

The Eyrie

St John's Catholic Parish Heidelberg



St John's Catholic Parish Child Safety Committee

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as central and fundamental responsibilities of the Church. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

We want our children to be safe, happy and empowered.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne has a universal expectation for the protection of children. It is resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in the Church promote the inherent dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe environment. This is particularly so for the most vulnerable children, including aboriginal children, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse

backgrounds and children with a disability.

The Catholic Church has a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe.

Creating child-safe environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by parishes, schools, families and communities. It is marked by collaboration, vigilance and proactive approaches across policies, procedures and practices.

Reference: CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety.



Moira Di Cesare, Michelle Robertson and Silvana Macallef

In 2017, Fr Mario established the Child Safety Committee for St John's Parish.

This committee consists of Michelle Robertson (Child Safety Officer), Moira Di Cesare and Silvana Macallef. The committee completed a Child Safety Training Course, provided by the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

Our role is to oversee Child Safety policies and procedures for the Parish and to train individual volunteers and Parish groups in meeting the Child Safety requirements.

We will be inviting volunteers and groups to attend these training sessions, to be held in early March 2018. We look forward to working with all members of the Parish, to ensure that St John's continues to provide a safe and welcoming environment for our young people.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

Mark Murphy

Principal of Marcellin College, Bulleen

Dear members of the St John's Parish community,

How often do we hear the line...*young people these days*...usually followed by less than flattering comments about their appetite for hard work, their lack of empathy for others or more broadly their inability to make a positive contribution to our society. As Principal of Marcellin College and as a parent of five amazing young adults my daily observations are the antithesis of this populist, uneducated and unhelpful perspective. Every day in our wonderful school, I am witness to examples of maturity, responsibility, respect, gratitude, support, compassion and incredible abilities which belay this narrow minded attitude. Please allow me to provide a few simple examples to illustrate my observations of the young men in my care.

Earlier this year I met with a group of our Year 11 students who spent the last three weeks of the 2017 school year in a little town called Palin in the northwest of Cambodia. Here they supported a small band of Marist Brothers who have dedicated their lives to the service of the people of this very poor and challenged part of the world. Each of these young men spoke with incredible empathy, compassion and love for the people of this place. Each day they would spend their time teaching English and playing with the children of the Village. They were also engaged in back breaking building projects in support of the people of the town. Their depth of understanding of the difficult life issues faced by the Cambodians was well beyond their years. Each boy also demonstrated a greater appreciation for his own life and the love, security and support of his family. Most importantly



they spoke about the model of Christian service presented to them by the Brothers. They spoke of seeing the face of Christ in these beautiful men and they were in awe of the selfless and single-minded focus they had on the people of Pailin.

Our boys do not have to go all the way to Cambodia for me to witness their wonderful qualities. Already in this early part of the school year I have observed young men who look beyond their own needs to those of others. I think most of us can remember our first day of secondary school; the nervousness, trepidation even outright fear. In these early days of the year at Marcellin I have observed many acts of kindness by senior students towards our year 7 boys. They have been as simple as a senior boy giving a junior student a 'high five' as they have passed in the school yard or a year 12 boy who goes out of his way to escort a year 7 boy to class because he

was lost. To the more substantial, as occurred last week; I received a call from a year 7 parent whose son had caught the wrong bus and didn't know how to get home. He was approached by a senior student who not only got him on the right bus but then travelled with the young boy all the way home even walking him to his front door.

Each week, at Marcellin our boys learn about attributes of respect, tolerance and understanding through activities such as Soup van, supporting the homework club at a local primary school, playing basketball with the boys from the Melbourne Youth Justice Centre or delivering bread to people who find it hard to afford it. These are formal displays of service which our boys take to with great enthusiasm and care. They are all highly worthy acts, however it is the daily displays of simple kindness from one boy to another or a boy towards his teacher which most inspire me. These are the acts that a young man does when no one is watching which are most telling about who he is as a person of integrity.

At Marcellin we know that boys are not perfect. They sometimes don't always get it right. I often say that they should have little signs on their heads which read- *Under Construction*. I am very proud of them all. I am grateful to their teachers and families who work in partnership each day to help them to develop into fine young men.

Marcellin Champagnat said that one of his aims in building schools was to develop Good Christians and Good Citizens. I think he would approve of the boys of Marcellin College.

We would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of this Land, the Wurundjeri people and of Elders past and present, on which our church and school stand. The St John's community joins together in solidarity with our Indigenous brothers and sisters, working for justice and reconciliation.

St John's Parish and School Fete

Saturday 4th March 2018



We were blessed with a beautiful autumn day for the St John's school fete, held on the first Saturday in March. Stalls ranging from plants, cakes, toys and clothes; to food from around the world took over the school grounds. Rides, laser tag and a Virtual Reality room were a hit for young and old. A true sense of fun and community spirit was felt throughout the day.



Special thanks to Father Mario, Maureen Stella and Carmel Armiento for entrusting a small group of parents to take control of the event. The money raised will go to exciting programs such as the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program, expanding the STEM department, new books and Parish Hall upgrade.



Whatever that final total is, it is nowhere near as important as the bonds that were cemented within our community - which are priceless. Thank you to our parish members who helped in any way by baking cakes, donating or attending on the day. Everyone said it was a great success and, as much as it is a shame that it's over, we are looking forward to the next one in 2020!



Elizabeth Williamson

An Interview by Matthew Van Oirschot

Elizabeth Williamson is well known to many at St John's as a teacher and a parishioner. Having taught at the school for over 30 years, she has an abundance of experience and stories to share.

Following her retirement at the end of 2017, Matthew Van Oirschot had the opportunity to meet and interview her.

As a youngster, Miss Williamson's primary school days were spent at St Augustine's Girls' School in Yarraville, followed by Catholic Ladies' College, East Melbourne. She loved her school days and enjoyed learning about Geography, Social Studies, English Literature and Religious Education.

Miss Williamson initially had thoughts of becoming a pharmacist. It was in her blood, coming from a family of three generations of pharmacists. However, she loved school and she wanted to help others love learning as her teachers helped her as well.

She was inspired by Miss McKelson, her Year 8 teacher at Catholic Ladies' College, who was her first ever lay teacher. She had a gentle demeanour and a good sense of



humour. Miss McKelson was the epitome of the saying, "They may forget what you said but they will not forget how you made them feel." She inspired Miss Williamson to be the best she could be, both as a person and as a learner.

Her parents were wonderful supporters throughout her journey as were the Sisters of Mercy when she first commenced at St John's. Sister Marie Celine was her mentor during her first year, guiding and advising her. Joan Geoghegan was a friend and colleague who affirmed and encouraged her. Her colleagues, through the years were a source of collegial advice, support and friendship.

Her journey as a teacher at St John's included a number of memorable moments, particularly whole school celebrations. One particular event that stands out was the sesquicentenary of the parish when

the students and teachers dressed up in garb of the day.

Other moments that stand out relate to teaching in the classroom, when she observed growth in a student's learning, sharing their joy in new achievements along with all the other blessings that come with sharing a student's educational journey.

Miss Williamson believes that as with all occupations there are stressful times and teaching is no different. Her particular concern whilst working as a teacher was whether or not she was doing the best for each individual student in the class.

Something unrelated to teaching that you may not know about her is that her favourite holiday destination is England. She has been very fortunate to have visited there on six occasions. She and her brother follow the football team, Queen's Park Rangers. The team currently plays in the Championship, the second tier of English football. She arranges her itinerary around going to as many games as possible.

As you can see, Miss Williamson has done many things in her time. You will see her around the school as she will be working in our parish as a volunteer. Good luck with all your future ventures, Miss Williamson!

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SISTER JOY HANRAHAN
pbvm

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Many will fondly remember Sister Joy Hanrahan who was Pastoral Associate at St John's Parish from the late 1991 until 1997, a position she shared with Mother of God Parish in East Ivanhoe. Those of us who knew her would say "to know her was to love her".

She was particularly close to those in the Friendship Group, (a group of senior members of the parish who met regularly to pray and socialise) and Teams of Our Lady (a group for married couples who met monthly to pray, discuss Catholic literature and socialise). Joy embraced the social aspect and eagerly participated. She was an invaluable assistance to the Parish Priests she served here and in other parishes.

The Mass to acknowledge her return to her Creator was an opportunity to recognise a life well lived in Religious Community, in her teaching life, her work in parishes, and with her family for whom she cared so much. Most of all we had the chance to reflect on the life of a woman who had great empathy for those whose life she touched. Who could forget her cheery smile.

Many superlatives can be written to sum up Joy. She gave much joy in the service she rendered to others in a very humble way; one priest saying, "Joy was just a joy". The Sisters of the Presentation Order, despite their overwhelming sadness and grief at the loss of a most beautiful member of their order, were strengthened to be able to speak so glowingly of the wonderful person Joy was.

The Mass on the 22nd December 2017 was truly a Mass of Thanksgiving for the life of Joy. St. John's joins in those prayers of thanksgiving for Sr Joy.

Sister Joy Hanrahan, Rest In Peace.

Jan McCafferty

Jan McCafferty is a new member of our St John's parish community. Currently residing in the nearby Catholic homes, Jan arrived only six months ago, moving from Frankston to Heidelberg to be within closer proximity to her two daughters and five grandchildren. Heidelberg has become her new home.

Community is core to wellness in Jan's eyes. Within days of arriving here, Jan recalls knocking on the door of the Parish house, and being welcomed warmly inside by Fr Mario. That short meeting was enough for Jan to feel welcome as a new member of our Catholic community.

Jan's early professional years involved roles in Education ranging from kindergarten and primary school teaching and in the later years, TAFE teaching. Jan has spent many years working in different places and professional environments, most of which have included working with and leading programs involving community and social development. She has also provided parenting and relationship education for adults, with a focus on creating positive outcomes for children and their families.

Jan regularly returns to Dandenong to the small gathering of 'Art of Soul', a craft and art group held at 'The Open Door' lead by the Sisters of St John of God, in the parish

of St Mary's, Dandenong. Jan is excited about bringing together a similar group within our community here at St John's.

Based on the St Mary's model,



it will be an opportunity to share in the experience of art, 'not for art's sake' but instead, to promote and sustain relaxation, self-expression and importantly social interaction, which she recognises as essential for good health and wellness.

If you are interested in finding out more about this new group, please watch out for her friendly face in our pews. Jan attends Mass at different times each weekend.

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Term One Report

Mrs Maureen Stella

St John's students and staff have enjoyed a smooth and successful start to the 2018 school year. It continues to be such a privilege to be leading this school, in collaboration with Fr Mario, the Leadership Team and staff.

Our focus at St John's school is on ensuring the development of each student by providing her/him with the mentoring and focused teaching that leads to reflection and planning. I thank the professional and dedicated staff who work in partnership with the families, in supporting our students' learning. I have been most pleased this term to see our students grow in faith, hope and love, as they continue on their learning journey of being lifelong learners.

We aim for our students' time here to be filled with many positive learning experiences, much joy and laughter and genuine opportunities to experience the love of Jesus in their lives. This is encapsulated in the following words from the Catholic Education Melbourne, Horizons of Hope framework *"At the very heart of each Catholic school is a desire for the full flourishing of each student, across religious, physical, cognitive, emotional and social domains."*

We warmly welcome a number of new students and their families, including our enthusiastic Prep students. We trust that their time at St John's will be enjoyable and filled with many new learning experiences and opportunities.



In 2018, we have introduced three new initiatives to our school:

The STEM Learning Hub (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics)

Our students participate in specialised sessions with our eLearning Leader, Tracey James and their classroom teacher.



The Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program (SAKGP)

Our Year 3 students, led by Susan Montalto, will spend time planting and growing their own produce with their classroom teacher and then follow recipes to produce nutritious food.



Flexible learning spaces

Especially for our Year Six students, with a focus on engagement and transition to secondary school. We aim to nurture in our students a love of learning and the opportunity to take

risks in a supportive and empowering environment. This term, our students have been engaged and motivated to explore and question through their Inquiry Based learning and to develop positive relationships with their teachers and peers.

Our Beginning of the school year Mass was a fitting start to our school year and I thank Fr Mario for being so willing to lead us in this school community liturgy, as we celebrate new beginnings and all that a new school year offers.



Introducing Mr Shane Thompson

Why did you choose to be a teacher?

Becoming a teacher was always something I had in my mind throughout the later part of secondary school. At that time, I was getting a lot of satisfaction and enjoyment from coaching younger students in sport and working with them through school-based community service initiatives. This was probably what planted the seed, along with the positive experiences and relationships I had with my teachers in both primary and secondary school. However, my first practicum experience was ultimately what cemented the choice for me. The four weeks I had in a Kindergarten class were so dynamic and a lot of fun. Each day was so different, and gave me a chance to learn something new in the students and myself - and this is something that hasn't changed in almost twenty years.



front cover she inscribed the Dr Seuss quote, "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

What is one thing that your students have taught you?

Every day students teach me to be patient, to listen, to be flexible; that relationships are the most important part of teaching and that I don't need to know everything.

What is one bit of advice you can share with new graduates starting out?

Two things; to have an open mind to learning new things - from colleagues, but particularly your students; and to take care of yourself and be sure to have a good work/life balance, because in the first two years of teaching - particularly in the juniors - you are going to catch everything.

What is the funniest thing that a student has asked you or done?

It's one of the great things about being a teacher, you know that at least once a day, a student will say, share or do something that will have you and the class keeling over with laughter. One story that still stands out is one day in Year 2, I was modelling a piece of writing about a physical description of my dad. In the session, I made the comment that one day I would probably start to lose my hair and go bald just like him. The next day, after coming in from early morning duty, I found a bottle of Men's Regaine Hair Foam on my desk with a post-it note that read - "Dear Mr T, my dad has great hair so I borrowed this from him for you to use." I thought that was hilarious, and so did the other staff. When I told the boy's mother at pick up she was in hysterics and couldn't wait to get home to tell her husband.

Which one of your own teachers most inspired you and why?

I was fortunate to have quite a few amazing teachers who stand out for various reasons. However, I would have to say my Year 3 teacher Miss Daly is someone I will always admire and be inspired by. For a kid who was always pretty quiet and reserved, and probably lacked a little self-confidence, I remember her challenging me in ways that pushed me to see the different things I was capable of achieving, so long as I was willing to "have-a-go" as she would say.

Miss Daly was also the very first teacher to show me how wonderful reading, storytelling and poetry were. She introduced me to the fantastic world of Roald Dahl and from that moment on I was hooked! Every chance I had in free-writing, I was innovating one of his texts and attempting to make it my own. Then at the end of the year - and I'm not sure if she did this for every student - Miss Daly gave me a copy of the BFG. Inside the

If you had the chance to meet one person who would it be and why?

At the beginning of the year, Tony Dalton asked this question to the staff as part of an introduction to some professional learning. With some time to reflect, rather than having to think on the spot, I would have to say my grandfather who passed away when my mum was 14. The reason why - I know very little about his life and family in Poland and I have always been curious to know more.

We welcome new staff to our school community:

Ms Chantelle Wegner - Prep teacher
Ms Rachel Devine - Year One teacher
Ms Nicole Costin - Year Two teacher
Ms Jacinta Tillack - Year Four teacher (Fridays)
Mr Shane Thompson - Year Five teacher
Ms Beth Miller - Year Six teacher
Ms Liza Hyland who joins our Education Support Staff.



Staff were blessed by Fr Mario at Sunday morning mass on 4th February.

Figolla

TRADITIONAL MALTESE EASTER BISCUIT

contributed by Fr Mario

Biscuit

1kg Self Raising Flour
225g Caster Sugar
4 Eggs
Juice of 1 lemon
115g Butter, softened
115g Margarine
2 Teaspoons vanilla essence
1 Tablespoon Milk

Filling

500g almond meal (skin on)
Almond essence to taste
3 egg whites
225g caster sugar



Method

Rub butter and margarine into flour. Add sugar and mix. Add eggs, juice, vanilla & milk into flour and combine to make a dough. Knead until smooth.

Roll out into 1cm thickness. Cut into shapes to make pairs.

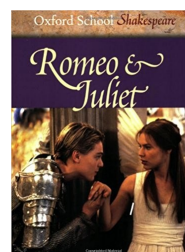
Combine all filling ingredients together to form a firm paste. Spread filling onto each dough base, and top with matching lid.

Bake in moderate oven at 180°C for 30 minutes. Once cool, decorate with melted chocolate or colourful royal icing.

Shakespeare?

I'm going to go a little old school here for the first review of the year – both literally old and school. Last year, you may have noticed the massive Globe Theatre set up next to the Sidney Myer Music Bowl and maybe even watched a play or two inside. I managed to see both the showing comedies *Much Ado About Nothing* and *As You Like It* and was greatly impressed by both the stories and staging which had us standing in 'ye olde moshe pit'. I know this isn't a theatre review segment but what I loved about the productions was the way they simultaneously brought Shakespeare into contemporary times with influences from Pacific Island culture *and* audiences *back* to the 1600s with ribald humour and crowd interaction.

Before I (compulsorily) studied some Shakespeare at school, the work I was most familiar with was of course *Romeo and Juliet*, and the often quoted 'to be or not to be' never minding from whence it came. However, once I got stuck in discussing, dissecting, denouncing and delighting in his work with fellow students, I really begin to engage with the work and finally understand how it has endured for so long. Indeed, it does seem like a big inconvenience to read something and not fully understand – not all of us can have the privilege of taking a literature class. So what then is the alternative for the aspiring Shakespeare reader? The answer is simply: school editions of Shakespeare plays – even if you are no longer a student! There are quite a number of publishers, series and editions available which match different levels of interest and academia.



If you are looking for a simple dictionary and introduction to themes or moments of significance then the *Oxford School Shakespeare* series is a good start.

It contains parallel 'translations', sporadic illustrations and additional context in the appendix.



The *Cambridge School Shakespeare* series contains the former and activities or questions on every page. It is perhaps more juvenile looking but I think that it prods a little deeper than the Oxford editions.

Recommended for new readers of Shakespeare and those who want to brush up on their Shakespeare studies from school.

This review has been kindly contributed by Jeanne Cheong, Andrew's Bookshop, Ivanhoe.

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St John's Heidelberg Netball Club

Trevor Robertson, President

It gives me great pleasure to report on the progress of the St John's Heidelberg Netball Club. As inaugural President, I have been honoured to work with a talented and committed committee of volunteers who have worked tirelessly through the last 12 months to establish a strong foundation based on transparency, ongoing policy development implementation and compliance, financial procedures and reporting and improved governance and competition management for our members.



A highlight of the 2017 Season was the establishment of our own Net Set Go Program with 27 participants. Our club is proud of the leadership shown by our senior players from Under 15s who coached our Net participants with skill and professionalism. We are grateful to have had Netball Victoria run their up-skills coach training session with these girls as well as some club coaches and parents. Five teams competed in various BDNA competitions all representing the club with pride and enthusiasm. Our coaches undergo the Netball Australia Foundation to Coaching Course and register as qualified coaches.

Late in 2017, the club secured an ongoing sponsorship partner in Bakers Delight at Warringal Plaza, whose generous support will provide much needed funds to invest in our teams, coaches and players. We have been successful in obtaining funding through the Banyule City Council Equipment grants and Sport Recreation Victoria sports grants. We will continue to seek further opportunities with others to ensure that we remain financially viable long-term.

OUR PHILOSOPHY AND PURPOSE



We are a community netball club associated with the St John's Catholic Parish Primary school.

Our netball club fosters a safe, fun and inclusive environment that enables every member to develop to their full potential. Our purpose is to nurture a lifelong interest in sport, healthy body and mind, self-esteem and resilience. We support all of our members through pathways of personal development.

Good sportsmanship and team work inform the culture of our club.

Our partnerships with both St John's Primary School and the Parish have flourished with valuable support of endeavours. We are also excited about our growing relationship with the St John's Catholic Tennis Club. These links will continue to provide stability and growth of our club, resources and activities.



We have commenced the 2018 season with our newest and youngest team. The Flying Foxes play in the Under 9s competition. This team is made up of a very eager group of girls and boys from St John's, Heidelberg and East Ivanhoe Primary Schools. The fun, friendship and teamwork that are typical of our netball teams are already evident in their first season of competition. We will again welcome Netball Victoria to St John's to provide coach training to our new Coaches joining these position in our club in 2018, and a refresher for our current coaches. Net will take off for the second time at St John's in April again led by senior members of our Club.

It would be remiss of me not to thanks all those volunteers that have worked tirelessly within the club and those that have come before us. Their contribution helps our club to achieve continued success and remain a welcoming sporting club well into the future.



Labyrinth and Our Lady's Walk

Labyrinths have been used by a wide variety of cultures for at least 3,500 years. Evidence of ancient labyrinths exists in Crete, Egypt, Italy, Scandinavia and North America. Ancient labyrinths had what is usually called the "classical" design of seven rings, or circuits.

A prayer labyrinth is a labyrinth used to facilitate prayer, meditation, spiritual transformation, and global unity. The most famous prayer labyrinths today include an ancient one in the cathedral of Chartres, France. While prayer labyrinths have been used in Catholic cathedrals for centuries, the past decade has seen resurgence in their popularity.

The St John's Heidelberg Labyrinth was official opened and blessed on 31st January 2010. It was a gift from Our Lady of Mercy College to commemorate the centenary year of the college and the close relationship with our parish of St John's. The gates at the entry to the labyrinth are the original gates from the front driveway of the church and were added later.

Many will remember the barren ground outside the church before the landscaping and labyrinth. The Labyrinth has added much to enhance the beauty of the church, the gardens and given us all a space to meditate and walk like pilgrims in earlier times. The pathway that passes the Labyrinth is called "Our Lady's Walk," as many of the Our Lady's students walk through the pathway gardens on their daily journey to and from school.



Reflections on walking the Labyrinth

Walking the labyrinth is like making a pilgrimage... It is a journey with the Lord.

There is no right or wrong way to walk St John's Labyrinth and no set pace... just follow the path in your own time... Be still and gently talk with the Lord and place yourself in his presence.

When you are ready... walk through the gates into the labyrinth and let your thoughts come to the surface and flow... Jesus is with you every step of the way, you are never alone. When you reach the centre... consider your thoughts... Stay in the centre for a while and spend some time in reflection receiving God's love and blessing.

When you are ready... return along the same path... return gratefully, peacefully and giving thanks.

excerpts from Pilgrim Paths Ltd., 2014.



Fr Mario Zammit

Parish Priest, St John's Heidelberg

Dear Parishioners and Friends of St John's Catholic Parish Community,

Suffering and death is one of the great mysteries of life, not just for me personally, but for all of humanity regardless of religion or culture. Over the centuries we have been handed down innumerable fairytales, legends, myths, holy texts and rituals to help us make sense of this mystery.

As a priest I have very often been invited to sit staring death in the face, either with people who are close to their death or with families who have just lost a loved one. Is death scary? I do not necessarily have an answer to that question. At times, as I sit with younger people who are being called away from this life experience, I feel angry at what seems like an injustice. However at other times I feel like death is a moment of great celebration, as I am called to assist people to move on to the next stage of life after a long and successful life. I often ask married couples to share with me the beautiful and not-so-beautiful moments they shared together in their married life. This becomes a moment of prayer, gratitude and praise to God and to the partner. Recently I have come across two very interesting and inspiring stories. One elderly friend of mine shared with me a conversation he was having with a younger relative. He was asked: 'Why do we find it so difficult to let go of life and move on to new life?' His response was: 'We are created for life and death does not seem to have been in the original plan! We are created in the image of God, life itself; the Bible tells us

“The pain of the cross is not the final answer.”

that death came as a result of our rejection of God's love! What an interesting reflection on life and death!

The second story is about a young friend who a few months ago suddenly lost her father, whom she was particularly close to. Since her father's death she cannot bring herself to pray, go to Church or participate in any parish activities. She recently shared: I have not lost my faith in God, but I am angry at God. I still cannot come to terms with the fact that God has allowed this to happen to my father! I believe that God understands our feelings and accepts this as a profound prayer and desire to relate with God.

These are only two of the stories I come across in my ministry. As I look at the cross where Jesus' body hangs vulnerable and broken for me, I also see, hanging on this same cross, the many friends and parishioners who are similarly broken in their pain. Each day at the Mass, before Communion, as I break the Body of Christ, which is another image of Christ on the cross, I place the pain of parishioners and friends on the altar in the presence of God our loving and understanding Father. I have often been asked how I handle pain, especially the pain and suffering of loss. Perhaps my best answer is: 'I do not!' Most times the best I can do is to stare at the cross of Christ and wait; very often that

becomes my only prayer. I do find our annual Good Friday celebration very helpful, as we are invited to meditate and celebrate the brokenness of Jesus on his cross. However, each year I am also reminded of the need to move on to the celebration of Easter. The pain of the cross is not the final answer, Jesus risen from the death is! Even as I experience myself vulnerable and broken in my pain, I need to constantly remind myself that it is through these painful experiences that I move on to new life, which I experience here on earth. Resurrection from the dead is not an easy concept to comprehend. What does the resurrection mean in life? The gospel stories are not too helpful either. The gospel according to Mark, that we read this year, leaves us with the image of three women inside an empty tomb. The other gospels tell us of the experience of the apostles after the resurrection. The risen Jesus, while still carrying the marks of the cross on his body, is not limited by our normal limitations of space and time. This needs to be our own experience of Easter in our own life. I cannot grow, mature or gain new life without carrying some type of pain in my body. My struggle is to make sense of that pain and experience newness of life through it.

As we celebrate the beautiful celebrations of Holy Week, Good Friday and Easter Sunday, I pray that we all learn how to celebrate our pain, our loss and our death in order to be able to also celebrate our own resurrection in Jesus.

Congratulations to the St Vincent De Paul Conference and Heidelcare who have been the recipients of a Jenny Macklin MP Jagajaga Australia Day Award 2018.

Heidelcare was recognised for 35 years of assisting vulnerable elderly people in the city of Banyule with transport, visits, meals, emergency jobs and a caring shoulder to lean on.

Vinnies members, past and present, were recognised for the valuable work among the less fortunate in our community.

Congratulations and very well done!

UPCOMING EVENTS

Palm Sunday 25th March

8:30am: Mass; 10:30am: Blessing of the palms in front of parish house garages followed by procession and Mass; 5:00pm: Mass.

Monday 26th March

Reconciliation at 7:30pm.

Holy Thursday 29th March

7:30pm: Mass and Washing of the Feet followed by Adoration in the Parish Hall. 10pm: Evening Prayer.

Good Friday 30th March

11am: Stations of the Cross in the church and school grounds.

3pm: Solemn Liturgy of the Lord's Passion at OLMC Nallejerring Centre.

Holy Saturday 31st March

9am: Morning Prayer.

8pm: Easter Vigil.

Easter Sunday 1st April

7am, 8:30am and 10:30am Masses.

No Evening Mass.

The Eyrie

OUR TEAM

Editorial • Mark Murphy

Content • Emma Daly

Content • Michelle Penson

Content • Margaret Ferma

Design & Layout • Margherita Bechelli

Printer • Peter Burke

YOUR FEEDBACK WELCOME

heidelberg.eyrie@cam.org.au

52 Yarra Street, Heidelberg 3084