

Times sure have changed!

Some of these changes have been encouraging and others discouraging. Amongst the joys and the struggles are the following elements:

- Fr Steven has been reappointed as our Parish Priest and for the last two years we have had Fr Dong with us. We hadn't had an assistant priest for many years until Fr Dong's appointment.
- We have been blessed in recent years with the arrival of people from many different ethnic backgrounds, making St Mary's a more multi-cultural parish.
- Although we have had new people joining the parish, our attendances at Sunday Mass are down significantly. Where two years ago we had 800 at weekend Masses, we are now down to 600. What is this obvious change saying?
- Our volunteer pool is rapidly diminishing and whilst we celebrate the beauty and wisdom of age and all the wonderful contributions made by so many to, and on behalf of the parish over the years, the fact that we no longer have many able younger people available during the day affects our capacity to reach out in the many ways we minister to each other.
- We have been partnered with Sacred Heart Parish, Diamond Creek and St Thomas the Apostle Parish, Greensborough North. This presents us with new opportunities for sharing of resources; however at the same time, Fr Steven is not able to be as present at St Mary's as prior to the partnering of the parishes because he now has three parishes to lead.
- The continued revelations from the Royal Commission have shocked us, as we struggle to come to terms with the horror of the sexual abuse perpetrated by representatives of the Church against so many victims, only to be compounded by the way the Church has handled these matters so badly. Many of us have experienced a sense of anger and shame and we fear for how we can ever rise from the ashes, as a more transparent, Gospel centred Church.

At an Archdiocesan level, procedures have been implemented so that all parishes, including our parish schools, will be safe places for children now and into the future. All parishioners involved in ministry are to have a Working with Children Check and in some instances a Police Check. This has been a huge task and one that has been challenging for some of our parishioners.

Independently, we have taken a stand in solidarity with victims of abuse, providing education and with the creation of our Loud Fence of ribbons, on the Grimshaw Street fence.

The Parish Pastoral Council is keen to know your thoughts. We really want to listen to people, so that we can provide the leadership needed at this time. Would you mind taking some time to complete the following survey? We encourage you, if you can, to complete it online, however if you can't complete it online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/StMarysParishGreensborough2017>, we encourage you to complete the survey on these pages. It is important to us to really get as clear an understanding as possible of how our parish is faring. We ask for your assistance to reach out to our broad parish community by passing the survey on to people that you might know of who might not see it in the church notice sheet or via the school bag app.

5. How would you judge St Mary's Parish in terms of the second part of our Vision Statement:
...Engaging with the World?

St Mary's engages well, with the world

Unsure

St Mary's does not engage well with the world

Please help us to understand your thoughts by, if possible, offering your reasons.

6. Overall, St Mary's Parish is going well.

Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please help us to understand your thoughts by, if possible, offering your reasons.

7. St Mary's Parish is important to me.

Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Please help us to understand your thoughts by, if possible, offering your reasons.

8. How often would you go to Mass?

Weekly

Monthly

Every now and then

Christmas and Easter

Never

If you go to Mass elsewhere, would you mind telling us where you go and why?

9. Do you think it would be helpful to have a facilitated, consultative review, which would determine the priorities of the three partnered parishes: Sacred Heart, Diamond Creek, St Mary's, Greensborough and St Thomas' Greensborough North?

- Note: each of the three Parishes will be consulted with this question at some point.

Helpful

Unsure

Unhelpful

Please help us to understand your thoughts by, if possible, offering your reasons.

10. Do you have any questions or comments for the Parish Pastoral Council?

If you don't mind, would you provide some further details about yourself so that we can have an idea as to whom this survey has reached?

11. **Gender** Female Male
12. **Age range** Less than 20 20-40 40-60
 60-80 80-100 100 +
13. Do you have children attending St Mary's School? Yes No

14. If you would like someone from the Parish to contact you
 so that you can discuss your comments further
 or so that Fr Steven, Fr Dong or Jacinta Bright might offer support
 or, if you would be happy for a member of the Parish Pastoral Council to contact you should there be a need for clarification,

Please indicate by ticking the box which option you would like above and add your name and contact details below.

Finally, we have a little incentive to encourage you to complete and hand in this survey. If you would like to have an opportunity of winning a \$50.00 Greensborough Plaza Voucher, please provide the following details. Otherwise, adding your name in, of course, optional.

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

Completed surveys can be left in the survey box in the Gathering Space or at the Parish Office.

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey. The Parish Pastoral Council will publish information from this survey in the New Year.

St Mary's Parish Pastoral Council