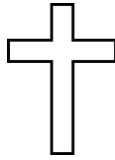


The Presbytery, St Margaret's Church
149 Main Street
Davidson's Mains
Edinburgh
EH4 5AQ



13 July 2020

Update regarding resumption of public Mass at St. Margaret's Church, Davidson's Mains

Dear Parishioners

I write with the joyful news that St. Margaret's Parish Church will reopen for Mass with effect from Wednesday 15 July, when I will celebrate a special Mass of thanksgiving at 12 noon to offer our praise and appreciation to God the Father for abiding with us and comforting us during lockdown. As you'll be aware, resuming public Mass will be subject to various restrictions (set out below), in order to reduce the risk of coronavirus transmission.

Weekly Mass times, which will include an extra Sunday Mass in light of the restrictions on numbers of attendees, will be as follows:

- Saturday Vigil Mass – 5pm
- Sunday Mass – 9:30am
- Sunday Mass – 11am (*which will also be streamed live on our Facebook & YouTube channels*)
- I will confirm the timing for the following week's weekday Mass with the usual Parish announcements at each Sunday Mass

Mandatory physical distancing and hygiene safeguards at Mass

The most significant change at weekly Mass will be the limit on the number of attendees in order to ensure 2 metre physical distancing. **It will therefore be necessary to book a place for your preferred Mass before attending.** More details on how to do this are set out later in this letter.

Other important changes and requirements that will be necessary include:

- **Face-coverings must be worn at all times** by those attending Mass (*except under-5s*)
- For each Mass, the parish must retain names and contact details of all attendees
- Upon entering the church, attendees will be required to use the hand sanitising gel provided
- Passkeepers will be on hand to check-off attendees' names against the pre-booking list and to direct them to their seats
- Parishioners are asked to arrive early so seating may proceed smoothly
- 2-metre physical distancing must be observed at all times in the church. This means that only every third pew will be open. **The maximum number of people per pew is two**, except if comprised of members of the same household in which case it is **six**
- Unfortunately there will be no singing due to the increased risk of coronavirus transmission from airborne droplets

- Communion will be distributed **after** the final blessing as parishioners exit the church, when indicated to do so by the passkeepers. Communion may only be received in the hand
- There will be a collection basket at the end of the church for donations
- **Anyone who has been identified as needing to shield should not attend Mass** until the Scottish Government changes its advice on shielding. The earliest such a change can be expected is 31 July.

While the church has been deep cleaned recently and will be subject to enhanced cleaning measures between Masses, our vulnerable and aged parishioners need to be aware that **it is impossible to completely eliminate the risk of virus transmission**. Remember, the usual obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains dispensed by the Archbishop until further notice. You should therefore consult your usual health practitioner and follow their advice as to whether or not it is wise for you to attend Mass at St. Margaret's Church. **You can continue to join the 11am Sunday Mass live on Facebook and YouTube**. Just click on the Facebook logo at the top righthand side of our website stmargaretsdmains.org.uk

Procedure for booking a place at Mass

The mandatory 2 metre physical distancing requirement means that the **maximum** congregation we can accommodate at St. Margaret's Church will be approximately **30** people (slightly higher where more than two members of the same household attend and thus can share a pew).

There are two ways you can book your preferred Mass:

1. Our Eventbrite website St-Margarets-D-Mains.eventbrite.com where you can book your place free of charge. No need to print nor bring any ticket with you, but you do need to fill out your name and contact details online. Bookings can be made from each Wednesday onwards for Masses that coming weekend. In the interests of fairness, bookings will be limited to 4 individual 'tickets' per Mass, or for a family of up to 6 people where all family members are from the same household.
2. By phone/text to the Parish Council member maintaining the attendee list for the Masses as follows:
 - Saturday Vigil Mass – 5pm – call/text Ray Hurley on 07739 812 720
 - Sunday Mass – 9:30am – call/text Michael Templeton on 07474 406 612
 - Sunday Mass – 11am – call/text Jim Ewing on 07977 556 351

If you leave a voicemail or send a text, please ensure that you specify:

- Your name and contact number
- How many places you require (up to 4 individuals or for a family of up to 6)
- The names of the other people for whom you are booking a place

Pre-booking will not be required for attendance at this Wednesday's thanksgiving Mass, as it is unlikely that more than 30 people will attend given midweek work commitments and holiday absences. Sign-in will be required at the door, together with the other measures detailed earlier in this letter.

I would ask for your *patience* and prayers as we all strive together to restore our weekly celebration of Sunday Mass. There are bound to be 'wrinkles' in the early stages until we all become accustomed to the new restrictive arrangements. And God willing, if science

achieves the necessary advances to end the pandemic, we may eventually be able to celebrate Mass without so many restrictions.

In the meantime, if you're concerned or unsure about any of these changes or how they apply to you personally, you can always email me or phone me at the Presbytery. I look forward to having you at Mass again, whether in person or by joining our Facebook or YouTube broadcasts at 11am each Sunday.

God bless you and I will keep you in my prayers.

Fr. Peter Kelly CC