



HORSHAM PARISH DURING COVID-19

After the Rite of Election at St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat earlier this year, our RCIA candidates and catechumens returned to Horsham full of enthusiasm to continue their journey towards Easter, undergoing the Scrutiny Rites. With the unexpected COVID-19 restrictions, their journey was interrupted with the order of lock down and we were asked to stay home and in isolation. Churches around Australia were closed. We were not really prepared, not ready to face the new challenges in our lives - to stay home and stay in isolation - and we were full of uncertainty. Our ordinary and daily routine was interrupted.

During all of the uncertainties, the presence of God was always there. He comes to us and consoled his people. When the doors of the church were closed, it opened a new way of approaching and evangelising people online. Through this, we are able to meet our God in our homes.



In Horsham, we still have our regular Masses everyday and weekends the same as before, just online. This pandemic couldn't stop us from our longing of God, but it has brought unity to many people. Though we may not have known each other well, through our online prayers and Masses we have become interconnected with one another now more than before. Members of the different groups in facebook and messenger are not only the churchgoers. Many of them are homebound elderly, some of them are people who do not have the opportunity to go to Mass for various reasons, but now we can see them with us online. At this point we have two hundred and eighty one members of the parish community involved in live streaming and they are not just individual persons but families, couples and friends watching together. For those not able to join for live streaming events, they can watch later as events are uploaded [here](#) or shared to the group.

Following on from the live streaming of Masses, I started to organise group accounts in messenger to meet people online to continue the spiritual journey and the journey of our RCIA candidates and catechumens, as well as many other needs of our Horsham parishioners. In our activities we have regular online meetings such as the RCIA group, daily rosary, faith or Bible sharing, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and continue the live streaming of Masses.

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Bible sharing online



Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament Online



Southern Zone Filipino Community
Faith Sharing



Online RCIA



Online Rosary