



SEASONS

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St. Thomas More, Mount Eliza

Sixth Sunday of Easter— Year A

17th May 2020

New Stages of re-opening Churches for public Mass and other liturgical services

Dear parishioners,

With the initial easing of some lockdown restrictions for Victorians, Churches are now permitted to open for Masses and liturgies (under strict number and hygiene limitations). Each Church service can have up to 10 people – not including the clergy and the people who are required to run the service – i.e. Lectors and AV Operators.

I would like to advise you of the following arrangements for Masses at STM Parish:

Weekday Masses (Resuming Wed 20 May 2020)

Wednesday: 9:15 AM and Friday: 9:15 AM **Please Note: 10 people is the maximum limit.**

Weekend Masses (Saturday 23 May – Sunday 31 May)

Saturday 23rd May @ 4:00 PM – Vigil Mass

Saturday 30th May @ 4:00 PM – Vigil Mass

@ 6:00 PM – Vigil Mass

@ 6:00 PM – Vigil Mass

Sunday 24th May @ 8:00 AM

Sunday 31st May @ 8:00 AM

@ 10:00 AM

@ 10:00 AM

@ 5:00 PM

@ 5:00 PM

The new Mass arrangements will be reviewed after 31 May 2020 when the Premier gives further guidelines. The Sat 4:00PM Vigil and Sunday 5:00PM Masses are added to make it easier for more parishioners to attend Sunday Mass – if this is what they want to do. **The Sat 4:00 PM Vigil and Sunday 5:00 PM Mass will cease when Churches return to ‘normal’ services.**

Parishioners who wish to attend any of the Weekday or Weekend Masses **MUST** make a booking with the STM Parish Office. Upon arriving at the Church, parishioners **MUST** sign - in the Mass Attendance Register. These are the essential requirements that the Government has asked all Churches and Parishioners to comply with if we want to re-open our churches. People who do not make a booking with the Parish Office **may not be permitted to participate in the Mass.**

I understand that these are very strict rules – but, we must observe them in order to re-open our church for service. I do ask for your pardon and understanding during this difficult time that the diocese and parishes are living in.

From Tuesday 19 May 2020 the Parish will start taking booking for weekday and weekend Masses. Booking for weekend Masses close on Friday @ 5:00PM. **Vicki and I will do our best to make sure that all the people who wish to attend Mass will have a fair opportunity to do so.**

Finally, I would like to make it clear that **all Catholics living in Victoria are still being suspended from the Sunday Obligation until further notice.** Therefore, I do sincerely encourage that the people who are in the vulnerable groups (i.e. over 60 or with other underlining health issues) to consider attending Mass/Prayer online or Mass which is broadcast on the 10 Network. You are the best person to make the decision as to whether or not you should be coming to Church during this time of Covid 19 Pandemic.

It is the most difficult time for all and we are in it together. Fr Joe Danh Truong

We pray for...

Those who have passed away recently...

Keith Crowther; Mary-jo Flood

Those whose anniversaries fall at this time.. Thomas H. Smith, Marcus Redfern, Margaret Pingiaro, Catherine Eggins, Chloe Hyland, James Willstead, Bernard Thomas



the sick... Joanne O'Brien, Ron Congues, Maree Bracken, Maria Truong, Fr Theo Rush, Bill Luscombe, Brigitte Rohner, Eileen O'Beirne, Helen Steinbach, Ava Macias, Michael MacKenzie, Luke Carroll, Betty Corke, Chloe, David Dole, Maria Kelly, Helen Gibson, Elizabeth Ware, Althea Greeff, Michael Blick, Maureen Anstey, Jake Steyn, Adrian Gobel, and all of the sick at the George Vowell Centre & Ranelagh Gardens Nursing home **and the parishioners of St Thomas More Parish, Tequinomata, East Timor, St Therese Parish,**

Sixth Sunday of Easter — Year A

First Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit



Responsorial Psalm:

Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18

In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, Alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them.

Alleluia!

Gospel: John 14: 15-21

I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate



Next Week's Readings - The Ascension of the Lord

1st Reading: Acts 1:1-11

2nd Reading: Ephesians 1: 17-23

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20



The Bishops of Victoria have suspended the Sunday Mass Obligation for all Catholic Faithful during Stages 2 and 3 of lockdown.

Mass is broadcast via the **Ten Network (6am, Sunday)** for any one who would like to participate.

Catholic Parish of St Thomas More

313 Canadian Bay Rd

Mount Eliza Vic. 3930

Phone: 9787 7777

Email: MountEliza@cam.org.au

Web: www.stm-mteliza.org

Pastoral Leadership Team

Fr Joe Truong (Parish Administrator)

Jacinta Griffin (Chairperson)

Sue Carr Paul Stinear

PPLT Email: MountEliza.PPLT@cam.org.au

Mass online

www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass

OR <http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand>

OR <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

OR St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Daily and Sunday Mass is available, with the I am Mass live streamed; it is also available as a recording on-demand.

<https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>



Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 9am—5pm

After Hours: Please leave a message on 9787 7777

What's Happening Here...



PREGNANCY
ASSISTANCE

Mothers' Day Appeal

Dear Father and Parishioners,

Our greetings of good health and wellbeing to you and your families.

PAF is unable to run the Mothers' Day envelope drive this year so instead we are suggesting that if you would like and are still able to donate to our annual to this appeal, you can do by paying cash to the parish office, or the centre; by cheque or by a direct payment into our account at **WESTPAC BSB: 033 272 ACC: 318726**.

If you would like a receipt, then please provide your name and contact details which you can email to pafcares@gmail.com

We thought that this year we could extend the appeal run the length of May, the month of Our Lady, Our Saviour's Mother. She is the mother of all mothers and knows full well the struggles and needs of disadvantaged pregnant women and their babies and families.

We wish a Happy Mothers' Day to all the mothers reading this and may you and your families be blessed abundantly.

Warm regards from the PAF Committee and Volunteers

Homily

In today's Gospel we hear Jesus says "I will not leave you orphans. I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever". What Jesus said to the early disciples, he says also to us. Also, Jesus has an important message for us to reflect upon, "if you love me keep my commandments".

Jesus does not leave us orphaned. Nor does Jesus abandoned us. To be left orphaned and abandoned are the most painful and damaging things that can happen to anyone- especially the very young and the elderly. The God who loves us beyond our comprehension will not allow us to experience the pain of abandonment or desolation. During the many weeks of abiding by the 'stay at home' rules and other strict social distancing regulations we have learnt that we can still be present to our loved ones without being with them physically. Likewise, Jesus continues to be present among us through some different ways even though he is no longer with us in visible or physical form. At the Last Supper Jesus instituted the Eucharist not only to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross but also as the means by which he remains with us until the end of time. When we receive the Eucharist we are not just in communication with Jesus, but we are in communion with him – hence, Holy Communion. Jesus is also present with us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit guarantees the ongoing presence of Jesus among us. One of the greatest pains for people of faith is not to be able to experience the presence of Jesus within them. What are some of the things that could help us to recognise the presence of Jesus within us and among us?

The Holy Spirit is our special helper (Advocate) who stays at our side and within us. The task of the Holy Spirit is to help us understand the teachings of Jesus and to appropriate them into our daily life. Whenever we find that it is challenging to remain faithful to Jesus the Holy Spirit will give us the strength to persevere and he will intercede for us. The Holy Spirit is a friend that we do not want to lose.

If we love Jesus we need to keep his commandments. Some of us don't like rules or being told what to do. But, Jesus' message is clear -if we say that we are his disciples then we must live according to his teachings. Sometimes we do feel overwhelmed by the commandments of Jesus, but with the help of the Holy Spirit, it will not be too difficult. Jesus does not give us the commandments to make our life more difficult. Jesus' commandments are there to help us to be more fully human as we are meant to be.

Dear friends, let us be assured of Christ's unending love for us and that our Advocate the Holy Spirit will always keep us in communion with him.

Financial Matters

Stewardship

10th May

Actual

\$1444

Pledge

\$ 1954

Presbytery

10th May

\$449



(Please note that the majority of our contributions are done electronically via Direct Debit & Credit Card Payments)

Thanks to all of you who give so generously to support our parish.

What's Happening Here ...

Pastoral Care for STM Parish during the time of the Coronavirus pandemic

This plan will be revised upon further restrictions from the Government.

1. **STM Church Open for limited services . 10 Attendees—Max.**
2. **Seasons** continues to be published online, send out by email, or by post,. Homily will be included with *Seasons*.
3. **Pastoral visitation:** Parishioners who would like a visit from Fr Joe are to contact the parish office.
4. **Anointing of the Sick, and Communion for the housebound:** Fr Joe is now only permitted to administer the Anointing of the Sick to the seriously ill, and also, Fr Joe is only permitted to give the Eucharist as Viaticum to the dying
5. **Fr Joe is available at the parish office** from Tuesday to Sunday afternoon for spiritual guidance .
6. If you are elderly/living alone and need assistance with shopping—please call Fr Joe at the Parish Office.

Baptisms

Due to lockdown, all Baptism Information/Preparation evenings are postponed until further notice.



Community Corner

To all parishioners attending St Thomas More Parish,

As a member of St Thomas More Finance Committee, I am appealing to all parishioners to continue on with their weekly contributions to our parish, as we are in desperate need of your contributions.

Due to the present pandemic corona virus situation, and the lock-down in relation to not being able to attend mass at all Catholic Churches, and in particular to our much loved St Thomas More Parish, sadly, our weekly contributions has fallen by 40 percent.

I hope that you can all please contribute financially to keep our St

Thomas More Parish viable, so as we can all return to our normal masses once permitted to.

Please follow up with my statement by leaving your feedback at the parish office, let's work towards us all being able to attend mass once again at STM.

Best regards, Michael Robertson

STM Children and Young People Safeguarding Committee

At STM Catholic Parish, Mount Eliza, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our parish. For more information please call: John Natoli (Coordinator) on 0418 208 778; or Julie Carter (Banda) on 0420 923 859

Combined Catholic Parishes Raffle

Due to the current restrictions imposed by the Victorian Government because of the Corona Virus pandemic, the Gambling Commission has granted approval to extend this raffle. The new Draw Date is 26th September 2020 at 7.15pm. If you still have a raffle book at home—you can drop it back to the office or put it into our locked mail box. Hopefully we can resume with this fundraiser later in the year. Regards Vicki.

STM PPLT News

Back in February, before the Covid-19 pandemic and crisis, the PPLT put out a call for parishioners to indicate their interest in joining us on the Parish Pastoral Leadership Team as our numbers over the last two years have begun to wane. We have been blessed with a number of people who have put their hand up to help our Parish in this way. In the past, new PPLT members have introduced themselves at a Parish meeting but that is not possible at the moment. We would also have photos taken which would be on display at the back of the church so that you know who we are. At the moment this is not as easy as it sounds, so instead of the usual face to face meeting we would like to introduce some of the new PPLT members to you here in Seasons.

Hopefully we can share some more with you next week. Just a reminder, you can speak to any of the PPLT members at any time with regards to our parish. Fr. Joe, Jacinta Griffin (Chair), Paul Stineer, Sue Carr, Carmel Huggard, Margaret Jameison, Michael Robertson via email to the Parish Office - MountEliza@cam.org.au



Dear Fr Joe and Members of the PPLT,

My name is Leonie Bourke and I have been a part of the St Thomas More Parish for 14 years. I was a parent at St Thomas More and Padua. I was a nurse for many years and now I work fulltime in Safety at a water company. I am a proud member of the St Thomas More Choir.

As a member of the PPLT I look forward to working collaboratively with the rest of the team and the parish community to support the church in moving forward through challenging times.

Kind Regards,

Leonie Bourke



New Members of PPLT



Margaret Jamieson



Michael Robertson



Carmel Huggard

Pastoral Letter from the Bishops / Diocesan Administrator of Victoria

Wednesday 13 May 2020

Members of the Catholic community in Victoria, The Catholic Dioceses of Melbourne, Ballarat, Sale and Sandhurst

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

Throughout this situation of the Coronavirus pandemic our prayers and solidarity have been with you all, and will continue to guide the challenging decisions we have been called to make.

Despite the many weeks of worry and social restrictions, we are delighted that as of 11.59pm yesterday, Tuesday 12 May 2020, churches in Victoria may now be open in certain circumstances.

This opportunity for small gatherings and for some quiet moments of prayer in the sacramental presence of Our Lord is a gentle first step in the right direction, and rightly a moment of rejoicing for God's people. We are pleased to work constructively with our communities to make appropriate adjustments. Strict restrictions still govern our actions due to the risks of COVID-19 and we are all being asked to show patience and fortitude.

Each Diocese is communicating with their parishes about how various ministries, including sacramental care, will be conducted in this first stage of the easing of social restrictions. We wish to be fully compliant with the directives that apply across Victoria, so that we ensure the protection of elderly and vulnerable people, and work together for the common good of our communities.

The conditions under which a church can be open include a collection of contact details (for the purposes of contact-tracing if it becomes necessary), strict monitoring of numbers, ongoing hygiene requirements, publicising the scheduled times for private worship, and public worship limited to ten people at a time.

Arrangements for liturgies and access to churches while ensuring these conditions are met will vary, depending on the facilities and resources that are available in each particular community. We recognise that deciding on these arrangements and putting them in place is not straightforward, and we ask for patience and understanding during this time.

This new stage of restrictions is subject to changing guidance that we receive from the State Government authorities, and we are advised this will be reviewed at the end of May.

After a difficult time for all of us, including many new pressures on families and great challenges for healthcare and emergency workers, we share in the disappointment that social restrictions are likely to continue for some time.

Nevertheless, we act with one accord in doing what is most prudent and loving for the sake of those most susceptible to the virus. We rejoice that Christ is with us and will walk with us as we begin the long journey out of the current stage of restrictions.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE

Most Rev Paul Bernard Bird CSsR MA, DD

BISHOP OF BALLARAT

Most Rev Shane Mackinlay

BISHOP OF SANDHURST

Rev Peter Slater

DELEGATE OF DIOCESAN ADMINISTRATOR, SALE



if you
love

ME

you will

OBEY

what I

COMMAND

John 14:15