

07 April 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to another weekly newsletter. I hope this finds you all well and rested. We are certainly in this situation, it seems, for the next few months at least – apart from GOD, nobody is sure how long.

I encourage you to continue to pray daily for our Bishops – Peter, Sonia and Charlie as they lead us through these un-charted waters. The situation as we are all aware, is continually evolving. Please continue to pray also for our political leaders as they do their work as well – through governments at every level.

An email from Bishop Peter on Tuesday morning has informed us that the live-streaming of services must continue to happen from the Rectory.

We will use our church buildings when clergy and laity can join together for worship Clergy to stream worship from their homes during Holy Week and Easter

Below is the Bishop's letter:

Dear brothers and sisters

It has been a truly extraordinary effort for churches to be streaming worship, prayers and teaching through a variety of platforms from homes across the Diocese. There have been profound offerings of pastoral care via a range of audio and visual platforms. It has been moving to hear so many stories of ministry and mission in these complex times.

I am sure, that like me, that when clergy are recording there are moments of stress when the uploads seem slow or the microphone records differently or the dog barks. We have seen a variety of production values depending on the equipment and resourcefulness of people. Undergirding each has been a powerful desire to proclaim the good news and minister to God's people.

There is a very real sense that the prayer and liturgical life of the Diocese is being sustained in people's homes during this time when we cannot be together in church buildings. Thank you for all that you are doing.

With you, I grieve not being able to meet as an assembly of Christians gathered to offer praise, to hear God's word, to pray and to experience his means of grace.

I am convinced that there is something very significant for those leading ministry to be at one with the people of God who are expected to remain in their homes.

The weight of that public health order remains in place. We have experienced a positive COVID19 test in one of our nursing homes. There are two coronavirus testing centres in our diocese as the government seeks to assess community transmission.

My approach is that we should use our church buildings when clergy and lay people can gather together for services. Accordingly, clergy are asked to stream services for Holy Week and Easter from their homes rather than from church buildings.

Grace and peace,

+Peter

Our live-streaming through Facebook-Live of Morning Prayer at 8am and Evening Prayer at 5pm and Mass on Sunday morning at 8am has had a wonderful impact and seems to be a blessing for those who are able to tune-in. Our services this weekend are as follows:

Maundy Thursday: 7pm; Good Friday: 10am; and Stations of the Cross: 11:30am.

Easter Day: 8am Thank you to all who tune in each day. If you do have internet access but are not on Facebook, you are still able to join us for by clicking on the appropriate link on the main page of our website. The address of our website is:

<http://www.stjohnsraymondterrace.org/>

Scroll down the page and just below the 5 buttons

Baptism Marriage Funeral Map Contact

there will be some boxes – one called **DAILY Morning and Evening Prayer**

and one called **SUNDAY SERVICE WILL NOW BE BROADCAST ONLINE**

Within these boxes there is a link to our Parish Facebook page where our services of Morning and Evening Prayer are broadcast LIVE each day and Mass on Sunday morning.

I am trying to keep our website as up to date as possible. This letter is published in our pew sheet and on our website – just click on CHURCH and then on NEWS.

Thank you for your continued messages of love and support. I think that GOD is giving us an opportunity here to consider and possibly change the way we do church. It will always be important for us to meet as a face-to-face community when the current restrictions are removed. But this time of enforced social and physical isolation will allow us to explore other ways of communicating with each other. On Monday, I had a video meeting with Bishop Sonia using computer software called “Microsoft Teams”. On Wednesday afternoon, I had a “Zoom” meeting with approximately 15 other clergy and Bishop Peter. These styles of meeting allow us to stay in our own homes but still do things and participate in things where all were previously required to gather in one meeting place.

We celebrate this weekend the pinnacle of the Christian year – Easter. I am thankful to GOD that we have been able to journey together – with Him and with each other – during this much different experience of Lent. The Diocesan Lenten Study book has been a wonderful journey in itself. The wealth of discipleship and knowledge throughout our Diocese is simply encouraging. Perhaps our concept of Fasting has taken on a different meaning. Perhaps we have come to realise how blessed we really are in this community and in Australia. We need to learn to fear and to trust GOD in everything we do and say. Unfortunately, it seems many people fear running out of toilet paper more than they fear GOD. I receive daily updates from a colleague in Kenya who, each day, tells me of the daily breakdown of the fabric of society around Nairobi – the capital – because of the necessary restrictions in place because of COVID-19. I would encourage you to pray for these people and all our brothers and sisters throughout the world.

It is important that we all continue to support the Church through our giving. If you have internet access, you might like to consider making a direct deposit into our parish account. Thank you to those who already use this method. The parish account details are as follows: BSB 705-077 and the Account Number is 00041040 – and our account is with the Anglican Savings and Development Fund. If you don't have internet access or prefer not to give electronically, give our Treasurer Edith a call and she can work with you on the best way to do this.

If you would prefer to make a **DONATION**, it may be done as follows:

At the top of the webpage there are 7 headings – the first of which is Church. If you click on Church, another menu appears. The 7th topic on this menu is DONATE. If you click on that, there are some steps to follow on that page in order to donate.

Please continue to Pray, continue to care for each other, stay safe and Stay at Home – and only go out if you absolutely must. Don't forget the parish phone number is 0401 061 789 if you would like to call.

May you all have a holy, happy and blessed Easter – with our love
Fr Steve and Marea