

Bellerive - Lindisfarne Catholic Parish

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Dear Parish Family,

Today would have been our first Parish Palm Sunday Pilgrimage... the second pillar in our pastoral plan for 2020. Building on the success of the community picnic, we were going to be giving public witness to our faith as we marked the beginning of Holy Week. This is far from the most significant thing we have lost as a community in recent weeks, but I note it nonetheless, as it is only three weeks ago that we had a meeting with Tasmania Police to assist in the safe planning of the event. So much has happened to change our world in those three weeks!

Everyone responds differently in a crisis. I have observed around our community that some have adapted quickly to the new way of being in society, and have even found many positives in the experience of isolation or social distancing. Others are struggling with the sense of loss as their worlds shrink and levels of social contact dry up. There is a light-hearted comment to the effect that introverts have been preparing for this moment for their entire lives, while extroverts will find these next few months extremely challenging. Let us aim to grow in our understanding of ourselves and others through this experience.

In my video message to the school students this week I reflected on the experience we are sharing in the light of the Passion of Jesus. During this Holy Week we meditate on the story of the Passion, and we hear again how Jesus was betrayed, denied and deserted by his friends, and even seemingly by God as well. He was utterly alone. What gave him the strength to stay the course? Where did he find the focus to remain true to himself and what he understood to be his mission? I believe it was simply from the deeply held belief that what he was enduring had meaning beyond the present situation, beyond his present suffering. Indeed, we now know with the light of the Resurrection that this was true, and in ways we like the disciples of the time could never have imagined possible.

We too, must constantly remind ourselves during this period of community lockdown that there is an ultimate good that is being served. In our moments of frustration, loneliness and even boredom, let us remind ourselves that we are doing this, we are enduring this suffering so that others may live. In this way, we transform our suffering into an act of love and service to the community. We may never meet the people who benefit from our suffering, nor may they ever acknowledge or thank us for our effort, but that experience may not be unfamiliar to Jesus either!

This newsletter lists the times of all our Easter services in the parish. They will all be live-streamed on our Parish Facebook page (@belleriveparish). Please join us, especially for the Easter ceremonies. May your Easter celebrations, so different from your usual ways of marking this great festival, be a deeper experience of love and service than ever before as we pray for the strength and resolve we need to stay the course.

Fr Richard

HOLY WEEK Livestream on Facebook@belleriveparish

Sunday 5th April	9am	Palm Sunday Mass
Tuesday 7th April	7pm	Reconciliation Service
Holy Thursday 9th April	7pm	Lord's Supper
Good Friday 10th April	10am	Stations of the Cross
	3pm	Commemoration of the Passion
Holy Saturday 11th April	7pm	Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday 12th April	9am	Easter Sunday Mass