

SPECIAL EDITION



THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF THE
Holy Family

MOUNT WAVERLEY

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I give thee my heart and soul.



A Message from Fr. Michael Morgan

Written by: Fr. Michael Morgan P.E.

The celebrated novel "A Tale of Two Cities" by Charles Dickens begins "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair; we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going the other way". How apt these words are as they capture the emotions and decisions taken by Government and ecclesiastical authorities to try to cope and deal with the ever spreading globally of the Coronavirus.

During the worst years of bombing and suffering of Britain in World War Two, Prime Minister Churchill declared: "Never let a good crisis go to waste". So, let you and me as we take proper care of our health and life, not be overcome by fear, but use this time of challenge to our lifestyles to bring in positive changes to our personal, family and community living.

For example, improve the quality of prayer in our personal and family lives. Be creative with spontaneous prayer, for example, at mealtimes, or even pray a decade or more of the Rosary. Instead of eating out, have a go as a family in preparing and cooking a family meal together. Instead of spending hours in T.V or I.T surfing choose a good book to read. And don't forget your neighbours, especially the elderly. I was deeply touched to find a hand-written note on my door at home last Thursday from my neighbour, very much younger than me, offering to help me with shopping, etc. Yes, what golden opportunities are open to all of us in this most critical of times.

Here in Holy Family Parish I convened last week a small group of Parish leaders to look at the best ways that all

parishioners can be supported spiritually and materially. I have called them our "War Cabinet"! We've decided to leave the Church open every day at specific times for private prayer, even though no public Masses etc. are now permitted. The Bishops have dispensed all Catholics from the obligation of Sunday Mass during the Pandemic. Also, I'm not abandoning you; rather I am continuing to celebrate Mass every day in Holy Family Church for God's blessings on us at this critical time. I do so when the Church is locked. Furthermore, I am making times available in the Presbytery for anyone wishing the Sacrament of Penance, or to speak of personal or family need. I have arranged with Father Nicholas Pearce to remain in this Parish until he returns. I shall happily visit any sick or home shut-ins upon request. So while feeling deprived in some ways, you and I are going to ride out this trying time with deep trust in the loving prayer and care of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

Our Parish "War Cabinet" is committed to our weekly meeting; so do feel free to pass on any comments, suggestions, etc. to the Parish Office by email or through the letterbox at the Presbytery front door.

St. John Henry Newman, recently canonised by Pope Francis has given us this Prayer: "**Lead kindly light amid the encircling gloom, Lead thou me on. The night is dark and I am far from Home; Lead thou me on.**"

Face this week with confidence in the words of the Psalmist: "**Keep me Safe, O Lord, You are my Hope.**" Amen!



Important changes at Holy Family.

Public Masses & Liturgies suspended until further notice.

In light of recent developments regarding the COVID-19 virus, the Archdiocese of Melbourne has decided to **suspend all public Masses and parish events until further notice.** Therefore, no Masses will be celebrated, or parish gatherings will be held until we are advised otherwise.

Please note: The Bishops of the Province of Victoria have given their official permission, that in light of these circumstances, "all Catholics in Victoria are **dispensed from their Sunday obligation** until further notice (canon 1248).

Holy Family Church will be open for private prayer during the following times:

Sunday

8:30 am - 11:30 am with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Monday - Thursday

8:30 am - 11:30 am

Friday

8:30 am - 11:30 am

6:00pm - 8:00 pm

Saturday

5:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Within the Church, Parishioners are asked to exercise social distancing of four square meters (2m X 2m) and to refrain from visiting the Church if they are experiencing symptoms, or have recently been in contact with someone who is experiencing symptoms of Coronavirus.



A LETTER FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF VICTORIA

18 March 2020

Prayerful greetings to the people of God across Victoria,

This morning, the Prime Minister announced that non-essential indoor gatherings will be limited to 100 people, and outdoor events of more than 500 people will be disallowed, effective today. Given the seriousness of COVID-19, we support this measure as being responsible and sensible, and we encourage everyone to follow public safety guidelines respectfully.

The Bishops of the Province of Victoria have given this prayerful and considered reflection, and have determined the following actions:

- Immediate suspension of public liturgies, celebrations of the Mass, until further notice.
- All other gatherings are suspended. For clarification of any concerns, please contact your local diocesan authority.

We are very aware that this restriction will be particularly difficult for families who are planning liturgies such as funerals, weddings and baptisms. At this time, so long as appropriate precautions are able to be put in place (such as distancing between participants), it may be possible for these liturgies to proceed with a carefully limited congregation. Deferring these liturgies may also be an option that is offered to families.

In light of this, all Catholics in Victoria are dispensed from their Sunday obligation until further notice (canon 1248). We encourage you to continue active participation in the life of the Church, through activities such as time in personal and family prayer, reflecting on the Scriptures, making a spiritual communion, or participating in a Mass online (<http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand> or <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass> or www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass).

We encourage our priests to continue to celebrate Mass for the spiritual good of God's people, the intentions of the faithful and the alleviation of the present crisis. We assure our people that the Mass is being offered for you in our parishes and that while you are not physically present, you still participate spiritually and that you are close to the hearts of your pastors in the Eucharist.

We urge the clergy to make themselves available to visit individuals, especially those who are unwell and vulnerable. This includes viaticum and all the opportunities for healing through the Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation.

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Again, we encourage you to regularly consult your local websites for further details of local arrangements.

Tomorrow further pastoral guidelines will be shared in the Dioceses of Melbourne, Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst. Clergy and religious should consult with their Ordinary if any questions remain uncertain.

All of this is happening during the Season of Lent, a time of preparation for the Easter mysteries. While we are invited to be self-sacrificial at this time, we must remember the words of Jesus upon appearing before his disciples after his resurrection: Again and again he said 'peace be with you.' (Jn 20:19) Let us not panic, nor be anxious, nor reduce ourselves to caring only for ourselves. This is a time to be sensible, practical, prayerful, and to share Christ's peace with those who are struggling to feel calm and safe.

Thank you for all your patience, prayers and resilience.



Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE



Most Rev Paul Bernard Bird CSsR MA, DD
BISHOP OF BALLARAT



Most Rev Shane Mackinlay
BISHOP OF SANDHURST



Most Rev Patrick Michael O'Regan
BISHOP OF SALE



We proclaim a crucified Christ

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Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne
Guidelines in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic
from 19 March 2020 until further notice

To the people of God in Melbourne,

In these days of increased awareness of the risks associated with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) I implore the faithful to be patient, prayerful and resilient. We fully support the Government's restrictions on social gatherings as being responsible and sensible.

To protect one another, especially the most vulnerable, we have been instructed to be very mindful of personal hygiene, of the careful washing of hands, of regularly cleaning shared surfaces and spaces and of respecting the need for physical distancing.

In Melbourne, as with the Dioceses of Ballarat, Sandhurst and Sale, the following actions were determined on 18 March with respect to Catholic worship:

- Immediate suspension of public liturgies, including celebrations of the Mass, until further notice.
- All other gatherings are suspended. For clarification of any concerns, please be in contact with your Parish Priest or Parish Administrator.

While public celebrations of Mass are suspended, our common work for the Gospel does not cease. In fact, this is a time for us all to re-engage in our mission to share Christ, in thoughtful and appropriate ways, with those in most need.

Please check the Melbourne website for information about Mass online and other helpful information:

www.cam.org.au/coronavirus

The following guidelines apply throughout the Archdiocese of Melbourne:

- all but priests are dispensed from attending Sunday Mass (canon 1248): the faithful can keep holy their Sunday by setting aside some time for prayer at home, reading the Scriptures of the day, watching Mass on television or online, and asking God for the graces they would normally receive in Holy Communion
- priests should celebrate daily Mass without the physical presence of the lay faithful and offer it on behalf of those who cannot attend and for the whole nation
- churches should remain open for private prayer as much as possible
- the Second and Third Rites of Reconciliation should not be used; First Rite of Reconciliation should only be heard through a protective screen (made of plastic or similar) i.e. no direct face-to-face reconciliation other than the sick in hospital or in their home.
- other instructions will be issued to clergy regarding Baptisms of several children, the RCIA and the various rites of the Triduum.
- as far as possible, churches should remain open to allow private prayer; the Blessed Sacrament might be exposed in the monstrance for this purpose (as long as fewer than 100 are attending and with the usual provisions for reverence and security of the Sacrament)
- on days when this is liturgically permitted (see Ordo pp. 10-11), priests should offer the Mass for the Sick, the Mass for Any Need or a votive Mass such as that of Our Lady of Lourdes or St Joseph
- Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals may be celebrated if necessary, restricted to immediate family (and small bridal parties etc.); baptisms and weddings can, of course, be postponed
- preparation for and celebration of First Confession, First Communion and Confirmation for children should be postponed until the pandemic is over
- all ministers should follow precautions recommended by health authorities when visiting people's homes, aged care facilities, hospitals, prisons and detention centres

Priests will abide by all civil restrictions while seeking to be as pastorally available as possible.

These directives will be reviewed as required.

Given on 19 March 2020, the Feast of St Joseph.

St Joseph, Protector of the Church, *pray for us.*

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter A. Comensoli', with a small cross symbol to the left of the first letter.

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

An update from Father Pearce

Written by: Fr Nicholas Pearce

Dear Friends.

After DFAT upgraded their travel advice this week and encouraged all Australians who were able to return home to do so, I decided to heed this warning and returned to Australia on Thursday morning. I am now in mandatory quarantine for the next 14 days, a time in which provides me plenty of opportunities to pray for each one of you, in particular as it coincides with the cancellation of public Masses across the Archdiocese. Please be assured that as I offer my Mass each day in isolation, I do so for each one of you and your intentions at this time.

It is my intention to complete my time of sabbatical here in Australia, finishing my Masters, and returning to the Parish as intended in the first weeks of May. I am so grateful for the hard work and commitment of Fr Michael Morgan and the Parish Staff, in particular during these challenging times, that allows me to complete this important study.

Please keep an eye out on each other, and stay connected.

Fr Pearce
Parish Priest

Staying Connected

Written by: Holy Family Parish

It will be incredibly important over the coming weeks that as a Parish community we keep an eye out for each other, and make an extra effort to stay in touch. In a particular way, we ask Parishioners to proactively reach out to those you would normally sit near at Sunday Mass, a simple phone call will suffice. While safety requires physical separation at this time, let us ensure that no member of our community is socially isolated. In addition to this Parishioners are encouraged to:

- Regularly check our Parish website for up to date information: holyfamily.melbourne/covid-19
- Sign up online for our regular e-newsletter that will be full of information and interesting articles.
- Do not hesitate to reach out to the Parish if you are feeling isolated, alone, or in need of assistance during this time.

Let's keep in touch

9807 9494 | holyfamily.melbourne. | mountwaverley@cam.org.au

