St Andrew’s

29 Roman Road, Bearsden, G61 2SN

0141 942 4635

14th June 2020

​**For the Attention of Parishioners of St Andrew’s**

Dear Parishioner,

**Reopening of St Andrew’s and Special Appeal for Volunteers**

I hope that you are safe and well, despite the challenges we’re facing at this time.

I do have some Good news! We are hopeful of being able to reopen St Andrew’s very soon and that will be in two phases.

Initially, under phase 2 of our current lockdown, the church will open for private prayer on Sundays from

10am until 12noon in the main church, and on Wednesdays, from 12noon until 3pm in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel only.

In phase 3, the church, hopefully, will be open for public Masses.

Even although the aim is for public Masses to begin again in phase 3, please do keep in mind, though, that there is still no necessity to go to Mass. Until further notice, the requirement to attend Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of obligation remains suspended, and it will still be fine to stay at home on a Sunday and enjoy Mass either live streamed or as an audio on your phone.

I do have to stress, though, that the reopening of the church is very much subject, to the outcome of the Scottish Government’s review on Thursday, 18th June, and also on our parish managing to get the required number of volunteers.

**Guidance for attending church in Phase Two and Three**

My number one priority, when the church is reopened and you come along, is your safety. So, to enable us to adhere to the Government guidance and ensure your safety, there are three things that I want to bring to your attention, and I'd be grateful for your cooperation with these.

* When you come to church, please bring a face covering with you which should be worn throughout your time in the church. In accordance with Scottish Government guidance, children under the

age of two years are not required to wear a face covering in the Church.

* Social distancing must be maintained at all times. You will see safety signage and floor graphics to help you with this, and there will also be stewards to assist.
* Please sanitise your hands when entering and leaving the church using equipment now installed.

**Changes**

Inevitably, to adhere to guidance and ensure everyone’s safety, we have had to introduce a number of changes and I want to make you aware of them before you return.

* Two meters distancing will mean that the church's seating capacity will be considerably restricted to approximately 50 people at any one time, around 10% of our normal capacity. We are therefore exploring the possibility of using our halls as overflow areas to allow more people to attend.
* From the moment you enter the church grounds, you will be asked to follow the directions of volunteer stewards who will show you into the church and to designated pews for seating. Our stewards will also assist you with exiting the church.
* You should be prepared to queue coming in to Mass, and, therefore, if you can, it might be an idea to arrive earlier than usual.
* In phase 3, we will need to introduce a booking system to ensure we don’t exceed capacity given restrictions. You will be able to book online. More information about this system soon.
* As we expect there to be a socially distanced queue in the church grounds, only blue badge holder drivers can be permitted to park in the church car park.

**Your help is needed**

In order to reopen the church, we will need to build up a bank of volunteers, along with our passkeepers, for various duties including having a presence in our church, when it is open for private prayer and for Mass.

Volunteers' duties will include welcoming and guiding people to sanitise hands, to enter and exit via the designated one-way system and to sit in designated places. They will wipe down the pew surfaces after each Mass and PPE (mask and gloves), cleaning materials and orientation/training will be provided.

We will also need to increase our group of parish messengers, as I would like to ensure the delivery of regular updates to all in the parish, as well as using our parish’s social media and St Nicholas’ Primary’s for communicating.

I know that it might be a disappointment to some of you, but I do have to let you know that the criteria for volunteering required by the current guidelines mean that anyone who has underlying health conditions which requires shielding or anyone over the age of 70 cannot volunteer for ministries of steward, passkeeper, or messenger at this time.

The reopening of our church will depend very much on us having a sufficient number of volunteers, as well as being subject to the Scottish Government’s announcement this Thursday. I would be very grateful therefore if you would consider whether you could volunteer for either of the above areas.

If you are able to help, please get in touch with me, as soon as possible, by email to standrew@rcag.org.uk and I'll be happy to arrange a meeting with you for the completion of the Safeguarding Volunteer Form. You can come to the chapel house, if that suits, or I can come to your home. I would also hope to give you some information regarding training.

Regarding the Sacrament of Reconciliation, if you would like Confession, that can be done in the Church grounds observing social distancing. Phone Monsignor or I beforehand to arrange a time.

It has been three months since we were last able to be together for prayer and the celebration of public Masses. It is good to hear that the church, hopefully, will be reopening soon, and I, along with Monsignor and Deacon Tommy, do look forward to seeing you again.

Please share this information and appeal for volunteers with any friends or family who may not have received it.

Many thanks and take care.

May God protect us and keep us safe.

Yours sincerely,



Joseph Mackle

Parish Priest

Website: [www.standrewbearsden.co.uk](http://www.standrewbearsden.co.uk)

Email: standrew@rcag.org.uk

The parish of St Andrew’s, Bearsden is a Parish of the Archdiocese of Glasgow,

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