

## Corona Virus Update

18<sup>th</sup> March

The Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, following advice from the government and health authorities, have decreed that there will be no public services in Catholic Churches after Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2020 until further notice.

The bishops are eager to encourage the faithful in these difficult times, to prayer privately and in their homes, to read the scriptures, and where possible to accompany the celebration of Mass by means of live streaming.

Sadly, this directive includes all services including Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals. The children on the Sacramental Programme will now have the occasion of receiving Holy Communion for the first time postponed also.

In our parish, Sacred Heart Church will continue to be open during the day, hopefully for longer periods than presently and we will keep some heat on so that people can drop into church for private prayer or simply a quiet time with God.

Since it will not be possible to receive Holy Communion except in emergencies, I recommend this prayer of Spiritual Communion which many of you may already be familiar with:

A Spiritual Communion.

My Jesus, I believe you are present in the Most Blessed Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and I unite myself wholly to you. Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

Please note that priests will continue to celebrate Mass as usual for the praise and glory of God and for the salvation and intention of his people. We live in unprecedented times but the Church does not cease to be Church and the Sacraments are still celebrated even if not publicly.

Let us keep each other in our prayers.

Fr. Peter