

Extraordinary Parish Newsletter for the Catholic Parishes of St John Vianney & St Monica and St Cuthbert, Blackpool

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Wednesday 25th March 2020, Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord

Dear Parishioners of St John Vianney & St Monica, Blackpool and of St Cuthbert's, Blackpool,

Re: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Further to our last Parish Newsletter of Thursday 19th March, the Prime Minister, on 23rd March, announced strict restrictions on the opening of **all** places of worship, shops and businesses across the country so as to protect the population from the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Full cooperation with **this announcement means that our churches of St John Vianney's and St Cuthbert's, Blackpool, and indeed all Catholic churches, chapels and other places of worship in England and Wales are now closed to the public until further notice.** As you know, **all** our public services and Masses are already suspended for this purpose until we are informed to the contrary. The Government's instruction to 'stay at home' also places further restrictions upon weddings and baptisms, none of which should now take place so as to play our part in combatting the Coronavirus. Funerals in our two parishes may be celebrated, but, again, only with the very smallest group of close relatives in attendance and by going straight to the cemetery or crematorium for the funeral with the option of a memorial Mass to follow when the pandemic is finally over.

Even in these anxious and unprecedented times, we are mindful that the life and mission of Our Lord and His Church goes on, as does the Season of Lent, albeit in a radically modified form. Much of our prayer life, this Lent and certainly in the weeks and months ahead will have to be at home. Again, be assured that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will continue to be celebrated for you (but in private) and for your intentions and especially for those who are sick, the vulnerable and those suffering from the Coronavirus. Your priests are also praying for those on the 'front line' caring for those affected by this current international health crisis especially in our own National Health Service. We pray, too, for our Government and those civil authorities who have to make and apply those decisions that drive forward and hold together our nation's fight against the Coronavirus. Ultimately, all our prayers and Masses at this time are for an end to this global scourge as soon as possible!

In these times without public Mass and Eucharistic Communion you are each encouraged to make **An Act of Spiritual Communion** using our recently adapted [Parish Prayer Card](#). Try to use the current crisis to develop and nurture your own prayer life while staying at home; pray the Rosary, read from your Bible, try to pray as a couple, as a family; make a family altar. It may seem strange, at first, but in time it should feel a little easier to pray in ways that are all part of our long and rich Catholic tradition as the 'Domestic Church'.

Many will want to make **Mass streamed over the internet** a priority. Some Links for this facility are:

- **The Facebook account of the Catholic Parish of St John Vianney & St Monica, Blackpool which is now carrying online Masses at:**
<https://www.facebook.com/CatholicParishofSJVandStM/>
To regularly access this just create a Facebook account for yourself and then 'like' and 'follow' the Parish account.
- Mass with Pope Francis at Santa Marta: <https://www.youtube.com/c/VaticanNewsEN>
- The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham: <http://www.walsingham.org.uk/live-stream>
- Catholic TV: <http://www.catholictv.org/> and EWTN: <http://ewtn.com>
- Extraordinary Form Masses from the Institute of Christ the King, Preston can be accessed on their Facebook account

There are already plenty of options for following **the Texts of the Mass** - some of which include:

- Universalis: <http://universalis.com/mass.htm>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/daily-readings>
- iMissal App: <http://www.imissal.com/>

For the Texts for the Liturgy of the Hours:

- Universalis: <https://universalis.com/>
- iBreviary App: <https://www.ibreviary.org/en/>

For Private Prayer & Meditation:

- Dominican Rosary Meditations: <https://www.marburydominicanuns.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/dominican-jubilee-rosary-meditations.pdf>
- Stations of the Cross (Bishop Robert Barron): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJNjtA-Awb4>

For Catechism & Faith Formation

- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- Go to YouTube, and search for ‘Ascension Presents’
- (for young children) Go to YouTube, and search for: ‘Br Francis online.com’

The National Dowry Re-Consecration and Rededication can still be prayed at home on Sunday 29th March for those online following: <https://www.behold2020.com/> and using the booklets we had been distributing for some time.

You will appreciate that, although your priests are not now allowed to visit people who are ‘self-isolating’ at home at this time, parishioners can still telephone their priests requesting prayers or email them for the same at: catholicsinsouthblackpool@gmail.com

Given that we will not be gathering for public Masses or other services for some time and our churches are now closed for private prayer until further notice, our Parishes are likely to see a significant reduction of income should the current crisis continue for a protracted period. The practical ramifications will be extremely serious. Consequently, we are now asking that our parishioners arrange their giving to their Parish by Standing Order or Bank Transfer – using the following details:

Both parishes are part of Lancaster RC Diocesan Trustees Registered - Charity No. 234331.

Account Name: ‘**The Catholic Parish of St John Vianney & St Monica, Blackpool**’

Account Number: **11334611**

Sort Code: **40-27-02**

and:

Account Name: ‘**The Catholic Parish of St Cuthbert, Blackpool**’

Account Number: **11334603**

Sort Code: **40-27-02**

Alternatively, cheques may be issued for: ‘The Catholic Parish of St John Vianney & St Monica, Blackpool’ or for ‘The Catholic Parish of St Cuthbert, Blackpool’ and then sent in the post to the one address: The Presbytery, 26 Glastonbury Ave, Blackpool, FY1 6RD (UK). Thank you for your steadfast generosity and support at this time of difficulty.

In this time, do please stay in touch via our own Parish websites and social media accounts. Besides, the St John Vianney & St Monica’s website and its Facebook and Twitter (Please ‘follow’) accounts are updated each day, throughout the day, and the *Latest News* section of this popular website: <http://stjohnvianneyblackpool.com/news/> is already a most valuable resource for keeping close to our Catholic Faith/News this Lent and especially during this Coronavirus crisis. Once again, **the ‘streamed Mass’ facility for the Parish of St John Vianney & St Monica is being run through Facebook** – so simply create your own account and ‘like’ and ‘follow’ the Parish to access this: <https://www.facebook.com/CatholicParishofSJVandStM/> as soon as possible.

Let us continue to pray for one another – and keep up our life of prayer and charity throughout this crisis!

As ever in Christ,

Your Priests