

## A letter to the parish from Fr Colin on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2020

Dear all in the parish community,

Although I've been in touch via the parish bulletin and our weekly online Masses it has been some time since I actually wrote to you all and I thought that this might be a good time to do that.

In the first place I hope that you and those dear to you are keeping well and happy in these challenging times. We are so fortunate to be in a country where we have so far escaped the worst ravages of this terrible virus but our thought and prayers of course are with those many parts of the world where people have been so sorely affected.

### **Opportunity to attend Mass returns to our parish life:**

As you know the NSW Government has provided for some relieving of social restrictions and one aspect of this is that we are now able to gather for Mass and to share in Holy Communion in small groups of ten, which I'm sure brings great joy to you all after this long separation from gathering as a parish community and sharing in the blessed gift of the Eucharist.

I might at this point just set out the arrangements that will be in place from this Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May:

Our way of sharing in the Eucharistic celebration will be twofold: for Sundays we will continue to provide Mass online with a small choir; on weekdays we will provide either one or two Masses each day at which ten people can be in attendance on each occasion. These will be simple weekday Masses – but they will be precious opportunities to gather with fellow members of our community, to enter into the celebration of the Eucharist together and to share in Holy Communion.

It will thus be necessary to register to attend Mass so that a maximum of ten people are in attendance on each occasion. The NSW Government requires us to maintain a register of who is in attendance at each Mass—which would assist in tracing and tracking should someone later be found to unwell. To find out how to book in for Mass please go to our parish website and click on the special hotlink box for this purpose. It will also take you to important further information about these Masses which it will be vital to read.

(Please also give a thought to those you know who may not be comfortable with the use of technology and assist them in booking in for one of the Masses – or let the Parish Office know and we can provide that assistance).

In this way hopefully everyone in the parish will be able to attend the celebration of Mass and share in Holy Communion once every several weeks. And of course everyone can continue to take part in the weekly online Sunday Mass. I do hope

that you'll take advantage of this wonderful opportunity. And for those of you with young families I do hope that you will be able to bring the children back to the rich treasure of the Eucharist. As you would understand, it is not possible to book in for a second Mass until we have given everyone who wishes to avail themselves of this opportunity the chance to take part in Mass. Once that is the case we can then begin the cycle of bookings again – we'll advise you of this in both the parish bulletin and on the parish website.

There will of course be no physical sharing of the Sign of Peace at Mass and we will have arrangements to ensure the safe reception of Holy Communion. In our parish Holy Communion will not be given on the tongue—this is a conscientious decision by Fr Thomas and myself for the sake of our own health and the health of the community.

As you know our parish finances have been greatly affected by us not having our weekly collections and so the facility to contribute to both First and Second Collection will be available at all these Masses - for health reasons we will not pass around the baskets but boxes for the First and Second Collections will be available at the doors. And at Lindfield church the Tap and Go machines will also be available.

At this stage our weekly Mass roster will be: · **Mondays:** 10am and 7pm at Killara; **Tuesdays:** 10am at Killara; 12 noon at Lindfield; **Wednesdays:** 10am and 12 noon at Lindfield; **Thursdays:** 10am usually at Killara, though at Lindfield this Thursday; 7:00pm usually at Lindfield, though at Killara this Thursday; **Fridays:** 10am at Lindfield; 7pm at Killara; **Saturdays:** 10am and 12 noon at Killara.

You are of course welcome to choose either church depending on the day and time that suits you. **Please see the homepage of our parish website ([www.lindfieldkillara.org.au](http://www.lindfieldkillara.org.au)) for how to book a place at Mass, or (if this link works!) [CLICK HERE](#).**

**Baptisms** may also now be celebrated (with a maximum of 10 people and only one family at a time). **The Sacrament of Reconciliation** will be available for ten minutes after each of the Mass celebrations listed above. It is also now possible for twenty people to attend a **funeral liturgy** (30 if it is outdoors at a graveside Service) though of course social distancing requirements must be observed.

Also, the good news is that our churches will now return to being open each day for personal prayer, though they will be locked when Mass is being celebrated as we must comply with the rule of a maximum of ten people. The parish bulletin this Sunday will detail the opening times of both our churches.

## **Our parish community life in the present situation**

While this is a welcome development in our community life of faith, things are still far from returning to normal. I hope that you will continue to draw upon the online resources we have provided to sustain our parish life. Please consider being part of the many parish activities which now take place online – it's not just a matter of whether the activity is one which attracts us but rather seeing them as opportunities to minister, to give, to one another by our involvement – and to keep our parish community strong. The special section of our website gives details of how to take part in the many activities. Activities include online Mass here in our parish, resources for parents and children, home liturgical celebrations, Sunday online morning gatherings, Scripture study groups, adult faith education, youth groups, young adults group, meditation, book group, and more. To access all this please head to that special section of our website ([www.lindfieldkillara.org.au](http://www.lindfieldkillara.org.au)) entitled 'Parish Life in the Current Situation' which is a special hotlink box on the homepage of our parish website – or, if this link works (!), just **[click here](#)**.

Fr Thomas and I continue to keep you in our prayers. We hope that you and your loved ones are well and that you have not been too adversely affected by either the economic effects of the health crisis or by the isolation. We have volunteers in the parish who are happy to call and have a chat from time to time if the experience of the isolation is difficult for you. Just contact the Parish Office – 9416 3702 (this number is also being attended to on weekends in the current situation – though only for calls of a pastoral nature such as just mentioned).

Finally, can I urge you to ensure that you read our parish bulletin each week. It is available on the parish website by late afternoon each Friday. It is our way of keeping in touch with you, providing important information and updates and providing some nourishing spiritual reading.

I hope to see you soon at one of our Masses with ten people or at one of our many online activities and gatherings. In these challenging times let's keep one another as members of our parish community in our hearts, our thoughts and our prayers as we look forward to the day when we, and all our fellow human beings, can once again walk freely in our beautiful world.

In Christ Jesus.

*Fr Colin*