



Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Parish, Rosemeadow

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My Dear Parishioners,

Once again I write to you to keep in contact with you, as well as to inform you of the latest developments as they affect the Parish.

As you are aware the current lockdown including for the Greater Sydney Area will now be extended until midnight Friday 30 July 2021. This may also be further extended. Additional restrictions within this period have now been announced which include the pausing of all construction and the closing of all offices except where it is impossible to do so.

This has meant that remedial work on the church cupola has had to be stopped. All the external windows on the cupola stained glass windows, as well as re-cladding the entire cupola was progressing well and would have only required one more week to complete. Unfortunately, this has had to stop or we would have risked a \$10,000-00 fine.

I have also had no choice but to close the Parish Office until the current restrictions are lifted or eased. Mrs. Meshline Wolczak will continue to work from home via a secure laptop computer and will come to the office when necessary to undertake work that cannot be done from home. You may still contact the parish office by telephone or email, and we will attend to your requests as soon as we can. Please be understanding and patient during this difficult time.

It is with great regret and sadness that I have had to make the difficult decision to stand down Mrs. Vicki LoCascio, the parish administrative assistant, and Mrs. Michelle Gardiner, the parish office, presbytery and church cleaner. Due to restrictions on those who can now enter the premises, and especially because of financial constraints on the parish resulting from a loss of approximately 50% income through Planned Giving Envelope contributions in the current lockdown period, and without the Jobkeeper allowance which was previously available, I was left with no choice. Once current restrictions are lifted, and please God, planned giving envelope income resumes from parishioners, I will reinstate them.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the critical and fundamental need for parish income via the Planned Giving contributions to continue. Without this regular and ongoing income, the parish's ability to operate is severely impacted as is obvious from the difficult decision I have had to make. This is why I have been encouraging as many parishioners as possible to transition from envelopes to Direct Debit Giving. You can imagine the impact on your own household budget if your weekly income suddenly stopped; multiply this effect by approximately **10 times**, and you will get a small idea of the impact on the Parish when regular income stops.

Please consider moving from envelopes to direct debit giving. If you wish to do so, email the parish office, or ring and leave a message and we will contact you to arrange this. Thank you. Otherwise, please drop your planned giving envelopes into the secure letter box at the parish office, or at the fence box if the gates are closed. I want to thank those parishioners who have continued to drop their envelopes into the secure letter box during the current lockdown period, and ask others to please do the same. Please don't forget the first collection either- I still have to live even in the lockdown! Again, thank you.

MASSES. I will continue to livestream the **SATURDAY 6 PM VIGIL MASS AND TUESDAY 6.30 PM weekday Mass.** The direct link to the parish YouTube channel is: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UClQhkeubtYCBu_elfcglmaw or by accessing it from the Parish Website. Please pass this information on to any other parishioner you are in contact with.

FUNERALS are still permitted but with a cap of 10 people attending, excluding the Priest and funeral directors.

BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS are all suspended until current restrictions are lifted.

I will continue to keep in contact by email and the Parish Website as further changes and updates occur. Please let other parishioners know that this information has been received by you via email, and if they have not registered their own email address with the parish office, to please do so by sending an email to us with their details. They will then be able to receive these updates. All updates are also accessible via the parish bulletin which is uploaded every week to the Parish Website.

Let us pray for each other, and the whole community that the current viral situation will be brought rapidly under control.

God bless you all

Father Christopher G Sarkis
Parish Priest.