

Dear Friends,

We have received advice from the Archbishops that, in the light of the Covid 19 pandemic, public worship and meetings in chapel will be suspended until further notice. As the statement from the Archbishops makes clear, this does not mean the church is shutting - far from it. Many of our churches will be open for private prayer and reflection.

The clergy will continue to offer Morning and Evening Prayer - and Mass will be live streamed from many of our churches. Do join us in praying from your homes.

Please know that I am praying for you, for your loved ones, for all who are in sickness and in need at this time, and for all who are involved in the care and healing of others.

Get in touch

If you have self-isolated and/or you need any pastoral support, please get in touch with me via email : HutchA@solsch.org.uk

National Day of Prayer

The Archbishops invite everyone this Mothering Sunday to join in prayer at home for the country, for the world and all who are sick or anxious at this time, by placing a lit candle in a window at 7pm on this day.

Four things to ponder:

1. It is a priority for us that we keep ourselves and others safe and well.
2. It is also important to have a robust pastoral strategy at this time: not just the clergy, but all the community engaged in actively phoning - or contacting in other ways - vulnerable members of the congregation and others; to keep in touch and to offer practical help if need be.
3. It is also extremely important that people know that the 'voice of prayer is never silent.' As I say, the clergy will continue to offer Morning and Evening Prayer and Mass, and families may want to have times of quiet and prayer corporately.
4. Communication: keeping in touch over the ensuing weeks will be a significant way in which we can still be the 'church'. I hope we can develop ways through our website, email letters and social media where this can be effective.

The impact on many in our society will be great - as well as on our community life, particularly as we journey through Holy Week and Easter - but we believe in God whose love in Christ is known to us in times of need and who inspires the gifts of faith, hope and love within us through His Spirit. So, we ask for guidance to be able to serve God and others.

I will write with further news and updates each week.

Prayer

Please pray for us as we engage in responding to the situation in our world at this time.

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.

Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen

With my blessing

Father Andrew