

Bellerive - Lindisfarne Catholic Parish

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Fr Fidelis Udousoro

Dear Parish Family,

In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Archbishop has decreed that no public Masses will be celebrated in Tasmania until further notice. This is unprecedented and deeply disturbing on many levels. However, the decision has been made in order to protect the lives of the elderly and the vulnerable. If we can slow the spread of this virus then our health system will cope and those who are sick will get the treatment they need. If not, our health system could be overwhelmed with potentially catastrophic consequences.

It is unclear how long this emergency situation will continue. It feels surreal that the very thing we instinctively want to do (gather together and draw strength from each other and our God) is the very thing we are not able to do. As feelings of isolation and disconnection take hold it is important that we all remain calm, follow the advice of the medical experts and keep in touch with relatives, friends, neighbours and especially elderly and isolated people. Pick up the phone and check in regularly. Similarly with our prayer. While nothing comes close to the celebration of Eucharist, we can remain connected to the Lord through personal prayer. Let us allow this period of absence from Eucharist deepen our hunger for the Bread of Life.

In the meantime, in Bellerive-Lindisfarne Parish the following will be offered in order to maintain a sense of connection:

- ☑ Corpus Christi Church will be open for prayer as often as possible.
- ☑ The Blessed Sacrament Chapel at Corpus Christi Church will be open 24 hours a day (Entry via door on Alma Street side of the church nearest Cambridge Road.)
- ☑ Mass with our local priests will be live-streamed on the parish Facebook page (@belleriveparish) at 9.00am every Sunday.
- ☑ Fr Fidelis and I will be available to respond to calls to the sick and dying as needed.
- ☑ Baptisms, weddings and funerals will continue in accordance with the

limitations imposed in the Archbishop's letter.

☑ We will continue to produce a weekly Parish Newsletter, including the Sunday Mass readings along with notices, messages and prayer requests. These will be available on-line through Facebook (@belleriveparish), the Parish website (www.cdtas.org.au/bellerive) with hard copies in the foyer of Corpus Christi Church from Friday lunchtime each week.

☑ The Archdiocese will produce some resources to assist in your personal prayer and reflection.

☑ I will communicate any plans for marking Holy Thursday and Good Friday in due course.

Please also be aware that without the weekly collection parish finances will take a hit, while the expenses associated with running the parish will continue. Arrangements can be made for direct debit if you contact the Parish Office or use Electronic Funds Transfer through Catholic Development Fund Account Number 10315679 BSB 067-000 or envelopes could simply be dropped through the letterbox at the Parish Office door (not the roadside letterbox!) Thank you.

We have witnessed some selfish behaviour in response to this crisis, and I understand that this is a result of fear and uncertainty. Might I suggest that we would do better to look after each other, look out for others in need and trust that others will support us should that need eventuate. Let's draw our inspiration from the community response to others crises such as bushfires, where we all pull together to look after one another. Let us pray for those who are sick as a result of this virus, and especially those who have lost their lives in this pandemic. Let us pray for the doctors, nurses and other health care professionals in the front lines of treating this illness. Let us pray for the research scientists working on a vaccine. Let us pray for staff and residents in aged care facilities, and all who are feeling vulnerable at this time. Let us pray for each other and our entire Tasmanian community. In the words of this weekend's Psalm: *The Lord is my shepherd... if I should walk in the valley of darkness, no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort.*

Fr Richard Ross

Next week's Readings: 1 Sam 16:1,6-7, 10-13; Eph 5: 8-14; Jn 9:8-