(s)	Remains unaltered
Marriage (capacity)	30 people

Funeral (capacity)	Covid-secure capacity of church taking into account family groups/bubbles
Baptism (capacity)	30 people
The Sacrament of Reconciliation	Unchanged – see bulletin
Home visits	Permitted but Government Guidance for people working in, visiting or delivering to other people's homes must be followed (risk assessment/limit on visits/regular use of freely available covid-19 home test kits)
Catechetical Groups/Formation Groups/Prayer Groups	Permitted following satisfactory risk assessment
Stewarding (Communion)	To continue
Stewarding (midweek)	To be discontinued
Stewarding (Sunday)	Remains
Piety stall	Remains closed

The above modest changes are consistent with the government and Bishops' Conference approach to easing lockdown. We have deliberately adopted a cautious approach based on the local situation and will continually re-evaluate as circumstances dictate. Should the local situation deteriorate, or good practice is no longer followed, some of the measures which have been eased could be re-introduced. Further central advice is anticipated on June 21<sup>st</sup>.