



DIFFERENT WAYS OF CONNECTING

With COVID-19 essentially shutting down the world as we knew it, we have had to adapt to many different ways of life. One of these being unable to attend Mass and liturgical gatherings with limited exceptions for funerals and weddings. Many dioceses and parishes are now providing resources and access to livestreaming of Masses. In the Diocese of Ballarat, Masses can be viewed [here](#).

We hope to give you a snapshot over the next editions of e-News into how the parishes are coping with the differences that COVID-19 has brought to our diocese.

Read below some of these thoughts and perspectives from ***Sacred Heart Parish, Mildura***:

Fr James Kerr

Society is facing some very trying times at the moment with the outbreak of COVID-19. Our parish communities are sharing in that struggle too. Many are facing anxieties stemming not only from the threat of the virus itself, but also from the very real effect it is having on many people's work situations and livelihoods. All of us are struggling to some extent with the difficulties that come with social distancing and isolation. Just when we would really love to both give and find support in one another, we are facing fairly drastic limitations on our ability to do so.



We have been really blessed here in Sunraysia to have the opportunity to stream our celebrations of the Eucharist. While we may not be able to gather physically, we do still remain united in prayer and solidarity. The streaming helps to remind us of this and strengthen our bonds as we face these difficult times together. The feedback has been very positive. Our parishioners really do draw great strength from seeing their Church and knowing that their fellow parishioners are praying along with them. Of course, we all look forward to the day when we can gather not just virtually, but in reality. It is a great help and support as we face these days.



Finally, I think we need to mention just how fantastic the response from our wider parish community has been during this crisis. Parishioners have shown terrific initiative and generosity in adapting to new circumstances and have been very supportive of Fr Mick and I as we readjust our ministry. We are full of gratitude. Many people are speaking of the good that may come out of these tough times. We haven't had to wait long at all for it to show itself.

Lyn and Colin Welsh

Colin and I are very appreciative of being able to link into the weekly Mass and the Easter Ceremonies at Sacred Heart Church. It means so much to us to feel like we are attending our own Parish Church and to see the faces of our two Priests, Fr Michael and Fr James. If it wasn't for YouTube we wouldn't see them at all and it is good to see them and know they are well and safe. We also feel that while we are attending Mass in our own home, many other Sacred

Heart Parishioners are also in their homes attending Mass. Not the same as being in the Church, but the next best thing.

Colin and I also watched the Good Friday and Easter Sunday Mass on Prime 7 and that was also good, especially for those who do not have computers and those in care institutions.

We are so grateful to our Priests and all others who contribute to filming and music during Mass and will continue to look forward to Mass each week at Sacred Heart Church.

Chris Slattery

In our enforced isolation today, we are fortunate to be able to connect with family and friends by telephone, email, social media, ways that were not available during the Spanish Flu pandemic one hundred years ago.

Thanks to modern technology, we can also access many Masses and religious programs online. So it has been very special for us here in Mildura to have the Sunday Masses and Easter Ceremonies telecast on YouTube from our own parish church by Fr Mick (McKinnon) and Fr James (Kerr).

As a parishioner, I find it both comforting and reassuring to see our own priests celebrating Mass and giving meaningful homilies while we can't be present at Mass in the church. It maintains a link to normality while we are experiencing social isolation. We are so blessed.



Sacred Heart Parish, Mildura Masses can be viewed [here](#).