



A Letter to the Members and Friends of St John's Camberwell
Tuesday 24 March 2020

Dearest Sisters and Brothers.

I am updating my correspondence to the parish in the light of recent developments. I am including some of the information sent out on Friday, as not all received the news below.

Introduction

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.

Services Are Now Suspended

Public services as St John's are now suspended until further notice. Our worship and corporate life, however, will continue online. I hope to be able to provide details tomorrow of when the live-streaming of services will commence, along with details on how to connect to the church and participate in the services.

I would encourage all in the parish to also join **Zoom** – an audio and video conferencing platform – which will operate in parallel with our live-streaming service.

The Church is Now Closed

In accordance with Federal Government guidelines the church is now closed until further notice. Arrangements for private prayer and reflection may be made on an individual basis after consultation the clergy. No one is to enter the building without the express permission of the clergy or churchwardens, in order to minimise the chance of cross-infection.

Weekly On-Line Services

St John's is working to bring worship and prayer into your homes during the coming weeks and months. We will broadcast both the 8.00am and 10.00am Eucharists on Sundays and various special services and events during Holy Week and Easter, including a performance of the Liszt 'Via Crucis' on Good Friday evening by Roger Creed. Morning and Evening Prayer will be available online each day at 9.00am and 5.00pm. Prayer materials for private worship and reflection will soon be sent to all who wish it and our weekly service booklets will be available online or via email.

Home Communion

We are able to provide Communion at Home for those who wish. Home Communion packs have been prepared for all who wish to share the sacrament of Holy Communion on a regular basis. Please contact the Parish Office if you would like to receive Communion at home and the clergy will contact you to make safe and secure arrangements.

Parish Groups and Meetings

All in-person meetings and events at St John's are now suspended until further notice. Details will soon be provided on how you can still join in our Lenten Reflection and Baptism Preparation Studies, along with a number of other regular parish meetings.

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 can you help ensure that our food cupboard is well-stocked, especially those items that we know have been in high demand?

If You Are Not Feeling Well

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, we recommend self-isolating immediately.

Furthermore, we encourage older and medically vulnerable members of the community to consider self-isolation until the current risk has passed or at least subsided.

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

0438 640 644

The Second Collect from Last Sunday

Keep us, good Lord,
under the shadow of your mercy
in this time of uncertainty and distress.
Sustain and support the anxious and fearful,
and lift up all who are brought low;
that we may rejoice in your comfort
knowing that nothing can separate us from your love
in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

For those who are ill

Merciful God,
we entrust to your tender care
those who are ill or in pain,
knowing that whenever danger threatens
your everlasting arms are there to hold them safe.
Comfort and heal them,
and restore them to health and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.