



# Diocese of Armidale

Ph: (02) 6772 4971  
Fax: (02) 5701 5140  
Email: [chancery@armidale.catholic.org.au](mailto:chancery@armidale.catholic.org.au)

Catholic Chancery Office  
3/131 Barney Street  
PO Box 93  
Armidale NSW 2350

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As you will be aware the Federal Government has prohibited all indoor gatherings of 100 or more people and all outdoor gatherings of 500 or more people. The Diocese is complying with all regulations and will ensure that all necessary precautions are taken. Your priests are being providing with regular updates and directives to ensure that all Parish activities and pastoral care is carried out safely for all concerned. If the regulations change the Diocese will respond accordingly.

Mass and the Sacraments are at the heart of our life as Catholics. Therefore, our Parishes will maintain the public celebration of Mass and the provision of the Sacraments whilst ever it is possible and safe to do so. However, there will be people for whom it is not advisable or safe (either for themselves or others) to attend Sunday Mass.

I hereby dispense the elderly, who are 70 years and older; and those who are sick and infirm; those who have underlying health issues, for example with compromised immune systems; and those with chronic conditions that place them at risk from the corona virus from their obligation to participate in Sunday Mass.

This dispensation also extends to those who have a cold or influenza or are generally feeling quite unwell and to those who have a genuine fear of attending communal gatherings.

There may be some changes to the Parish Mass programme in some Parishes. Regular updates will be provided on the Diocesan website [www.armidale.catholic.org.au](http://www.armidale.catholic.org.au) by simply clicking on the Icon for Parish Mass times and selecting your Parish. Our priests and I are committed to serving you and will continue to pastorally care for you in these times. We all need to care for each other.

If you are unable to be present at a celebration of the Eucharist, I encourage you to participate in other ways such as a time in personal and family prayer, reflecting on the Scriptures, making a spiritual communion, or participating in a Mass on-line through <https://www.youtube.com/user/cathnews>

Please join me in praying to Our Lady of the Rosary, the Patroness of the Diocese, by praying the Rosary to seek Our Lady's intercession and protection. I encourage you to pray this in your homes, workplaces and school classrooms.

I pray for the victims of Coronavirus and thank you for your understanding and patience

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy  
**Bishop of Armidale**  
20<sup>th</sup> March, 2020