

From The Churchwardens

COVID-19 UPDATE

19 August 2020

In his weekly letter to the Churchwardens and Rectors this week— Archbishop Glenn expressed his gratitude for the way the diocesan churches have “stepped up” and established effective and well implemented safety plans. A check of the NSW Records by the diocese for the insurers showed that all 277 parishes in the diocese had registered their plans and are compliant. In many cases these plans had excluded in-person services but in the case of St John’s—your willingness to work with the Churchwardens as we manage the regulations and our plan has seen us able to maintain this service each Sunday. The Archbishop advised that the NSW Minister for Health had contacted him on Monday to investigate the mandating of masks at services—but with many churches, including St John’s, voluntarily requiring masks at all services along with their other processes, this was seen as an unnecessary further regulation. However, it is critical that we don’t weary of the vigilance in keeping this COVID scourge at bay whilst still maintaining an operational society. NSW has avoided a Victorian style lockdown so far and all the groups like the St John’s community of faith have collectively played a major role in that.

The Churchwardens are continually reviewing the plan for its relevance and safety to ensure that safety is never compromised, but at the same time any “bureaucracy” is kept to a necessary minimum. With that in mind, some further tweaking has occurred this week to cover errors and omissions in the pre-registration process that inevitably occur. However, the essence of our plan remains intact in the interests of streamlining your arrival process and participation whilst maintaining the due-diligence of cross checking each attendee for any possible exposure and even then minimising the risk of that occurring. If you would like to read the details of our protocols— it is posted in the narthex or you can ask the office to e-mail you a copy.

The essence of our COVID Safety Plan has remained constant:

*** Please ensure you have no symptoms of a throat tickle, running nose, cough or a temperature over 37.5° C.** If you do—please don’t attend. We have a nurse in the sidesperson team if you have any questions or doubts and she has the final decision as to whether you attend or not from a health

perspective. However, if in doubt—please join our on-line service at 9:30AM on our Facebook page from your home.

*** Please bring your own mask with you and wear it before you enter the church and leave it on until you are back in your car.** We have a limited supply if you are unable to procure one, but we are trying to preserve those for the sanctuary team and sidespersons.

*** It is also critical to avoid mingling and socialising in the narthex** to minimise the risk of any contact to sidespersons or each other in a confined area.

*** Please also pre-register with the office if you would like to attend.** We now have a process in place if parishioners forget—but **please avoid having to use it by letting the office know by Wednesday 5:00PM each week.**

Finally ...

The Churchwardens prayerfully request on behalf of all of us that each of you continue to maintain your financial support for the parish. The Treasurer will be releasing a budget update incorporating the recent extension of the JobKeeper programme in the weekly update over the next few weeks. However, our budget is dependent on the continued offertory receipts from all of us and we encourage you to continue with your financial commitment.

In thanking us all, the Archbishop concluded his letter this week as follows:

“I am grateful to God for your love and care for your people in these extraordinary days and I encourage you to continue to do so ‘more and more’ (a phrase echoed in the Bishop’s Confirmation prayer), as the Apostle Paul likewise encouraged the church at Thessalonica:

Now concerning your love for one another, we have no need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more. (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)”

The Churchwardens

Chris Russell AM JK Seo James Winter