

Revised Mass Schedule and Guidelines

The Parish of St. Peter and the Winchester Martyrs looks forward to welcoming you. It has been wonderful to see people returning to Mass as restrictions are lifted, and everyone is encouraged and warmly invited to attend as we continue move forwards.

Following the announcement by HM Government on 19 January that the measures put in place to mitigate against COVID virus transmission as 'Plan B' would be lifted in full on 27 January, the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales has updated the guidance offered to the dioceses of England and Wales.

On their website, they share that:

"The scientific consensus is that society is moving towards the stage where the virus is transitioning from the pandemic phase to the endemic phase, but as stated by HM Government, there is still a risk associated with gathering for sustained periods in enclosed spaces and therefore there needs to be continued caution by all against infection.

This, however, has to be balanced against the need to move forward safely towards a normal lifestyle and these two positions will always be held in tension. This holding in tension is the key to living safely with Covid-19, namely keeping infections from a virus that cannot be eliminated to levels which minimise disruption to people's lives."

They offer their guidance, which you can read in full [here](#), with this principle in mind. In the light of this updated guidance, and with regard to our own local context, we are updating our own measures in the parish with effect from Sat 12th February. We are trying at every stage to make Mass as accessible as possible, by lifting restrictions where it is sensible to do so, and in line with guidelines, but also recognising that people may also remain concerned about COVID infection. We have sought to strike the right balance.

It's important that as a parish community we strive to create a safe space for everyone, as best we can.

From Saturday 12th February

Livestream

We also understand that some people may still feel unable to attend Mass for health reasons, and that's OK, and it's one of the reasons why we are continuing with live streaming. We will continue to livestream every public mass and liturgy at St. Peter's. You can participate live [here](#) and participate in previous liturgies [here](#).

Booking for Masses – no longer required

As of Feb 12th, we will no longer require you to book in for Masses in our parish. In the newsletter each week, we will publish the number of participants for each of our Sunday Masses (including Saturday evening Vigil Mass), alongside the capacity for that church building. This will hopefully assist you in making an informed decision about how full a given Mass is likely to be and whether or not you feel comfortable joining us. Please note that the Saturday evening Vigil Mass (5:30pm) and the 8am Sunday morning Mass in St. Peter's are the ones with fewest people compared to the size of the building.

Face coverings, social distancing, etc.

- ✦ Face coverings/masks – we will continue to ask you to wear a face covering or mask for all our public masses.
- ✦ Hand sanitiser – we will continue to ask you to use hand sanitiser when you enter our church buildings.
- ✦ Hymn books – these will be available for use at all Masses where we have congregational singing.
- ✦ Mass booklets - we will also make available Mass booklets, with the text of many of the prayers used during Mass.
- ✦ Holy Communion – we will continue to distribute Holy Communion under one kind only, and ask those receiving on the tongue to come at the end of the communion line. We will revert to people approaching the altar for communion in two lines at St. Peter's (other churches continue as currently), asking people to keep 1m distance between themselves and those from other families, etc.

- ✦ Holy Water – we will be filling holy water stoups and the font and will ensure that these are cleaned at least once a week.
- ✦ Offertory Collection – we will resume the practice of taking a collection during the Preparation of the Gifts (and at the end of Mass when we have a Second Collection). We have ordered some “long-handled” collection baskets for this purpose.
- ✦ Various other steps – we will continue to: refrain from offering a physical sign of peace during mass, to keep ventilation levels high (whilst being conscious of the cold), and to clean the church buildings regularly.

Teas and Coffees

We will be able to continue with or re-commence serving teas and coffees, etc. after some of our masses (8am St. Peter's; 9am Stockbridge; 9:15am St. Stephen's; 10:30am St. Peter's and 11am St. Gregory's).

Thank you for all your patience and support during this time. We hope that this next phase of measures will make Mass as accessible as possible to as many as possible. Please bear in mind that as we get more used to living with COVID, we all need to be understanding of those whose situation is different to our own. Please pray that we will be able to continue with this phased re-opening of our buildings in a way that is safe and welcoming.

Next Review Date: prior to Holy Week (w/c 10th April)