

Parish of St Winefride, Lymm

RC Diocese of Shrewsbury a registered charity 234025

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Newsletter 11 June 2020

Hello everyone. Best wishes to you all again. It is especially awkward to be in lockdown for the liturgy this week. We are supposed to be celebrating a feast in honour especially of the Body and Blood of Christ, really present in the Blessed Sacrament, real food and drink for us, so that we can be sacramentally united with Jesus and with one another, and we can't have that nourishment. I can only hope that being denied Holy Communion, as perhaps when we don't have singing at Mass, you will appreciate all the more what you are missing. The prayers and readings at Mass this weekend are texts which highlight and venerate the truly great gift Jesus gave his Church at the Last Supper. Our Catholic religion is one that conveys spiritual truths and realities through material things, signs that mean something but also 'bring about what they signify', Sacraments. We miss the greatest Sacrament most of all.

As I tried to explain last week, a real attempt is being made to restore things to 'normal', in many different ways, including opening churches again. The government and all of us are encountering difficulties with sports fixtures, shopping, going to school, getting medical attention apart from Covid19, hairdressing (alas), and choosing what 'bubble' to go into. The snags involved in opening churches are wittily illustrated in a video produced by our Baptist friends – see it at <https://youtu.be/flf1tkvCVfA>.

Fifty parishes in our Diocese are going to try opening up for private prayer this coming week. Most of them are large buildings and even they are only opening for an hour or so at a time.

I am currently in talks with the diocese, and pending further government guidance expected next week, looking forward to welcoming our parishioners back in the future. As stated, there will be no services, just private prayer and reflection. As I am currently within the shielding category, I won't be attending. I want to assure you that all measures as set out in the guidelines will be put in place to ensure we are Covid secure and don't risk further transmission. Martin Roberts, who has Health and Safety Risk Assessment experience, has kindly volunteered to supervise preparations. In order to allow our re-opening, we will of course, require further volunteers, under 70 and not in the shielding category, and vetted and barred for safeguarding. Maybe you could give an hour at the weekend, at the time you would normally be attending Mass. Your duties would be much like a welcomer, handing out sanitisers instead of prayer books (!) and also being willing to make sure everything is as clean as possible. More details of dates and procedures will be confirmed, once we know how many volunteers we have, and if the response is enthusiastic. This very morning on the news there was debate about the need for 2 metre distancing, so you see how uncertain planning necessarily is. Send an e-mail to lymm_rc@btinternet.com. if you want to help.

I have offered Mass as requested, for A&C, Beryl Spivey, Molly McAllister, and John Dodd, for all the parishioners, and on Saturday will myself be thanking God for 55 years in the priesthood and ask your continued prayers.

Many thanks to all of you for your messages and phone calls, and for the £2000 (approx.) sent in as offertory contributions. Thanks also for being so patient, and for all the care you are showing to other people, and for keeping safe yourselves.

Fr Tony Elder.