

MEDIA RELEASE



Polding Centre
133 Liverpool Street
Sydney NSW 2000

22 May 2021

ARCHBISHOP OF SYDNEY CALLS CATHOLICS TO RETURN TO MASS AT PENTECOST

The Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP has appealed to the faithful to return to Sunday Mass and invite others to attend with them, now that COVID-19 restrictions have eased on churches.

Archbishop Fisher made the appeal in a new Pastoral Letter, *Come Holy Spirit! Lead Us Back to Mass for the Church's Birthday!* Which has been released to coincide with the Feast of Pentecost when Christians believe Jesus' disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, leading them to go out and proclaim the faith to others.

Archbishop Fisher has urged Catholics to take up that same call today at a time when growing numbers of Australians are drawn towards a religious faith to help them through the current COVID-19 pandemic.

"In the Year of COVID, half the Australian population thought more about their mortality and the meaning of life with some research showing 41 percent were thinking more about God and 35 percent prayed more", he wrote in his latest Pastoral Letter.

"After a year of sickness, separation, anxiety and lock-downs, we are free once more to gather for Mass at Pentecost on the Church's birthday", Archbishop Fisher explained.

"After a year of enforced 'retreat' the Spirit is calling us back to the Eucharistic Breaking of the Bread and to the Eucharistic life of service".

Archbishop Fisher is calling on Catholics to invite others from their local communities back to Mass, whether via letter box drops, email campaigns, notes to school parents, community notice boards or through local newspapers.

The call comes after the NSW Government announced earlier this week that masks are no longer compulsory at churches and other places of worship given there has been no community transmission of COVID-19 in the state for some time.

Archbishop Fisher's full Pastoral Letter is available here: <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/casys/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Archbishop-Pastoral-Letter-for-Pentecost-2.0.pdf>

A downloadable video message is also available here:
https://www.dropbox.com/s/ezf9vg179ae63tw/20210513_archbishop_pentecost_captions_v.01.mp4?dl=0

Further Information: contact Michael Kenny, Acting Director, Communications & News Media Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney mobile: 0438 046 406, email: michael.kenny@sydneycatholic.org