

Attending Mass at St Joseph's, Bishop Thornton

Ours is a small church with a diverse congregation and we have therefore had to apply additional restrictions and apply some restrictions more strictly. None of this is intended to discriminate against anyone but is intended to ensure the safety of all of our parishioners who wish to attend Mass at our church. It is therefore possible that attending Mass at St Joseph's, Bishop Thornton is not possible for everyone but it needs to be borne in mind that there is currently no obligation to attend Mass on Sundays.

Masses will be shorter than normal as there will be no singing, no bidding prayers and some other changes although some additional instructions will also need to be conveyed.

Registration is mandatory - no exceptions, even if there is space. Names and contact details of all those who visit our churches will be required and will be retained for 21 days (for Track and Trace purposes).

We will use the Diocesan arranged Eventbrite booking system, initially with 20 places available to book per Mass. There is a Button on the website to make your desired booking.

If you are unable to book by the website method, you can telephone Helen Jordan on 07957112753 and she can do this for you. Telephone Booking will be possible by calling Helen on Tuesday and Thursday from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

The cut-off time, after which booking of a place for Mass will not be possible, are as follows:

- For Masses on a Sunday – 5 pm on the prior Thursday for telephone bookings
5 pm on the prior Saturday for online bookings
- For Masses on a Thursday – 5 pm on the prior Tuesday for telephone bookings
5 pm on the prior Saturday for online bookings

Stewards will wear face masks and follow strict Covid-19 hand and face hygiene regulations.

Father Maurice will not wear a mask during Mass but will put on a mask prior to moving to the back of the church to give out communion at the end of the Mass.

Face coverings obligatory for those 11 years old and over, no exceptions and children under 11 should be encouraged to wear a face covering if possible. Please ensure you bring your own as you will not be admitted without one.

There will be no movement of parishioners within the church during Mass, except in any emergency. The toilet in the Presbytery will not be in use and will be locked (but the Mass will be short, I am assured!!).

The usual restrictions apply on who should not attend, including those showing symptoms of infection with the virus. A notice of this will be prominent on approach to the church

There will be no access to in the sacristy or any other parts of the church before or after Mass (other than for Fr. Maurice) and so please do not come to church at Mass times for any other purpose other than to attend Mass

Attending Mass

Please come early to allow time to manage entry to the church. You may still have to wait and queue outside the church and if so please ensure that 2m social distancing is observed.

There will be at least 2 Stewards on duty at each mass, 1 outside the church (checking names and registrations, face coverings, providing guidance, ensuring hand sanitising is performed) and one inside the church (directing to seating, ensuring staying in seating)

A table will be placed outside the door of the church and will display additional signage and provide hand sanitiser dispensers for your use prior to entering the church.

Wait outside church until called forward by Stewards; please do not enter without being called to by a Steward.

On entering and leaving the church, everyone will be asked to use the hand sanitiser product provided at the entrance and exit of the church.

Only one individual or household group (couple or adults with children) will be allowed to move through the church at any given time.

No Holy Water stoups, Hymn Books, paper Missalettes or Bulletins.

You will not be able to choose your seat; parishioners will be directed to and seated by the Stewards, starting from the front of the church to the back of the church in strict order of arrival. Please do not embarrass our Stewards by asking to be seated elsewhere or near friends and relations.

You must not move around or get up from your seat during Mass.

There will be no congregational singing at Mass. There will be no procession of the offertory gifts and no collection of offerings will be taken during the Mass. The Sign of Peace will not be exchanged at Mass

Holy Communion will not be given during Mass but on leaving after the end of Mass but special arrangements will be in place.

Please do not leave any rubbish or other items in the church.

Holy Communion will be received after the Blessing and dismissal at the end of Mass and the special instructions will be conveyed by Fr. Maurice.

Leaving the church

After the Mass the church will be vacated in a strict reverse order from the back of the church to front of the church order and this will be controlled by the Stewards.

Please do not get up from your seat or make a move to leave the church until told to do so by a Steward. You will be invited by a Steward to go to the back of the church to receive communion on your way out.

Holy Communion will be distributed in the hand only. When receiving Holy Communion, you should do so standing, with arms at 'full stretch' so that there is a good distance between Father and yourself. Your hands, palms upwards, one on top of the other, should be extended as flatly as possible. Holy Communion will be given to you silently. As Father will be facing you directly at this point, they will NOT say "The Body of Christ" and you should consume the Host immediately and NOT say "Amen" at this point.

You will need to momentarily lower or remove your mask or face covering in order to consume the Host and then immediately replace it to leave the church.

If you or a member of your family normally comes for a blessing at the time of Holy Communion rather than receiving Communion, you/they should still fold your arms diagonally across your chest. Father will make the sign of the cross over you but without saying any words of blessing.

Please leave the church immediately and disperse as soon as possible.