

Weekly Message from Fr William for Twenty-Seventh Sunday Ordinary Time 2021

Dear People of St Mary's,

I celebrated Mass with the school on Friday, in school for the first time since March 2020. In school most of the covid restrictions are lifted since the beginning of this term. We celebrated school Mass with singing for the first time in 16 months, with no face coverings. Doors and windows were kept open to maintain ventilation. Sign of peace was between me and the congregation only, as currently in church. Communion was host only, no shared chalice. I duplicated the same sanitisation routine for the hosts that I adopted for the parish from the beginning of the pandemic.

A big chunk of the past week for me has been preparing for school Mass, and I've been in school most days. I recruited and trained four Year 6 Servers over three days. I recruited and trained 15 Year 5 Singers over three days. I took the whole school for a mass preparation assembly on Wednesday, to preview and talk about the readings coming up, and to practise responses and the sung parts of the mass. Then the Mass itself on Friday. This is the usual pattern of preparation for school masses which we normally celebrate twice a term.

The last 16 months have been a break in this pattern. Our school masses have been by livestream, twice a term, with me in church and them in their classrooms, and no singing. It was great to be back in school and celebrating mass with them with most of the covid restrictions lifted. I'm looking forward already to our next one! That will be Advent.

It's also wonderful to be having you in church for Sunday Mass in recent weeks. If you're preferring to join us by livestream for the moment that's fine too and thanks for joining us. For the covid measures I'm keeping in place for mass in church, and the rationale for these measures, see my weekly message for last Sunday. Just click 'Weekly Message from Fr William' on the homepage, then click '26 september 2021'.

God bless you

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

Twenty-Seventh Sunday of Ordinary Time, 3rd October 2021