

Bellerive - Lindisfarne Catholic Parish

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Fr Fidelis Udousoro

Dear Parish Family,

In these troubling times, it is the lonely and isolated members of our community who I am most mindful of. As one commentator suggested, their isolation is now their best friend, as it will protect them from exposure to the Coronavirus. However, I feel it is important that we reach out safely to these members of our community who live alone, most especially in these days of uncertainty.

I will attempt to create a list of contact phone numbers of any isolated parishioners who may benefit from a phone call and even some on-going contact and support from our wider community. If you know of someone in such a position, please make it known to me as soon as possible. Similarly, if you are in a position to provide this kind of support to another member of the community, then please email or call the parish office. All you will be asked to do is occasionally ring the person assigned to you... they may require assistance such as groceries or medicine being delivered, or just a friendly chat or a card dropped off at their home letting them know they are remembered. You do not even have to be the person who does the running around, just the point of contact who establishes a relationship with them and makes known their need for support. Of course I realise many such gestures are already taking place throughout our community, and if you have a friend in an isolated situation, then do what any friend would do, but one or two extra calls is better than someone being overlooked altogether.

This is going to be a marathon, not a sprint, and we all need to pace ourselves for the long haul ahead. It is important to stay informed but not to be overexposed or the mental and emotional exhaustion levels become unmanageable. Remember to take a break from all forms of media occasionally, and reconnect with your own reality. Go for a walk, stand in a garden, breathe deeply. To assist with this, I have included in this newsletter an adapted form of the Ignatian Awareness Examen which may prove useful. I commend it to you. Our community needs to gather in prayer as best we can in the months ahead. Our Parish Sunday Mass will continue to be live-streamed on Facebook (@belleriveparish) and we are establishing a "Resources" page on our Parish Website (www.cdtas.org.au/bellerive) with other useful links and spiritual resources. We will publicise new content as it is loaded, so keep an eye out for that.

The Gospel this weekend is about the death of Lazarus. His two sisters, Martha and Mary both approach Jesus with the same accusation: "If you had been here my brother would not have died". We too can feel abandoned and let down during difficult periods of our lives, and we cry out to God for his comfort, his presence and his healing power, yet sometimes it seems that God is slow to respond or deaf to our cries. We ponder the response of Jesus to the two sisters: to Martha he gives a theological answer: "I am the Resurrection"; to Mary he gives a heartfelt emotional response: "Jesus wept". The Lord is with us in our pain and sorrow, and he is beyond us as our hope and strength. Thanks be to God. I will reflect more on this in my homily on Sunday morning.

Fr Richard Ross

Next week's Readings: Is 50:4-7; Phil 2:6-11; Mt 26:14-27:66

Awareness Examen of St Ignatius during Covid-19

- Step One: Acknowledge how you are feeling in this moment.
If being calm is hard, acknowledge it.
If you find yourself frustrated or stressed, acknowledge it.
God wants to be present in all parts of our lives, not just the easy or serene moments.
- Step Two: Ask for light or insight as you prepare to review your day.
For some that light may come in the form of a sense of the Divine.
For others it's from a deep sense of your true self.
- Step Three: Take a moment to think about how Covid-19 has affected your life.
Even as we are being asked to distance ourselves from one another socially, ask yourself what connections you find yourself grateful for.
Who, or what, makes you feel grounded or connected to God?
- Step Four: Public health issues have a way of making us recognise how interwoven our lives are with others in society.
What connections to others are you becoming more aware of?
Who do you usually choose to reach out and connect to?
Is there someone new, different or unexpected who you have become more aware of?
If you can, picture the faces of these people.
What connections do you take for granted in your life?
What connections impact you the most?
- Step Five: Note the emotions you feel when you think about these individuals without judging or overanalysing. Simply acknowledge them, pay attention and listen to where God may be speaking.
- Step Six: As you think of the ways we are connected or disconnected to each other, pick a connection (or lack thereof) that seems important, significant or is manifesting itself the strongest.
Pause and reflect on where you are being asked to grow from that moment.
Take a moment to pray with this.
- Step Seven: God gifted us with limitless creativity and imagination. Even in this time of separation and possible isolation, what is one way you can maintain meaningful connection to others – whether directly, through technology or intentional focus and attention?
- Step Eight: Take a deep breath and a moment of quiet.
When you are ready, return to your day.

HOLY WEEK Livestream on Facebook@belleriveparish

Friday 3rd April	7pm	Stations of the Cross
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