

# COVID-19 PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL



## ***1-Pray for people who are infected with COVID-19 or facing quarantine.***

Jesus, during Your ministry on Earth You showed Your power and caring by healing people of all ages and stations of life from physical, mental, and spiritual ailments. Be present now to people who need Your loving touch because of COVID-19. May they feel Your power of healing through the care of doctors and nurses.

Take away the fear, anxiety, and feelings of isolation from people receiving treatment or under quarantine. Give them a sense of purpose in pursuing health and protecting others from exposure to the disease. Protect their families and friends and bring peace to all who love them.

## ***2-Pray for people at higher risk of developing the disease.***

Dear Lord, we lift to You our concern for people who are more likely than others to become severely ill from COVID-19 — the elderly and people with chronic health conditions. Protect them from harm and be their comfort in this time of uncertainty and, for many, preventive isolation from loved ones.

## ***3-Pray for medical professionals, caregivers, and researchers responsible for fighting the new coronavirus.***

God, as more people get sick, healthcare workers and first responders are working longer hours with fewer supplies and with more risk of contracting the new coronavirus themselves. Renew their energy and sustain them on long shifts. Bring Your protection upon them as they work with patients. Multiply their supplies so they have the protective items needed to stay safe on the job.

Inspire and invigorate the research doctors developing better tests to diagnose the virus, create vaccines to prevent it, and identify protocols to eliminate the disease's spread.

## ***4-Pray for leaders responsible for making decisions about the new coronavirus.***

Father, we seek Your wisdom daily. Be with people making decisions that affect the lives and futures of our families, communities, countries, and the wider world. We pray that they communicate clearly, truthfully, and calmly — with each other and with the public — and that their messages are received and heeded. May truth and empathy be the touchstones of people setting policies for our protection.

## ***5-Pray for families adjusting to new ways of life.***

Holy Spirit, as families adjust to everyone being home as businesses and schools close, we ask that You guide people in their new realities. Give spouses grace for each other. Prompt worn-out parents to speak words of kindness and encouragement to their children. Help children find creative ways to experience the beauty of all You have created and continue learning.

## ***6-Pray for business owners and families facing financial stress.***

Jesus, we thank You for Your faithfulness in how you have guided and equipped people in their jobs and have provided in the past. It can be scary and overwhelming not knowing how bills and obligations will be met or to not be able to provide for families. As people feel financial strain during the uncertainty, bring them comfort and peace, reminding them that You are there for them. Provide for them in their times of need.

## ***7-Pray for grocery store workers and delivery drivers.***

Lord, we are so grateful for all the people who continue to work each day so that people are able to eat. We ask that You bless and protect them as they serve. Give them grace to handle disgruntled customers during supplies shortages. Keep their bodies healthy as they unload and stock boxes of supplies. Keep their cars and trucks running smoothly as they deliver needed supplies and food people have ordered online. And please protect them all from contracting the new coronavirus.

## ***8-Pray for the disease to stop spreading.***

Almighty God, we know that everything is in Your sovereign control. We ask that You keep this new coronavirus from continuing to spread. Give government officials the ability to safely handle people arriving from other countries. Help people decide to stay home instead of traveling or going out needlessly. Holy Spirit, remind people to wash their hands properly. And while it may be heartbreaking, comfort families as they decide to keep their distance from elderly or other high-risk family members.

***9-For those who died of the COVID-19***, may God grant them eternal rest, and we pray for their families, may the Lord give them strength during this time of loss.

### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

#### FIRST READING *Ezekiel 37:12-14*

*A Reading from the prophet Ezekiel.*

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

The Word of the Lord.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*Psalm 129*

**R. With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,  
Lord, hear my voice!  
O let your ears be attentive  
to the voice of my pleading. R.
2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,  
Lord, who would survive?  
But with you is found forgiveness:  
for this we revere you. R.
3. My soul is waiting for the Lord.  
I count on his word.  
My soul is longing for the Lord  
more than watchman for daybreak.  
(Let the watchman count on daybreak  
and Israel on the Lord.) R.
4. Because with the Lord there is mercy  
and fullness of redemption,  
Israel indeed he will redeem  
from all its iniquity. R.

#### SECOND READING *Romans 8:8-11*

*A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.*

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is

because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

The word of the Lord.

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*John 11:25-26*

Glory and praise to you, O Christ!  
I am the resurrection and the life,  
says the Lord;  
whoever believes in me will never die.  
Glory and praise to you, O Christ!

#### GOSPEL *John 11:3-7,17,20-27,33-45*

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.*

Mary and Martha sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.  
If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live,  
and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and

see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me,  
so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### CREED

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
(*All bow during these two lines*)  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again  
from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God  
the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge  
the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

# ST PAUL'S PARISH

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**St Paul's Parish strives to create an environment where children are safe, respected and cared for.**

## NOW WHAT? ONLINE MASS AND OTHER RESOURCES

### What should I do if I can't go to Mass?

If you are unable to be present at a celebration of the Eucharist, we encourage you to participate in other ways such as spending time in personal and family prayer, reflecting on and praying with the Scriptures (particularly the Mass readings), making a Stations of the Cross, praying the Rosary, making an Act of Spiritual Communion (see below) and participating in Mass online (see more below). Further information about opportunities for Sacrament of Reconciliation, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and times of private prayer in parishes will follow, however, churches will remain open.

#### 1. St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne

Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne is available daily. The 1pm Mass is streamed live daily (Mon-Fri) and is then available as a recording on-demand until one hour prior to the next Mass. Sunday Mass is available, with the 11am Mass live streamed and it is also available as a recording on-demand.

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

#### 2. Pope Francis' daily Mass

Pope Francis' daily Masses are now available online through the Vatican's website and YouTube channel.

Watch here: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta.pagelist.html>

#### 3. Mass for You at Home

Broadcast on Eleven and Network Ten on Sundays and Aurora Channel on Foxtel every day.

Watch here: <http://www.mfyah.com/video.html> or <https://10play.com.au/mass-for-you-at-home>

**What is an Act of Spiritual Communion and how do I make one?** Catholics have long been encouraged to partake in the practice of "spiritual communion" if they are unable to receive the Eucharist for a particular reason (e.g. being homebound). Simply put, it is coming before God in prayer – expressing our deep desire to be united to Him despite the fact that we are unable to be united to Him in receiving the Eucharist. In making an Act of Spiritual Communion we ask the Lord to give us the graces that would come to us if we were able to receive Him sacramentally (Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity). Reciting the prayer written by St. Alphonsus Liguori below is simple and common way of making an act of Spiritual Communion.

#### An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

## APRIL AT ST PAULS

### HOLY WEEK CELEBRATIONS ARE ALL SUSPENDED.

Sat 18<sup>th</sup> Wedding of Stephanie Galante & Joseph Schiavello at 1pm.  
(only 5 persons to attend including Celebrant).

Sun 26<sup>th</sup> Baptisms Cancelled.

### IN THESE DAYS OF INCREASED AWARENESS OF THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

These days have been emotional for everyone, heartbreaking in fact, in so many ways.

May I remind you that the church will remain open, as usual times, for private prayer. Take with you home, **The Prayer of St Joseph, The Guidelines in Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic** issued by the Bishops of Victoria, and **The Pauline**.

You are encouraged to support the parish with an 'online collection.' Those who use sacrificial giving envelopes might consider dropping their envelopes off at the Parish Office or setting up a direct debit payment during this time. Bank details: St Paul's Church

BSB: 083-347

Account: 67541 0884

Reference: Surname/ Envelope Number

Information will be updated on our website regularly. Go to

<https://www.cam.org.au/coburg>

## NOTICES:

**ATTENTION PARISHIONERS.** Given the risks associated with COVID-19 (Coronavirus) there will be no public Masses in this Parish Church until further notice. Our Bishops in Victoria have made this difficult decision in order to protect the life and health of those most vulnerable in our community, to whom as Catholics we are called to provide a special care. The Bishops have announced that the lay faithful are, until further notice, dispensed from attending Sunday Mass (canon 1248). We are encouraged to keep our Sunday holy by setting aside some time for prayer at home. Reading the Scriptures of the day, watching Mass on television or online, and asking God for the graces we would normally receive in Holy Communion are all valid ways of doing this. At this time let us keep in our prayers all the sick and vulnerable in our community and around the world and those selflessly working in hospitals and emergency services. Please check the Melbourne Archdiocesan website for information about Mass outline, prayer resources and other helpful information: [www.cam.org.au/coronavirus](http://www.cam.org.au/coronavirus).

## LAST WEEKEND'S COLLECTION:

1 <sup>st</sup> Collection	Sacrificial Offering	\$ -----
2 <sup>nd</sup> Collection:	Presbytery	\$ -----

## WE PRAY FOR

BAPTISMS: NIL.

We pray for those in our local community who are **sick** and vulnerable: may they see in us the followers of a God who heals and serves.

**Let us pray for those who have died recently: and those whose anniversaries we remember at this time, Girolamo Mustica, that they may enter the peace of God.**

## STEWARDSHIP:

**“Jesus said to her, ‘Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?’” (John 11:40)**

Many of us say that we believe in God. We go to church on Sunday. We volunteer for events at our parish. But when life gets hard and the pressure is on, when things aren't going our way, do we really believe and put our trust in the Lord? When we live a life of gratitude, being thankful for the gifts we have been given, we really do see that God is providing all that we need. It opens our hearts to see God's active presence in our daily lives.

## REFLECTION: “Never-Ending”

**Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live...” John 11:25**

When two people deeply love each other, they never want their love to end. I think that's one of the best experiences we can ever have. And it's open to every one of us! Our desire for permanence, at its best, is a sign of a vibrant love, one that reaches out to heaven. It's also a sign of the way God loves us. We are so important to God that God desires to be together with us in an intimate relationship that will grow and never end. Our resurrection is the way God brings this about. Years ago, I read these words on a sign: “This life is good, but the best is yet to come!” I never forgot it. God offers us a resurrected future full of incredible beauty and joy. But then, what else would you expect a loving God to do?

*Thank you, Lord, for your incredible, unending love.*

Fr. Kenneth E. Grabner, C.S.C.

## PRAYER OF THE WEEK

That we open our hearts to see God's active presence in our daily lives.

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK: “Hope”

Hope is one of those things in life you cannot do without.

*LeRoy Douglas*

## VOCATION VIEWS

Seeing physically dead people return to life is not a common event. But Christians, serious about their vocation, are eager to help the “down and out” find new meaning in Christ and live a full life.

## HOMILY on the Gospel of the 5th Sunday in Lent. The Resurrection of Lazarus. The tears of those who love, a lens on the world (John 11,1–45).

The story of the resurrection of Lazarus is the page where Jesus appears more human. We see him shivering, crying, being moved, shouting. When he loves, man performs divine gestures; when he loves, God does it with very human gestures. A force flows under all the words of the story: it is not life that conquers death. In reality, death wins and swallows life. Instead, what wins over death is love. Everyone present that day in Bethany becomes aware of it: *look how he loved him*, they say admired. And the sisters coin a beautiful name for Lazarus: He – whom – you – love. The reason for the resurrection of Lazarus is the love of Jesus, a love to tears, to the arrogant cry: *come out!* The tears of those who love are the most powerful magnifying glass in life: you look through a tear and understand things you could never have learned about books. Jesus' rebellion against death passes through three steps:

**1. Remove the stone.** Roll away the boulders from the mouth of the heart, the rubble under which you buried yourself with your own hands; away the guilt feelings, the inability to forgive oneself and others; away the bitter memory of the evil received, which nails you to your inner life sentences.

**2. Lazarus, come out!** Out in the sun, out in the spring. And he says it to me: come out of the black cave of regrets and disappointments, from looking only at yourself, from feeling the center of things. Come out, repeat to the butterfly inside me, closed inside the caterpillar that I think I am. It is not true that “all mothers in the world give birth astride of a grave” (S. Beckett), as if life were immediately sucked into death, or always walked on the edge of an abyss. Mothers give birth astride of hope, of great beauty, of a vast sea, of many embraces. Riding a dream! And of eternity. To every child who is born, Christ and the world cry out in one voice: come, and bring us more awareness, more freedom, more love!

**3. Release him and let him go!** Dissolve the dead from their death: all free yourself from the idea that death is the end of a person. Free him, as the sails are freed in the wind, as the knots of those who are folded on themselves are untied, the knots of fear, the tangles of the heart. Free him from masks and fears. And then: let him go, give him a road, and friends to walk with, a few tears, and a polar star. What sense of future and freedom emanates from this Rabbi who knows how to love, cry and cry; that frees and puts paths in the heart.

**And I understand that Lazarus is me. I am the One – whom – you – love**, and who you will never accept to see the end of death.

**P. Ermes Ronchi**