15/04/2020

Mourners claim they have been banned from visiting Melbourne cemeteries



Mourners have been been left confused by restrictions around visiting cemeteries in Victoria, with police saying people are allowed to mourn as long as they keep to social distancing rules.
But that wasn't the case for Father Emmanuel Lykopandis who claimed on Facebook that he was shut out from visiting Keilor Cemetery on Good Friday.

"I was informed by the Greater Metropolitan Cemetery Trust that visiting grave sites to place fresh flowers and lighting the oil lamps is regarded as non-essential," Father Lykopandis wrote.



“We hope the state government of Victoria can see there is need for people to visit the cemetery.”

And he’s not the only one who claims to have had a brush with the law when visiting a cemetery. Some distraught families jumped online to say they had even been fined for putting flowers down on gravesites.

When asked on Monday about these reports, Victoria Police said in a statement that officers had been given “clear instructions” to exercise discretion if people were in cemeteries to pay their respects.
“At this stage we are unable to confirm whether any fines have been issued,” a Victoria Police statement read.

“However, as per our process, all fines in relation to the Chief Health Officer directions will be reviewed to determine whether they should be withdrawn or whether it was more appropriate to issue a warning.

“In the case of people visiting cemeteries, in the absence of any other factors which may have led to an infringement being issued, these fines will be withdrawn.”

Currently, social and physical distancing restrictions still apply during cemetery visits but if possible, the Victorian Government is urging people to “delay” their visit.

Funerals are still limited to no more than 10 people.
greekherald.com.au