

Memorandum

TO: Parish Priests, Parish Leaders, Parish Leadership Teams

CC:

FROM: Fr Andrew Doohan VG

DATE: 21/12/2020

ATTACHMENTS: 1

SUBJECT: Impact of COVID-19 Cluster in Northern Beaches of Sydney

Dear Colleagues,

The development of a COVID-19 outbreak cluster in the Northern Beaches of NSW is a concerning development, particularly this close to Christmas.

Over the weekend of 19/20 December, the NSW Government made some announcements about restrictions to be reintroduced into the public health regime. These announcements have received widespread media attention. Unfortunately, some of the media reporting is inaccurate and will be the cause of possible confusion.

Under the amended Public Health Order that takes effect from 21 December 2020, there is **NO** change to the restrictions applicable in the Newcastle, Hunter and Manning regions, those areas which make up our Diocese.

The current version of the *COVID-19 Pandemic Event: Advice, Guidance and Instructions to Parishes* is **Version 11a** dated **7 December 2020**.

While there is no immediate impact of the Northern Beaches COVID-19 cluster for many of our churches, it would be wise for local communities to monitor the situation in their local setting and make any necessary local changes that might be prudent. Please do not, however, impose restrictions or conditions that are unwarranted or not supported by the Public Health Order.

I would strongly suggest that some thought be given to what might be necessary to be implemented at short notice should restrictions be strengthened or imposed within the boundaries of the Diocese. A little pre-planning might go a long way.

I suspect that like me this is not the Christmas we were hoping for, and the developments in Sydney will only heighten the work-load and concern for many people, including myself. I have returned to a regular monitoring of public health advice and public health orders, and will communicate any necessary changes as quickly as possible.

I would take this opportunity to thank you for your faithful commitment to ministry during 2020, a year that has been difficult and draining. We can only hope and pray that 2021 will be a different year.

As always, if you would like to discuss the contents of the document or clarify things for your particular setting, please don't hesitate to make contact with me.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Doohan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and "D".

(Fr) Andrew Doohan VG