

4 June 2020

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

### **RESUMPTION OF PUBLIC MASSES IN SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL, HAMILTON**

With the easing of COVID-19 related restrictions that took effect from 1 June 2020, it is now possible to resume the celebration of Mass in the Cathedral, subject to certain continuing restrictions and requirements. These requirements and restrictions are intended to ensure the continuing protection of everyone, and in doing so permit a further easing in coming weeks and months.

Having taken the time to ensure that the Cathedral can meet the requirements and restrictions, the public celebration of Mass, both weekdays and weekends, will resume with effect from **Tuesday 9 June 2020**, and subject to the requirements set out below.

### **NUMBERS OF ATTENDEES AT MASS**

Under the current regulations, the upper limit of people who can attend Mass, or other religious services, is limited to **fifty (50) people**. This rule must be strictly observed, and no exceptions can be made under any circumstances. The limit of **fifty (50) people** also applies to the use of the Cathedral for private prayer.

**For Weekday Mass:** This number should be easily accommodated within the Cathedral for weekday Mass, though it will be monitored closely for compliance.

**For Sunday Masses:** Parishioners would be aware that our Sunday Masses regularly attract more than the limit of 50 people. So that everyone who may wish to attend has an equal and equitable opportunity to do so, registration in advance will be required (see below).

Please note that the Bishop has dispensed all members of the faithful, except priests, from their obligation to attend Mass on Sunday. All members of the faithful are invited to keep Sunday holy in some appropriate way. For suggestions, please visit the diocesan website ([www.mn.catholic.org.au/news-events/covid-19-update](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/news-events/covid-19-update)).

### **REGISTERING TO ATTEND SUNDAY MASS**

- Registration to attend Sunday Mass in the Cathedral will open at 9am on the Monday beforehand, and close promptly at midday on the Friday immediately before the Sunday.
- Registration is valid only for one week; you must register separately for each subsequent Sunday.
- To register your wish to attend one of the Sunday Masses in the Cathedral, you must do so by visiting the Cathedral website ([www.sacredhearthamilton.org.au](http://www.sacredhearthamilton.org.au)), and clicking on the registration button on the right hand column.



- If you do not have the ability to register via the website, please contact the Parish Office where staff will be able to do so on your behalf.
- If the number wishing to attend is above the limit of 50 persons, a 'lottery' will determine those who will be able to celebrate each Mass on each weekend. Those selected to attend will be contacted on Friday afternoon/evening.
- Only those whose names have been selected will be permitted entry to the Cathedral for each Mass. There will be no exceptions to this requirement.
- You will be required to provide your telephone number and/or email address as part of the registration process. This is a requirement of the current Public Health Order, and there can be no exception made.
- When attending Mass, please have your name 'ticked off' the list that is being monitored by a volunteer.

### **SOME CAUTION TO OUR VULNERABLE**

While we look forward to the day when we can welcome all our community back to the celebration of Mass, there are some whom for the time being we would encourage not to join us for the celebration of Mass.

Those who fall into the most vulnerable categories are those over the age of 70, those who have a compromised immune system, and those with chronic medical conditions.

We also ask those who are sick or are symptomatic with colds, the flu, or other illnesses to refrain from attending.

The Cathedral will continue to live-stream the 9.30am Sunday morning Mass, and we hope that this may assist vulnerable parishioners to stay in touch with the liturgical life of the Cathedral.

### **WHEN ATTENDING THE CATHEDRAL**

Since the presence of COVID-19 in our communities remains, I respectfully ask you to observe the following precautions while in the Cathedral, whether attending Mass or for private prayer:

- Only one door to the Cathedral will be open – the side door nearest the diocesan offices – and there will be no need to touch door handles to enter or exit the Cathedral.
- Please make use of the hand sanitiser on entrance and exit.
- Some seating in the Cathedral will be roped off – please do not sit in those seats.
- Please observe the suggested physical distancing requirement of 1.5m from other people; this requirement does not apply to people from the same household.
- Please refrain from physical acts of devotion that require the touching or kissing of items within the Cathedral, such as statue, icons, etc.
- The confessional will not be used until further notice; when confession is being celebrated, the priest will sit in a discreet part of the Cathedral where physical distancing can be maintained while respecting the privacy of those wishing to make their confession.

### **ADAPTATIONS TO THE CELEBRATION OF MASS**

The Cathedral has already made significant adaptations to the way Mass is celebrated since we started live-streaming the Sunday morning Mass. Regular viewers of the live-stream will already be familiar with



some of them. We are confident that those adaptations are satisfactory to ensure the health and safety of those who will now be attending Mass again. We will continue to monitor these adaptations and will make further changes if they are considered necessary.

Please be aware of the following significant adaptations:

- Only one Reader will be required for the time being, and this is being organised on a week by week basis.
- Communion will only be distributed by the Priest Celebrant.
- Communion will only be distributed under one kind, i.e. the Chalice will not be offered for the time being.
- Communion will only be distributed in the hand for the time being.
- There will be no Procession of the Gifts for the time being.
- Collections will not be taken up for the time being. Instead, those attending will be invited to place their contributions in two clearly labelled receptacles as they enter the Cathedral. Parishioners who wish to consider electronic contributions should contact the Parish Office for more information.
- The Sign of Peace will be given without physical contact, i.e. with a bow, or a wave, etc.
- Printed bulletins will be available at entrance to the Cathedral – please collect your own and take it with you from the Cathedral when you leave.
- Communal singing will not take place for the time being. A small group or a single cantor may be present.

I recognise that some of what is temporarily required of us will be strange, even foreign, to us. We look forward to the time – hopefully not that far away – when we can once again celebrate the fullness of our liturgical life in our Cathedral. Until that time comes, we do the best we can, and work within the limits that have been set down for us to resume the public celebration of Mass.

Above all, I would like to acknowledge and thank all those among our community of faith who have been so supportive during the difficult times we have all faced. I thank you in anticipation for your continuing patience and support as we navigate the changing circumstances in which we live.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fr. Andrew Doohan', written in a cursive style.

(Fr) Andrew Doohan  
Rector