



*Our Lady Help of Christians Catholic Parish, Rosemeadow*

80 Demetrius Road, Rosemeadow NSW 2560

PO Box 3010, Rosemeadow NSW 2560

Ph: (02) 4628 1385 & Fax: (02) 4625 7213

Email: [rosemeadow@dow.org.au](mailto:rosemeadow@dow.org.au)

Website: [olhcrosemeadow.org.au](http://olhcrosemeadow.org.au)

23 February 2022

My Dear Parishioners,

Greetings and the Peace of Christ be with you.

I write to update you on the latest changes to the covid protocols and what this means for us and our Parish.

Following recent changes, the following now applies:

- QR check-in is **no longer required** when entering the church
- Face masks are **optional**
- **No limit** on the number of people in attendance
- **Church Open** during the day (*except Monday*) for private prayer
- Please continue to **use hand sanitiser** when entering the church
- Congregational singing is permitted. *Please note: singing at Masses will re-commence after Easter.*
- After Mass, please use a disinfectant wipe to rub over surfaces you have come in contact with and place them in the bins provided as you leave. *Please wait until the priest has left the Sanctuary before doing this. Thank you.*

The removal of virtually all restrictions means that we can return, by and large, to our normal way of life. This is a great blessing after the restrictions and prohibitions of the last two years. We are still facing challenges ahead as we all learn to “live with the covid virus”, and I ask that all of us observe vigilance and common-sense practises as we return to our normal lives. I especially ask all parishioners to be conscious and respectful of those who, due to their circumstances, health, or age, may be more vulnerable to the effects of the virus in harsher ways than we may be. *This is the reason why I am asking that we continue to use hand sanitiser when entering the church, and to wipe down seats when leaving.* This is a very small inconvenience in being mindful and caring not only about our own health, but of those who may be more vulnerable than ourselves.

The easing of restrictions also enables us to return to devotions that we have not been able to have during this time. Therefore:

- First Friday Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will recommence this first Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March from 11am to 12 noon, and every First Friday thereafter.
- Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament before the 9am Wednesday morning Mass will recommence on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, and every Wednesday thereafter.

I take this opportunity of also reminding you of the following matters:

- **Silence in the Church.** Now that check-in is no longer required and the associated conversations needed in administering this no longer apply, I ask that we resume the venerable practise of maintaining silence inside the church please. We need to re-capture the sense of reverence and prayerful recollection within the church. Conversation and interaction can occur before entering to enable those within to quietly pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Thank you.
- **Ash Wednesday.** Lent begins with Ash Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. Masses in the parish at which blessed ashes will be distributed will be celebrated at **9am** and **7.00pm**. (*Note: NOT 7.30*)
- **Church Anniversary.** Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> March is the 3<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the consecration of the church. I shall celebrate the Mass of consecration for the “Anniversary of a church building” at the usual 6.30pm Mass. *There will also be an hour of Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament from 5.15 – 6.15pm before Mass.*
- **Lenten Penance.** On Ash Wednesday and Good Friday all who have completed their 18th year and have not yet begun their 60th year are bound to **fast**. All who have completed their 14th year are bound

to **abstain from meat**. Pastors, teachers, parents are to ensure that even those who, by reason of their age, are not bound by the law of fasting and abstinence from meat, are taught the true meaning of penance.

- **Paschal Precept**. Each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This is to be done between Ash Wednesday (2 March) and Trinity Sunday (12 June) unless for a good reason it is done at another time during the year. All the faithful are obliged to confess their grave sins at least once a year.

It has been a long and difficult road for all of us these last couple of years. I am very conscious of the stresses and anxieties that have been experienced by individuals and families during this time. It is my very sincere and heartfelt prayer that we can now begin to return to the living of our normal daily lives in freedom and gratitude for the countless blessings we experience, and which, sadly, are not by so many others elsewhere. Let us especially express this in action through our rededication and recommitment to our precious Catholic Faith and its practise in our lives, especially through daily prayer, Mass and the reception of the Holy Sacraments.

I also want to truly thank you for your solid support to the Parish and myself personally throughout this time, including through your financial support that has enabled us to survive, and which I am sure you will continue.

May St. Joseph and Our Lady Help of Christians protect and watch over you.

God bless you all

Father Christopher G Sarkis  
Parish Priest.