

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

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3rd June 2021

PARISH UPDATE 63

Greetings from lockdown as we extend into another week of the restrictions!

For Parish activities the situation continues as for the past week: our churches are closed to all activity. See an attachment with this letter for several ways of accessing TV and online Masses.

What timing – in so many ways! For the Church calendar, this coming Sunday is the ‘Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ’ – the Eucharist, which is such an important identifying mark of who we are. In Eucharist we gather to celebrate and share in the continuing presence amongst us and for us of the Risen Christ, given to us ‘food for the journey’, ‘strength for our lives’, ‘nourishment for our spirits’. The other great feast of Eucharist is on Holy Thursday when the centre is Jesus’ service to us and His instruction to us to ‘go and do likewise’. Every time we gather for Sunday (and on other days) Eucharist, we share in the faith of one another and are encouraged by that, we take in the wisdom, instruction, reassurance, and energy of the Word of God – and we are given the life of Christ in the Holy Meal who gives Himself to us all over again! And we can’t do that these weeks, and pointedly, on the very feast of Eucharist!

Our schedule for Baptisms had just begun to settle into its new routine, and now two weekends’ have had to be cancelled/postponed. Our process calls parents and godparents to a Saturday night/Sunday morning Mass with their child, presents them to the community, and anoints them with the Oil of Catechumens. In the following weeks, the family is called to the continuation of the Baptism with more family and friends – at 12noon at Sacred Heart on the first Sunday of the month and at Emmaus on the third Sunday of the month.

That very neat pattern will now have to be re-jigged because of these two lockdown weekends.

However it’s not all about us. I came across this prayer that keeps us thinking – and praying - more broadly than our own situations:

BEATITUDES FOR COVID SAFE

Blessings for those who have lost their life, that they come to know the joy of the Risen Lord.

Blessings for those who are sick and dying, that they may come to know healing and peace.

Blessings for those who are isolating, that they may overcome their fears and anxiety.

Blessings for those who are aged, lonely and housebound, that they may never feel forsaken.

Blessings for the scientists and researchers, that their work may bear fruit.

Blessings for our civic leaders, that they may make wise decisions for the common good.

Blessings for our doctors, nurses and frontline health care workers, that their works of service may be richly blessed.

Blessings for people of faith, that they may be the face of Christ in moments of suffering.

Blessings for the families who have become isolated from each other, and the ones who sacrifice personal well-being, that they may come to know that still feel the love of those they are missing.

As restrictions weigh heavily on us, may our hearts remain open and our spirits remain hopeful.

from Fr Jamie Collins, Catholic Parish of Harristown, Diocese of Toowoomba

Another attachment with this letter is a reflection by our Parishioner Sr Judith Geddes on the mother of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. Once again it grounds Mary’s life and faith into our ‘real world’.

Best wishes and blessings to all as we head onwards! Stay well, be hope

Maurie Cooney
(Parish Priest)