

Saint Paulinus Guisborough

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From: V Rev Canon Michael Bayldon MA

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I pray for your well-being at this difficult time. As you will be aware I may only offer Mass privately, without anyone else present. This will suffice to cover my obligation to pray for and support our parishioners and community. By bishop's Decree I cannot publicise the places and times at which my private celebrations will take place.

The bishop suggests that we unite our distress and stress with the Passion of Our Lord as we progress through Lent and Holy Week. I am suggesting that we keep before us the Resurrection of the Lord, for we hope to be united with him in glory.

There will be many Catholic sites supported by the internet and the www. May I recommend these to you, for private devotion and prayer. It may be a good practice to pray in the mornings at 10.00am, particularly on Thursdays and Sundays when Mass would usually be celebrated.

Holy Communion is to be restricted to those in imminent danger of death, usually in a hospital or hospice. In those places the necessary isolation procedures for the priest will be observed. We do not carry the gowns and garments needed to keep an immune barrier between the minister and the recipient. No Eucharistic ministry is permitted by deacons or laity.

Funerals will only be celebrated at the graveside, or at the Crematorium without any member of the public present. We will offer Masses for the deceased when the crisis is judged to be over. This is a sensitive area, and surrounded with deep feelings and emotions. We recognise all of this, but sadly the needs of the greater and wider community to be kept safe must outweigh even our deepest sentiments.

First Communions, First Confessions and other similar celebrations are all postponed indefinitely. It may be that in the Advent Season there will have been sufficient recovery to make all these events possible.

Please keep one another in prayer before the Lord. The guidance laid down by the Government Health Department is to be followed.

Finally, there is a Christian ministry of charity which we can participate in. Without breaking the rules for good health and safety prayer and encouragement may be shared over the telephone or similar media.

With ever prayer and blessing

Canon Michael