



Easter is not simply one feast among others, but the "Feast of feasts," the "Solemnity of solemnities," just as the Eucharist is the "Sacrament of sacraments."

(Catechism of the Catholic Church)

31 March 2021

Reverend Fathers and Deacons
OLSC

My Dear Brothers,

One year and one week ago began the first COVID-related lockdown in the Archdiocese of Sydney. I suspect none of us thought that pandemic related restrictions would have persisted as long as they have. And, yet, after that initial lockdown, with the exception of a significant curtailing of music, and the faithful only being able to receive in one kind, the effect on life in the Australian Ordinariate, community-by-community, with the exception of the prolonged subsequent lockdown in Victoria, has not been so significant, as it has been and continues to be, in so many other parts of the world.

Just as we have experienced highly inconsistent restrictions here in Australia, so too in other parts of the world. And, owing to much higher continuing infection rates, the restrictions elsewhere are truly quite burdensome. In my last parish in Canada, in Victoria, British Columbia, since last November they have gone over 130 days without public services during the latest lockdown (over 200 days in the past year). Last week, there was a somewhat bizarre glimmer of hope offered: four public services over the following six weeks would be permitted – only to have that rescinded just days later. Therefore, our Ordinariate brothers and sisters remained locked out of their churches at this most holy time of year – again.

During the past year, internal border closures here at home made planning travel somewhat of a gamble. Thus, I have not made any external-to-NSW visits to our communities. With the sudden outbreak in the past few days in the Brisbane area and northern NSW, the spectre of travel restrictions looms again. I would therefore repeat my suggestion that we arrange community-by-community Zoom calls with me. Our first was held, quite successfully, in Passion Week with our Adelaide faithful. Through Eastertide and beyond, I should like to do the same with our other communities as a stopgap measure until travel is freely restored.

In the days immediately ahead, if your community is among those who are not able to celebrate the Paschal Triduum, please refer to the April newsletter for information on the livestream of all of those services that we shall broadcast from the Seminary of the Good Shepherd Chapel here in Sydney.

My apologies for a less *pastoral* and a rather more *state of affairs* Easter message. With prayerful Paschaltide wishes and blessings
I am your brother in Christ,

Rev Mgr Carl Reid