

Weekly Message from Fr William for the Fifth Week of Easter 2021

Dear People of St Mary's

Following consultation with the Parish Pastoral Council I'm introducing a second in-church mass starting next Sunday 9th May.

As we begin to look towards the lifting of restrictions pencilled in for 21st June, and as we begin to plan for the full reopening of the church and a return to full in-church participation, here's paying tribute to the parish for your constancy and fidelity to St Mary's throughout the pandemic. Since the beginning of January we've had over 100 devices streaming the Mass each Sunday from St Mary's. And it's clear from the number of families I know are celebrating mass together from their home that this represents a large core group of parishioners faithfully celebrating mass with the parish community each Sunday. Thank you for staying with us when you could easily have tuned in to the thousands of other celebrations of mass being streamed from around the world.

I haven't ruled out the possibility of making all three Sunday masses in-church between now and the final lifting of all restrictions.

If you're continuing to celebrate mass by livestream, you will notice a difference with the introduction of in-church participation. No singing I'm afraid, and I won't be coming to the camera for the homily. Many people have told me how much they have valued and appreciated this. It felt the most natural thing to come closer to talk to you when I can. Please stay with us in these remaining few weeks, as you have done throughout. It won't be long before we're all back into church again, together, and singing.

The introducing of the third in-church mass will depend on a number of factors including whether we get any more volunteers for covid sanitisation of the church between masses.

Thanks once again for sticking with us during the pandemic. As I wrote last Sunday, please continue to reach out to parishioners who may have lost touch and may not be aware of the continuation of mass each Sunday either by livestream or by in-church participation. Let them know about this weekly message and the other information on the website. And when we get to the full lifting of the restrictions, hopefully in June, I'd be grateful for your help not only keeping people in touch with what's happening, but also inviting them to come back with you into church.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William". The script is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Fifth Sunday of Easter, 2nd May 2021