

**LATEST UPDATE FROM ARCHBISHOP PETER COMENSOLI**  
**23 March 2020**

The Archdiocese has been in direct communication with civil authorities over the course of today. Not every question can be answered immediately, but the basic picture is now clear. Therefore, I can now inform you of the following directives, noting that further changes are likely in coming days.

**CHURCHES, MASSES and LITURGIES:**

We have been directed by Government (state and federal) to close all places of worship and religious gatherings. At this point in time, this means the closing of our church doors, not just to the celebration of Mass and other liturgies, but for all activities that would involve the presence of a number of people for a period of time. Therefore, I ask that you now immediately close the doors of your church(es).

**Funerals and Weddings:** These may still take place, but only with very small groups and where the '1 person per 4 square metres' rule applies.

**Reconciliation:** If you wish to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation please contact the Parish House: 9369 8677

**Private Prayer:** Churches are now closed for private prayer

*As our Father entrusted the care of his only Son to St Joseph, we call on him in prayer to protect and guide us gently through these troubled times.  
St Joseph, pray for us.*

**A message from Fr John**

As we enter this next stage of responding to impact of the coronavirus I am very conscious of you my Parish Family. Be assured that as these weeks unfold I will do all that is possible to support the faith and families of our community.

Please check our website regularly with regards updates and suggested prayers and reflections.

If you have any concerns please contact the Parish Office.

I will be meeting with the Parish Team this week to review office hours and how we might best respond to your questions, concerns and needs.

At this stage the one thing we can do as a Parish Family is to pray. One simple suggestion is that at the time you may have attended weekday or weekend Mass you pause and pray at home. Just imagine the power of that community prayer celebrated in our own home but in union with all the others who stop at pray.

That prayer might be the rosary, reading scripture, praying other prayers are important to you or simply sitting in silence with the care and wellbeing of all. Or you might pray the following prayer to St Joseph.



**St Joseph You were receptive to God working in your life. Help us by your prayers at this time of trial.**

**You kept Jesus and Mary under your watchful care: may your prayers assist our local Church to respond to those in need.**

**You taught the Christ Child your trade and prayers: help us to follow his example of love.**

**You were part of God's plan for all humanity: assist us to be vigilant and responsible this day.**

**You spent your life in service: may we be mindful of others, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, caring for them in these difficult days.**

**You trusted in the clear primacy of God over all history and every situation: help us to grow in faith and pray to the Father, *Thy will be done.***

**Amen**

This morning in my prayer I read the following reflection:

The truth is that we must pray for the strength to do what we are meant to do. We must pray for the courage to meet the challenges of life. We must pray for the endurance it will take to go on even when nothing changes. We must pray that the Spirit of God is with us as we do what must be done. Sr. Joan Chittister OSB, *The Breath of the Soul*.  
Let us be people of prayer during these times.