

Dear Parishioners of St. Cath's,

We are experiencing the sadness and anxiety of dealing with the Coronavirus in our own country. As Catholics, we cannot say that God wouldn't let it happen to us when in Italy two Nuns and six Priests have died, and two Bishops have tested positive.

At St. Cath's we need to be cautious and take necessary precautions. In line with this, I encourage parishioners who may be more susceptible because of age or poor health to stay at home and watch the Mass on TV, or to pray or reflect on the scripture readings. Staying at home will fulfil your Sunday obligation.

Another option is to attend a week-day Mass (Monday to Friday 9.15 am or Saturday 9 am) when fewer people will be present, or visit during the day to pray privately. For the near future, I will celebrate a 7 pm Mass on Wednesdays to help you get to Mass in lieu of attending Sunday Mass.

Wearing of masks and bringing your own personal hand sanitiser at Mass is also a good practice. The door handles and collection plates have been sanitised, and next week there will be alcohol sprays at each entrance of the church (they have been ordered so let's hope they arrive).

As far as possible, I will take Communion and anoint those who are sick at home. Also, if anyone is struggling for food for themselves or their families, please contact me at the Presbytery - 9525 9993.

This pandemic should bring out the best in the human family. Behaviour at some supermarkets, however, has been the opposite. As a parish, we will continue to have the Church building as our spiritual home. Every possible effort is being made to limit the spread of this virus but individually we must make the effort. With you, I pray that all parishioners will be spared from this destructive and life threatening virus. Pray to our Lady of Lourdes to protect us, and those we love. In so doing, also pray for your fellow parishioners.

Please keep up your spiritual life even with this terrible distraction. Keep the Faith but look at how you can do this given the advice of the Senior Medical Officer. If you have symptoms contact your doctor ASAP and don't just say it's the sniffles or a passing temperature. Masses in the Church will be kept as short as possible, with an adapted liturgy, while maintaining due reverence.

I am really concerned about each of you and I pray for your continuing good health. May our Lord and His mother, our Lady of Lourdes (Patroness of the Sick), care for and protect us in the months ahead.

Mons.

"With increasing measures being taken to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, we would like to inform all parishioners, specifically the elderly, of some of the strategies and services provided during this difficult period in time. For our elderly parishioners worried about crowded shopping centres and grocery shopping, both Woolworths and Coles are opening their stores exclusively for the elderly and vulnerable Monday to Friday inclusive between 7 – 8 am each morning. Meals on Wheels and FoodBank are also providing additional services by delivering toilet paper, tissues and pantry staples to the elderly. (NOTE: subject to change) Elderly and vulnerable parishioners can also register for Priority Assistance to access delivery services from Woolworths to pay and receive groceries without leaving the house. More details are available at the Woolworths' website or by calling 1800 000 610. The parish also asks that all parishioners continue to regularly hand wash with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, practice social distancing, and to stay at home if you or a family member presents with any symptoms. Mons would also like to reiterate that he is willing and able to visit any parishioner who wishes to receive the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick or Communion."

Best Regards,
Timothy Fong
(Pastoral Council Member)