



For all things give thanks.

1 THESS 5:18

Our Diocesan Implementation of Step One

DIRECTIVES FOR EASING OF COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS

15 MAY 2020

My brothers and sisters

COVID 19 remains present in the community and is highly infectious. We need to continue to act with prudence, calm and hope.

The NSW government has announced today that certain restrictions are being eased. The purpose of today's communication is to direct you as to how we will implement this in our diocese.

Believing it to be the more prudent course of action at this time, and given the limitations on the number of people who could attend and the associated logistics, I have determined that the public celebration of Mass will remain suspended and churches will remain closed. This will be reviewed in two (2) weeks. The previously communicated dispensation of the faithful of the Diocese from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in place.

This decision has been made for the safety and wellbeing of all involved - parishioners, clergy, parish staff and wider community.

Therefore the current directives remain in place, except for the the changes in relation to the attendance numbers for weddings and funerals:

- Weddings are limited to **no more than ten (10) guests** plus the couple, celebrant and assistants.
- Funerals are limited to **no more than twenty (20) mourners** indoors and thirty **(30) mourners for outdoor** ceremonies excluding celebrants, funeral directors and assistants.

The government requirements for hygiene practices and physical distancing guidelines of one person per four square metres must still be adhered to at all times.

Please support your priests in understanding the need to comply with these directives so that we can act in a unified manner across the diocese. Again, I emphasise that this current situation will be reviewed in two (2) weeks. I will be communicating with you during this period of time to assist you in preparing for the next steps in this process.

I understand that this time has been challenging in many ways, however, it has also proven to be a time of grace and opportunity. I therefore encourage you to continue to engage with your parish through means such as live-streaming and other initiatives that have been implemented in the life of your community.

Yours in Christ

Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD

BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG

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