



The Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity, 20th September 2020

Dear Friends,

Today, Christchurch re-opens for worship with a celebration of Holy Eucharist. It is good news that all four of our churches have now re-opened for worship. As with our other churches, thanks are due to all those who have made this re-opening possible.

Following the restrictions announced by the Welsh Government last week, it was confirmed on Monday that worship in places of worship could continue (subject to the previously agreed limits on numbers attending), but that it would now be necessary for those attending worship to wear a face covering. This has generated some questions, in particular concerning whether those members of the congregation who are reading lessons or leading intercessions need to wear a face covering whilst carrying out these tasks.

Bishop Cherry has confirmed that those who are reading lessons or leading intercessions should wear a face mask whilst moving from their seat to the lectern, and vice versa, but that the face covering may be removed whilst they are at the lectern. She has also confirmed that the minister leading the service does not need to wear a face covering (except whilst administering the hosts) provided that there is a 2 metre distance between them and the congregation. She also advises that they wear one when they enter and leave the service, particularly if they are passing through the congregation.

The requirement to wear a face covering applies to those attending all religious services and to those visiting our churches.

Tomorrow, Monday, September 21st, Father Mark Soady will be instituted by the Bishop of Burnley and inducted by the Archdeacon of Blackburn as Rector of Rufford and Tarleton. Please pray for him on this joyous occasion. Please also pray for Deacon Samuel Patterson, who will be ordained Priest by the Archbishop of Wales at Brecon Cathedral next Saturday, September 26th. Due to the local lockdown imposed in Lancashire from Tuesday, Father Mark will unfortunately not be able to travel to

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preach at Samuel's first Mass the following day. He will, however, be able to preach via the internet.

I am meeting with Fr. Julian Gray this week to sort ministerial cover for our services during October and November. It is anticipated that we will maintain our usual pattern of services across the Benefice, and our thanks are due to all those who will be conducting worship during this period.

It is also likely that the vacancy for our next Incumbent will be advertised in the very near future. Please pray for those who will be involved in the choice of our next Incumbent and also for those who will be guided by God to express an interest.

Finally, our Gospel reading today, the Parable of the Labourers in the Vineyard, reminds us that God invites everyone to be a member of His family and not to compare ourselves with other family members. We are reminded that we serve God, not for reward, but for the joy and fulfilment which that service brings. May we be willing and cheerful workers in God's vineyard.

With every good wish

Jeff