



# St Mary's Cathedral Parish

PO Box 183

SALE, VIC. 3853

Email: [Sale@cdsale.org.au](mailto:Sale@cdsale.org.au)

Phone: 03 5144 4100

20 March 2020

Dear Parishioners

## **Given the seriousness of COVID-19**

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](http://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

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

Contact your local priests, Dean Peter and Fr Edwin, anytime for pastoral visits concerning the sick or requests for communion and anointing. Dean Peter's mobile number is 0408 517 073 and Fr Edwin's mobile number is 0469 733 929 or the Parish Secretary, Clare O'Brien on 5144 4100.

Let us pray for each other in this uncertain time.

Dean Peter encourages you to make daily reference to the Parish website <http://www.stmaryscathedralsale.com.au/> for the Sunday Gospel's, prayer reflections and for ongoing parish news.

With prayerful good wishes to all  
Dean Peter