



# CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKHAMPTON

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Prot: 20186:MMsp\_1102

8 April 2020

## **Easter Message from Bishop Michael McCarthy**

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I write to you as we go through this incredibly challenging time in our nation, our communities and our Church. You are all aware of the measures that are being undertaken in response to this coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis facing our nation and the world at this time.

I made the very difficult decision to suspend all Masses and liturgies throughout the Diocese until further notice. This included the Holy Week liturgies as we approach this most holy time in our calendar. The decision was made for the good and health of the faithful and the wider community following much prayer, listening to my priests and discussion with health professionals. In line with this, I dispensed the obligation of the faithful to attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation.

Recent Government directives have now also required the closure of all churches and restrictions on activities we can undertake and I have asked our communities to adhere to these requirements for their own health and that of the community.

I know these times are hard. We cannot gather as we are used to. As a Catholic community we cannot gather in-person to support each other in prayer or to receive the Eucharist. Through these challenges however we are appreciating better what we had and are looking at new ways to connect with each other and our faith.

I am streaming a daily Mass through the [St Joseph's Cathedral, Rockhampton YouTube](#) page to allow people to still connect from their homes with Mass from this Diocese. Resources are being developed to support people in their faith journey and more information and updates are being pushed through Facebook. These can be found on the [Catholic Diocese of Rockhampton website](#) and by following us on Facebook.

At a local level, priests and parishes can still be contacted and are looking to keep supporting their local communities. Initiatives such as video gatherings and messages to connect and phone ministry to check on people are some examples.

In 326 Helena, the mother of Constantine, took a trip to Palestine. Details of her pilgrimage uncovered many people, the followers of Jesus, would celebrate Easter and the events leading up to Easter in the old city of Jerusalem. Christians across the centuries have stopped at Easter time to celebrate the life of Jesus and to reflect on his death and resurrection. This year as we celebrate Easter it will be very quiet. However, we are always reminded that at Easter time Jesus Christ rose from the dead and that he is with us as we walk along our own roads.

**Bishop Michael McCarthy**

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The beautiful story of the road to Emmaus reminds us that Jesus is with us, through the ups and downs of life, and especially during this time of uncertainty. Christ, the Risen One, is in our midst.

My prayer for you this Easter is that Christ is in your lives and with each one of you. May our God bless you and your families. Please be assured of my prayers for everyone of our Diocese, everyone who lives within our boundaries, from Mackay, down to Bundaberg, from the East Coast and way out to the West.

May God bless you all.

Yours sincerely



Most Rev Michael McCarthy  
Bishop of Rockhampton

- An extended video version of Bishop Michael's Easter Message can be found on the St Joseph's Cathedral YouTube page – <https://youtu.be/r0WobB9eDcpw>.
- Easter Services can be found online and via free-to-air television as follows:

| <b>Live stream – from<br/>St Joseph's Cathedral</b>  | <b>National Television<br/>(Free-To-Air)</b>  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Holy Thursday – Mass 6.00pm</li><li>• Good Friday – Stations 9.00am</li><li>• Good Friday – Passion 3.00pm</li><li>• Holy Saturday – Easter Vigil 6.00pm</li><li>• Easter Sunday – Mass 9.30am</li></ul> <p><a href="#">YouTube – St Joseph's Cathedral, Rockhampton</a></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Good Friday – Passion 3.00pm<br/>Live on Channel 7 from St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney</li><li>• Easter Sunday<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Mass for You at Home – 6.00am on WIN television</li><li>○ Easter Mass – 10.30am<br/>Live on Channel 7 from St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney</li></ul></li></ul> |