
Fw: IMPORTANT - Reopening of Churches - 'Track and Trace'

Peter Andrews <peterandrews@rcaos.org.uk>
To: Francesca Cataldi <francesca.cataldi.it@gmail.com>

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From: Archbishop John Wilson <archbishop@rcaos.org.uk>
Sent: 01 July 2020 19:43
To: A. All Clergy <allclergy@rcaos.org.uk>; A. Cathedral House <cathedralhouse@rcaos.org.uk>
Cc: Paul McCallum <paulmccallum@rcaos.org.uk>; Jo Driver <jodriver@rcaos.org.uk>
Subject: IMPORTANT - Reopening of Churches - 'Track and Trace'

To all Parishes in the Archdiocese of Southwark**IMPORTANT: REOPENING OF CHURCHES - TRACK AND TRACE**

Dear Father

In the Government document *Guidance for the safe use of places of worship from 4 July*, published on the 29 June, reference was made to the 'NHS Test and Trace service' which has been set up '...to manage the risk of the virus re-emerging.' This states: '*...In line with other government guidance for other venues ... you should assist this service [NHS Test and Trace] by keeping an accurate temporary record of visitors for 21 days, in a way that is manageable for your place of worship, and assist NHS Test and Trace with requests for that data if needed for contact tracing and the investigation of local outbreaks.*'

A message from Cardinal Vincent Nichols, the President of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, on the 29 June included the following key point relating to the Government Guidance:

'The Guidance seeks cooperation in the 'Test and Trace' system by our keeping a record of those attending a church at any one time. The Guidance states that it will explore with us ways that are 'manageable' and mentions the pre-booking systems of regulating those who come to church. One way that this cooperation could be achieved is with a system of precompleted cards giving the names of those attending public worship and a contact number, to be placed in a bag/box on entry and then retained securely for 21 days.'

The request for cooperation with 'Test and Trace' was not foreseen when the original guidance was created by the Bishops' Conference, hence this additional email only a

few days before the 4 July.

I appreciate that this will feel like additional bureaucracy at an already challenging time. I am sorry for any additional burdens which it places upon you. It means, however, that

- Parishes should endeavour to create an accurate temporary record of those who attend Mass or another service in the church from the 4 July
- The record should include:
 - the name of the person / household group
 - A note of a suitable method for Test and Trace staff to make contact, i.e. a mobile phone number, email address, other phone number, or postal address
- The record should be collected as people enter church for Mass and retained securely for 21 days. Please keep records for each Mass separately in a secure envelope which clearly states the time and date of the Mass attended.
- The choice of method for recording this information is to be made by each parish. Among the possible options available are:
 - A advance booking system which will record contact details as people 'book' a place for Mass
 - Pre-completed cards to be filled in at home and brought to Mass. (A template for such a card is attached)
 - Stewards recording the relevant details as each person arrives for Mass
- Information recording must be done in a manner which meets the guidance for preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This will include not providing pens for reuse.
- If a visitor initially refuses to cooperate:
 - They should be asked to do so politely, reassuring them that this is in line with Government advice and an act in service of the common good for the potential benefit of all present.
 - If they do not wish to do so they should be invited to leave.

➤ If any individual becomes aggressive and/or refuses to co-operate with any of the hygiene or social distancing requirements, this should be reported to the police.

I appreciate that this additional burden comes at short notice. I also recognise that some of you may have already put this in place having read the guidance. The Catholic Church along with other groups has been given the opportunity to resume limited public worship in advance of some other activities and it is important that we demonstrate our seriousness by cooperating to the best of our ability with all that the Government is asking of us.

For the benefit of everyone, we will do all we can to *'control the virus and save lives.'*

If any further amendments or clarifications from the Bishops' Conference about this, I will, of course, pass these on as soon as possible.

With my deep appreciation for all that you are doing, and my prayers for all who are working to return our churches to public worship.

+ John

Most Rev John Wilson
Archbishop of Southwark

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