

Weekly Message from Fr William for the Seventh Sunday of Easter 2021

Dear People of St Mary's,

You can now wake up on Saturday morning and watch online the St Mary's 200 Club draw take place. Have your numbers ready, then go to the 200 Club page on the parish website and watch the draw. The video of the draw is of course a recording, not live. So if you don't want the suspense you could just go straight to the results. If all goes according to plan the draw for April will be on the website by the time you read this. A big thank you to Sarah for running the 200 Club for us, for setting this up, and for spinning the wheel of numbers! The plan is to release the monthly draw online in this way every month.

On the same website page you can also find out the rules, this month's results, past results, and how to join. Once you've joined our St Mary's 200 club you're in with a chance to win £15, £20, £25, or even £40 each month, and you'll be helping us to raise more than £1,000 for the parish each year.

Last Sunday I introduced a second in-church mass. Take up was 17 people plus me for the Saturday 6pm, and 5 people plus me for the Sunday 5pm. Our maximum capacity with covid spacing is 32. So there is still plenty of space for more in church. Most of the parish are continuing to celebrate mass by livestream, with still 100+ devices connected to the livestream each Sunday. This number will go down as people increasingly take up the opportunity to come into church.

Whether you're celebrating in-church or by livestream we are one congregation.

While we are praying for a speedy end to the pandemic across the world, particularly in India and Brazil, we are of course hoping and praying that lifting of restrictions in this country, pencilled in for June, will be realised. At the time of writing there is the new uncertainty due to the increased incidence of the India variant and its possible impact on the lifting of restrictions. I mention this now in case you're thinking to wait until restrictions are lifted before coming into church for the mass. It might be longer than we thought. But hopefully not.

We also can't rule out another future lockdown if for example a new variant arises that has a strong resistance to the vaccines available at that time. I know that some people have felt fortified for periods of church closure by participating in-church when it's been possible to do so.

The main reason for this weekly message has always been to keep you informed about current mass provision during the pandemic, and the underlying rationale for each change. But I'm pleased to be bringing you also any new developments in the parish. Like the 200 club!



Seventh Sunday of Easter, 16th May 2021