

SEASONS

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St. Thomas More, Mount Eliza

Fourth Sunday of Easter— Year A

3rd May 2020



Mass online

www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass

OR <http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand>

OR

<https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

OR St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Daily and Sunday Mass is available, with the I Am Mass live streamed; it is also available as a recording on-demand.

<https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

**313 Canadian Bay Rd
Mount Eliza Vic. 3930
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**Email: MountEliza@cam.org.au
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Pastoral Leadership Team

Fr Joe Truong (Parish Administrator)
Jacinta Griffin (Chairperson)
Sue Carr Paul Stinear

No Public
Gatherings in
Victoria under
Stage 3
coronavirus
guidelines

Sem. Alex Chow's testimony on the calling to the priesthood.



I am Alexander Chow from the Archdiocese of Melbourne, Australia. In the past 2.5 yrs, I was doing my priesthood formation at the Pontifical Beda College in Rome, Italy. Due to the COVID19 lockdown, I have returned to Australia early March this year. I am deeply grateful to the parish community of St Thomas More for your hospitality and accommodating me in the presbytery to continue with my priesthood formation.

I like to share my experience of my vocation of priesthood. As with the story of the Good Shepherd, I have recognised the voice of the shepherd (John 10:4) in my early teens particularly to the vocation of priesthood.

I was born in Brunei Darussalam ('Abode of Peace'), I am one of three children of a devout Catholic family and of a Taoist ancestry. In 1995, I graduated as a Scientist (Master of Chemistry) from Monash University. I returned to Melbourne in 2006 as a migrant. I have worked for 22 years across the globe in various international Oil and Gas companies. The lure of money, career opportunities as well as the adventure of expatriation to amazing places and cultures took the 'better' of me. Yet, there was a stirring in my heart for a deeper relationship with God, to the priesthood and to share with people this relationship with Jesus Christ. For me, priesthood is where this desire can be fulfilled and where my true self is realised within the community.

"God has created me to do Him some definite service. He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another. I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons" - Saint John Newman

I feel a sense of peace in the midst of excitement, disappointment, joy and sadness. As St Augustine writes in his *Confessions*, "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in You."

This journey continues to challenge me to trust in the grace of the Holy Spirit as "I believe that I can do all things through [Jesus] who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13). Indeed Jesus promised a fully lived life when we invite Him into our hearts and lives "where no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9)

I like to encourage those who have inkling to the vocation of priesthood to contact the vocation director of our diocese. Do not be afraid. Please pray for us, seminarians, to seek God's will in our lives, to lay down our lives for others and enter and share the compassionate, humble servanthood of Jesus Christ, the Hope of the world. Thank you for your prayers and support.

We pray for...

Those who have passed away recently...

Those whose anniversaries fall at this time.. **Joe KilGariff, Bernadette Thomas, Lucia Henley,**

the sick... Joanne O'Brien, Ron Congues, Maree Bracken, Maria Pham,

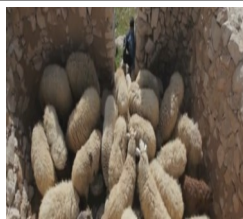


Maria Truong, Fr Theo Rush, Bill Luscombe, Brigitte Rohner, Eileen O'Beirne, Helen Steinbach, Ava Macias, Michael MacKenzie, Luke Carroll, Betty Corke, Chloe, David Dole, Maria Kelly, Helen Gibson, Elizabeth Ware, Althea Greeff, Michael Blick, Maureen Anstey, Jake Steyn, Adrian Gobel, and all of the sick at the George Vowell Centre & Ranelagh Gardens Nursing home **and the parishioners of St Thomas More Parish, Tequinomata, East Timor, St Therese Parish, Bathurst Island and Our Lady of the Sacred**

Fourth Sunday of Easter — Year A

First Reading: Acts 2:14, 36-41

God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.



Responsorial Psalm:

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Second Reading: 1 Peter 2:20-25

You had gone astray but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, Alleluia!

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord; I know my sheep, and mine know me.

Alleluia!

Gospel: John 10: 1-10

I am the gate of the sheepfold.



Next Week's Readings - Fifth Sunday of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 6:1-7

2nd Reading: 1 Peter 2:4-9

Gospel: John 14:1-12



The Bishops of Victoria have suspended the Sunday Mass Obligation for all Catholic Faithful during Stages 2 and 3 of lockdown.

Mass is broadcast via the **Ten Network (6am, Sunday)** for any one who would like to participate.

Family Reflection Time

Gospel: John 10:1-10

1— Nominate a member of the family to read out the Gospel passage. You may like to have a short pause to give everyone the opportunity to reflect upon the Gospel message.

2) **Did you know that sheep is very precious for the people who lived in the time of Jesus? We are the sheep that belong to Jesus' sheepfold = we are the precious people who belong to Jesus.**

3) Do you know the song, *The Lord is my Shepherd*? You might like to sing/ recite this song together...

4— What is God saying to your family through this Sunday's Gospel? What is God saying to you?

5-Prayer of intercessions: you may like to pray for the needs of each member of your family...

6— You may like to bring this family reflection time to a close by saying together 1 x the Hail Mary for your family and 1 x the Our Father for the end to Covid 19.

More activities for children on page 7.



Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 9am—5pm
After Hours: Please leave a message on 9787 7777

What's Happening Here...

CDF-Online Portal for Parishes

Dear Parishioners,

We wish to thank you for your support of our parish even during this time of health crisis and financial challenge. We wish to advise you that the Archdiocese of Melbourne and Catholic Development Fund have partnered to build an online payment portal—CDF pay for parishes. This site enables you to make quick and easy online thanksgiving payments—you can set-up a recurring payment, or you can choose a one-off offering. The St Thomas More Mount Eliza site is live and can be found via the link below:

<https://secure.artezpacific.com/registrant/donate.aspx?eventId=52905&spid=5635822>

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family every blessing from the risen Christ.

Fr Joe Truong

Homily

The fourth Sunday of Easter is also known as "Good Shepherd Sunday". The Gospel for Good Shepherd Sunday is always about Jesus—the Good Shepherd who loves and cares for all. As the sheep who belong to Jesus' flock we are called to listen to his voice and to follow wherever he is leading us.

Jesus is the gate and gatekeeper of the sheepfold. As the gatekeeper Jesus will do whatever it takes to keep his sheep (i.e. us) safe from all predators. As we can see in the Passion and Easter stories, Jesus is strong and powerful – no one can knock him down. Therefore, we are safe and secured as long as we remain in Jesus' sheepfold. Why would some of us still want to escape from Jesus' sheepfold? Perhaps, we may be able to find luxury and liberty in another flock, but let us remember that it is only in Jesus' sheepfold that we can find everlasting peace and happiness.

Jesus says I know my sheep....Jesus knows us better than we know ourselves. If we want to know ourselves better we need to turn to Jesus and ask him to give us the grace to be able to see ourselves as he sees us. Let us ask Jesus to help us to recognise the goodness that is hidden in our heart. God created us to be 'good' and each one of us ought to be able to celebrate this fact!

It is the task of the shepherd to lead and guide the sheep. The sheep only need to trust, to listen to the voice of the shepherd and to follow wherever he is leading them. The shepherd will only be taking the sheep to the place of green pasture and he knows the way to get there. Often, in my experience, there are some sheep who do not want to follow the shepherd, but they want to lead the shepherd to wherever they want to go. How often in our life have we tried to lead Jesus, instead of allowing him to guide and lead us??

On this weekend let us do something different. Let us make some greater effort to discern the voice of the Shepherd and have the courage to trust him and to follow his guidance.

Financial Matters

Stewardship

26th April

"April Monthly Average"

\$2358

Actual

\$ 1110

Pledge

\$1326

Presbytery

26th April

\$45



(Please note that the majority of our contributions are done electronically via Direct Debit & Credit Card Payments)

Thanks to all of you who give so generously to support our parish.

What's Happening Here ...

Pastoral Care for STM Parish during the time of the Coronavirus pandemic

This plan will be revised upon further restrictions from the Government.

1. **STM Church Closed until further notice**
2. **Seasons** continue to be published online, send out by email, or by post, copies of *Seasons* will be available on the church door for people to collect. Homily will be included with *Seasons*.
3. **Pastoral visitation:** Parishioners who would like a visit from Fr Joe are to contact the parish office.
4. **Anointing of the Sick, and Communion for the housebound:** Fr Joe is now only permitted to administer the Anointing of the Sick to the seriously ill, and also, Fr Joe is only permitted to give the Eucharist as Viaticum to the dying
5. **Fr Joe is available at the parish office** from Tuesday to Sunday afternoon for spiritual guidance over the phone...
6. If you are elderly/living alone and need assistance with shopping—please call Fr Joe at the Parish Office.
7. **Private Mass of the Priest:** Fr Joe will be offering Mass in private as follows:

Tuesday—for private intentions—9AM

Wednesday—for the victims of sexual abuse—8:30AM

Thursday—for the end to Covid 19—8:30AM

Friday—for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed—especially those have died from Covid 19—8:30AM

Saturday—**Mass for the intentions of all mothers 12:00 noon**

Sunday—for the spiritual/temporal needs of the parishioners of STM Parish—10AM

Baptisms

Due to lockdown, all Baptism Information/Preparation evenings are postponed until further notice.



Something to Think About

Its Mothers' Day next Sunday—10 May! Like Jesus, our dear mother is the good shepherd who loves us and takes good care of us during the years when we are too young to look after ourselves. Although, we are older now and can make decisions and choices for ourselves, our good shepherd mother continues to care of us and guiding us with their wisdom. Therefore, on Mothers' Day this year, how are we to show our appreciation to our mother who is also the good shepherd of our life?

Combined Catholic Parishes Raffle

Due to the current restrictions imposed by the Victorian Government because of the Corona Virus pandemic, the Gambling Commission has granted approval to extend this raffle. The new Draw Date is 26th September 2020 at 7.15pm. If you still have a raffle book at home—you can drop it back to the office or put it into our locked mail box. Hopefully we can resume with this fundraiser later in the year. Regards Vicki.

STM Children and Young People Safeguarding Committee

At STM Catholic Parish, Mount Eliza, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our parish. For more information please call: John Natoli (Coordinator) on 0418 208 778; or Julie Carter (Banda) on 0420 923 859

Would You Like To Advertise Your Business In This Space In Seasons?

- ◆ Business card size In colour
- ◆ \$50 for one month

We print 200 copies per week, and distribute to all STM School families by email. It is also available on the Parish website for six months. Please contact the Parish Office on 9787 7777 for further details.

STM PPLT News

Back in February, before the Covid-19 pandemic and crisis, the PPLT put out a call for parishioners to indicate their interest in joining us on the Parish Pastoral Leadership Team as our numbers over the last two years have begun to wane. We have been blessed with a number of people who have put their hand up to help our Parish in this way. In the past, new PPLT members have introduced themselves at a Parish meeting but that is not possible at the moment. We would also have photos taken which would be on display at the back of the church so that you know who we are. At the moment this is not as easy as it sounds, so instead of the usual face to face meeting we would like to introduce some of the new PPLT members to you here in Seasons.

Dear Fr. Joe and members of the PPLT,

I would like to apply to join the PPLT. I enjoyed the meeting I attended and I feel, with the years that I have attended this parish of St. Thomas More, I have something to bring to the meetings.

I first started as house keeper to Fr. Peter Fulton in 1999, to then working for Fr. Laurie Pearson certainly not in the same capacity, as Fr. Peter, but still available, and now with Fr. Joe.

So in my 21 years here I've certainly seen some changes made.



Margaret Jamieson

My name is Carmel Huggard. I have lived in the Frankston South area for over 35 years and was an active parishioner at Frankston and parent at St Augustine's PS, Baxter for many years. I am an experienced secondary school teacher of English and Literature. I joined St Thomas More parish 4 years ago and was very pleased to be warmly welcomed at one of the Friday night Welcome Dinners. I am pleased to be part of a caring and active faith community at St Thomas More's, which values and encourages vibrant liturgy and active social groups. As a member of the PPLT, I hope to share my vision and contribute my skills to promote even more inclusive and effective outreach to our parishioners, inter-church groups and the wider community.



Carmel Huggard



PPLT News

Dear Fr Joe and Members of the PPLT,

I'm pleased to have this opportunity to introduce myself to the parish of St. Thomas More.

I have been associated with this parish for the past 16 years, attending the 6pm Vigil Mass, which has been so important to me, being a Special Minister, has been so rewarding. Taking communion to the sick and elderly has been another rewarding task.

I have recently been elected to the Finance Committee, we have some difficult days ahead of us in relation to finances within the parish.

During my time attending St. Thomas More, I have always been keen to support fund raising, as well as assisting in working bees when the opportunity arose.

St. Thomas More under Fr. Laurie Pearson was always able to provide me with the dedicated spiritual needs, in relation to my love for Christ, as well as for the person whom I have been a full time carer Mr. Greg Carew. Fr. Laurie cared and looked after Greg during his long illness. I was just so keen to meet Fr. Laurie, as I nursed and looked after his uncle Fr. Stephen Pearson, many years ago.

In relation to my input to the PPLT, my wishes are that we can all pull together to get parishioners to return to our St. Thomas More masses, as the dwindling attendances over the past few years has been very disheartening and alarming in my opinion.

St. Thomas More along with other parishes are facing some difficult times, I pray to God that we will survive.

Regards,

Michael Robertson



Hopefully we can share some more with you next week. Just a reminder, you can speak to any of the PPLT members at any time with regards to our parish. Fr. Joe, Jacinta Griffin (Chair), Paul Stineer, Sue Carr, Carmel Huggard, Margaret Jameison, Michael Robertson via email to the Parish Office - MountEliza@cam.org.au

ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN

The Lord Our Shepherd+

1The..... is my shepherd;
I have I need.

2 He lets me..... in fields of green grass
and leads me to quiet pools of fresh

3He gives me new strength.
He guides me in the right paths,
as he has promised.

4Even if I go through the deepest,
I will not be afraid, Lord,
for you are with

Your shepherd's rod and staffme.

5You prepare afor me,
where all my enemies can see me;
you welcome me as an honoured
and fill my..... to the brim.

6I know that your goodness and love will be with
me all my.....;
and your will be my home as long as I
live.

Clues

Lord, house, rest, life, darkness,
me, cup, banquet, guest, protect,
water, everything





CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Good Shepherd Sunday 2020

3 May (Fourth Sunday of Easter)

Today is the World Day of Vocations. Pope Francis tells us:

Every vocation is born of that gaze of love with which the Lord came to meet us, perhaps even at a time when our boat was being battered by the storm. We will succeed in discovering and embracing our vocation once we open our hearts in gratitude and perceive the passage of God in our lives. (Message for World Day of Prayer for Vocations, 2020)

Let us pray for the young people in our community, and in our families and circle of friends. May our prayers and presence reflect the gaze of love from the Lord to help them discover their vocation.

Pope Francis – Message for 2020 World Day of Vocations

‘Take heart, do not be afraid! Jesus is at our side, and if we acknowledge him as the one Lord of our lives, he will stretch out his hand, take hold of us, and save us.’

‘The Lord knows that a fundamental life choice - like marriage or special consecration to his service - calls for courage. He knows the questions, doubts and difficulties that toss the boat of our heart, and so he reassures us: “Take heart, it is I; have no fear”.

‘Dear friends, on this day in particular, but also in the ordinary pastoral life of our communities, I ask the Church to continue to promote vocations.’

What can I do?

Each one of us can do something for the future of the Church in our nation. We all want and need more vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. What can I do? The most important and essential thing that each of us can do is to pray. Intentionally, regularly, insistently. Make a decision today to include a prayer for vocations in your daily prayers.

On Line ideas

At this time when we are communicating with people on line much of the time, it is an opportunity to enter into the world of young people, and engage with them in a new way. The Masses that are being streamed may be one of the few times that they may engage with the Church; the posts on social media; the new and innovative ways of pastoral ministry – these are all opportunities to spread the message of vocation in a new way.