

Fáilte- Bienvenue- Willkommen- Benvenuto- Bienvenido- Witajcie- Welcome –  
Bemvindo- Welkom- Velkomin- Vitajte- Karibu- Crozso- Valkommen- Tervetuloa



Donore Avenue Parish

ST. TERESA'S  
PASTORAL PARCEL 6

JUNE 2020

Dear parishioners & friends of St. Teresa's!



In this sixth pastoral parcel during these times of pandemic, we offer the good news of the re-opening of the church for public mass on Monday the 29<sup>th</sup> June. The church has been open in the afternoon from 2-5 pm all during this pandemic but now we are making preparations for the public celebration of the sacraments again. In this newsletter we present to you the changes that are required of us all in order for this to happen and invite you to have a close read of it, so that you are aware of the changes that there will be when we gather. We are delighted that this can happen and we will do our utmost to ensure that St Teresa's remains both a safe/healthy and prayerful place.

When you approach the church on the 29<sup>th</sup> June or afterwards you will notice some changes. Immediately you will see the standard lines outside the church for the two meter social distancing. You will notice a sign at the entrance saying a maximum of 90 people in the church at any one time. You will also see that there are separate doors for entering and leaving the church. Entrance will be through the usual door (automated) that we have been using, but you will exit the church by either the door to the right of the Altar (shrine of St Joseph) or through the door at the very back of the church. Outside the church there will also be a notice with the information about the maximum number in the church, advice about where to sit, receiving communion and that the toilet is no longer available. There will be a steward outside the church at weekends to count the number coming in and also to assist with any social distancing.

Inside the church there will also be a steward to advise on hand sanitizing and any assistance with seating arrangements. Baskets will be available for both the first and share collections and the parish envelopes. Basically two people can sit on the big seats and one person on the smaller ones. These places are marked by rainbow signs on the back of the seat. Obviously those from the same household can sit together. So we believe it would be helpful, if those from the same household sat together in the smaller seats in the aisles. This may enable us to have more in the church. You are asked to take the mass leaflet/newsletter home with you or to bin in on the way out of the church. Communion will be brought to you, you do not need to leave your seats. There will be instrumental music but no singing or hymnbooks. We are advised not to delay too long in big groups so mass will be shorter. The church seats, doors and shrines will be cleaned after each mass by volunteers. You exit the church by the door to the right of the altar or the back door.

All this may sound complicated and cumbersome and it can appear quite different to our usual experience. The parish team, the Parish Pastoral Council, the Liturgy Committee and volunteers did a lot of preparatory work to enable public mass to be in compliance with the instructions given from the archdiocese which in turn is in dialogue with the state officials. After a little while, we are sure that we will be used to this new routine. And after another while, things will return to a more usual experience. Most important, we can come again for mass, to meet each other, to celebrate our faith and community.

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### **PREPARING TO RE-OPEN CHURCHES FOR PUBLIC MASS FROM 29<sup>TH</sup> OF JUNE ONWARDS**

*Please read this information carefully before coming to mass!*

We celebrated the last public mass on the evening of 24 March. Since then, the priests continued to offer mass daily, especially for the mass intentions given.

Mass is back from Monday, 29<sup>th</sup> of June! However, not as we have been used to. The pandemic imposes caution. What does this mean in practice?

**1 Weekday mass** at 10am. As usual in July-August there will be **no** Monday Evening mass. The **Kingdom Café** remains closed.

**2 Sunday masses:** The mass times remain the same. This may need to be revised.

**3 Sunday obligation** continues to be dispensed with and is also fulfilled by going to a weekday mass.

**4 Vulnerable groups** are still asked to stay away from bigger gatherings like mass.

*Those who choose to stay at home are welcome to contact us about bringing Holy Communion to the house!*

*Those who come to mass: You do **not** have to book online. You may feel more comfortable wearing a mask (advisory). There may be further guidance from the government on this.*

**5 Before mass:** Please try to come early to facilitate the seating. Keep social distancing outside the church. You will notice a one-way system. Entrance is the usual middle door. Exit doors are in the back of the church and to the right of the altar (ramp was added!).

Please pay attention that the **toilet cannot be used** due all these restrictions!

**6 At the door, stewards** will be present to assist. We ask you:

- \*to sanitize your hands,
- \*to note that collections are by donations into designated baskets in the entrance area,
- \*to take a newsletter or bin it on the way out
- \*to sit at designated places ('Rainbow'-sticker!),
- \*not to shake hands for the sign of peace, and
- \*to remain in your seat as Holy Communion will be brought to you.

### **7 During mass**

There will be only **one reading** for the time being.

**Seating in the church:** the pews are set apart for social distancing. Two per big Pew, side pews for one person or for persons from the same household. Please ensure during mass that if you are kneeling that you don't compromise the two meter safety zone of the person seated in front of you.

Lay ministers will be seated in the first pews (near additional hand sanitizers).

We can accommodate **90 people** in the church and we will need to stick to this number. Please note that our seating capacity may also impact on our ability to facilitate all Mass intentions. In order to stay within our number we may need to arrange different dates for some intentions so that we do not have too many people inside the church.

You will find respective **signs** in the church. Please read those carefully or ask the stewards.

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There will be no offertory procession and no common singing. We will have instrumental music or tape music. This will result in a **more quiet mass**. On the one hand a pity, on the other hand it can promote a prayerful atmosphere.

**Please leave the church** by the designated exits: back of the church, to the right of the altar. Please leave in good time as volunteers need **to disinfect** the church for the mass following.

### **8 Weddings, baptisms and funerals**

These special moments will be celebrated. However, the above measures will be in place. Please contact the parish house for information. For all those who passed away since the middle of March we created a memorial space in our church. If any of the families concerned wish to arrange a memorial mass for their relative please contact the parish team.

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### **A THOUGHT FOR REFLECTION.....**

#### **CAN YOU TELL ME WHO MADE YOU?**

„Can you tell me who made you?” the pastor asked the small boy.

The youngster thought a moment. Then he looked up at the pastor and said: “God made part of me.”

“What do you mean, ‘Part of you’?” asked the pastor.

“Well,” answered the boy, “God made me little I grew the rest myself.”

‘Growing the rest’ is a lifetime job for everyone.

#### **MAKE A DIFFERENCE**

As the old man walked the beach at dawn he noticed a youth ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea. Finally, catching up with the youth, he asked him why he was doing this. The answer was that the stranded starfish would die if left in the morning sun. “But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish,” countered the old man. “How can your effort make any difference?” The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and then threw it to the safety of the waves. “It makes a difference to this one,” he said.

#### **THE RAINBOWS ON THE RAILINGS**



Who thought of the “rainbows for railings”? This is an easier question to answer than, “who is the mystery knitter of the rainbows? It was an inspired idea with many and varied colourful contributions. Knitted daily rainbows. Poetry. Story. St Patrick and other figures with rainbows. Animals too. Crocheted daily rainbows. Cloth and other material rainbows. Painted rainbows. Rainbows from here, there and everywhere; near and far; and everyone - young, older and in between; regulars, neighbours and passers-by. Need more cable ties. Need more lamination sheets. Need more printer toner? Need more railings? No shortage of ideas, and contributions. Thank you so much for brightening up the days, the walks, the views, the clouded anxious minds at times, with colour, good wishes, thanks and inspiration. Thank you to everybody.

As the election surveys say – allowing for 1% margin of error, the numbers are: 241 paper/material rainbows. 52 Knitted. 52 crochet, 7 pom poms, and one glove. The rainbows are down now. Washed and cleaned. They have been copied to Facebook and website and to powerpoint presentation. The originals will be on display at the back of the church, under the gallery and from then on will be stored in the parish archives.

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### A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME - THE LAST THREE MONTHS

What do you remember? Did you keep a time capsule of memories? Here are some pointers to what we remember. It is a synopsis of a much larger memory bank.

#### Quietly Active

*St Teresa of the Child Jesus Parish, Donore Avenue, Dublin 8 during the Pandemic March to June 2020*

#### Remember...

**Early March** we began to follow guidance on the Corona Virus situation: sanitizers in the church, no sign of peace, communion on hand only.

On **12 March**, we celebrated confirmation. Then it was announced that schools would close.

From **15 March** onwards, Sunday mass was restricted to below 100 present.

Archbishop announced on **23 March** the end of public masses until further notices.



On **Good Friday**, the Taoiseach announced the lockdown: until 5 May, then until 18 May.

We had the church open except for the usual times for common liturgy which was not to be. From **Easter Sunday** onwards we opened the church from 2pm to 5pm.

From **10 May** on we offered Holy Communion on a Sunday afternoon. At times we prayed the rite of forgiveness.

On **18 May**, the first easing of restrictions. The archdiocese encouraged parishes to prepare for public mass. This was done by the parish team and the respective

committees. Finally, the re-opening for public mass albeit with restrictions was announced for **29 June**.

#### Six Pastoral Parcels

From March to June we delivered six 'pastoral parcels': parish newsletter, readings and reflections for Sunday and weekdays, photos, pages to colour, experiences of people...

#### Archdiocese, deanery & neighbouring parishes

The archdiocese provided us regularly with information what the state regulations mean for church life. We had some contact with other parishes but not much.

#### Liturgies and sacramental program



**Funerals** were hit most by the restrictions. That was an added burden on those families who lost a loved one in this time. They may want to meet again for a memorial mass. Signs of solidarity by people gathering outside were touching moments. The very last minute as it were we could celebrate **Confirmation**.

**First Holy Communion**, foreseen for 26 April with children and parents in full preparation however had to be delayed for months. That was not easy for all concerned. We will have three smaller celebrations on Saturdays in July.

The **Frist Friday Calls** became literally a call. The priests rang the people but could not go to bring Holy Communion.

The home became even more the **place for** following mass online, prayer life, spiritual reading and meditation. In the church a prayerful silence created a lovely atmosphere, nearly monastic.

Some people asked for **confession**. In the church we prayed the prayer for forgiveness.

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### Parish Committees

Meetings continued albeit in different forms. The **Parish Pastoral Council** held two Zoom-meetings to bring forward the Pastoral Plan and to prepare the re-opening of the church. The **Liturgy Committee** collected comments via e-mail and post for the upcoming church events and for a celebration after we all come back – sadly not possible as such. The **Finance committee** was contacted. Sadly, we could not offer a meeting for all the volunteers and liturgical ministers.

### Financial situation of the parish

With no public masses, the first collection, the SHARE collection, the donations for the Vincent de Paul Society, the weekly envelopes, the Easter Dues and Trocaire faced problems. First of all, a huge thanks to all who so thoughtful and faithful continued to hand in their weekly envelopes. That kept us going! Then, people were also generous for the other collections mentioned above. More than usual people left money in the shrines which goes to the parish but part of which we also forwarded to the diocese. No first collection had as one consequence that all salaries for priests and lay staff in the diocese were cut by 25%. We had a big expense fixing the flashings but thankfully the insurance covered most of this. At the instigation of money, steps are now taken to install a webcam. This is also possible to generous donations associated with a funeral. There are other donations for which we are most grateful! In all, we had in some ways less expenses (light, heating, music) and in some ways more (pastoral parcels). Overall, the immense generosity keeps our figures in the black!

### Outreach

Restrictions initially made us wonder how to keep contact with people and how to serve the faith community. With planning and creativity and the new media we tried to continue.



The **new media** really came into their right place. They can be abused but this time proved to be most useful: contact with individuals via phone, text-a-parishioner, whatsapp; follow mass on the internet or via one of the many webcams; our parish website and our parish *facebook*-page and our parish twitter account; meetings via Zoom or Skype. We offered texts, images and different series of short videos along the liturgical year.

The leaflet drop of the **pastoral parcels** was another way to reach out. Then, the priests tried to keep some contact via **phone calls**. Sam sent out **An Post cards** to elderly parish members.

Sam's '**Rainbows for railings**' proved a hit – 241 given! People from different countries participated. The *Dublin news*, the *Irish Catholic*, the *Irish Daily Mirror* reported. Communication with Reverend Mark from the **Church of Ireland** continued.

The open church and the rainbows brought **people from other parishes** to our church.

Parish and parishioners had contact with some **local initiatives from the commune** (for food services).

Last not least, the priests and pastoral assistant were **personally present** in the church.

During the afternoons we introduced different elements in the **open church** to mark the liturgical year and support people in personal prayer: decorations for feast days, music, a shrine for pandemic victims, a



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shrine for the deceased in the parish since March, handouts with prayers, Church magazines. Most of the time a priest was present.

### Some data...

**Church attendance 2pm to 5pm:** From 28 to 73, mainly around 40 to 50.

**Finance:** Initially, all collections went down dramatically. The weekly envelope collection picked up speed quickly. You find the figures in the parish newsletter in this parcel.

**Funerals middle of March to June 2020:** All together there were twenty funerals. The names are remembered in the church. Some funerals were celebrated in neighbouring churches.

### What next?

In this Parcel we inform you about the **new routine** for going to mass 'until further notice'. Feedback from people stimulated a **webcam** for our church. The **Pastoral Parcel** may continue in another form. Once we can freely gather we plan a **celebration as a thank you** for your support and fidelity. The **new media** may well be used more from now on for communication, contact and meetings.

This time of pandemic put a **challenge** before each one of us: Do I want to continue my faith life? Then I need to take initiative: practice it at home, assure input from the internet and other sources, and find a form of contact with my parish. This is a gain.

*As parish team we can only say a big THANK YOU for your fidelity and support for the parish over these difficult months!*

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### FIRST HOLY COMMUNIONS:



Due to the health emergency the celebration of the Sacrament of First Holy Communion had to be postponed on the 26<sup>th</sup> April. Now that we can re-open the church for public mass again, we have settled on new dates for the celebrations. Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> of July, at 12pm.

It is very important to remember that even though the church may be open for public mass again, the health regulations remain in place in terms of social distancing, numbers, hand sanitizers etc. Because of this, we have to regulate the numbers in attendance at all times. Therefore each child for the Sacrament of First Holy Communion, can bring - parents, grandparents, and siblings (max. 8).

### PARISH COMMITTEES

Over the past three months it has not been possible for the various parish committees to meet in person. However the work of these committees continued in these challenging times and made great progress. The **Parish Pastoral Council** (PPC) worked on Zoom-meetings to finalize the new pastoral plan for 2020-2025. This is now in its early stages of being prepared for printing. It has just been terrific to achieve this during these times. A sub-group of the PPC drove this to its completion very successfully. The PPC also decided to install a webcam in the parish church. Webcams obviously have been very useful for parish and parishioners for the circulation of information and for attending Eucharist during these times. Thanks to a very generous contribution we are able to do this now. Thankfully the repair on the roof (March) has been paid for by the parish insurance. The parish **finance committee and counters** are back in operation. The **liturgy committee** had a remote meeting by email and phone to continue preparations of upcoming liturgies and a parish celebration after the end of the pandemic. Obviously other volunteers were restrained from their usual routine in the church but gradually the usual cleaning, flowers, maintenance, sacristy activities have begun again – all in the appropriate time.

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### **OPENING HOURS OF THE CHURCH**

It has been wonderful to have the church open for a few hours each day during this pandemic for private prayer and reflection. It has been like a beating heart of prayer of intercession for the needs of the local community, family and country during these very anxious times. Over these pandemic times, whereas we were all very conscious of movement restrictions etc, normal everyday concerns did not go away either. We are all aware that various families and friends had to cope with bereavements, sudden illness, life changing decisions for family members and friends. Our prayers, thoughts and best wishes are offered in solidarity and support.



Now that we will be back to our usual routine of daily morning mass at 10am, we will keep the church open for the mornings and close it from lunchtime each day. This is due to the demands of cleaning, disinfecting and supervision required to keep the church open and to enable other works of the parish to proceed. I'm sure you will understand that in order to reduce the amount of daily disinfecting, the pews in the bottom half of the church will be roped off. It will continue to be possible to visit shrines and to do the Stations of the Cross.

### **DONORE COMMUNITY CENTRE:**

On our latest enquiry it remains unclear when the Donore Youth and Community Centre will be in a position to re-open for clubs, activities and gathering. There are a number of complex issues involved in this.

### **SEATS AND MEMORIAL PLATES**

The seats have been moved around a bit to make space for the social distance requirement of two meters and also for the distribution of Holy Communion. In most cases the seats have just been moved back and remain in the same order. But in a small number of cases, where for example we needed a bigger or smaller seat for a space beside a pillar, a seat or two have been moved from its normal place to the back or the front of the church. So if you are looking for your usual place and/or your relative's memorial plate it will normally be just further back from its usual spot but in a small number of cases it maybe in a completely different location in the church.

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### **THE WOUNDS IN OUR CHURCH**

On Facebook and via a link on our parish website you find five short videos with presentation and prayer on this theme for the month of June. Photos show literally wounds of our church – slight damages here and there. These are the starting point in the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart to pray about the wounds in my life and the healing power of God.

#### **1 The Sacred-Heart Window in the sanctuary**

June is the month dedicated to the Sacred Heart. In our parish, we still honour the tradition of the First-Friday, the Friday dedicated to the suffering of Christ and the sufferings of people. The Risen Lord showing his wounds to his followers is a central image in our church, in particular here, in the sanctuary.

Our church quite literally is wounded and has scars. This window for example shows small places where repair work was done. There are others. Each scar can tell a story.

Wounds and scars. There is a consolation captured in the words of Hebrews 4: 15: For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet he did not sin.

The wounded heart of Christ is the open heart – for us and the wounds and scars in our own life. You are invited to name five wounds and scars in your life and to entrust them to God's understanding expressed in the image of the Sacred Heart.

#### **2 The Stations of Suffering**

The Stations of the Cross illustrate with great intensity the literal wounds and scars in our church with all the little damages and scratches and missing pieces and missing colour. The Stations of the Cross direct us to the wounds of Christ who suffered for us and all who suffer from wounds and hurts, violence and abuse. Each Station is a drama on this same theme.

The 5 primary wounds of Christ are his hands and feet (Mark 15:20) and side (John 19:34). The secondary wounds are: The tears of blood in Gethsemane (Luke 22:44); the flagellation (John 19:1); the Crown of Thorns (John 19:5); the shoulder wound carrying the cross.

Sometimes in churches you find a modern illustration of similar sufferings of people today and of the wounds and hurts inflicted on them. We could name hunger and violence, terror and religious persecution, and so many others.

Praying the Stations brings us very close to the wounded, to Christ himself, and to our brothers and sisters today. Prayer: We adore you, O Christ, and we praise you – Because by your Holy Cross, you have redeemed the world.

#### **3 The five wounds of the church**



Through baptism we become members of the Church. The baptismal font and the surrounding marbles show scars. Pieces are broken off. The Church is a wounded church.

In 1848 (English 1883) the Italian priest Antonio Rosmini (1797-1855) published his book *Of the Five Wounds of the Holy Church*: The lack of sympathy between the clergy and the people; insufficient Christian teaching; the divisions inside the Church; the worldly power of the Church; the worldly possessions of the Church.

We could speak of five wounds of the Church of our time: The abuse scandals; the abuse of power over a long period of time; the lack of zeal and authenticity in many believers; the hurt done to groups by a severe interpretation of the Bible; the exclusion of people.



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In our new Pastoral Plan we want to offer an open hand to people hurt by the Church. How can wounds caused by the Church itself be healed? With Pope John Paul II we ask for forgiveness as he did in the name of the Church in the year 2000:

*“Let us forgive and ask forgiveness! We cannot fail to recognize the infidelities to the Gospel committed by some of our brothers and sisters. Let us ask pardon for the divisions which have occurred among Christians, for the violence some have used in the service of the truth and for the distrustful attitudes sometimes taken towards other religions.*

*Let us confess our responsibilities as Christians for the evils of today. We must ask ourselves what our responsibilities are regarding atheism, religious indifference, secularism, ethical relativism, the violations of the right to life, disregard for the poor in many countries.*

*We humbly ask forgiveness for the part which each of us has had in these evils by our own actions, thus helping to disfigure the face of the Church.”*

### 4 St Teresa: The Dark Night of Faith

St. Teresa, our church patron, went through the ‘dark night of faith’ during the last 18 months of her life. Only an immense act of faith brought her out of this. Her experience is a modern experience when so many cannot believe, who gave up their faith or refuse to believe. St. Teresa wrote about her work with the novices:

*“From a distance it appears all roses to do good to souls, making them love God more and molding them according to one’s personal views and ideas. At close range it is totally the contrary, the roses disappear; one feels that to do good is as impossible without God’s help as to make the sun shine at night. ... To be speaking severely to them (novices) when showing them that their beautiful fleece is soiled, or to be bringing them some light tuft of wool which they allowed to be torn by the thorns along the way. ...”*

Karl Rahner wrote about the modern priest as the priest of the Sacred Heart: Someone who has experienced the wounds of unbelief himself and therefore can understand this experience in others. In our own families, among our friends we may be the ones to meet people who do not believe, who go through a dark night. We can lend a hand.

With Saint Teresa let us pray for faith:

*“O Theresa of the Child Jesus, who, in your brief earthly life, became the mirror of heavenly goodness, of courageous love and of whole-hearted surrender to Almighty God. Turn your eyes of mercy upon us who trust in you.*

*Obtain for us the grace to keep our hearts and minds pure like yours, and be united with you in virtue: a virtue that unites us with Christ, Our Lord. Grant us to feel in every need the power of your intercession; give us your comfort when we experience difficulties and that we may be worthy to share eternal happiness with you in paradise. Amen.”*



### 5 The Easter Candle

The New Testament emphasises that the Risen Christ is the same as the Crucified Christ (1 Cor 1: 18-25). Our God is a god who has lived and suffered and died like us. We trust that he will give us a share in his resurrection.

St. Martin of Tours one day had a vision. A figure of light and glory appeared before him and said to him: I am the Risen Christ. You come and follow me and obey me. St. Martin looked at the figure. Then he said: You are not Christ. You are the devil in disguise. And he was right. The devil asked St. Martin: How do you know? St. Martin answers: You are not wounded.

Saint Paul reminds us that our wounds and scars bring us closer to Christ (Gal 2: 19f; 6: 17). The Lord asked Thomas to place his hand at his wounded side and to believe. We can place the wounds and scars of our lives into his wounds. He understands. By the prophet Isaiah already foretold (Is 53: 5-6) and in Jesus Christ fulfilled (1 Peter 2: 24) we pray:

*Through his wounds we are healed!*