



## SAINT MARY AND SAINT MARK'S COPTIC ORTHODOX CENTRE

### **Guidelines for attending liturgy services during the COVID19 Pandemic**

#### *General guidelines:*

1. We are all members of the body of Christ and we should all do our best to protect each other and save lives. Accordingly, please MEASURE YOUR TEMPERATURE before you come to church and kindly STAY AT HOME if you or anyone of your household has any flu symptoms and/or fever. Please book a slot two weeks after you no longer show any symptoms.
2. Please use Eventbrite website to register for liturgy services. A link with all details will be sent to you by our church communication officer.
3. You won't be able to attend unless you have registered and assigned a certain day and time. NO WALK-INS will be allowed for any reasons.
4. Liturgy services will be limited to a number of congregants with respect to UK Government guidelines and social distance instructions.
5. The Church will take all the necessary precautions to ensure your safety, but your attendance is entirely your choice and the church does not accept any liability.
6. NO SOCIAL GATHERINGS at church or in the parking lot or in the ground outside the church for any reasons.
7. If you are SHIELDING, please strictly follow the guidelines sent to you by the NHS.

#### *Arrival guidelines:*

1. Please arrive on time (liturgy service times will be sent in due time).
2. You MUST enter a code for the church door to open. This code will be sent to you prior to the day of the liturgy by the church communication officer.
3. Please use the provided hand sanitiser (located on both sides of the church door) to sanitise your hand before and after tapping the code.

#### *Seating and Social Distance guidelines:*

1. If you come first, please use the front benches then go from front to back until all slots are allocated. By doing this, we ensure that a ONE-WAY SYSTEM is followed.
2. ONLY use the allocated benches for seating. Other benches will be crossed out to ensure social distance measures are applied.
3. Family of the same household will be seated together.
4. A bench will take from 1 to 4 people. If you are a family of 5 to 8, you will be allocated two benches.
5. Single individuals will be seated on their own and are NOT ALLOWED to be seated with other families or other single individuals on the same bench.
6. Please DO NOT ALLOW children to run around in the church. They must be seated with their parents at all times.

### *Safety guidelines*

1. You **MUST** wear a mask at all times during the liturgy service.
2. Children **UNDER THE AGE OF 6** are allowed to attend the liturgy without wearing a mask.
3. Please **DO NOT** touch relics or icons inside the church.
4. Please **DO NOT** kiss the priest's hands.
5. Please **REFRAIN** from the physical sign of peace. When it is said, 'greet one another with the holy kiss', it may suffice to nod and bow your head to one another.
6. The allocated seating areas will be disinfected after every liturgy service.
7. The crying room will be **LOCKED**. To use the toilet, please go outside the church and use the side doors on the left, leading to both ladies' and men's toilets.
8. Please use allocated disposable toilet seats placed in the box on the sink worktop. Kindly dispose of those using the allocated bin close to the toilet. Afterwards, please make sure to wash your hands using the hand wash based on the sink or disinfect your hands using the hand sanitiser located in the toilet.
9. For our children's safety, all children **UNDER THE AGE OF 10** should be accompanied to the toilet by one of their parents. This will ensure necessary hygienic and safety procedures are applied.
10. Please **SHARE** the safety guidelines with **CHILDREN ABOVE THE AGE OF 10**. Please make them fully aware of all safety requirements and make sure they are able to implement it.
11. If possible, bring your own hand sanitiser to the church.
12. After using the exit door on the left, please **DISINFECT** your hands before leaving the church, using the hand sanitiser located on the door from outside.

### *Communion guidelines:*

1. Please bring your own water bottle, 'lefafa' and scarf (for ladies).
2. **NO COMMUNION QUEUE**. A family of the same household will move together towards the priest for communion.
3. Single individuals will move on their own towards the priest for communion.
4. People sitting in the left row will move first, then followed by people in the second and third rows, and finally followed by people in the right row.
5. Before receiving the Holy Sacraments, please remove your mask from the straps, open your mouth wide, and **DO NOT** touch the priest's hand.
6. After receiving the Holy Sacraments, please go back to your bench to put on your shoes. Afterwards, please follow the **ONE-WAY SYSTEM** and exit the church through the side door on the left.

### *Deacons' Service guidelines:*

1. Deacons will be called and assigned by the church priests on a rota basis.
2. **ONE** deacon will be allowed in the altar and **ONE** deacon will be seated in the deacons' area.
3. Other deacons attending the liturgy (whether adults or children) and are not on the deacons' rota for that day, will directly wear their 'tonyas' (no need to take the priest's blessing) and remain seated in their allocated bench. Please hang your coats on your bench and **DO NOT** use the deacons' room.

**MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU ALL SAFE**