

Sacred Heart Parish.

Church of the Sacred Heart,
Harefield Road,
Coventry,
West Midlands CV2 4BT



Tel: (024) 7645 6214
Email: sacredheart.covty@rcaob.org.uk
Website: www.sacredheart-coventry.org

Preparations for the re-opening of Churches.

Hello Everyone,

I want to give you information on the preparations parishes must make before Churches can re-open. There is a lot of work to do before this can happen and I will need your help to make this possible.

Before continuing I need to stress that churches remain completely closed. There is no date for when Churches will be allowed to reopen. This will be announced by the government when they give permission.

Obviously, re-opening must happen in a safe manner, and it seems likely that it will happen in stages, with each stage being accompanied by guidance to ensure this can happen safely and effectively. It seems probable that when churches are allowed to reopen, this will only be for individual prayer.

We need volunteers to help. If churches are allowed to open for private prayer, volunteers (at least 2) must be present in the church throughout the time it is open for prayer. Without the volunteers the church will not be allowed to re-open. A church doesn't have to open every day, or at the same time of day, certainly it will not be possible to have any church open all day (Even the biggest of parishes wouldn't have enough volunteers to cover all day in Church.)

So, it might be the case that a church will open for an hour in the morning on a couple of days, then for an hour in the evening on another day, and perhaps remain closed the next day to allow for extra cleaning.

A one-way system will need to be in operation (like the supermarkets) People will enter through the main doors but they must leave by another door - we're lucky that we have fire escape doors that can be used as an exit. People will need to use hand sanitizer, which will be provided.

And just as we can't use the toilets in supermarkets, I'm sure we will also not be allowed to use toilets in churches.

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The church will need to be cleaned fully each day. Two metre social distancing rules will, I'm sure, also apply – so there will be some benches where people cannot sit.

Because we do not know when churches will be allowed to re-open, at the moment I am just asking for volunteers who would be willing to help when the time does come. Because, unless we have volunteers in place, we won't be allowed to reopen.

Please, will you be willing to volunteer? If you are, please email or phone me (email is better, and the email address is at the top of this letter) and we can begin to put together a team of helpers. (It is important that no-one should volunteer who has been instructed to shield themselves or is in a situation of being more vulnerable to coronavirus.)

I know we all have a deep longing to re-open churches as soon as the government allows us to do so and with your help, when that time does come, we will have in place the volunteers that we need to make that possible.

May God bless you and your loved ones,

Stay safe,

Fr. Tony.

Fr. Tony Norton.

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