



BISHOP'S OFFICE

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TO THE PARISHIONERS OF NEERKOL PARISH
FROM BISHOP BRIAN HEENAN

I have asked Fr John Grace to celebrate the Mass for you this evening and to read this letter from myself.

Fr Reg Durham has been Administrator of this parish, from the time he resigned as Parish Priest, at the age of 75. He has since passed his eightieth birthday and has now tendered his resignation from all ministries within the Diocese of Rockhampton. He is now a retired priest. It would not be possible to express my personal thanks and that of the whole diocese for his lengthy years of active priestly ministry. Fr Durham will cease residing at Neerkol and, at least for the immediate future, there will not be a resident priest.

Mass will be provided at Neerkol from now on, on Saturday evenings, by visiting priests. For any pastoral needs that arise, eg baptisms, weddings, funerals, sick calls etc. I ask you to contact St Joseph's Cathedral and the priests and team there will care for your needs.

You are aware with me of the critical shortage of priests we have and will realise that it may not always be possible to provide Mass at Neerkol. I will consult you if and when a change becomes necessary and I assure you of my personal support for the Sisters and parishioners who form this community.

Your gratitude to Fr Reg Durham for his dedicated ministry will lead you, I know, to pray for him as he copes with failing health, the burden of increasing years, and the added pressure coming from the difficulties that have arisen in the present time.

Yours sincerely

Brian Heenan
Bishop of Rockhampton