

Catholic Parish of Whangarei

Ascension 24 May 2020

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Note: *Office is open – Parish phone and email.*



Dear Parishioners

Blessings of peace to you all.

Today is the celebration of the **Ascension of the Lord**. Next week we celebrate the Gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

In the Gospel of Matthew today we have the wonderful consoling reminder from Jesus *“and know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time”*. We depend on the presence, help and guidance of Jesus.

In the First reading from the Acts of the Apostles Jesus commissions them and us to be his witnesses *“indeed to the ends of the world. I can’t help but think – in relation to Israel – Aotearoa NZ is the end of the World!*

We don’t go around looking into the clouds- we are called to look outwards towards others on the mission of Jesus.

I am at a loss to understand why so many things are opening and we cannot gather for Church.

However, we have made a start; St Francis Xavier Church is **open** on Thursdays to Saturdays for **Prayer and Reconciliation** 11:30 am to 1:30 pm.

We are in hopeful anticipation for celebrating Masses and Liturgies next weekend.

Again, we await the Government announcement on Monday. Our bishops have made a strong plea to be able to gather in groups of at least 100.

Even at that number we cannot expect to accommodate all in regular Masses

Hence: We plan to add an **extra Mass at 12:00 noon on Sundays at St Francis Xavier**.

We are planning on providing if necessary, a liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion for the overflow from the scheduled Masses.

Two Special Requests

1 – Please contact the Parish office in advance to indicate which Mass you hope to attend. At the same time, we note your contact details.

2 – In order to gather we have to fulfil **Safety Regulations**

In each place we need specific people organised for:

Reception: Checking and noting **Contact tracing information**

Ushering: Allocating **safe Distance Seating**

Sanitizing of surfaces after Mass.

We also require **coordinators** for these roles.

Please contact the Parish office to register your help with these requests.

In the mean time

All Aroha and Blessings

Fr Chris M s.m.