



# Archdiocese of Cape Town



No 4/2020

## Newsletter form the Archbishop's office

Dear Bishop, Monsignor, Father, Deacon, Sister, Brother

I trust that you are all well and keeping safe. During these days we must pray fervently for the coming of the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts in a special that we may persevere and cope with these uncertain and anxious times. There are just a few points I wish to bring to your attention:

### **Transfer / Appointment:**

Fr Zygmunt Kurzawinski, the Rector of the Redemptoris Mater Seminary, Rondebosch will be returning to his home archdiocese of Washington D.C. to take up a new appointment. We thank him sincerely for the service he rendered to this Archdioceses and wish him every blessing.

Fr Lorenzo Ricci will replace Fr Zygmunt as the new Rector. I wish him many blessings in his new appointment which will take effect from 15 June 2020.

### **Levy/Medical Aid:**

In consultation with the Finance department, I write to inform you that the Medical Aid subscription deduction from parish accounts will be reinstated from the month of June 2020. As things stand, it is likely that the pension and levy deductions will be reinstated in July but further information regarding this will be forwarded to you..

### **Opening of the Churches:**

As you have heard from our country's President, we will be moving to level 3 lockdown from 1 June 2020 However, there is still talk of the hotspots remaining at level 4. The Government has yet to promulgate level 3 regulations which will presumably include the easing of restrictions and more freedom of movement and, as we heard on Tuesday night, public worship will once again be allowed but under strict restrictions.

*Please note:* Under no condition may there be a public Mass on Sunday 31 May 2020. We are busy preparing the protocols for the re-opening of Churches for public worship with no more than 50 participants – these will be sent out as soon as possible. However, as things stand, the Government regulations for alert level 3, and the regulations for public worship, have not yet been promulgated – we only know the broad “brush strokes”. Until they are promulgated, we cannot finalize our

Archdiocesan protocol and, again, we cannot even be sure at this time whether we will be moving to level 3 in the Western Cape which, as you know, has the greatest number of infections as well as deaths due to Covid 19.

It is imperative that we move slowly and in a staged way while we return to ministry – infection rates could soar if we move forward quickly and without proper thought. Please wait for the Archdiocesan Protocol and encourage your parishioners to be patient and to persevere. The greatest danger is moving headlong into this. To make it clear: no return to public worship in the Archdiocese is allowed (apart from the provisions given for funerals) until our protocol has been sent out and a definite decision has been made as to when and how we start re-opening our churches.

### **Opening of the Chancery:**

We are also working towards the opening of the Chancery from Tuesday 2 June 2020. The opening will happen in a gradual manner, making sure that all safety measures and protocols are in place.

### **Behaviour Change:**

I appeal to all priests to use social media and any other form of communication to encourage behaviour change among parishioners. We are aware that this is crucial in limiting the spread of Covid 19 and it is worth noting that a number of churches in other countries that re-opened had to close down again due to infections occurring in church. The success of our re-opening depends on everybody's willingness to obey the regulations and the protocol that we will draw up. I suggest that you also encourage parishioners to listen to my reflection of yesterday (<https://youtu.be/oluqFzgrJfw>) and also to read the information and watch the video clip from the SACC (see below).

### **SACC Covid – 19 message:**

The South African Council of Churches has provided some useful information regarding COVID – 19 pandemic and the way forward. Kindly click the attached link to access the information and may I request you to share it with your parish community as well.

<https://churchinaction.org.za/index.php/resources-tools/about-corona/watch-about-corona>

The video clip is also particularly useful: and you could send it out on WhatsApp or other media:

<https://youtu.be/IngwzeK7TCA> - it is available in most South African languages

### **Day of Prayer:**

The President has called for an inter-faith Day of Prayer on Sunday 31 May 2020. Within the next couple of days we will circulate special prayers which can be used by all parishioners. Please encourage parishioners to make a special effort to use them, that we may be in solidarity with all people of faith, seeking God's protection and help in the face of this pandemic.

### **COVID – 19 Food Parcel appeal:**

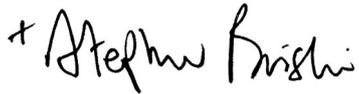
I attach a letter from Bishop Sylvester requesting your assistance in our effort to feed the hungry during this time of ill health, suffering and poverty. I know that many parishes are also doing something to help those in need, but this campaign should be supported by all – it is something we do together as *Catholics* of the Archdiocese.

**Chrism Mass:**

Since the lockdown restrictions may be eased, we are considering the celebration of the Chrism Mass albeit with a reduced number of priests. Possibly the Deans and a few Deacons, Religious and lay people would participate. The Deans would then distribute the new oils to parishes within their deaneries. Further information will follow.

Imploring the blessing and gift of the Holy Spirit, I wish you joy and peace.

Sincerely in Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+Stephen Brislin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

+Stephen Brislin  
Archbishop of Cape Town

28 May 2020