

# St Mary the Virgin: Parish of East Preston with Kingston



from the Vicar:

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2SP

Remembrance Sunday 2020

Dear Friends

## re **Second National Lockdown**

We're a few days into the second Lockdown and much has been produced on-line and as posters to say what's happening this time around.

It's worth saying that anything we produce is only accurate at the point of publication! - things inevitably change very quickly under these circumstances!

So for our life together at St Mary's: meetings and regular services are cancelled. Funerals can still go ahead (with a max of 30 people present), and ashes interments can go ahead (with a max of 15 people present). The church can (and will!) be open during the day for private prayer.

To address these restrictions, for the duration of the Lockdown at St Mary's: Morning Prayer and Night Prayer are being live-streamed on the Face Book page at 9am & 9pm on weekdays, and the Sunday mass will be live-streamed from the home of the clergy at 10am on Sundays.

This Lockdown is different from the first in its intended length (PM Boris Johnson said it will "expire automatically" on 2 December - although further measures at that stage are always possible); in the hope to keep educational institutions functioning; and in the ability to allow the church to be open for private prayer.

Again we face a period of not being able to meet together for worship and support, and the sacrament will be denied us - but this is for a shorter time than the last Lockdown.

We're in the part of the Church's year called the Kingdom Season (between All Saints & Advent), and it's a time of remembering. All Saints, All Souls, Bonfire Night, Remembrance Sunday all fall at this time, and it's an encouragement to recall that those who went before us also lived in difficult and turbulent times when their patience, faith, hope and love were tested. We are not having things any tougher than our ancestors - different, but no worse. And we have access to means of communication that our forebears never did.

We remember in awe those world-wide, history-wide saints; we remember in love those who we knew and who influenced us; we remember with repentance the denominational strife between Christians surrounding the gunpowder plot; we remember with sober heaviness those who lost their lives in armed conflict. And we remember all these people in Hope. Hope that is offered to us in the resurrection of Jesus; hope that death is not the end; hope that all shall be well.

And we are challenged to view our current situation in Hope too. Hope that this too will pass. Hope that although we don't know what the future holds we do know who holds the future.

Advent (which starts on 29 November this year) is the season of looking forward in eager expectation to the coming of the Christ-child, whose arrival changed the course of history; let us rejoice in the Hope that Jesus still brings - Hope for change in our lives and our world.

Please stay safe. Please pray for our community at St Mary's, as well as our village, nation and world.

With every blessing

Fr Andrew