



Most Rev Anthony Randazzo  
*Bishop of Broken Bay*

Message for BBNeighbourhoods  
12 May 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

This week I am writing to you from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference. The Bishops of Australia meet in Plenary twice a year, in the months of May and November. Normally we gather in North Sydney at the shrine of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop, but lately due to building works, we have been gathering in Melbourne. This year, as we continue to find new ways of living in a COVID-19 environment, I am in the Diocese and we are meeting via video conference.

To be honest, constant video-conferencing is a challenge as not everyone is IT savvy. I am also finding that by the end of each day I am mentally fatigued, so I take to the footpath for a run or walk to clear my head. The experience has given me an even deeper respect for our teachers who have been working double-time to ensure that our children, especially in our Catholic Schools, are able to continue with their studies. The experience has also reinforced for me the marvelous work being carried out by so many parents and carers as technology plays a greater part in family life and learning.

As the Government gradually lifts some of the restrictions, many of us are asking when will we be able to gather once more in our churches for prayer and worship? The Catholic Bishops of NSW/ACT have written to the Premier offering our recommendations regarding the gradual reopening of our churches. Key to our proposal is the reassurance that our people will continue to maintain the physical distancing required during the health crisis. We would also want to ensure that there is a high level of safety due to thorough cleaning programs. As we continue to dialogue with the Government, I would ask you to pray for the best outcome – the safe reopening of our churches.

In the meantime, I would like to thank the priests, deacons and parish community leaders who are tirelessly reaching out via livestreaming and ongoing pastoral care. A special word of gratitude to the members of my Chancery and Office of the Bishop.

Over the past few weeks, I have received numerous messages from people who are staying connected as well as from people who had been away from our community of the Church and who are reconnecting. It is great to have you with us again as we strive to live as disciples of the Lord.

Please continue to pray for me and the other Australian bishops as we conclude our Plenary on Thursday and be reassured of my constant prayers for you as I bring your needs and intentions to the altar of the Lord.

Blessings and thanks,  
+Anthony