

St Thomas of Canterbury Church, Woodford Green

Dear Parishioners,

As we approach the end of August I thought I would take this opportunity to update you. There is a lot to tell you though most of it you have already heard through the very efficient electronic channels we enjoy. Still I know that there are a considerable number who do not have access and we still need the paper version.

From Monday week, September 6th we are returning to many of the normal practices in church. Already the tapes forbidding entry to alternate benches have been removed. I am anxious about our abandoning some of the precautions in place for over a year. The rate of infections continues to be high. Government instructs us to be careful. But as time goes by the measures we have faithfully observed melt away. Distancing is still needed. One instance arises from the possibility of occupying all benches. When someone is seated it is not appropriate for the person behind to kneel. If you wish to kneel please think of the need to keep a distance from the one in front of you. There are cards that you can take with you to indicate that you wish to keep your distance, asking others to help you by staying a suitable distance away. It is good that we continue to wear masks, sanitise hands on entry and record for trace and test.

Outdoor mass

I do not know whether we are being courageous or foolhardy. We planned an outdoor mass for June. But the weather was so terrible we cancelled it in good time. The cancellation proved very wise. The outdoor masses have been such a delight in past years we have decided to try again. September can often be a good month for weather.

So: On Sunday September 12th there will be no mass in the church. Instead you are all invited to the single mass at 11.30 in the garden. And bring a picnic and something to sit on. In the open air, with plenty of space there is no problem about singing. The 10 am choir will lead us.

We do have a Plan B. We will watch the forecasts carefully and warn you if possible in good time should we need to cancel. In that case the usual three masses will take place in church

***God Bless,
Quentin***

Updates

Parish Office

Will be closed on 31st August for one day as the church and office carpets are being cleaned. Queries will still be dealt with by email – parishoffice@stthomaswoodford.org

September Church Opening Changes

From 6th September

We are pleased to announce that St Thomas' will be open on a daily basis (8.30am to 6.30pm) with mass taking place in the main Church as follows:

SUNDAY MASSES

1st Mass Sat. 6pm;
8.30am; 10am & 11.30am
(The 11.30am Mass is recorded)

WEEKDAY MASSES

10am

CONFESSIONS

By Appointment

BAPTISMS

1st and 3rd Sundays
Of the month

- We would like to invite the lay readers for the weekday mass to return from 6th September on the basis of the rota they previously had in place
- Sunday services from 12th will include two readings and prayers of the faithful. Rota organisers are asked to prepare rotas accordingly.
- We will not at this stage be inviting Sacristans or Altar servers to return as the sacristy and chapel will not be open to the public at this time. We will however, keep this under review
- Children's Liturgy will **NOT** recommence at this time but will be kept under review.
- Services will not be resuming at St James' or Chigwell Convent at this time.
- Date for your diary – **Sunday 12th September** – Plans are underway for an open air mass at 11.30am, please see attached leaflet

When coming to Church please

- wear a facemask,
- sanitise your hands,
- observe appropriate social distancing when sitting and/or kneeling
 - remember when receiving communion to hold your hand flat
- Don't forget to provide track & trace information by using the QR code or logging your details in the book provided

A couple of important reminders:

Holy Communion Application Process will close on 10th September

Applications are now open for registered Parishioners of children who will be going into year 3 in September 2021. The application form can be found on the website.

Baptism Course

Our next **baptism course** will be held on the 3 & 10 November (8 to 9pm). If you are having your first child you will need to attend a course prior to booking a baptism. Application forms can be found on our website

<https://www.stthomaswoodford.org/forms>

Looking towards October, we are planning:

Our **24 Hour Adoration** will commence at 6pm on **8th October**. Further information will be issued in due course

On 17th October – A special service will be held in the Henrietta Suite at 1pm for those who would have previously attended mass at St James'

St Thomas' Confirmation Programme

We will also be opening up applications for our confirmation programme in October, please check the newsletters for more information.

