

**Subject:** COVID-19 Update – sent as email

Today's Gospel starts with Jesus saying to his disciples, "Stay Awake", and that came home to me last Saturday morning at 8 am when the Premier announced [new restrictions](#) after seven people tested positive to COVID-19.

This led to discussions about the impact of this for our parish communities. Our response was deliberately conservative while we assessed the situation. Since then, there has been a revision of those requirements which I now include for your consideration. It goes without saying that our priority is limit any risk of community transmission, hence the "stay awake" imperative translates into our constant vigilance for the sake of our communities and all engaged in the life of our parishes.

Thank you for quickly adapting to stricter gathering rules. We are thankful that community transmission numbers did not multiply and now we can reconsider those earlier guidelines.

### **Recent restrictions for parishes have now been modified.**

Parishes can resume faith-based activities with the occupancy limits determined by the [Industry Plan for Places of Worship](#). These activities include youth groups, Alpha gatherings, sacramental preparation classes and any other faith-based activities of the parish.

- As a reminder, the industry plan does not cover weddings and funerals which currently have a maximum attendance of 100.
- If you are serving food or drink at a faith-based gathering you must also comply with the [Retail Food Services COVID Safe Industry Plan](#).
- Any gatherings that are not faith-based (such as a third party use of parish property) must comply with an Industry Safe Plan.
- You can stay up to date with public contact tracing alert locations by visiting the Queensland Health website [here](#).

We are starting to see some warmer days now and as we approach the weekend, I know many of you will be eager to enjoy our outdoors. If you are thinking of going out, please remember that physical distancing, along with good hand hygiene, is our best defence against this virus. The latest Queensland Health advice is that everyone should consider wearing a mask if they are in a crowded situation and can't maintain physical distancing. It's important to remember that masks only work when used correctly. This short [video](#) show you how to wear and dispose of a mask.

In closing, I sincerely want to acknowledge our parish employees, sacramental and youth ministry coordinators, musicians and all our volunteers for working hard to implement the Industry Plan as seamlessly as possible, to protect our parishioners, ourselves and our community. It is good that our worship and mission can continue in these uncertain days.

Every blessing,

+Ken



**Bishop Ken Howell**

*Auxiliary Bishop - Brisbane*