
The Cathedral

Coronavirus Chronicle



St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney— 1 April 2020 – First edition

Dear Cathedral Parishioners and Visitors,

Hello from Cathedral House! I hope that you are all well, and not too shaken up.

Since you cannot gather at the cathedral for Mass and pick up a weekly bulletin, I wanted to reach out to you all via an electronic newsletter. I hope the title “Cathedral Coronavirus Chronicle” doesn’t sound too flippant. This pandemic is of the utmost seriousness and a great danger to the health and even life of many, here and globally. I chose “Chronicle” because this newsletter will, when we look back, tell something of the story of our journey through this together.

Many of you may be facing great financial strain and employment uncertainty, and many people are feeling cut-off and alone. We at St Mary’s Cathedral want you to know you are very much on our minds and in our prayers.

When news of the closure of places of public worship came through, a friend of mine sent me a text: “Enjoy your holiday...” He was only joking, of course, and actually the past week or so has been one of the busiest I can remember here, as there has been much to do, much to implement, much to manage.

We cannot gather, and we can’t schedule liturgies for you to attend, but Fr Brendan, Fr Gerard, Fr Lewi and I are still available in Cathedral House, and for as long as we are not all in total lockdown, you can always arrange to meet with one of us. The current restrictions on going out allow the clergy to visit for the purposes of pastoral care.

Please know that a “flying squad” group of Sydney priests is being equipped with protective equipment and special training, so that if someone infectious with COVID-19 needs the sacraments, they can attend them. Your clergy are with you. More information about that as things develop.

Each day we are live-streaming a Mass. We have shifted to a 9am Mass, which is available “on demand” for the rest of the day. We have had some technical problems with that sometimes, and our hardworking staff are working hard to overcome them.

On Saturdays, a Mass will be livestreamed at 9am, and on Sundays at 10.30. From time to time,

we will be online for other things, too, so please keep an eye on our website and social media. The Archbishop has dispensed the laity of the Archdiocese from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass while this crisis lasts. However, we all still have an obligation to keep Sunday, "holy" even if we cannot attend Mass. I encourage you to set a particular time on Sundays, and say some prayers together with those in your household. Times like this highlight how valuable the Catholic custom is of having a crucifix and holy pictures in the home. In addition, you cannot go wrong with the Scripture readings from Mass, and the Rosary!

Anyway, be careful, be kind, pray, and stay in touch! There will be a new edition of the Cathedral Coronavirus Chronicle in a few days.

Every blessing,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fr. Don". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr Don Richardson,

Dean,

Administrator of St Mary's Cathedral Parish, Sydney.

Administrator St Philip Howard Parish, Norfolk Island, South Pacific.

Administrator of Sacred Heart Parish, Darlinghurst.

Liturgy Office Director, Archdiocese of Sydney.