

Rev. Fr. Jude Pirotta mssp
Parish Priest



Parish of St James the Apostle
St James Presbytery
336 Derrimut Road
Hoppers Crossing North 3029
Telephone: [03] 9401 6367
Email: HoppersCrossingNorth@cam.org.au

Thursday, 19 March 2020

Dear Parishioners of St James,

We are living in strange and unprecedented times. There is no event in living memory that can compare to what we are going through now. The last similar event was a hundred years ago, in 1920, with the Spanish Influenza. While there is no need to panic, we do need to take necessary measures to protect ourselves and our loved ones. Strange and unprecedented events require new, strange and unprecedented responses!

This week, the Parish established a committee to manage the parish's response to the COVID-19 crisis. This committee will continue to monitor developments and communicate with you on a regular basis.

It had been announced that gatherings of more than 100 people are no longer allowed in an enclosed area. It is important that we, as a faith community, are aware of and comply with all government and health protocols. Following this latest announcement by the Prime Minister, the Bishops of Victoria have determined the following actions:

- immediate suspension of public liturgies and celebrations of the mass until further notice;
- all other gatherings are to be suspended.

This means that, until further notice:

- Weekend and weekday masses will be suspended immediately.
- All ministry meetings and activities are also suspended
- There will be no public Easter celebrations this year (this includes Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil and Easter Sunday).

We know that all this will be a source of deep sadness to the faith-filled People of God all over the world. Sunday without mass is unthinkable for millions of us, especially as we approach this most sacred time of Easter. Yet, even when we cannot attend Mass at Church, God is still with us. This is NOT a punishment from God. God travels and suffers with us even in these difficult moments. Now is a time to turn to God in prayer. Let us pray for each other, continuously. Let us pray especially for those who are most vulnerable. Elderly members of our community are being asked to stay indoors; this is certainly very difficult for them. People who are struggling financially are also going to experience serious difficulties as we cannot always reach out to them as much as we would like to. How can we be God to other members in the community at these times?

We will continue to explore ways of ensuring that we remain in communion with each other during these trying times. We will continue to communicate regularly through the Parish website, on Facebook and by email. Mindful that not everyone in our community has access to social media, we ask that you communicate this information as widely as possible and within your circle of friends. Please notify the Parish Office if you become aware of such people so that we can explore ways of reaching out to them.



"Come as you are"

Rev. Fr. Jude Pirotta mssp
Parish Priest



Parish of St James the Apostle
St James Presbytery
336 Derrimut Road
Hoppers Crossing North 3029
Telephone: [03] 9401 6367
Email: HoppersCrossingNorth@cam.org.au

We will also be live streaming a liturgy on our Parish Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/stjamesapostlehcn/>) this Sunday at 10:30am, that you may wish to view.

In all of this, let us remember that the Catholic church has always had the tradition of “Spiritual Communion” where, even if you are unable to attend mass, you can participate spiritually. Here is St Alphonsus Liguori’s prayer on Spiritual Communion to end with:

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

I encourage you to make the most of your time in self-isolation by reflecting on the Scriptures, praying with family or making a spiritual communion.

I miss you already.

I would like to most heartily thank GERALYN MCCARTHY, KEVIN LLOYD and FR SILVIO, the newly established Committee for assisting in managing the Parish’s response to the COVID-19 crisis.

Yours sincerely,

Fr Jude Pirotta mssp
Parish Priest

Some Handy Resources:

Daily Mass:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYRq7AjVimr-hcHFJD_HVaQ

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

Sunday Liturgy:

<https://www.facebook.com/stjamesapostlehcn/>

<https://stjamesapostlehcn.com.au>

<https://brisbanecatholic.org.au/multimedia/web-cast/>

Daily readings:

<https://universalis.com/mass.htm>

<https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/living-word/>

Daily prayer:

<https://www.pray.com.au/>



“Come as you are”