

As I write to you now, I am reminded of yesterday's Gospel, "*Lord, Lord,*" *who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven ... Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock ...*" (Matthew 7:21-24) So, let us build on this rock and navigate with this in mind.

26 June 2020

Dear Parishioners of St Mary's,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,  
Dear Friends,

**Peace and Every Good!**



There is so much going on, and with the upcoming elections I cannot help but remind you that while Nomination Day is on June 30<sup>th</sup>, the Mass Attendance and Registration System (MARS) will open on June 27<sup>th</sup> ! Your vote has implications and I hope this letter helps.

**IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS and MORE IMPORTANTLY, that we embrace what it means for us being Church and a Parish.**

Before we get in a tizzy about the resumption of services (with very severe restrictions and limitations), **let us remember that while we are grateful that we can begin some semblance of a Eucharistic Community**

coming to worship together in person, our **SENSE, PURPOSE AND MISSION** must go beyond attendance, but living the Paschal Mystery (baptised into the Death and Resurrection ) of Christ.

*“The crisis of liturgical lockdown brought significant liturgical innovations - online Masses and online prayer groups flourished. Home/family/prayer resources were developed, along with weekly and sometimes even daily prayer emails and WhatsApp messages. We began to speak, meaningfully, of the domestic Church, the home church. We literally prayed for one another and there was a sense of ecumenism.”*

*~ J.P. Gayland, “A New Pentecost: Giving Crisis a Hoe in Worship”~*

Forgetting these experiences could widen the division between the Church’s “official” prayer and “home prayer” of the Church. By just rushing back and “booking” Mass attendance, we can return to the “old sins” of becoming merely people who “attend” Mass - not **LIVE CHURCH**.

*Spiritual Communion* was/is a time of preparation, so that if and when we do participate in person, we are ready for the real transforming presence of Christ in our lives.

There is a saying, “*Never let a good crisis pass you by without taking advantage of the opportunity to change, learn, evolve.*” The rush back to the normal presumes no one has changed. It can assume that there is no post-traumatic impact. Pope Francis has issued the call for a synodal Church, but a Franciscan synodal and missionary Church is only possible if we become

a community whether linked spiritually or virtually or in person - united in Christ. Reading the signs of the times belongs to us all. And so, I ask that you read more about how our Parish and church is inviting you to become community in our online Feast Day celebrations and participation.

## INVITATION TO ENGAGE WITH OUR FEAST DAY

### 1) Feast Day Dedication Project:

This project invites you & your family to share video clips of your family celebrating an online Mass or praying together - the domestic church. Keep it real; natural. These will then be collated and included in a music video as a gift of gratitude for our St Mary's Feast Day and shared with the world.

If you are interested to be a part of this project, you can contact the project coordinator Carol Seow ([smota.moms@gmail.com](mailto:smota.moms@gmail.com)) for more details. Carol can help you and actually, you can help Carol too!

### 2) Music through the Decades: celebrating the Music Ministry and Ministries through the 70s, 80s, 90s, etc.

### 3) Take a walk down memory lane with us.

Do you have photos of the church that go as far back as the 80s or even the 70s? If you do, share them with us and contribute to a photographic collage of our church's rich history. We can go and collect them from you or you can send digital copies of your photos to [stmarymemories50@gmail.com](mailto:stmarymemories50@gmail.com)

- 4) We are preparing a series on St Francis and St Mary of the Angels and the Pardon of Assisi. Are you subscribed to our channel? Are you sharing it with others?
- 5) Nurture the domestic church, sit and hang out with your children, the young and talk to them about what really is church in these times? What is the Holy Spirit asking us to do?
- 6) Care for the environment even more and tune in to the sounds of creation and praise God - this is **Laudato Si!**
- 7) Form a personal communication with others who are not able to connect virtually. Have a phone network and speak to others personally, sharing your friendship with them and our connection with the Body of Christ.

These are other important ways in which we can live out being church as well.

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and*

*Enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.*

*Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created.*

*And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.*

## REVISED PARISH OFFICE OPENING HOURS

If you need to come to attend to any administrative matters,  
please call and make an arrangement.

**Monday – Friday**  
**9am – 12pm**

## UPCOMING 2 WEEKENDS

We are making St Mary's available to you for confessions on certain evenings  
on an appointment basis and for private prayer on Sunday morning.

All bookings can be done at: [go.stmary.sg/privateworship/](http://go.stmary.sg/privateworship/)

## PRIVATE PRAYER

**Sunday**  
**9am – 12pm**

## SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

**From Sunday to Friday**  
**5pm – 7pm**

# MASS ATTENDANCE & REGISTRATION SYSTEM (MARS)

Following the recent government's announcement regarding Phase 2, we thank you for your patience whilst the Archdiocesan Catholic Task Force sort further the details for the resumption of services at our churches. By Saturday, you should be able to sign up with a church for the possibility of participating in the Eucharistic Celebration in person.

This can be done by going to the MARS link: <https://mycatholic.sg/>

**However please note that once you have signed up, you will have to stay with the church you select throughout this Covid pandemic. The rationale for this is to mitigate the spread of the virus. Religious congregation services are different from other social interactions, so this added precaution has to be taken to ensure we avoid possibilities of clusters infecting one another.**

Mass booking will be made available from 1 July (Wed) onwards. With a limitation of 50 persons per Mass (excluding ministers and safe entry ambassadors), many of you may not be able to attend Mass regularly. In order to give everyone an equal chance of attending Mass, each person will most probably be limited to a restriction of one Mass per month or even less.

I encourage you not to fret if you are unable to find a place. Our connections online will remain. I sincerely want to thank the Music Ministry, the Lectors, the friars and the Digital Ministry for their tireless service. It is not easy producing something every day. YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT AND CONTRIBUTIONS and their generous service have made it possible for us as one, to connect and be nourished.

We will resume Masses from **July 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>**. At St Mary's, the friars are doing our utmost to have as many slots open as possible and into the weekdays too. You can imagine the strain this puts on the volunteers working to ensure the process goes smoothly and that your safety and well-being are not compromised, should you be registered with St Mary's.

## REVISED MASS TIMES

Monday to Friday - 6.30pm

Saturday - 4.15pm, 6.15pm

Sunday - 7.15am (Mandarin), 9.15am, 11.15am, 1.15pm, 5.15pm, 7.15pm

Our Christian principles and social conscience will require us to be understanding, patient and kind, and that we exercise a high degree of social responsibility.

As we look forward to welcoming you back, we have been busy doing everything we can to create a space where you'll feel safe and celebrate the love of Christ for us here and bring it to others who are unable to come physically. We seek your kind understanding that in order to maintain these measures, this may cause some delays and inconveniences.

So in order for us to carry out these safety measures before you attend Mass, we have adjusted our Mass times slightly, while maintaining as closely as possible to the previous Mass times that we used to have.

# WHAT DO YOU NEED TO KNOW AND DO?

(Note that there is a DIFFERENCE between Signing up with a church and Booking a Mass slot)

## **If you want to attend the Eucharist IN PERSON:**

- 1) You NEED to have an email account to register with a church. If you do not have one, please sign up for one BEFORE proceeding to register.
- 2) Go to <https://mycatholic.sg/> and register.  
The registration exercise will open on 27 June (Sat) at 9.00am.
- 3) Book a Mass time slot. If your preferred slot is already fully booked, you can choose an alternative ON another weekend or weekday.
- 4) You will receive an acknowledgment email upon successfully booking a Mass time slot.
- 5) You MUST bring your NRIC or any other form of photographic identification, for verification purposes. Those who do not produce identification will be DENIED ENTRY.



## Important things to note:

- 1) Only one email account for one registration.  
If there are other people in your family who also wish to book a slot, they must use a separate email account.
- 2) You can register with a church but need not to book a slot just yet.
- 3) If you have no intention to attend Mass during this Covid pandemic, you need not register.
- 4) The Mass booking system closes 48 hours before the day of the Mass.

## WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT WHEN YOU COME TO ST MARY'S FOR MASS

### **Coming for Mass:**

- 1) Entry to the church is only via the main gate through the driveway or the side gate by the market.
- 2) The side gate by the bus stop WILL NOT be open for entry to the Church. Please proceed to either the main driveway gate or to the side stairs on the left of the bus stop to enter the church by the Market Gate.
- 3) Arrive 30 minutes before Mass. Please proceed directly to St Clare Hall for Safe Entry registration, temperature checks and booking verification. Please ensure that you bring along your NRIC or FIN.

- 4) If you are driving, you may be asked to park at only designated areas of the carpark. This will allow for a smoother flow of traffic between incoming and outgoing worshippers.
- 5) In the church, you will be welcomed and asked to sit only in designated areas. Pews are labelled with ticks and crosses to ensure proper social distancing.
- 6) Please scan the QR codes for individual pews as this will help us with contact tracing.
- 7) Face masks must be worn at all times, even during the Mass.
- 8) Communion can only be received on the hand.
- 9) There will be no singing during Mass.
- 10) Directional signs are available for entry/exit.

**After Mass:**

- 1) After Mass, exit from the church premises will ONLY be via BUS STOP GATE or via the DRIVEWAY GATE. NO EXIT VIA THE MARKET GATE.
- 2) Please leave the church premises immediately after Mass. DO NOT mingle after Mass.
- 3) Remember to check out via Safe Entry before leaving the church premises.

**REMEMBER, FOR THOSE WHO ARE VULNERABLE AND AT RISK OR IF YOU ARE NOT FEELING WELL, FOR YOUR WELL-BEING, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONTINUE FOLLOWING US THROUGH OUR ONLINE VIDEOS JUST FOR NOW**

So, as you can see, you can expect many changes when we finally open up the church for Mass. However, let us know how best we can remain connected to you during this ‘new normal’ that we are living in. Remember we are to be prudent in slowly opening up -- that no matter what, your safety and well-being is our priority.

Pax et Bonum



Friar Michael D'Cruz  
Parish Priest

*“Our worship will get fuller as together,  
We learn new steps in a new time.  
As we prepare to reopen,  
Let’s not go back to the old ‘normal’.”*