



Covid-19 Management at St John's Camberwell Friday 20 March 2020

Dearest Members and Friends of St John's in Camberwell

St John's places the highest importance on the health, safety and well-being of our parishioners, friends and staff. In response to the outbreak of the Coronavirus we are following Government advice and closely monitoring updates and developments.

Keeping the Church Open

In recent days, some churches have made the decision to close entirely until further notice. We will, however, remain open for services as long as possible. Even when services cease, as is likely, we will continue to keep the church open for people to pray and meditate privately, until otherwise advised. It is important, however, that all attending the church now keep a minimum of 2 metres from others they are not immediately related to.

Please note that we are currently offering Holy Communion in one kind only to all communicants. Only the consecrated bread will be distributed.
We urge people not to shake hands or touch in any other way during the sharing of the Peace or before or after services.

When Services Cease

We are working on ways to bring worship and prayer into your homes for when services at the church must end. This will include the live-streaming of the Sunday and weekday Eucharists and access to study-groups and other activities at St John's. This includes a performance of the Liszt 'Via crucis' on Good Friday evening, performed by Roger Creed. We are also investigating ways of providing Communion at home to those who are isolated or when services cease. I will send out a further bulletin next week once we are clearer as to what is possible, when our plans are in place. Whatever happens, we will continue to provide materials for private worship and reflection at home via email.

Parish Groups and Meetings

Until further notice, all in-person meetings and events at St John's are suspended. Only the following services will continue for the moment: Tuesday Eucharist at Noon and the Sunday Eucharists at 8.00am and 10.00am, and Morning and Evening Prayer in the body of the church. From this Sunday onwards, all hospitality after services is suspended until normal services resume.

If You Are Not Feeling Well

We ask that you not attend St John's if you develop a new and persistent cough or temperature. This will protect those who are more vulnerable in our community and help slow the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the pressure on our health services. If you are feeling unwell, please contact your General Practitioner by telephone for advice on what to do. If you have visited any country with a high prevalence of the virus, or you have been in close contact with someone who has, please do not come to the church even to pray.

Furthermore, we recommend that older and medically vulnerable members of the community consider absenting themselves from worship until the current risk has passed or at least subsided.

ST JOHN'S CAMBERWELL



Pastoral Care Over the Coming Weeks

Clergy and volunteers will seek to maintain contact with the parish community and isolated people in particular by telephone and other means. We would urge you if you are feeling vulnerable or lack essentials such as food or toiletries and have no-one who can assist you, to please contact the Parish Office on 9882 4851 or office@stjohnscamberwell.org.au and we will endeavour to assist where we can.

Caring for Our Neighbours

We ask you all to please look out for your neighbours who might need to self-isolate and consider if there are ways you can help to ensure that they get the supplies that they need. If you are able to assist the vulnerable by doing with shopping or deliveries, please contact the parish office to offer your help. You will be given instructions on how to help without making direct contact with others.

And as this Sunday may possibly be the last Sunday before the church closes for some months, can you please ensure that our food cupboard is well-stocked? Could you donate a little extra this week, especially those items that we know have been in high demand?

Donations and Planned Giving

Some people have asked about Planned Giving and contributing to the parish when services are cancelled. Parishioners who give regularly to the church via envelopes or cash in the plate are encouraged to move to direct debit giving via the ADF or by making a contribution directly to the parish's bank account. Details are available from the Parish Office on how to proceed with either option. St John's needs to maintain its income so we can continue to provide important ministries over the weeks and months ahead. It would be wonderful, for example, where families have lost loved ones, to offer funerals in the parish at no cost, but there will of course be expenses to cover.

Please Let us Know

And please, let us know if you or your friends or members of your family fall ill with the virus, so that we may pray you and for them. The clergy of the parish will pray each day and at the Eucharist for those who are ill and those who have died. We urge you to please let us know of people who need our prayers.

I ask you too to pray for the world, the church and our parish community, for the isolated and all who are feeling anxious at this time, for health specialists and authorities who are combatting the spread of infection, and of course for all who are already ill and those who have died. May they, in the mercy and love of God, Rest in Peace and Rise in Glory!

In Conclusion

Finally, we look forward with great anticipation to the day when we can meet together for a service of General Thanksgiving and Deliverance. Pray God this will all pass soon!

With every prayer and my blessing on you all!

Fr John Baldock
St John's Camberwell
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