

THOMASTOWN PARISH NEWSLETTER

29th March 2020

Parish Priest:

Fr. Dan Bolland

Mobile 087 6644858

Email: dbolland@eircom.net

Website www.thomastownparish.ie

Radio: fm108

Parish Office:

Tel No 056 7793191

Opening Hours Tues. Wed. Thur. Fri. 10 - 1pm

Email: thomastown@ossory.ie

Facebook: Thomastown Parish

CHURCH SERVICES THESE WEEKS, beginning Sunday 29th March 2020

Masses Suspended by Bishop Farrell Bishop Farrell has asked that, considering the rapidly changing situation that we are living through, there will be no public mass in our churches at this time. In making this decision Bishop Farrell commented: *“Just as our Lord remains with us, we remain with the people we serve. We continue to celebrate Mass for them and with them – online and via radio”*.

Masses will be celebrated at 6pm on Saturday & 10am on Sunday and people are invited to join in on Radio 108fm.

Ways to join together for Mass In these difficult days, it is good for us to be able to pray together. Our churches remain open for moments of private prayer. It is also possible to be part of the celebration of Mass via Radio or Online from some of our parishes. Each Sunday morning, at 9.30am, a live Mass is celebrated on KCLR96fm broadcast to the people of Kilkenny and Carlow.

It is also possible to join Masses via webcams in the following parishes:

St Canice's Parish www.stcanicesparish.ie St John's Parish www.stjohnskilkenny.com

Mooncoin www.mooncoinparish.ie St. Mary's Cathedral www.stmaryscathedral.ie

RTE has been broadcasting Mass at 10.30am on RTENewsNow (and later on @ RTEplayer each day. There has been a daily religious reflection from the other churches at 11.55am. It is expected that RTE will make an announcement re further plans for Mass.

30 minutes prayer will be held on Monday at midday on 108fm

The Rosary will be prayed on Wednesday at midday on 108fm

Stations of the Cross will be held on Friday at midday on 108fm.

Please share this information with friends and family.

Deaths/Anniversaries: **Neddie Hogan**, 3, Newtown Terrace (6pm Mass); **Mary Byrne**, Carrickmourne (6pm Mass); **Patrick Lyons** (6pm Mass); **Joe O'Hara**, Kiljames (Month's Mind Mass 10am); **Mary Doyle**, Carrickmourne (10am Mass), **Mary O'Leary**, Pleberstown and London; **Jimmy Walsh**, Cappagh; **Mary & Paddy Greene**, Pleberstown; **Larry & Mark Butler**, Castle Avenue. May they rest in peace.

Mass Intentions next weekend: **Edward Walshe**, Castle Avenue (10am)

Lent: The particular circumstances of Lent this year impose their own discipline. Remember **Trocaire**. The customary Trocaire boxes are available at the Churches. This is the Irish Church reaching out to people less fortunate than we are. A way of exercising some self-denial. For prayer, check out www.sacred.space.ie This Jesuit website provides daily prayer based on the Gospel readings at Mass.

Check the Diocese of Ossory website for numerous 'offers' from **Adult Faith Development**. Avail of a **Lent Text message** – text your number to the Adult Faith Development group at 0858313100. See also www.catholicbishops.ie and www.catholicireland.net and www.ossory.ie

Lent Online Retreat: Do a free three-day online retreat focusing on Prayer, Fasting & Almsgiving available throughout Lent. Register now priority institute.com 01 404 8124

The Parish Office is currently open Tuesday and Friday. Best contact the Office, in this era of social distancing, by telephone, email, or leave a note into the Office letterbox.

The First Friday of April Allowing for the current regulations regarding social distancing and the encouragement to people to stay at home, we won't call to the homes of the people who usually receive Communion on the First Friday. Let's be united with the Lord and with one another in prayer.

Confirmation in Thomastown has been scheduled for Sunday 26th April. We can take it that if the National School isn't open, then we won't have Confirmation on that day. We must await further directions from Bishop Farrell.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation Pope Francis recently said 'If you don't find a priest to go to Confession, speak to God. He's your Father. Tell him the truth. "Lord, I did this and this and this. Pardon me." Ask his forgiveness with all your heart, with an act of contrition, and promise him, "Afterward I will go to Confession." You will return to God's grace immediately.' At this time of crisis, the Pope said the Catechism clearly teaches that one can draw near to God's forgiveness, even without a priest at hand.

COVID-19 Support Line for Older People: ALONE has launched a national support line and additional supports for older people who have concerns or are facing difficulties relating to the outbreak of COVID-19 (Coronavirus). Professional staff are available to answer queries and give advice and reassurance where necessary. The support line is open Monday to Friday, 8am-8pm, by calling 0818 222 024. Hours may be extended to meet the demand.

The vision of **Towards Peace** is to provide a safe supportive space where people who have been affected by abuse in a Church context can be accompanied as they seek their own experience of spiritual peace one step at time. **Towards Peace** provides a spiritual direction service. Up to nine sessions with a specially trained spiritual companion can be made available; there is no fee. **Spiritual direction** offers a safe space to attend to your own spiritual life and sense of the Sacred. It is an ancient practice in many religious traditions. Within the Christian tradition, spiritual direction offers a way to tune into the presence of God's love within your own life. Phone 01 5053028; email towardspeace@iecon.ie web www.towardspeace.ie

Words from Bishop Farrell:

Although you have made the difficult, but prudent decision, not to attend weekend Mass, remember the Church is not a building. It is the community. 'Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them' (Matt 18:20). We attend to the sick by supporting them and by society acting in a sensible manner. It will be important that we look out for each other and especially the most vulnerable. Christ is in our sisters and brothers. To love those Christ loved, is to love those whom Christ loves: the stunning words of the gospel speak afresh to us today: 'In so far as you did it to one of the least of these my sisters and brothers, you did it to me' (Matt 25:40). As a faith community we remember people who may need support. Do what you can to help others, especially the elderly, the disabled, the poor and isolated. Keep your heart open to those who are ill and suffering. Take the necessary precautions; do not be reckless and do not risk spreading the disease. Many events have been cancelled because of the Coronavirus. Faith, love, and especially hope, however, are not among them.

Around this time of the year in Ireland there are some trees and shrubs, such as the Witch Hazels, Forsythia and the Cherry Trees where delicate flowers appear before the emergence of the tree's leaves. The brief visit of these fragile flowers reminds us that life is beautiful, but fragile. Life is beautiful, but life is fragile. We all share a common home. We know from our experience of life that God can bring new life from the ashes of the most complex of situations. As we now are in the painful and prolonged uncertainty of grappling with the Coronavirus, we pray that this will be a shared undertaking for the benefit of all humanity, a time when we realize that we are one family living in our common home.