

Dear Fathers and Deacons,

Our grasp over the COVID19 virus remains elusive. Just as we thought that the situation was under control, the last day has seen a concerning outbreak in our own Diocese on the Northern Beaches.

The NSW Government has now asked all residents in the affected area to remain home for the next three days. The bulletin can be found here: [https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/news/Pages/20201217\\_02.aspx](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/news/Pages/20201217_02.aspx)

In light of this, and in order that our people be kept as safe as possible, I ask that all our churches in the Parishes of Pittwater, The Lakes, Warringah, North Harbour, and Manly-Freshwater be closed for this weekend. Since this is at my request, the obligation for the faithful to participate in Sunday Mass (can.1247) is lifted for the people of the Northern Beaches for this weekend. I will review the situation early next week. Where possible, you may choose to resume livestreaming the Mass for this weekend. This service continues to be made available from our Cathedral on Sunday morning at 9.30AM.

Given that people from the Northern Beaches often travel to other centres such as Frenchs Forest, Chatswood and Lower North Shore I ask that at the churches in these parishes every precaution be taken to ensure that COVID Safety Plans are in place, particularly with the use of sanitiser and cleaning and recording of attendees at Mass.

I am particularly mindful of the disruption in people's lives and plans that this development will occasion. Many would have been planning travel to see loved ones they have not seen in many months. It surrounds our forthcoming celebration of Christmas with some anxiety. The situation may be distressing for families. I hold them all in my prayer and ask that you do the same. I am very conscious of our clergy in our affected parishes, and so we pray that the Lord may keep them safe during this time.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+Anthony

Most Rev Anthony Randazzo