

One Day at a Time

Father Tim's Daily Reflections
during the COVID-19 crisis

Sunday 17 May

Sixth Sunday of Eastertide

5.20pm – I was waiting all last week for the new Directives from the Archdiocese about how we will implement Phase 2 of our State's COVID Roadmap. I had met with **Daniel Lynch**, the Director of the Archbishop's Office last Thursday (after our Tuesday meeting was postponed), and noticed that he was a bit tight-lipped when I asked questions about the upcoming Directives. He assured me that the Archdiocese had adopted much of what I had sent in terms of proposals for going forward.

However, when I raised the topic of how to proceed with First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation for our young people, he said nothing – he merely gave a strained smile. He promised that the **new Directives** would be released first thing the next morning – last Friday.

They were finally released at the end of the day on Friday – too late for me and other priests gathered for our monthly **ACCC** (Australian Confraternity of Catholic Clergy) meeting at noon. So we were reduced to guessing what would be announced.

As I wrote in this weekend's parish newsletter, we can rejoice that the number of attendees now permitted in church at any one time (for Mass, Rosary, Adoration or private prayer) has been raised to 20, plus up to 10 additional persons directly involved in the liturgy (priest & liturgical ministers, plus live-streaming personnel). ***Please consult this weekend's parish newsletter for more details.***

However, the celebration of the Sacraments for our young people is **still suspended**. I thought of writing to the Archbishop and asking for a dispensation, to permit us to give First Holy Communion to one or two children at each of our weekday Masses, and to permit their families to attend. We have 30 candidates this year, and it would take six weeks of weekday Masses to accommodate everyone (or fewer weekends if we could have 2 children receive First Communion on some days, depending on the number of people attending along with them).

But I read in the paper today that the Premier is hoping to move the date for implementing Phase 3 **forward to June 8**. So rather than put the Archbishop on the spot, I have taken a deep breath and decided to wait until then to see what happens. I do hope the Archdiocese has a plan for celebrating these important Sacraments, and isn't falling into its usual mode of being reactive rather than proactive. Time will tell.

I keep thinking that I'm going to get a lot of things done – my office is a disaster! But the time that I set aside for working on such projects is quickly consumed with meetings and appointments. As I've mentioned before, preparing and executing the daily live-streamed Mass takes 5 to 6 hours each day: the homily, PowerPoint, script for the computer operator, and organising the day's music (I compose most of the Responsorial Psalm tunes because the weekday psalms often don't have any music – composers have focussed on the Sunday psalms, of course).

And now that we have resumed Bible study and RCIA, there is preparation for both of those evening events as well. So I'm kept busy – and my office remains in disaster mode.

Bible study last week was a bit difficult: for some reason, every time switched from PowerPoint slides to camera angles of me and the participants, the sound went off. So the next evening, we didn't use PowerPoint at RCIA, and all was well. But this is a mystery to me, because of course we use both PowerPoint and cameras at all of our Masses, with no problem at all. So the man from Cosmic Sound is coming out tomorrow (Monday) to check into that, and also to install another cable,

and hopefully address the problem of the background 'clicking' in our audio during Mass. If he can fix these problems, then we're all done with our set-up of our live-streaming system – hurrah!

If you want to attend a Mass, please ring the office (9271 5253) and – slowly and clearly – leave your name, phone number and the day you'd like to attend 5.45pm Mass on a weekday, or 4.30pm for a Saturday Vigil Mass. *Because we're limited to 20 attendees, you can't show up without an advance booking – sorry.* But at least we're moving forward.

You're also welcome to attend Bible Study on Tuesdays, 7.30 to 8.30pm, or RCIA on Wednesdays, 7.30 to 8.30pm. There's no problem with reservations for Bible Study, I think; as for RCIA, the actual candidates for the Sacraments have first priority – there are 7 of them. Others who wish to attend should please let me know. Thanks!