

**Webcam Broadcast C-19 17**

**Hello Everyone! I hope you are safe and well.**

**It's Monday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2020.**

**Yes, I know, the hair! Hopefully, next Thursday, 2 pm!**

**As we perhaps tire a little of the restrictions imposed on us by the Pandemic, there's a danger that we will become a little complacent and perhaps lower our guard. I met someone recently who said that the Pandemic was over, and seemed to behave accordingly, and mock my reticence. I said such a view was highly irresponsible, and I felt unsafe in that person's company. If we lower our guard at this time, we are being warned that the consequences could be dire. The WHO is warning that worldwide the worst may be still to come. We don't know the path of Covid-19. There is still much uncertainty and still much to learn.**

**Yesterday, Sunday, in the afternoon, I visited a number of churches to see the evidence of their response to reopening, and the requirement of a plan to do so safely. I visited churches I am familiar with most of my life: Naas, Sallins, Clane, Kill. I think our efforts here compare favourably with what I saw. I even saw posters appealing for volunteers to steward and clean.**

**I dared to visit some shops as well. Tesco are selling a packet of 10 disposable facemasks for €7.99. Boots are selling what looks like the same packet for €15. The lady in Boots whispered to me that they are much cheaper in Lidl and Aldi. This is important information because this matter of facemasks, like Covid-19, looks like it's going to be with us for a long time.**

**We had our first experience of Sunday Mass since reopening our churches in St Kevin's yesterday. All appeared to go well. The instruction is to wear a facemask while distributing Holy Communion. As soon as I put on the facemask, my glasses fog up. I then take them off and then I can't see properly.**

**I discovered after Mass that a number of people sadly had to be turned away due to the maximum number permitted on the premises, which is 50. That number is dictated by the Guidance for Religious Services from the HSE updated on 8<sup>th</sup> July following the Cabinet Committee Review on 3<sup>rd</sup> July.**

**That number may be reviewed again in the future, but at this moment we are obliged to abide by it.**

**If that number remains unchanged into the future, we will have to explore ways of making the most of it. I notice some parishes operate a booking system for Mass. I hope it doesn't have to come to that. I get a sense that this is a bother for many parishes.**

**We had a further difficulty with our Broadband service yesterday. It was down all day and maybe still is down. This is distinct from the Webcam service. That meant that no one could view Mass on the Webcam yesterday. This matter is totally out of our control. And given the times we are in, totally unacceptable. The Broadband service at St Kevin's is generally very poor, indeed unreliable. The Webcam service is dependent on there being a reliable Broadband service.**

**In my naiveté I thought that the Pandemic would be the ideal time to install the infrastructure needed to provide a reliable Broadband service to every home in the country. In my view, Broadband should be available like water, electricity and gas. Those early days of the Pandemic, when there was little traffic on the roads, struck me as an ideal time to install fibre optic cabling, or whatever is required, to connect every home in Ireland to the Internet. From now on people are going to be working from their homes more and more. The need for this connectivity was never more apparent than these past months. The poor quality of service accounts for the fact that it sometimes takes literally hours to upload this Monday Message. Natalie takes on this, at times, wearisome task every Monday.**

**The Mass Schedule for the week ahead is posted on the Parish Website and also on the church gates.**

**Since our numbers are restricted to 50 at this time, perhaps consider coming to Mass on a weekday rather than on a Sunday, if that is possible for you. At this time of Pandemic, people can fulfill their Sunday Obligation by attending Mass on any weekday.**

**Mass is now open to the public on Monday & Wednesday in St Kevin's, and on Tuesday and Friday in St Kilian's. The Saturday Vigil Mass will be in St Kilian's next Saturday at 6 pm. Sunday Mass in St Kilian's will not recommence at this time.**

**The schedule we can maintain into the future depends on there being an adequate number of volunteer stewards and cleaners to enable us to open safely.**

**It also depends on yours truly, who is, according to the HSE, due to age and long-term medical condition, considered at higher risk for Covid-19, remaining upright and healthy.**

**You can sign up to volunteer on the Parish Website or contact the Parish Office.**

**I also encourage every Parishioner to fill out the Parish Register Form. The Parish needs to be able to communicate with Parishioners directly. So, please fill out the Parish Register Form on the Parish Website. Hard copies of the Form are available in our 2 churches.**

**This is a learning experience for us all that will hopefully help us as we plan for the future. We will take note to see if we can improve on things as we go along.**

**If anyone has observations or suggestions, please get in touch.**

**Lastly, for the moment, we now have another important tool to help us deal with the consequences of Covid-19.**

**It's the Covid Tracker App.**

**I recommend you download and use it.**

**Until next time. Slán agus beannacht.**