

PARISH OF OUR LADY AND ST DAVID CWMBRAN

Archdiocese of Cardiff

(Registered Charity Number 117727)

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31st May 2020

PENTECOST SUNDAY (Solemnity)

Psalter Week 1

Sunday 10am	The People of the Parish Mass – live streamed. <u>ORDINARY TIME BEGINS</u>
Monday	Richard Hurley (TH); Terry Evans (CJG) <i>The BVM, Mother of the Church</i>
Tuesday	Jim and Fay Desmond (VW); Jayson Spokes (SS)
Wednesday	Jacqui Smith (VJ); Sr Esther <i>Charles Lwanga and Companions, Martyrs</i>
Thursday	The Abbey Community; Patricia Mary Baker <i>Our Lord Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest</i>
Friday	Marian Milling (MM) <i>St Boniface, Bishop and Martyr</i>
Saturday	Bill and Margaret Gale (LR)

**May 31st – National Rosary Rally 9am to 9pm
England, Wales, Scotland**

Pope Francis is encouraging Catholics to pray the Rosary in their family homes during the month of May, especially when the Pandemic is making us aware of the value of our families and making it possible for us to pray together in lockdown at home. We are invited to join in an initiative that follows on the Pope's request, the **Pentecost Sunday National Rosary Rally**, from 9.00am to 9.00pm across Scotland England and Wales. Our Diocese has been asked to pray a **Rosary Hour** at 12-1 pm and you are warmly invite to take part.

Requiescent in Pace

Of your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of Denis O'Brien, Patricia Mary Baker, Jacqui Smith and Kathryn Williams who died recently.

“When will our churches be open?”

by Archbishop George Stack

With the gradual loosening of lockdown regulations and the opening of more and more amenities, the question is inevitably asked “When will our churches be open?”. As with the many other challenges facing us in this pandemic, this is not an easy question to answer. The opening of parks and beaches, of garden centres and supermarkets car showrooms and other amenities is based on the concept of these being “open spaces” of one kind or another. Churches do not seem to be seen in the same category. I imagine this is because they are places where large groups of people come together, sit in close proximity to each other, often for one hour or more. Control of access, movement and social distancing will be part of the conditions laid down in the gradual return to our churches whether for private prayer and public worship.

The Archbishops of England and Wales have been engaged with the relevant authorities on the necessity of opening our churches in the first instance for private prayer. Public worship will begin later. The essence of our coming together for Mass is that it is a communal gathering. We are blessed to have large congregations in many of our churches who sit very closely together. Under social distancing regulations which will undoubtedly be imposed, this will not be allowed to happen. People will need to sit apart with the consequent significant reduction in numbers being able to attend the same Mass together. Although the rate of infection has been reduced by between 60-70%, as a result of the lockdown restrictions, this does not mean it is completely eradicated. If the R number were to rise again there would likely be a second and equally dangerous wave of infection. Medical professionals are warning of this danger.

The government in Wales has devolved responsibility in matters of health and in the control of the pandemic in this country. It has not yet announced any relaxation of the many restrictions with which we have become so familiar in recent months. The Catholic Church in Wales, like other Christian bodies and members of the ‘Faiths Forum’, is working on a common approach to government on these matters. The next meeting of the ‘Faiths Forum’ is on 3rd June. If and when permission is given for our churches to open, they will be subject to strict health and safety conditions as are all public buildings. Amongst these will be the necessity to provide in churches:

1. Social distancing measures – seating arrangements, one-way systems, exits and entrances, clear signage, restricted times etc.
2. Attendance management – queuing, ticketing, online registration, stewarding etc.
3. Staggering of attendance by age or vulnerability
4. Infection control issues such as Holy Water stoups, leaflets, hymn books, missals, newsletters, candles, all of which can harbour the virus.
5. The supply of PPE materials – sanitiser, deep cleaning materials, surface cleaning materials etc.
6. Liturgical issues – distribution of Holy Communion, frequency of Mass, devotions, organisation of Memorial Masses, care of the bereaved.

7. Two or three volunteers (under the age of seventy) to implement these policies in order to keep churches open at specific times. The safeguarding of clergy over the age of 70 and those with underlying health issues will obviously be a priority.

In the first instance, large, strategically placed churches would be opened. Whether large or small, churches would need to ensure compliance with the above requisites.

The diocese is engaged with ChurchMarketPlace which is a central purchasing agency in order to acquire the necessary equipment outlined above at competitive prices. There are other agencies also able to provide PPE materials also. These include:

BCB International Ltd. a Cardiff based firm specialising in PPE materials.

Harlequin Printing Group for appropriate signage etc.