

## THOMASTOWN PARISH NEWSLETTER

14<sup>th</sup> June 2020

**Parish Priest:**

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### CHURCH SERVICES THESE WEEKS, beginning Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2020

**Here in Thomastown:** Mass will be celebrated on 108fm at 6pm on Saturday and 10am on Sunday.

As we continue with the restrictions due to the coronavirus,

**30 minutes prayer** will be held on Monday at midday on 108fm

**The Rosary** will be prayed on Wednesday at midday on 108fm

**30 minutes prayer** will be held on Friday at midday on 108fm.

**Pope Francis says mass each morning** at 7am. He starts the Mass by dedicating the liturgy to a group of people: this has included health care workers, families, the elderly and those who have died from the virus. <https://www.vaticannews.va/en.html>

#### Ways to join together for Mass

Sunday Morning: KCLRfm @9.30am.

St Mary's Cathedral @ 11am and 5.30pm

St John's Parish @ 11.30am

Monday to Saturday: St Mary's Cathedral Webcam @ 9am

RTEnow @ 10.30am

Locally mass is available from the following:

St John's Parish [www.stjohnskilkenny.com](http://www.stjohnskilkenny.com)

Mooncoin [www.mooncoinparish.ie](http://www.mooncoinparish.ie)

**Deaths and anniversaries: Mgr. Jim Cassin, John Maher, Colmcille, Brigid (Bishy) Walsh, Hillview, and Stephen Roche, Grennan** died recently. **Esther and Jack Woods, Newtown Terrace (6pm Mass); Shivaun Kavanagh, Berkley Lawn, John Fennelly, Boher,**

**Mass Intentions next weekend: Paddy Ryan, Legan (10am Mass).**

**The Parish Office** is not staffed on a regular basis these days. Best contact the Office, in this era of social distancing, by telephone – leave your name and number and we will get back to you – email, post, or leave a note into the Office letterbox.

**Accord establishes support phone line to help relationships during COVID 19:** To help support marriage and relationships in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, This will be a free service, but calls are charged at a local rate. The support line is open from 9.00am – 8.00pm Monday to Friday and will be contacted at 015313331.

Family members of the deceased buried at **St. Mary's Cemetery** are upset at people dumping old wreathes etc near the graves, and behind the wall near Lidl. Please take with you old flowers and flower vases, old wreathes, and other materials you may have no further use for.

**The Roadmap for reopening Society and Business:** The Government has indicated that, **from 29<sup>th</sup> June**, it 'wants places of worship to resume services again, with precautions.' Resuming services must happen in a safe manner. So, the Bishops' Conference has published a detailed framework document, and a checklist regarding the steps that each parish must take before it re-opens its churches for the public celebration of Mass and the other sacraments. If we in Thomastown consider that we can meet all the guidelines, we must request permission from the Bishop to begin the public celebration of Masses on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June. The Bishops say that disregard for the guidelines has the potential for our churches to become foci for new clusters which will not only lead to stricter lockdown measures but will put the lives of people – particularly the elderly and vulnerable – at risk. So, we need to ensure that we can meet the guidelines, and for that we will need your help, both to adhere to the guidelines, and also to assist with putting them in place. Bishop Farrell states in his letter 'With so much emphasis on mechanical matters it is easy to lose sight of the fact that in our Catholic tradition the Church is more than a location for worship or assembly. It is both *Tigh an Phobail* (the house of the Community) – and *Conai De* (where God dwells); it is a 'sacrament' of God's presence among and with his people. As St. John Chrysostom said, it is people who make the building holy, not the other way around! To protect God's holy people, our church buildings had to be closed; they are now being returned to those for whom they are intended, and whose they are! A family, when they are apart, are still a family. However, when they are apart, they are less than the full expression of who and what they are, and what they want to be. So it is with the Church, the family of faith; it is important that we can return to the public celebration of the sacraments, as a church without its people is much more less than what it truly is'.

*With dioceses around the world cancelling public Masses. many Catholics are feeling starved for the Eucharist. When the world is fighting a global pandemic, it seems that the Mass would be more necessary than ever. But while public Masses are cancelled, the private ones continue and the Body of Christ can receive the graces from those Masses, especially when we make a spiritual communion.*

*Still, how can we who depend on the Sacraments survive this crisis when divorced from Mass? Well, there are plenty of saints (and millions more Christians) who've had similar experiences, months and years of surviving without the Sacraments. Looking to them can strengthen us to persevere.*

*Though not canonized, **thousands and thousands of Japanese Christians** lived without priests for nearly 250 years. They baptized their children in secret, passing down the faith in whispered lessons, praying before images of the Madonna and Child that were disguised to look like Buddhist images. In 1858 Japan finally readmitted Christian missionaries, who found 10,000 hidden Christians waiting for them. Imagine being raised with the near certainty that you would never in your life attend Mass, knowing of the Eucharist only because your grandmother's grandmother's grandmother once went to Mass. It puts social distancing in perspective.*

*The saints of **19th-century Korea** were in a similar situation. After the Gospel was first preached by Servant of God Yi Beok and his companions in 1784, the Church was run entirely by laypeople until 1795. At that point, **Bl. James Zhou Wen-Mo** arrived and discovered 4,000 Catholics, only one of whom had ever seen a priest. Wen-Mo served as the only priest in all of Korea for six years, until his martyrdom. For the next 36 years, there were again no Masses in Korea until a small group of French priests arrived in 1836—and were killed two years later.*