

# ECHO

The magazine of

St John's Catholic Parish  
HEIDELBERG



## **EASTER BLESSINGS**

### **Message from Fr Mario**

Dear parishioners, friends and visitors to our parish,

Easter is the principal feast of the Christian Church; it is where it all began. St Paul writes in his first letter to the Church in Corinth: *"If Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain."* (1Co 15:14) The early Christians realised the importance of this event and started celebrating the Sunday: the day of the Resurrection, and thus the Resurrection of Jesus marks our whole life.

As Christians we are baptised - *that is immersed* - in the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus. Once again quoting St Paul, this time in his letter to the Church in Rome where he writes: *"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life."* (Rm 6:4) This is the great mystery of our whole life as Christians.

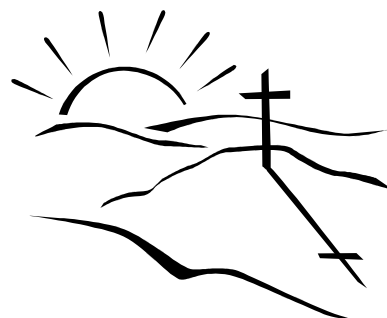
In this sense, Easter is not just the celebration of the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ, it is also the celebration of our own Baptism into this great mystery. The Easter Vigil, when we gather to wait for and to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus, is based upon a celebration of Baptism. It is a very old tradition in the Church to baptise adults, who were being prepared for Baptism, on this holy night.

Baptism commitment and start afresh. During the Vigil we are invited to renew our own Baptism vows by promising to reject Satan and sin, and to place our faith more fully in God who is Father, Son and Spirit. After this renewal of vows we are either blessed or we are invited to come forward and bless ourselves with the newly blessed water.

If Easter is such an important moment in the life of my Church and in my own life, how do I live this special feast? A first reflection I am invited to make is whether I am living up to my Christian calling. Through Baptism I have died and now I live in Christ: does my life reflect this? Do I think, speak and act the way Christ wants me to? Christ invites me to love my neighbour as myself - am I ready to go out of my comfortable way of life to reach out to those around me, especially those who are most in need of my help? And if I find that often I have failed, I need to pick myself up and move on with renewed determination.

Have a very holy and blessed Easter!

Fr Mario



## HEIDELCARE

Heidelcare is a voluntary community organisation seeking to offer short term assistance to people living in the City of Banyule - the elderly, the disabled, the socially and economically disadvantaged, families in need and people living alone.

Established in 1982 as an ecumenical organisation sponsored by St John's Catholic Church, today's volunteers come from churches of all denominations and from the wider community. We are pleased to work in partnership with Volunteers of Banyule and the City of Banyule to serve a broad range of people needing short term assistance.

### Services offered by Heidelcare

- Driving - to therapy, hospitals, doctors etc;
- Family support - in emergency or sickness (not housework);
- Visiting - the lonely, ill, disabled;
- Supplying a meal to a person in temporary need;
- Handyman - some small emergency jobs;
- Shopping - taking someone, or shopping for someone housebound

Heidelcare has forty volunteers, who are active at different times, some regularly, some occasionally, all highly valued!

Most of the jobs are driving; volunteers having travelled more than 20,000km in the past two years alone, working approximately 2000 hours on 1900 jobs.

Heidelcare has a long link with both Strathalan in Macleod and the Drop in Centre in Burgundy Street (part of Scots Uniting Church), offering assistance with transport for many years.

Volunteers find their work most rewarding, especially assisting the frail and elderly who cannot travel alone and need that caring person to stay with them.

With only eight monthly coordinators who organise the requests, four do an additional month.

Heidelcare can be contacted via the Yearly Coordinator's Roster which is sent to all the Council agencies, Aged Care facilities and other organisations who might require the services of Heidelcare.

The valuable work of Heidelcare volunteers has been recognised in the community, with 30 volunteers being awarded the Jagajaga Community Australia Day Awards in the past 14 years. As well as a Banyule Community Volunteer Group Award in 2008, and an Individual Category Award in 2011, and a Highly Commended Individual Award in 2012

### Meeting times:

First Monday of the month, bimonthly on even months, at 7.30pm, St John's Catholic Church Parish House.

If you would like to join the team as a volunteer or monthly coordinator, or would like further information, contact

Rosemary Vecchies,  
Secretary and  
Volunteer Coordinator,  
on 9459 0729, or  
email [heidelcare@gmail.com](mailto:heidelcare@gmail.com)

NB. In the name of our parish community I thank all the Heidelcare coordinators and volunteers who with such great generosity reach out to needy members in our community.

May God continue to bless your generosity!

## HEIDELCARE - CELEBRATES 30 YEARS



Marie Sheahan President of Heidelberg & Rosemary Vecchies



Alice Hyland cutting the Cake



Heidelberg Volunteers at Banyule Council Volunteer Awards Dinner 2013



Volunteers past and present  
Pat Chenoweth, Aileen Powell, Betty Maloney,  
Elisabeth Grist, Judith Qunilivan & Colleen Lourey

Heidelberg volunteer Colleen Lourey received the Jagajaga Community Australia Award in Jan 2014

Joan Vandenberg received Highly Commended in the Individual Award Category in 2012



Cr Jenny Mullholand, Rosemary Vecchies, Cr Tom Melican and Margaret Andrews

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## AUSTRALIA DAY PICNIC

The Australia Day Picnic was held after 10.30 am Mass on Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> January. The families who came all enjoyed the sausage sizzle, fun and the cricket. Thanks to Chris and Peter who prepared the BBQ for us and Christian for running the errands well.

It was fun watching Fr Mario try and hit the ball and he did not last at the crease for long as he was bowled out by keen cricketers!

Below Fr Mario shows he is better holding babies than the cricket bat



Adrian Daly donned the umpire's coat and hat and bent the rules to suitably match the talents of the bowler and batsmen (and women).

Fielders came in all ages and Ronnie Maloney and Aileen Powell did their bit as did Des O'Brien and Max Richardson in enjoying conversation whilst pretending to be fielding!



Shade was sought after as it was a lovely sunny day.



Littlies and older parishioners alike enjoyed the hat competition and prizes.  
(above the winning Opera House Hat)



Brendan Harty explaining about his paper hat with Winston in his Endeavour hat.

## FATHER CHRISTMAS COMES TO ST. JOHN'S

Prior to Christmas, I was very surprised to receive a phone call from Father Mario inviting me to attend the 6.00 pm family Mass at St John's in Heidelberg.

Although Christmas Eve is the busiest night of my year, my elves and I sprinkled some magical Christmas dust on my Google Map, and was delighted to see that it had now included a stop at St John's for the family liturgy. Father Mario also told me that, at each parish Christmas liturgy, baby Jesus would be represented by babies from the parish.

These were: Orlando Tancredi at the 6.00 pm Mass on Christmas Eve, Nicholas Burness at Midnight Mass and Juliet Daly at 10.30 am on Christmas Day. I have since been told that all the babies were very beautiful, and such a meaningful symbol for baby Jesus as we celebrated his birth.

On arrival, at the 6.00 pm Mass we could see that the church was full to overflowing, and many families were seated outside the church for this celebration of Jesus' birth. As I, and my young helpers, Alyssa and Megan, progressed from the presbytery towards the church we could hear joyful singing coming from the congregation, as they rejoiced in the celebration of our Saviour's birth.

On entering St John's, ringing my Christmas bell, I was greeted with looks of amazement, which quickly changed to delighted smiles on the faces of all, when they saw who had arrived.

As I progressed through the body of the church, I noticed that Father Mario had assembled all the children on the sanctuary and they began singing

"Happy Birthday Jesus".

When they finished singing, I asked them to follow me out of the church where my helpers and I had a small gift for each of them.

It was delightful to see the community filled with the spirit of Christmas, the joy as they gathered in groups outside the church, to greet one another and reflect on all that had happened on this special evening.

On returning to my busy rounds, I too was pleased that I had been able to participate more closely in the wonder and awe of the Christmas story.



Our thanks to Santa and his helpers  
Alyssa and Megan.

## Spiritual Direction - Guidelines, Signposts or what?

"Where shall I find God in life?" the disciples asked the elder. "God is with you everywhere," the holy one replied. "But if that is true," the disciple asked, "Why can I not see this presence?" "Because," said the elder, "you are like the fish who, when in the ocean, never notice the water."

"In God we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28) God is always where we are and is ever at work. Just like the fish in the ocean that swims and swims looking for that ocean in which it is immersed, so too can we become so involved in life's activities that we become inattentive and often unaware of the magnitude of Love who surrounds us. How can I become more aware of God's activity and presence and to cooperate with it? Where is the action of life in me? God is present and active in you, in the action of your life in all its busyness. These are some of the questions which may prompt one to seek spiritual direction.

What is this spiritual direction? The word direction can be a bit of problem. For people who have not come across it before, the word 'spiritual companionship' or 'spiritual journeying' with people or simply 'accompaniment' may be better. It is an opportunity for people to come, usually, but not always, on a regular basis, to have a chat about faith, about life about you, about relationships, about God. It is about helping people make sense of their life; about searching for God. Some people would use that language, naming and recognising God, but others would talk in terms of 'I just know there is something more but I do not know what the more is'. So it is really just helping people to reflect on their life and see where there are movements that are life-giving and movements that are sort of taking them away

from life and growth. It is about their relationship with God, deepening it, re-finding it or even searching for it. It is a coming together of life and faith.

If you are trying to make better decisions, discerning some important life decision or choice, if you are struggling in a difficult relationship, if you are a new mother both stirred by the ecstasy of this amazing life and overwhelmed by its relentless demands, if you are battling an addiction, if financial troubles are consuming you, if grief and loss are causing pain and emptiness, if you are just not happy with how things are going, then this is where God is acting, calling to you: "My yolk is easy and my burden light." (Matthew 11:30) Experiences of delight, a strong human emotion which seems to be a yearning for something inexpressible, a hunger for more to life, may lead people to spiritual direction.

The task then of spiritual director is to help the directee to become more aware of the presence and activity of God in one's life and respond appropriately. It is about seeking God and responding with your whole heart. People come with a willingness to be open to the transformation that God wants to give them.

Spiritual direction is an ancient practice of the Catholic tradition which began, with the Desert Mothers and Fathers who were sought for their wisdom in the life of the Spirit and it continues to today.

Spiritual direction is not counselling; no advice is given for God speaks his wisdom within the heart of each of us. Deep contemplative listening and prompting questions can get you to explore in confidentiality and safety to allow that voice within to emerge. With the help of your spiritual director you can become more

conscious of how truly active God is in your life and how you might better cooperate with God's gift of grace.

If you come for the first time you might be invited to talk about what has brought you to direction, telling something of your own story, your God story, and your relationships. It is not techniques or skills but it is just helping people to talk about things that are real, substantial and personal; it is a kind of spiritual conversation in the presence of God, that is about the inner world as well as what is happening around you.

Prayer is an engagement with God and an indispensable support in our life of faith and a communication of love. So spiritual direction is also about learning to pray in a way that draws you closer to God. It can be especially helpful for those embarking on a serious life of prayer, to dialogue with God and moving to union with Him.

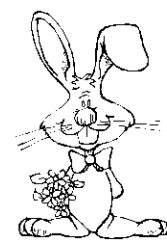
Life is a growing thing going from seed to sapling, but always, always toward its purpose, the shaping of the self into a person of quality, compassion and joy in relationship with our God. "Our hearts are restless until they rest in you, O God," says St Augustine. What is that inner restlessness calling to you? Can spiritual direction assist you?

Ms Pat Hearity

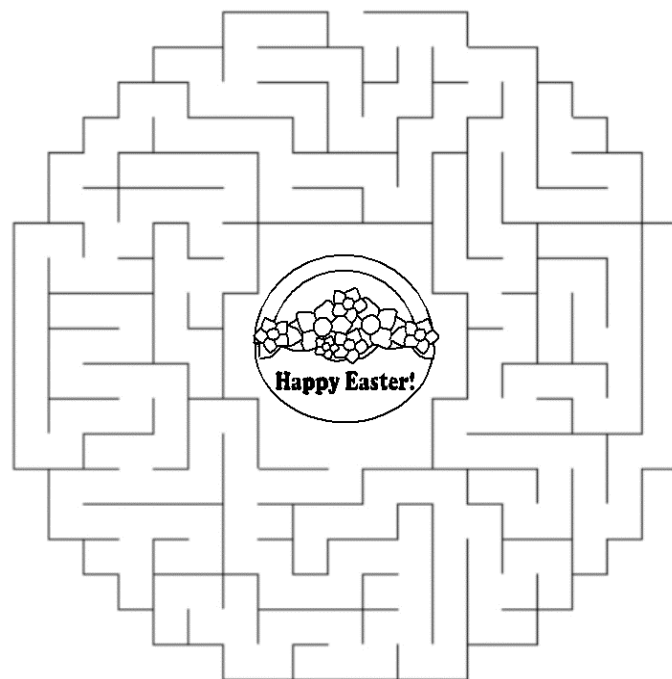
*Ms Pat Hearity, a qualified spiritual director, is available in St John's Parish House (by appointment) to meet with anyone who seeks a spiritual companion. Retreat in Daily life is also offered. Please contact Pat on 0409 958 365.*



Happy  
Easter!



Help the Easter Bunny find his basket.



Reminder –

Parish Luncheon - Sunday June 15<sup>th</sup>

**All Welcome** – Come along and enjoy a scrumptious spit roast and sweets-tickets on sale in May.

*Funds raised go directly to the charities we support in developing countries for much needed eye surgery.*

# ST JOHN'S PARISH DIRECTORY

## PARISH PRAYER

Heavenly Father - We, the Parishioners of St John's, are grateful for all we have received from the men, women and children of our past. Help us to cherish and maintain our Parish heritage.

Most of all, enable us to be people who welcome the stranger, the needy, the sick and the lonely.

Like St John, our Patron Saint, may we be people who love others, as Your Son, Jesus, asked us to do.

We make this prayer, through Christ our Lord. AMEN

## PRESBYTERY:

Ph: 9457 1066 Fax: 9459 7874

Email: heidelberg@cam.org.au

Web: www.cam.org.au/heidelberg

Parish Priest: - Fr Mario Zammit

Pastoral Associate: - Sr Loreto Lynch

Parish Secretary: - Marilyn McCann

*(Parish Office is open Tues-Fri between 9am & 2.00pm)*

Parish, Primary School

55 Cape St, Heidelberg 3084

School Principal: - Mr Nick Marinelli

Ph: 9459 2963 Fax: 9459 0133

School Secretaries:

Anne Marie Smith / Melanie Sharples

## WEEKEND MASS TIMES

Sat: 6.00 pm,

Sun: 8.30 am, 10.30 am, 5.00 pm

Mass at the Austin Hospital at 9.30 am on the fourth Sunday of the month.

## WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

Mon to Sat: 9.15 am

## RECONCILIATION

Saturdays: 9.45 am & 5.30 pm.

## EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

Wednesday: 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm

Thursday: 9.45 am – 11.00 am

Friday: 8.00 am – 9.00 am

## BAPTISMS

By appointment on Sundays at 11.45 am.

(No Baptisms on the first Sunday of the month.)

*Baptism preparation meeting is held in the Parish House on the last Thursday of each month at 7.30 pm.*

*No Baptism preparation meeting is held in the months of December and January.*

## WEDDINGS

By appointment

*Articles for the next Echo most welcome. Please email to the parish secretary or hand in at the parish office.*

After Care – Stacey – 9457 6573

Altar Servers – Fr Mario

Altar Society – Pauline Griffiths – 94597093

Children's Liturgy of the Word – Sr Loreto 9457 1066

Choir & Music – Sr Loreto – 9457 1066

Cycling Group – Peter Symes – 9458 2332

Echo Magazine – Michelle Penson – 9457 2351

Finance – Des O'Brien – 9457 1066

Hall Hire – Fran Gasior 0417 972 317

Heidelcare (Ecumenical) – Rosemary Vecchies – 9459 0729

Legion of Mary – Tues 7.30 pm. New members welcome.

Liturgy Committee – Pat Heywood – 9459 1798

Parish After School Religion classes – Sr Loreto 9457 1066

Parish Council – Michelle Penson (Chair) 9457 2351

Partners in Community – Sarah Riitano – 9457 3685

Playgroup – Vanessa Javier – 0418 382 915

Readers' Roster – Parish Secretary – 9457 1066

St Vincent de Paul – John Griffiths – 94597093

School Education Board – Michelle Robertson – 9457 3214

School Maintenance Committee – Nick Marinelli – 9459 2963

Sunday Counters – John Griffiths – 9459 7093

Sunday Morning Coffee – Barbara Dabal – 9459 3990

Tennis Club – Des O'Brien – 9499 9056

Thanksgiving Committee – Xavier Csar – 9455 1706