

St. Nicholas of Myra Catholic Parish

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Thursday 19th March 2020

Dear Parishioners,

RE: ST NICHOLAS OF MYRA COVID-19 RESPONSE FOR THE NEXT FIVE DAYS

The situation around the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) seems to change by the hour in respect to government and public health advice.

Given that non-essential gatherings of people more than 100 have been directed, as of yesterday, by the Federal Government not to take place and on the advice of the Permanent Committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv with the Diocesan Curia today have made determinations at the discretion of the Parish Priest, which will apply from this weekend and will be reviewed next week pending further advice from the Diocese, government and public health officials.

FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT FOR THIS WEEKEND ONLY 21/22 MARCH 2020

All parishioners should be aware that Catholics from the Diocese of Parramatta are from 20 March 2020 dispensed from their Sunday Mass obligation until further notice (Canon 1248 §2 and Catechism 2181.)

Our regular Sunday Mass attendance is well below 500 but more than 100. Therefore, the following decisions have been made through consultation with parishioners, for the Spiritual needs of the Faithful of the Penrith Parish Community. These will be updated on Monday 23rd March 2020.

Those who still wish to participate in the Eucharistic celebrations, should be advised of the following directions.

- If you are experiencing symptoms of the cold, cough or flu, you must not join the congregation for Mass.
- If you have travelled overseas in the past 14 days, you must not join the congregation for Mass.
- If you have been in contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19, you must not join the congregation for Mass.
- All regular weekend Masses (below) will take place outdoors in the School Grounds of St Nicholas of Myra Primary, irrespective of the weather. Parking as normal.
- There will be a head count at the entrance to ensure the outdoor policy of essential gatherings are followed.

- The outdoor Masses are to be celebrated without music, and with a shortened homily. The Mass duration will be 30 – 40 minutes.
- Worshippers are asked to maintain a distance from each other during Mass.
- There will be limited seating, reserved for those in need, in accordance with the social distancing policy.
- Restrooms are in the Parish Hall and near the main church.

**ALL MASS TIMES THIS WEEKEND ARE OUTDOORS
AT ST NICHOLAS OF MYRA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Sat Vigil 6pm

Sunday 7am, 8.30am, 10am & 6pm

FOR IMMEDIATE WEEKDAY MASSES

FRI 20th MARCH 2020; 6.45AM & 12.10PM

SAT 21st MARCH 2020; 9AM & HOLY HOUR

MON 23rd MARCH 2020; 9.30AM

- Masses will take place in the main Sanctuary at the Church at normal times
 - If you are experiencing symptoms of the cold, cough, flu or fatigue, you must not join the congregation for Mass.
 - If you have travelled overseas in the past 14 days, you must not join the congregation for Mass.
 - If you have been in contact with a confirmed case of Covid-19, you must not join the congregation for Mass.
- A head count will take place at the Car park entrance, to ensure that the government regulations for indoors are followed.
- Please ensure that personal hygiene is practiced.
- Worshippers are asked to maintain a distance from each other during Mass.
- The main Church will be available for personal prayer and meditation, as normal. If you do use the church for prayer, please maintain a safe distance from other worshippers.

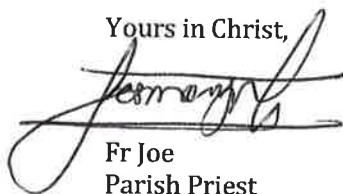
SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE USUAL TIMES & PLACE

Other than the above, all other Parish activities are cancelled until further notice.

As Very Rev Peter G. Williams (Vicar General & Moderator of the Curia) has said.

'We are in unprecedented times and we have a duty and responsibility to continue the pastoral care of our people as best we can given the restrictions. Let us pray that all of us would be strengthened for the task ahead and relying on the intercession of Our Lady of Lourdes, St Joseph and all the Saints we might persevere in carrying the Cross at this time.'

Yours in Christ,


Fr Joe
Parish Priest

