

**To the parishioners of:
Holy Trinity Parish, Bryndwr
St Joseph's Parish, Papanui
Christ the King Parish, Burnside**

24 March 2020

Dear parishioners,

I write to you on behalf of myself, Fr Kevin, Fr Edwin, and Fr Alister. There is no doubt that you will be missing Mass and the comfort, strength and healing it brings.

Please keep safe and look out for each other in any way we can during this unprecedented time as we do our best to protect against the Covid-19 Virus.

In last Sunday's readings in Psalm 23, the well known Good Shepherd psalm, we read:

*If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort.*

I encourage you to cling to Jesus, the Good Shepherd, as we go through this anxious time. Our Lord is calling us to deepen our trust in him, to pray, and encourage each other with that same faith. Fr Edwin had a lovely acronym for the word FAITH during a homily.

FAITH - ***Forsaking All I Trust Him.***

I remind you that this is a great opportunity to spend some time in prayer.

We will try to get this letter out to you in as many ways as possible - email, Facebook, parish websites, school websites, a personal message on YouTube, and paper form in two of our churches.

Masses

Your priests are celebrating Mass each day and keeping all of you in our prayers.

The diocese is providing a live streamed Mass each day; on Sundays 10am celebrated by the Bishop; and weekdays at 9am. These Masses can be found on the diocesan YouTube channel.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbDyKPjjDeYWfpoz_hSDLfw

Other resources are also available on the diocesan website.

<https://chchcatholic.nz/covid-19-resources/>

You may also find helpful Fr John O'Connor's blog '*Food For Faith*' <https://foodforfaith.org.nz/2020/03/rethinking-lent/> and also Bishop Robert Barron's Global Media Ministry '*Word on Fire*' <https://www.wordonfire.org/dailymass/>

You may like to establish at home a small sacred space, or altar, to promote private devotion and prayer. And I have also attached a prayer resource from the diocese you could use.

On Friday the bishop sent out a pastoral letter which I have attached to this parish letter.

Checking up on others

If you are in one of the groups or ministries in one of our three parishes please remember to keep in touch with fellow members by telephone.

We have begun to telephone parishioners across the three parishes to see how people are, and if there is anything we can do to help. If you would like to be on a team that telephones parishioners please let us know by contacting your parish secretary via telephone and email as they will be checking these modes of communication regularly.

**Wilma Vertogen (St Joseph's Parish): Ph 03 352 9275 or 027 202 5950;
pap.bish.rc@xtra.co.nz**

**Jennine Baines (Holy Trinity Parish): Ph 03 351 5795 or 027 471 0245;
holytrinitybryndwr@gmail.com**

**Melonie de Roo (Christ the King Parish): Ph 03 358 2611 or 021 334 683;
ctk.parish@xtra.co.nz**

Fr Rick Loughnan: Ph 021 223 0680 or 03 359 0444

Sacraments & Sacramental Programmes

The preparation for 1st Holy Communion has been paused in all three parishes but the confirmation programme for Holy Trinity and Christ the King may continue online, because of the small numbers.

Baptisms and reconciliations are suspended, but if you would like reconciliation please contact a priest via phone.

Regarding the celebrations of funerals, we are still to be advised what the funeral directors and government outline. We will keep you informed on this matter.

Alert Level 4

From Monday 23 March the government has moved to Level 3 and will move to Level 4 from Wednesday 25 March Midnight.

From midnight of Monday 23 March all our Churches are shut.

Level 4 means no one is able to visit others. Please ring the priests if a family member is in danger of death.

Support

I am particularly concerned about people who have suffered job loss or serious loss of income. It may be that I can arrange some help or someone to advise you. Please please me directly.

Some of you will not be able to contribute your usual amount financially to your parish at this time. You must not worry about this. However, some may be able to continue their contribution. If you are on the planned giving and are able to continue to support your parish, please do. If you are one of our wonderful cash givers and are able to continue supporting your parish you might consider setting up an automatic payment.

The parish secretary can advise you here with the account number.

Pentecost and the Amalgamation of the Christchurch North Catholic Parish

On the Feast of Pentecost we will become one new North Parish, however the timeline for things to be put in place, both before and after this date, is now not so clear. We have been doing some good work bringing together the three parish councils, finance committees, secretarial and pastoral staff. Each member of this group took part in a spiritual gifting programme.

Fr Alister and I presented a draft of a vision and mission statements for the new parish. These were developed from Bishop Paul's vision and the plan he confirmed across the diocese in December last year. We are working on the new administrative and pastoral roles in the new parish and have made some headway. We will continue to plan the way ahead and be ready, when it is safe again, for a three parish wide gathering to look together at the needs of the new parish. Currently we are looking at employing a project manager for a few months to ensure a smooth transition.

Please keep this in your prayers and look out for any further communications.

Let us do all we can to work together trusting in the grace of the Lord and bringing him all our fears and struggles.

God bless,

Fr Rick Loughnan - ***Parish Priest***