



ST PAUL'S

ST CLARE'S

Bulletin Highlights

Third Sunday of Lent - Year A

15 March 2020

PASTORAL STATEMENT BY BISHOP BRIAN MASCORD
Temporary Mass changes as a result of the increasing risk of coronavirus

My Sisters and Brothers in Christ

As you are aware, the spread of coronavirus, COVID-19, continues to present challenges to health authorities around the world, including here in Australia. As a result of the increased spread of coronavirus and what we know about its transmission, many dioceses around the world and closer to home have temporarily altered certain practices in the Mass to ensure the health and safety of parishioners. With this precedent—and with the wellbeing of all parishioners of our diocese in mind—I am issuing the following directives to all clergy, religious and the lay faithful in the Diocese of Wollongong:

- In those parishes and communities in the diocese where holy Communion is distributed under both kinds, this practice will cease. Communion of the Precious Blood will be for the celebrant only.
- Given that one of the easiest ways to transmit a virus is by the transmission of saliva, Communion will be received only in the hand.
- Clergy and parishioners are not to shake hands during the sign of peace, but should acknowledge each other at the exchange with the words, “Peace be with you.”
- All ministers of Holy Communion (both ordinary and extraordinary) are to use hand sanitisers before the distribution of Holy Communion commences, and are not to physically touch anyone in the act of blessing.
- Holy water fonts are to be emptied or removed.

These directives are informed by the latest advice from the Australian Government Department of Health which states that everyone should practice good hygiene to protect against coronavirus infection, including “avoiding close contact with others, such as touching”. These directives will remain in place until the need for them ceases. We are closely monitoring the situation and will provide further advice as necessary. In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to monitor local and national health advice, and to practice good hygiene, including washing hands often with soap and water. Please join me in praying for all those who have passed away or been affected by coronavirus; for the women and men working tirelessly to care for those affected; and for the development of a vaccine to keep us all safe.

1 THESS 5:18
FOR ALL THINGS GIVE THANKS

Yours in Christ
Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG



Woman by the Well ~ The love & compassion of Jesus Christ

Sacrament of Penance Programme ~ 2020

Please collect a leaflet after Mass which, after considering the preferences from parents and carers, provides the details of the various ceremonies to which families have been assigned.

The parents and carers who have decided to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance are to be affirmed. At this time for adults, especially, the most important qualities are to have a deep humility of heart and an attitude of gratitude. The humble words of St Peter come to mind *“Leave me Lord for I am a sinful man”*. Far from leaving Peter, Jesus assigned him with great responsibilities.

One great spiritual author has written *“When we come before the altar of God, we come as beggars with nothing to offer except our human need”*. This beautifully worded insight describes with deep penetration the relationship between the human and divine. Mementos of the First Confession will be distributed to the children at Masses next weekend.



Confirmation Programme 2020 Camden and The Oaks

Advance notice that the weekend for Confirmations in our two parishes will be 27/28 June. The first weekend for enrolment is 25/26 April. This is the final weekend of school holidays but, presumably, families will have returned no later than Sunday for the recommencement of school the following day. The 25th is, of course, ANZAC Day but there is no extra public holiday. More news after Easter.

Parish Expenditure ~ Lighting

The generous and ongoing financial support of all our parishioners is really needed. Our yearly costs are at least \$200,000 and generally closer to \$250,000. An update will be provided after the meeting of the Parish Finance Committee meeting in two weeks. In the meantime, however, it's worth being aware of other unanticipated expenses. Parishioners may have noticed that two lights in the middle of the church are out. All the lights were fitted about 7 years ago. With two fittings now completely extinguished, the others are likely to follow. So a decision has been taken to replace all the globes. There are actually two globes in each light fitting. Scaffolding will be needed. Who can guess the cost?



Well the total cost amounts to \$7,000 plus GST. The care and maintenance of our church is expensive. So please try to be financially committed and motivated. Better not to think in terms that someone else can take my place. Financial commitment shouldn't be dependent upon how we think funds ought to be spent. And if ever wondering how much is reasonable, Father Michael is happy to advise that he gives \$125/month by direct debit.



Prayer to Mary during coronavirus pandemic

O Mary ,you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm. You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.



Message from Pope Francis for Lent

Lent is a time to remove all distractions and bitterness from one's life to better hear God and those who suffer silently and need help. It is the right time to turn off the television and open the bible. It is a time to disconnect from cellphones and connect ourselves to the Gospel. It's a time to give up useless words, idle chatter, rumours and gossip, and speak intimately with the Lord.



Parish Finance Council

A meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 24 March at 6:30 PM. The only agenda items are to review the parish finances for 2019 and to consider developments with the new church at St Clare's. For the past three years there hasn't been any new spending initiatives so as to allow the maximum amount of funds possible to be directed as savings for St Clare's Church. Big projects take patience and deep resolve. A second meeting has been scheduled for Saturday 4 April at 11:00 AM. Please enter both these dates in your diary. Both meetings are very important.