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News of This 'n' That around St. Leonard's

Issue No: 909 8/03/20
St Leonard's Parish 349 Springvale Road, Glen Waverley Ph: 9560 9469
Mass Times: Mon – Sat 9.15am (except Wed. Communion Service at 9.15am)
Sat (Vigil) 6.00 PM Sun: 8.30 AM and 10.00 AM

TIMELINE OF TNT SUBMISSIONS

Issue	Parish Office Submissions	Electronic submissions	Published
910	3 PM, Fri 24/04/20	24/04/20	3/05/20

NOTE: Electronic submissions to Fr John – glenwaverley@cam.org.au

St. Leonard's "International Luncheon": "Guardian Angels of Kenya" Fundraiser **(Jan Richards and Leela Sharma)**

Nearly fifty women gathered in St. Leonard's Community Centre for a heart-warming get-together and beautiful lunch to listen to our guest speaker Fr. Jason Micheni from Kariakomo Parish, Meru, Kenya.

Back in 2014 a very generous contribution was made by the St. Leonards' community towards Fr. Jason's school and orphanage. Fr. Jason has expanded his work with the generosity of fellow Rotarian, Mrs. Wilma Best from Healesville along with her husband Bruce. They have been the main supporters of this venture. Now two young Mothers from Healesville Parish have undertaken to work and support "The Guardian Angels of Kenya".

St. Leonard's "Mothers Prayers Group" have been contributing and supporting this cause. When Fr. Jason started this journey, orphaned children from remote villages had little hope of bettering their lives. They are now able to attend school and "Christ the King School" is now one of the top schools in the diocese. With your generosity since 2014, children are now receiving two meals a day, porridge in the morning, maize, beans and vegetables from the 5 acre garden in the afternoon. This has also enabled jobs for some of the men and women, giving them the opportunity of working and sending their children to school. The donations have also gone towards very happy teachers who are inspired and inspiring, being paid monthly (\$50) and making a difference in the lives of the next generation of Kenyan children. We here at St. Leonard's too have made a difference as we were able to hand over \$2000 from our wonderful afternoon.

Thank you to all the Ladies who helped make this day such a happy day, thank you for the beautiful food donated and a big thank you to all who supported our lunch and for your very generous donations.

Thank you too to all those who could not attend but still donated, it is very much appreciated.

Lent (From "MC News")

Lent offers an invitation to actively re-orient ourselves to God: because for Christians, God, and the one who was so loved Jesus, is the heart and soul of life. We are offered this gracious time when we reflect on what has formed us since we tread last year's Lenten path. And we are offered beautifully ancient tools to assist us with entering into this time. Tools of being prayerful, of living more simply and living more generously. The wonderful gift of the Lord's

merciful love is offered in a special way in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Lent is a most appropriate time to receive this healing sacrament.

Preparing for Lent

What is God calling me to in my prayer?

What is God prompting me to fast from?

Where is God guiding me to respond in generosity?

Friendship Club News (Bev Ogilvie)

We had another successful lunch in January at the Waverley RSL where 49 people enjoyed the food and, of course, the company.

Thursday April 16th. Don your Easter Bonnet for a lunch in the Community Centre, with entertainment by Paul McCarthy. Cost \$10 payable at the April meeting.

Some dates to put in your diary:

Monday, 22nd June – Three course lunch at the Zest Restaurant.

Monday, 20th July - Biannual Lunch at Waverley RSL.

Monday, 14th December - Christmas Lunch at the Canterbury International.

Bushfire catastrophe has brought out the best in us. (Ursula Stephens)

Visiting some of the areas of southern NSW most affected by the unprecedented bushfires has highlighted the extent of the devastation and the long road of recovery that is ahead for so many communities.

In Wingello, I witnessed the capacity of a little village to hold its own, grateful for the diligence and persistence of firefighters who held off the fire in the Morton National Park. The community has rallied to support those who lost their homes, and there is an enormous sense of resilience in dealing with the aftermath of the terrifying fires.

Our visit to Batlow and in Tumut was also profoundly moving. The destruction and desolation, the humility and stoicism. I listened to people who have lost everything but are somehow clinging to hope. I heard stories of heroic deeds and inexplicable escapes from ravaging fires.

I also got to see retired Canberra-Goulburn Bishop Pat Power and Alison Burt from the Bishops Conference speaking with the locals – people like Jannine Richards, the Principal of St Mary's Primary School in Batlow, the Rural Fire Service personnel, the volunteers in the recovery centres and the local Parish Priest. I saw what a difference Bishop Pat and Alison's warmth made to the people. It is faith in action. It is the Church living out the Gospel. It is humanity expressed in mateship and in kindness and in the strength of a hug.

The network of Catholic social service agencies, with a presence in more than 650 communities across the country, including dozens in affected areas, is well placed to be at the coalface of the Church's compassionate response to this disaster.

Our services, which often work quietly and with little fanfare, are embedded in the community and are therefore in place for the long haul. For Catholic social services responding to disasters, the efforts are targeted and sustained for weeks, months and years – well after the national spotlight has faded.

When people have themselves been evacuated, when they have lost property, when they have lost loved ones and animals, there's an empathy and an understanding that allows them to respond with a listening ear and a sensitive spirit.

It is in areas like trauma counselling that our services shine. The horrors of bushfires and other natural disasters leave scars on our landscape for days or weeks. The hidden scars on people's hearts can last months, years, even a lifetime – but ongoing support can help ease that pain.

How do you start again when everything you own has been destroyed in a fire? That is even scarier for families that didn't have insurance, but financial counsellors from Catholic and other agencies can plan a way back.

How do you try to find God in all the literal and metaphorical “mess” of a flattened house or community? Priests, pastoral workers and others will help people work through those questions of shaken faith.

Our people are part of what we might call a “Catholic ecosystem” that is part of responding in various ways to the crisis. One of our great strengths is our far-reaching presence in the Australian community. Few communities exist without a Catholic presence. In some remote communities, the Church takes on a quasi-governmental role – e.g., being the sole provider of school education.

Sometimes it takes catastrophic events like the one still unfolding across the country to bring out the best that humankind has to offer. Within the Church, it's prompted an even deeper collaboration between some of the major national entities. This has led to the special collections in parishes, to the partnership with Vinnies and to the shared resources between Catholic schools, hospitals, social services agencies and Parishes.

Religious orders and other Catholic organisations are seeing how unused accommodation might be made available to affected families or first responders who need some respite. My hope is that the spirit of generosity and solidarity we are seeing – within and beyond the Catholic Church – becomes the rule, rather than the exception.

((Ursula Stephens is the CEO of Catholic Social Services Australia))

Plenary Council 2020

In October 2020, the Catholic Church in Australia will gather for the first Plenary Council to be held since the second Vatican Council. In 2018, the People of God in Australia began preparing for this historic moment by listening to God, by listening to one another's stories of faith.

More than 222,000 people participated in listening and dialogue encounters and contributed 17,457 submissions during the first stage of preparations for the Australian Plenary Council. The voices of the faithful help all of us to understand something of the historical experience and the current reality of the Catholic Church in Australia. The gathered data also reveals some deeper hopes and questions, and the diverse yearnings, that we are now challenged to consider together.

Since the National Themes for Discernment were named, Dioceses throughout Australia advertised for people to be part of the groups to review the responses that were received, including people's questions and stories. These groups will consider their relevant theme in the light of the Church's teaching, Church tradition and Scripture, and by drawing from

contemporary wisdom within and outside the Church. Over four hundred applications were received from people offering to be part of these groups.

The themes that will be reflected on are:

How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is:

- Missionary and evangelising
- Inclusive, participatory and synodal
- Humble, healing and merciful
- Prayerful and Eucharistic
- A joyful, hope-filled and servant community
- Open to conversion, renewal and reform

PRAYER

**God of all people's and nations,
As you accompany us on our Lenten journey,
May our fasting strengthen our commitment to live in solidarity,
Our almsgiving be an act of justice,
And our prayers anchor us in love and compassion.
Awaken our hearts and minds that we may be one human family
As we all go further together. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen**

Reconciling oneself to God leads to healing: (Pope Francis)

Lent is a time for deeper dialogue with God through prayer, for renewed gratitude for God's mercy and for increased compassion for people whose lives are under attack. In his message for Lent, Pope Francis said people must not only show generosity through charitable giving, but they should also work for a real structural change to today's "economic life."

Contemplating the great mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus and putting it at the centre of one's life "means feeling compassion toward the wounds of the crucified Christ present in the many innocent victims of wars, in attacks on life from that of the unborn to that of the elderly, and various forms of violence" the Pope said.

These wounds are "likewise present in environmental disasters, the unequal distribution of the earth's goods, human trafficking in all its forms and the unbridled thirst for profit, which is a form of idolatry."

Not only are Christians called to generously share the richness of the Gospel and gifts from God, "today, too, there is a need to appeal to men and women of good will to share, by almsgiving, their goods with those most in need, as a means of personally participating in the building of a better world," he said.

"Charitable giving makes us more human, whereas hoarding risks making us less human, imprisoned by our own selfishness," he said. "We can and must go even further, and consider the structural aspects of our economic life."

That is why he called for a meeting during Lent with "young economists, entrepreneurs and change-makers with the aim of shaping a more just and inclusive economy. The meeting is set to take place in Assisi on March 25-26.

(Taken from "Cath News")