**RETURN TO MASSES AT ST JAMES**

As you will recall, since March the obligation to attend Sunday Mass was suspended by the archdiocese and we would confirm that the obligation still remains suspended until further notice.

Our Church is not just the building, but our community across our parish and beyond, wherever we may be, including watching the streamed Mass which we can all access from the safety of our homes.

Since the start of the pandemic, limits have been placed on the number of parishioners physically attending each Mass and the reason behind this is to ensure that every action is taken to look after the health of all our parishioners and their safety during this period of pandemic. The safety of us all is paramount and this is why we look to ensuring adequate social distancing and one-way flows within the church.

As you are no doubt aware, each Mass requires sufficient volunteers to act as ushers before and during each of the masses and these volunteers also act as cleaners after each Mass.

Due to the large number of parishioners wishing to attend the weekend masses, we now propose to add an additional Mass on Sunday evening at 5pm. However, this will depend upon more volunteers offering their help as ushers. Therefore, if you feel that would like to volunteer to help then please contact the Parish Office accordingly.

At present, the maximum number of Parishioners attending each Mass is limited to 30, however, when the Covid-19 numbers reduce to a safer level, we will take the opportunity to reassess the numbers of parishioners allowed in the church for each Mass with a view to increasing the numbers able to attend, if possible.

As you are, no doubt aware, to attend any of the masses, you need to book via the Parish Office and we would ask that you only book when you know you will definitely be able to attend. If you are subsequently unable to attend, for any reason, please notify the parish office promptly (leave voicemail if unable to speak with us) so that your space can be offered to others seeking to attend that mass.

**Please be assured that any action we have taken, in respect of the mass attendance, has been in accordance with both Government (now at tier 2 restrictions) and Archbishop’s directives and , more importantly, solely to protect the health and safety of all our parishioners during this period of pandemic.**

**To Summarize – Attending Masses**

* **Phone /email the Parish Office by Thursday morning to book for weekday or weekend Masses.**
* **Please phone/email Parish office to cancel if you can not attend a Mass you have booked.**
* **Please DO NOT come to church if you have not had confirmation of a place. In order to avoid being turned away.**