

GUIDANCE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF OUR MASSES AT ST MICHAEL'S

The guidance we have just received which includes the maximum safe operating capacity of St Michael's is based on the social distancing guidelines, and will be clearly signposted at the door and the number and position within the church of people attending at any one time will be overseen by our volunteer stewards.

It is now possible for us to go to 1m plus social distancing this means we can space ourselves with a minimum of 1m. In this case it would mean the compulsory wearing of a face covering for the congregation and we ask you to bring a face mask with you.

Readers will be supplied with single-use gloves and should avoid touching the microphones or the Lectionary during the Liturgy of the Word, apart from page turning and the Prayer of the Faithful should be omitted.

There should be no offertory procession of the gifts of bread and wine to the altar and no sharing of the collection plate or bag. People should be encouraged to make their donation to the church online or via standing order. Plates or other collecting boxes for cash offerings should be placed at the entrances and exits of churches, and this should be overseen by stewards.

After the prayer and its response "*Behold the Lamb of God . . . Lord I am not worthy,*" the priest should hold up the Host to the Congregation and say audibly "The Body of Christ" to which the people should respond "Amen." In the same way, he elevates the chalice and says, "The Blood of Christ" and again the people respond "Amen." because we have already acclaimed the presence of the Lord, at the Priest's Communion, the People's Communion is distributed in silence with no dialogue between minister and communicant.

At the place where communion is to be distributed, a physical barrier should be placed, for example a prie-dieu (kneeler on the priest's side) or small table to socially distance the priest distributing Holy Communion from communicants. Communion must be given silently in the hand only, with the communicant standing, and avoiding any physical contact. People should wait in their pews until instructed to move forward to the priest for Holy Communion by the Stewards, always aware of the regulations on social distancing in the orderly queue. When they approach the priest, they should do so with arms at "full stretch" so that there is a good distance between the priest and the communicant. Their hands, palms upwards, one of top of the other, should be extended as flatly as possible. Having received Holy Communion, communicants should move back to their pews in an orderly manner. After the Celebration of Mass we are all encouraged to return home and not to remain.