

# THE CELEBRATION OF PUBLIC SUNDAY MASS

## *Welcome to St Thomas More Church!*

We are asked, while the pandemic continues, to celebrate Mass in a way that keeps everyone as safe as possible. Catholics are as susceptible to the virus as any other group and, like every other group, we too have a responsibility to act safely and demonstrate our care both for one another here and for the wider good of society in general.

These new arrangements are new to us all. We are all learning how to follow them as efficiently and smoothly as possible. Please bear with us - clergy, stewards, and people – as we get used to them.

### **WHAT'S DIFFERENT?**

- You will be wearing a face covering, have sanitised your hands and have been shown to seat – thank you for bearing with those. Not only is this to be hygienic and maintain social distancing of 1.5m (those who form one household are able to sit closer) but it also helps us easily see when the church is at its safe capacity of one hundred people. We cannot exceed that number.
- The doors and windows must be open to encourage ventilation.
- You will have no hymn book or Mass book provide by the church, the holy water stoups are empty, the toilets and piety stall are shut and you are asked to stay seated and not move about.
- There is to be a minimum of people on the sanctuary and so, at least to begin with, there are no musicians, readers, or servers.
- Mass is not meant to be prolonged, so the homily is to be short and the bidding prayers left out. You are asked to leave promptly after Mass and not to congregate anywhere in the building. Stewards will ensure a smooth exit by encouraging people to leave beginning from the back of church.
- During the Mass, we are not to sing. There can be no physical sign of peace and collection bags cannot be passed round (there are boxes for your offering near the main doors).
- At the time of communion, please follow the directions of stewards.

### **COMMUNION – *diagram of movement overleaf***

The containers (ciboria) used for Communion are kept covered until the Hosts are distributed. After the 'Behold the Lamb of God...' and the priest's communion, Fr Stephen will hold up a Host and say 'The Body of Christ'. All answer 'Amen'. No words are to be said aloud at the moment of individual communion. This communal 'Amen' replaces that. The clergy will sanitise their hands and don face coverings before moving to distribute Holy Communion.

If you wish to receive a blessing come forward as usual with your arms crossed over your chest.

Nothing should be said by either the priest (or deacon) or the one receiving the blessing: the sign of the cross will be made in silence.

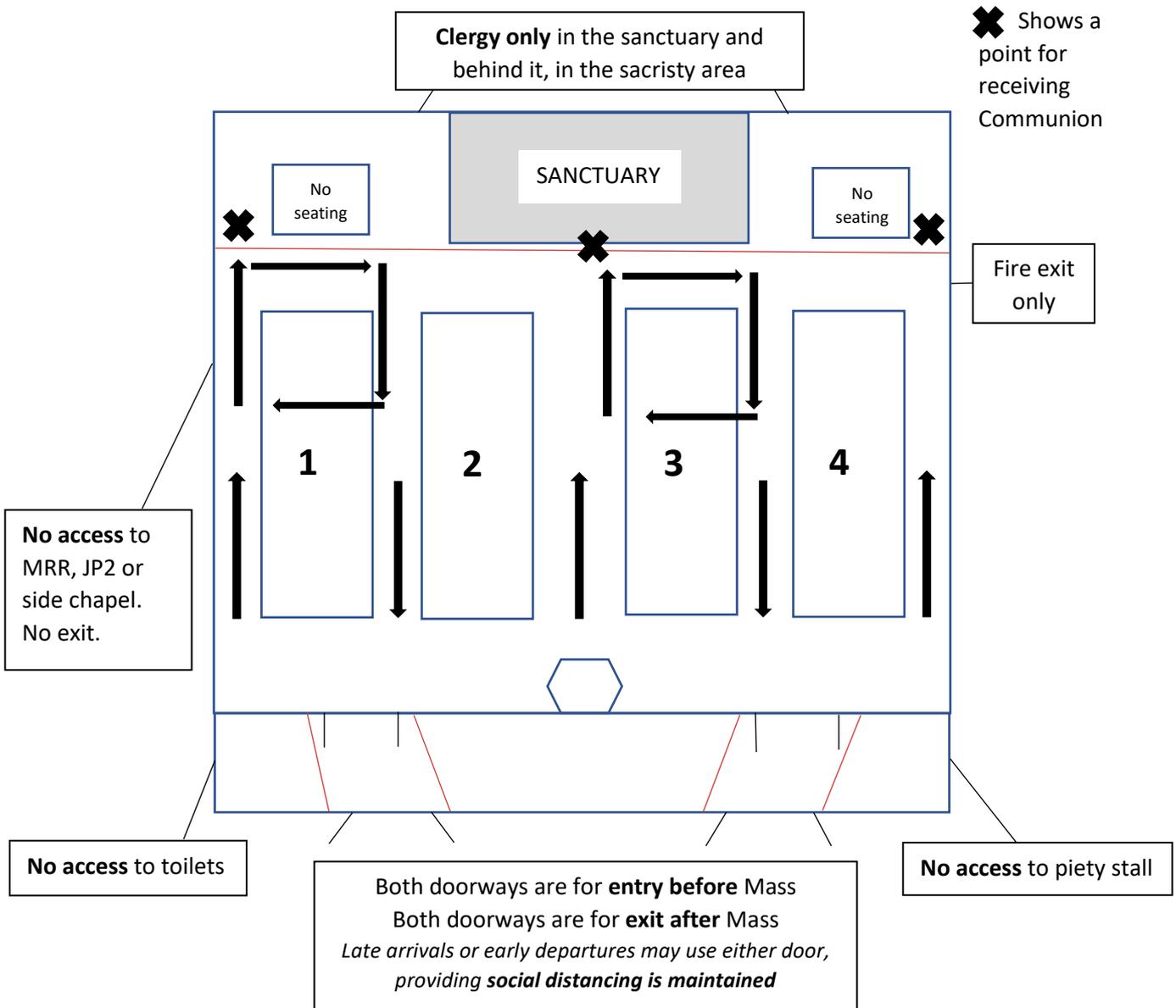
The previous way of waiting for Communion at 9am is now replaced by a single file in the aisle: no gathering shoulder to shoulder. The clergy will stand one side of a simple barrier to ensure distance. You are asked to receive in the hand, arms outstretched with your open right hand resting in the palm of your left. The clergy will reach out and the Host will be put on your palm without touching you, with nothing being said aloud. Then please step to one side, let your face covering down, consume the Host, replace the covering, and go back to your place.

Communion will be given by Fr Stephen in the centre and Deacon Leo first at one wall (on the MRR side), then at the other. Seating Blocks 1 and 3 will be ushered forward first. Block 1 to the X by the side chapel, moving towards the altar along the wall. They return via the inner aisle between Blocks 1 and 2. Block 3 come forward up the centre aisle to X and return via the inner aisle between Blocks 3 and 4.

Once 1 and 3 have received, Deacon Leo will move to the opposite wall on the car par side by the fire door (X). Then Blocks 2 and 4 will come forward: Block 2 approaching up the centre aisle to Fr Stephen and returning via the inner aisle between 1 and 2, and Block 4 approaching along the wall and returning via the inner aisle between 3 and 4. This means that people are kept distanced while moving.

This is harder to describe than it is to do!

# MOVEMENT FOR COMMUNION



***Thank you all for bearing with all this and  
thank you to the stewards and cleaners  
without whom we cannot be open  
for public worship.***