

To follow is a summary of the key points
from a Pastoral Letter written by
The Most Reverend John Wilson
Archbishop of Southwark
Given at Archbishop's House, Southwark
March 18th, 2020

Links to his full letter are at the bottom

Archbishop John asks “every member of the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese of Southwark - clergy, consecrated religious and laity - to abide by these measures until they are amended or withdrawn. They will be kept under review in light of expert health and hygiene advice.”

“The major change is the cessation of public celebrations of the Mass and the dispensation of the Obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.”

“To continue to mark the significance of Sunday as the Lord's Day, I would encourage all those who are able to read the Scripture readings of the Sunday Mass and to pray the Rosary. We can also make a Spiritual Communion which prayerfully expresses our faith in Christ's presence in the Blessed Sacrament. Various forms of prayers for making a Spiritual Communion are available in prayer books and on the internet.”

“I want to assure you of my prayers for you, for your loved ones and for your parish community. We will do our very best to provide support and information through the Archdiocesan website and social media presence. In all that we will face, individually and together, we find our hope in Christ. He is our sure foundation, today, tomorrow, and always.”

Archbishop John's letter:

https://mcusercontent.com/a40ab1a35eac7236d856fe882/files/6e921006-07cb-4e23-b7dc-6ac75a76854d/Pastoral_Letter_18_March_2020.pdf

I have made the decision to close our church at this time, as we are unable to leave it open without constant supervision. Please know that the statue of Our Lady, in front of the Presbytery, is a lovely place to stop and pray.

In these challenging times, we would add that it is key we care for each other, please bear in mind that St Thomas's will have to postpone funerals, baptisms and Holy Communion preparation. Father Duncan appreciates that this is a caring parish and although we are physically separated, spiritually we are not, we will all be reunited soon.

<http://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/media/2020.03.18%20-%20PUBLIC%20LETTER%20FROM%20THE%20PRESIDENCY%20-%20CBCEW.pdf>

Finally, may I add that, we practice social distancing and self isolation for the over 70's, in accordance with Government guidelines which were updated on March 16th:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>

