

## Opening Our Churches

As you will know from the news, the government is starting to relax its “Stay At Home” message as it tries to reopen the country. Although there have been no specific details of the reopening of places of worship we know this is bound to happen soon and we will advise you when this happens. Initially the opening may just be for a limited time for private prayer, but eventually at some future date Masses will restart. We have, therefore, started thinking how we do this ensuring that everyone can have access to a Mass and remain safe.

If the “social distancing” rules need to be applied during the first phase of reopening then we could not just open up our churches for the normal Masses at the normal times. All of our Masses have attendance numbers that would make the 2 meter rule impossible to enforce, so we will need to limit the numbers attending to ensure we have safe distancing.

Consequently, we are considering bringing in a “rota” for Masses which might limit people to attending one Mass per month during the pandemic. We understand that this is not ideal – but as an interim step out of the current crisis we believe that this offers both a physical Mass and, importantly, a safe Mass.

We do not know when we might be able to meet again at Mass, but would like to ensure that when we are able we can do so in a safe, secure and holy setting.

You can help us to develop this outline plan. Would you please let us know, by email if possible, or telephone and leave a message, which church and time you would like to attend Mass. We will not be able to accommodate every parishioner for every Mass they would like to attend – but we can promise that we will ensure that as many people as possible – and as importantly as safely as possible – can attend.

Please email or telephone your reply letting us know:

- which one of these Masses you would like to attend when we are able to resume Masses
- your contact details
- how many people from your household you would like to attend:-

### **PLEASE LEAVE A TELEPHONE MESSAGE WHEN YOU CALL.**

St Mary (please email [strichard@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:strichard@rcaol.org.uk) or call 01695 720095)

St Francis (please email [strichard@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:strichard@rcaol.org.uk) or call 01695 720095)

St Richard (please email [strichard@rcaol.org.uk](mailto:strichard@rcaol.org.uk) or call 01695 720095)

We will, with your permission, compile a list of people for each Mass and contact each person to let them know which Mass (time and date) they can attend.

We appreciate that this is a departure from normal Mass attendance procedures – but these are unprecedented times when our main focus is celebrating a Mass which keeps our parishioners safe. Thanks for your understanding and please pass on this message to anyone who might not have access to this and have them respond or respond on their behalf.

Thanks – let’s pull together to get through this!