



13 September 2021

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

### **Resumption of Weekday Masses**

After consulting the priests of the Diocese and after they and their parish staff have made the necessary provisions to comply with the Level 2 restrictions I am pleased to be able to announce that weekday Masses will resume in the Diocese of Hamilton on Wednesday the 15th of September, the Memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows. Thank you for your patience in waiting for this announcement.

These Masses will follow the Level 2 regulations. Please, wear a mask. Please scan or sign in. Please do not give grief to those who ensure we do not exceed 50 people at each Mass. Your local parishes will publish details about when Masses will be offered in your parish. The restrictions of Communion on the hand only, no Communion from the chalice, no singing, no physical contact during the sign of peace and no holy water in the church porches return. I know there are many parishioners in the Diocese who like to be daily Mass goers. Your daily attendance at Mass, however, may stop other people attending any Mass so please be aware of others wanting to attend a weekday Mass. The 8.00am Cathedral Mass will be livestreamed Monday to Saturday at the following link <https://www.cdh.org.nz/livestream>. The Mass is available to view later in the day.

Unfortunately we are unable to offer Sunday Mass at this stage. The dispensation from Sunday Mass applies during this time. I am continuing to look at how this might be possible to meet the desire for Sunday Mass across the whole Diocese in a sustainable manner. In the meantime I will continue to offer a livestream Mass each Sunday at 9.00am at the same link above <https://www.cdh.org.nz/livestream>. Despite our inability to gather together for Sunday Eucharist in our churches can I encourage you to use the livestream Masses or some other form of prayer to keep the Lord's day holy in response to the commandment.

Can I take this opportunity to remind you of why we are doing this. Every week, since Lockdown last year, I, like many of our priests, have had parishioners ask me to pray for family members who have Covid somewhere in the world. I get asked to pray for

those who have died of Covid. I get asked to pray for those who are having ongoing medical care from Covid-related complications. I get asked to pray for those who have lost employment or businesses. I get asked to pray for those who are experiencing fear and mental stress. With Our Lady of the Sorrows you and I are invited to stand at the foot of the cross of suffering that Covid is bringing to our world. We believe in a Christ who embraced suffering in his life and who identifies with those who suffer in the world. We know that where the Suffering Christ is found in his people, his Mother is also there, praying for them, praying with us to her Son.

As we contemplate Mary at the foot of the cross she seems so powerless in the face of injustice and cruelty. But in her silent acceptance she recognises what he is doing is for the salvation of the world and offers her silent yes. In the same way, we too can feel powerless in the face of this pandemic and frustrated by the restrictions that we seem to be crucifying our parish communities and us in our own spiritual life. But let us remember we do this for the life and wellbeing of others. We have seen how one case spread so quickly in Auckland. We have seen how the virus got out of control in Fiji. Our acting together with this is part of our consistent ethic for life. We do not want this to take root in New Zealand and decimate those vulnerable to this virus.

With Our Lady of Sorrows may we have gracious acceptance. With Our Lady of Sorrows may we offer our own personal sacrifice at the foot of the cross. And with Our Lady of Sorrows let us have a heart for all entrusted to her maternal care, let us have a heart for each other as we join together to overcome this latest outbreak.

Our Lady of Sorrows, pray for us.

Yours sincerely in Christ the Good Shepherd

+ *Steve Lowe*

✠ Steve Lowe  
BISHOP OF HAMILTON



**TOGETHER  
ON THE JOURNEY**  
LIVING NO LONGER FOR OURSELVES BUT FOR CHRIST