

Dear Parishioners, priests and deacons of the Chorley Pastoral Area,

The priests of the Pastoral Area, met on Tuesday 30th June to discuss the implementation of the cautious re-opening of churches for public worship. While we all acknowledged the great desire of people wishing to return to church, mass, and Holy Communion, we were also very aware of the restriction placed upon us in doing so.

In the light of the age and health of some of the priests; the restrictions in place and the number of volunteers needed it was decided that in the first instance we would only open two churches for mass. These would be St Gregory's and St Mary's which are large churches, with easy access, and a one way system can be followed easily. Mass times will be as follows:

St Gregory's Monday- Saturday 8:30 am Sunday 9:30 am (masses will continue to be live streamed behind closed doors at the other mass times)

St Mary's Monday- Friday 12 noon Saturday 5pm and Sunday 10:30 am.

It is important to emphasise that Sunday obligation has **not** been re-instated; people who are shielding or at risk should not feel obliged to attend any mass; people who have had any symptoms of COVID 19 should not attend for at least 14 days after the symptoms appeared. Those who can are encouraged to attend a weekday mass so that those who cannot, can attend at the weekend without the churches being over crowded.

Restrictions that will be in place include the wearing of face masks and giving personal details for track and trace. Social distancing of 1 meter + will be observed and so maximum numbers of 80 (St Gregory's) 120 (St Mary's) are allowed.

Some churches may open for private prayer and the celebration of the other Sacraments (restrictions of 30 people attending), please see your parish newsletters or websites for this individual information.

As priest's we realise that this cautious approach may disappoint some parishioners (and priests) but it was felt that the safety of all was paramount and that it was better to be safe than sorry. The re-opening of churches will be reviewed locally and by the Archdiocese on a regular bases. Please continue to pray for each other and keep safe.

God Bless you all

Fr Graeme Dunne (Dean of the Chorley Pastoral Area)

Dear friends,

As you can see from the letter from Fr Graeme, our Dean, we will have to wait a little longer before we resume the celebration of Masses open to the public in our parishes. I do hope to open our churches for private prayer very soon and am working with our volunteers to allow this to happen.

Please note from Fr Graeme's letter the times of Masses you will be able to attend from Monday 6th July at St Gregory's and St Mary's.

God bless,

Fr. Mark