



# St Finbar's Catholic Parish

**Parish Priest:**

86 Centre Rd, Brighton East, VIC, 3187

Year A

Fr Ian W Ranson

Telephone: +61 3 9593 2122 Website: <http://pol.org.au/brightoneast>

**Parish Secretary:**

Mrs Carmel Cristiano

**Office hours:**

PARISH OFFICE IS CLOSED

DUE TO STAGE 4

RESTRICTIONS

*Please feel free to email or call Fr Ian or Carmel if you have any special intentions.*

*Please refer to the links on parish website for further information regarding COVID regulations.*

**Telephone:**

+61 3 9593 2122

**Email:**

BrightonEast@cam.org.au

**St Vincent de Paul**

1800 305 330

**School Principal:**

Mr Patrick Berlinger

**School Telephone:**

+61 3 9592 4479

## THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Our religious tradition is founded on love. Actually, life itself is grounded in love. We may not always feel this love, but if we allow ourselves to reflect on life, we will realise this truth. We have been called into being by God's love; and we will only be happy if we live in that love. Thus, when we are directed to love God and love one another, we are not being asked to do something contrary to our nature. Rather, we are being told to live in accord with that nature. We come from God who is love, and so it is in our very nature to love and to be loved.

We may sometimes think that it is easier to love God than

to love others. It may actually be just the opposite. Other people are tangible. We can see and hear them, interact with them. Their influence in our lives can permeate our consciousness. That is not the way it is with God. Like Moses on the mountain, we can only see the traces of divinity as God passes by (see Ex 33:23). However, we show that we love God in the way we love our neighbour.

Love, the foundation of the reign of God, is contagious. When we love others, the reign of God spreads throughout the world. The compassion that we show toward others is a form of evangelisation. It proclaims

much louder than any words that the reign of God has been established.

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**NO MASSES ARE TAKING PLACE OUTDOORS AT ST FINBAR'S CURRENTLY.**

*Should you have a special intention, pass it onto Fr Ian via email or office phone and he will place it in his personal daily mass intentions.*

**NOTIFICATION OF MASSES WILL BE MADE ONCE CONSENT FROM THE VICTORIAN STATE GOVERNMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH COVID RESTRICTIONS IS GRANTED.**



## LIVING THE GOSPEL

### Compassion

Jesus' words call us to love our neighbour as ourselves. We are called to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves. To be able to do this, we need to picture ourselves in their place – experiencing all that they are experiencing; not imposing our own values and circumstances. To see ourselves in the place of another is the key to responding with compassion. The origin of the word, compassion, means experiencing with. If we are able to truly 'experience with' another person perhaps then we can genuinely recognise and respond to their needs.

**PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER**

**Pray for the Sick**

Rita Maguire

**Anniversaries**

Carmel Mulvany



# Equality for Faith Petition



Dear Parishioners of St Finbar's,

Places of worship are being treated in an inequitable way by the Victorian government's current restrictions in the 'Roadmap for Reopening'. A small group of people of faith have started an online petition to immediately correct this inequality. We need your help! We ask you to read, consider signing and distribute the petition to people you know.

The petition can be found at [www.equalityforfaith.com.au](http://www.equalityforfaith.com.au) or on the last page of this bulletin.

Your support will be critical in enabling the petition to influence change! #equalityforfaith

## Sunday was not a great day for people of faith in Victoria, but it should have been.

In announcing the next step of Victoria's COVID-19 road map, the government eased some restrictions. People were ready for glimmers of hope, but there was not much hope offered to people of faith.

We weren't expecting a great opening up of every sector. However, it was noticeable that additions to step two restrictions allowed for a return to pet groomers, swimming pools and locations 25km from your home, but no return to your place of worship in any meaningful sense.

Presently, in step two of the COVID-19 road map, Melbourne's doors of faith are closed. Churches, synagogues, temples and mosques are shut, pending a government announcement that they can open again.

These are not places of mere formality, but of lively and attentive care to vulnerable people, and of support to those facing sickness, loneliness, grief and death. They are places of hope and wellbeing, and of spiritual friendship.

Sadly, what is worse is that when we look ahead to step three there is very little for faith communities. Parity with other sectors seems denied even when we reach COVID-normal. The spectre of our places of worship remaining closed except for "private prayer" leaves our people feeling exiled and pushed outside.

And frankly, given our weather sometimes, Victorian people of faith aren't too pleased at being forced to stand outside the doors of their sacred places to celebrate the most important dimensions of their fundamental beliefs and commitments.

If they are gathering outside in the wind and rain, looking over at their locked doors, it's pretty hard to explain why the doors of the cafe across the road are invitingly open.

People of faith have joined in the common work of co-operation with COVID restrictions at every stage this year. We've proven ourselves to be fair-minded and civil, patient and prepared.

We've worked closely with the health department, local police, government authorities and other faith leaders to be safe and responsible. We have been publicly recognised for these efforts.

Churches may not be licensed premises, but they are highly regulated spaces, especially during times of worship.

It is now seven months since people of faith have been able to gather together in prayer. Like every other sector of life, this has had a major impact on the wellbeing of a very large sector of our community. For many of those who are affected, this is one of their principal opportunities for social interaction and personal activity.

Why would pool water shared by 30 swimmers at a time be considered safer than baptism water poured over one infant child?

Why would sitting down without a mask and socialising informally with up to 40 strangers inside an eatery be considered less risky than the formalised, masked and appropriately spaced gathering of a faith community?

Why would public health advisers tell the government that religious worship is an inherently higher risk than other sectors?

It is a relief for all of us that our places of sporting, hospitality and community gathering are being allowed to open. It is just that none of this passes the pub test (literally!) when it comes to places of worship remaining closed.

I have been inundated with calls for accountability on the COVID road map and of answers to obvious questions. Profoundly, some of the loudest voices in my own archdiocese have been from our young people.

While our elderly and more isolated parishioners have suffered from being closed out of their churches, young people have been speaking on their behalf, concerned for their wellbeing, requesting that the government show us a measure of fairness and equality in each step of restrictions.

Our young people and young priests are looking to the future, and they can see that closing off churches is cutting off a source of spiritual care that cannot be overlooked, and of social and mental health supports that nobody else can provide.

For us, prayer with others is essential. It is a powerful help in our troubles that has nothing comparable in the secular and medical parallels of a visit to the doctor, however important that is.

If there really is health advice suggesting places of worship are inherently riskier, I respectfully request to see it.

If there is data that backs up the suspicion being thrown on communities of faith in this pandemic, I am only too pleased to sit down and talk it through with experts. We can manage all the steps required to be COVID-safe.

The quiet and patient prayers and hopes of people of faith have been constant this year.

But now they deserve the opportunity to step forward hopefully.

**Archbishop Peter A Comensoli, 20th October, 2020**



Live telecast of 11am Sunday Mass,  
Ch 44 or online

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

## OCTOBER—MONTH OF THE HOLY ROSARY

28th Saints Simon and Jude, Apostles

Easy online **thanksgiving payments** can be made via this link:

<https://secure.artezpacific.com/registant/donate.aspx?eventId=52905&spid=5635700>

Thank you to all those who have continued to support  
St Finbar's Catholic Church during these difficult times.



*Petition to the Premier of Victoria*

# EQUALITY FOR VICTORIA'S PEOPLE OF FAITH

Dear Premier Daniel Andrews,

We, people of Victoria's faith community, request that the 'Roadmap for Reopening' be amended so that people of faith and places of worship are treated equitably and fairly.

The 2016 national census indicates that approximately 60% of Victorians identify as religious. For people of faith, the ability to practise our beliefs – including through public worship – is essential to our wellbeing. As it stands, the 'Roadmap' suggests that our wellbeing has not been given due consideration.

We are particularly concerned about the inequitable treatment of people of faith under 'Step 3' of your 'Roadmap'. For example, 'Step 3' permits cafes and restaurants to seat up to 20 people indoors and 50 people outdoors yet restricts religious communities to outdoor gatherings of only 10 people and indoor private worship to household bubbles.

There is no logical reason for this discrepancy. People of faith are able to attend a service in a place of worship whilst wearing a face mask; physical distancing is not a challenge in what are often very large venues; services are time-limited and rigorous infection-control measures are able to be implemented. A place of worship can and should be accessible in a COVID-safe way.

Religious organisations should be afforded the same opportunity to open for indoor worship with density quotients equivalent to those seen in other parts of the community such as hospitality. We were afforded the opportunity as we emerged from the first lockdown; we deserve to be afforded the same opportunity again as we emerge from the second lockdown.

Premier Andrews, we, people of Victoria's faith community, request that you adjust the 'Roadmap for Reopening' in a way that secures the equitable treatment of religious communities and grants us the opportunity to practise our faith in a COVID-safe manner.

Signed,

People of all faiths, Victoria

Sign at

[www.equalityforfaith.com.au](http://www.equalityforfaith.com.au)