

DIOCESAN COVID-19 UPDATE

21 October 2020



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MELBOURNE**

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Dear Brothers and Sisters

The latest news and information from the Diocese.

The Archbishop's weekly video

"The small things that matter", this week's video, is found [here](#).

Religious gatherings outdoors

In metropolitan Melbourne, people cannot attend church more than 25km from home, and people from metropolitan Melbourne cannot attend church in regional Victoria.

In both regional Victoria and metropolitan Melbourne, outdoor gatherings and services must maintain 1.5m distance between people and 4sqm per person for the space that is used.

Church lawns and gardens

In metropolitan Melbourne, five people at the same time can now mow lawns and maintain church gardens. This must be outdoors, with masks, social distancing, disinfecting shared equipment and no overlap with other volunteers and no mingling with other people. There are no restrictions in regional Victoria on numbers for maintaining church gardens and lawns.

Letterbox drops

General letterbox drops are now allowed.

Business Support Fund 3

As previously advised we do not yet know whether we are successful in our application for the second round of the Victorian Government's Business Support fund. However, we have been advised that parishes should apply for the third round even while eligibility is being confirmed.



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An application guide is available [here](#), and parishes are encouraged to complete their applications as soon as possible as the funds are limited. The official application closing date is 23 November 2020.

Extreme Hardship Support Program

We have been asked to pass on information on this program and encourage clergy to do so for any appropriate people they know. This program provides emergency financial assistance, information and referral to temporary migrants who are unable to access Commonwealth income support and the International Student Emergency Relief Fund.

To apply for emergency financial assistance, go to www.redcross.org.au/vicrelief. Applicants will need their passport and bank statements showing transactions from the last month. The website has information in simplified Chinese, Farsi, Malay, Nepalese, Spanish, Tamil, Urdu and Vietnamese.

Applicants struggling to find required information or to apply through the online portal should call Red Cross on 1800 855 240.

EFAC conference

EFAC is offering an online conference called "Pitfalls and Possibilities: Charting a Path to COVID normal." This is on Wednesday, 28 October. A link to this webinar is found [here](#).

We remind you that diocesan information and resources related to the pandemic are on the diocesan [website](#) under four main headings: online church, wellbeing, resources for ministry and mission, diocesan information.

Questions or concerns about restrictions, work permits or annual meetings can be directed to Bishop Paul: bishoppaulbarker@melbourneanglican.org.au. Please avoid asking other staff in order to save their time.

Groups using church facilities

We expect that in the next steps to relax restrictions, some groups may be able to hire church facilities again. Please ensure such groups are COVID compliant, clean rooms and toilets, and ensure such groups are allowed to meet under the rules. This may include dancing and tutorial groups. When announcements are made we will endeavour to indicate which groups can use facilities.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus,



Archbishop Philip Freier

