

Face Coverings in Church

I am sorry to send another email so soon after my last one, but as you have probably seen or heard the Government has issued guidance on Face Coverings in public indoor spaces.

As of today it is compulsory to wear face covering in shops, transport hubs, banks and other locations.

The need to do this is to ensure that we enable as many people as possible to access these places as safely as is possible.

A Face covering provides reassurance and offers protection to others (from you spreading the virus) and for you (from others spreading to you).

Churches are also public indoor spaces and there is guidance on the use of face coverings in places of worship.

This guidance has been followed up by 'strong' advice from the national Church which has been endorsed and which the diocese 'recommends' we follow.

The advice is that everyone in a place of worship should wear a face covering including the ministers.

This means that **from this Sunday we are requesting that all who attend public worship in our Churches wear a face covering** (unless they are in a group which is exempt from wearing them – see Government guidance or contact one of the Ministry team for details)

The Priest celebrating the Eucharist will wear a plastic shield visor, which they will replace with a covering to administer communion.

Those reading and leading intercessions will remove the mask so they can be clearly heard.

The congregation will remove the mask to receive communion – continuing to do so without speaking.

We hope that this will ensure that all who come into the Church can feel safe and that we maintain our commitment to create a secure space.

On this last point can I remind everyone that **we should not be moving around inside the church** once we have arrived and found our seat.

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Likewise **at the end please immediately follow the celebrant out of the building** rather than talking to each other inside.

If you wish to **talk to one another** (which is understandable) please do so **after the service outdoors**, away from the exit doors.

Once outside if you wish , and if you maintain a 2m distance, you can remove your face covering.

Finally, it is important we have a good awareness of how many **people intend to be there** as space is limited (especially at All Saints, St Faith's and St Wilfrid's) and we don't want to be in a position where we have to turn people away.

I hope you understand the reasons for us having to do this, and that you will support all of us in following the advice and guidance we have been given.

If you have any questions or comments please do contact me.



With best wishes
Father Bob

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