



# DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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## Reopening of Churches – FAQs

### **I live close to a church that has announced it is reopening; can I attend on 15 June 2020?**

Not unless an announcement has been made to say that this particular church is reopening on that date.

### **How long can I stay in church for individual prayer?**

To ensure fairness for all, we ask that you display consideration for others who may be waiting to enter the church.

### **I'm unable to attend one of the churches above, what can I do?**

We will continue to broadcast services and share prayer resources online at [www.rcdhn.org.uk](http://www.rcdhn.org.uk). For those who do not have access to the internet, a free postal "Ring a Prayer Resource" has been created, contact 07375934713 for more information. Or alternatively, a Mass by Phone service, provided by the Diocese of Middlesbrough, is available at 01642 130120.

### **What does individual prayer mean under the new restrictions?**

Individuals are expected to be able to "reflect and pray" whilst adhering to physical social distancing rules. Votive candles may still be lit but shared matches, tapers or lighters must not be used. Candles must be lit from existing lit candles. Statues and relics must not be touched or kissed. This instruction will be displayed on posters in church. Mass, and all other public services, including praying together the Divine Office, the Rosary and other group devotional prayers, are still not presently permitted.

### **Can I wear a face mask or gloves? And what about cleaning my hands?**

Research suggests that masks and gloves do offer limited protection when applied correctly. Therefore, we are supporting the use of personal masks, and will provide hand sanitizer at dedicated cleaning stations.

### **When will my local church reopen?**

The Diocese will be undertaking a site-specific risk assessment before any church can reopen. Further information about the reopening of more churches will be made available on the Diocesan website at [www.rcdhn.org.uk](http://www.rcdhn.org.uk), and on Facebook and Twitter.

### **When will I be able to attend Mass?**

In line with Government advice, the Diocese is making preparations to reopen the first five churches for individual prayer only. It is anticipated that churches may reopen for Mass from early July 2020, and further announcements will be made in due course via the Diocesan website to confirm if this is possible.

### **How can I find out about future announcements?**

To ensure you do not miss any of our future announcements, please sign up to our diocesan eNewsletter [here](#).