25th March 2020

Dear Parishioners of Mansfield Catholic Parish Fourth Week of Lent

How are all of you?

The Government (state and federal) has directed to close all places of worship and religious gatherings. At this point in time, this means the closing of our church doors, not just to the celebration of Mass and other liturgies, but for all activities that would involve the presence of a number of people for a period of time, including private/personal prayer. Hence all the churches in our parish will remain closed. Holy communion to the sick and homebound too stands suspended except in the danger of death.  The parish office also will remain closed. We shall stay in contact via email and  the updates  on  our Facebook page (Mansfield Catholic Parish).

**We read in the Book of Exodus when God rescued the people of Israel from Egypt there was a plague. The Israelites were spared from the plague by obeying God’s command to “kill the Passover lamb…and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood…and none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.” (Exodus 12: 21-22) They were saved from the plague not just because of the blood of the Passover lamb but also because they obeyed the command of God spoken through Moses “none of you shall go out of the door of his house until the morning.” (Exodus 12:22) Even to this day Jewish families celebrate this Passover meal as a memorial every year. It was out of these familiar rituals of the Jewish home and not the pomp of the temple that Jesus formed his Eucharist and gave us a form of worship. We have all been marked by the Blood of Christ that we receive in the Eucharist but in this present time we have been asked to stay indoors as well.  A similar directive, stay indoors as far as possible,  during this time of the Corona virus crises we find ourselves in.**

**The Passover is a passage into life, whether  seen from the point of view of the sparing of the first born, or the deliverance from Egypt, or the safe crossing of the Red Sea, it is always leading into life.**

**Lent is time we prepare to renew our baptismal commitment (our Passover) by celebrating the Easter triduum of Holy Thursday (commemorating Jesus’ institution of the Eucharist and the ministries of service – priesthood/deaconate), Good Friday (Our Lord’s salvific death) and Easter (His Glorious Resurrection). St Paul establishes a parallel between the Passover of the Israelites from Egypt to the promised land and baptism which is our Passover to the fullness of life in Christ (I Corinthians 10:1-4). During this time while we remain in our own houses we look forward with hope to that fullness of life, like the Israelites our ancestors in faith, we too wait for the Passover from this crises which has taken over our world.**

**To become frustrated with leadership at times like this, as the Israelites did against Moses, is possible. But let us pray for the leaders of our country, the world and the Church that they may be led by the power and wisdom of God. They are doing their best.  Paul in his Letter to the  Romans writes, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God…For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good.” (Romans 13:1ff).  For ourselves, we pray for the humility to listen and obey them.**

As you may already know the Victorian Government has announced new measures to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). They come into force at midnight, tonight.

Below are links to the Archdiocese of Melbourne sites where you could access Mass online, Mass Readings, digital devotions etc.

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

<https://www.cam.org.au/Guidance-for-Parishes-COVID-19>

**Hope you all are relaxing as well. A good time to read a book, watch good movies, listen to music may be even a sing song, good food and a glass of wine.**

**Kindly feel free to contact me and let us unite ourselves in prayer.  I will be offering private Mass daily at St Francis Xavier, Mansfield  for all your intentions and praying for you all.**

With every blessing

Yours Sincerely in Christ

George

George Feliciouz

Parish Adminitrator

Mansfield Catholic Parish

Ph: 5775 2005



**The Catholic Parish of Mansfield, Archdiocese of Melbourne is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.**