



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

52 Yarra Street

HEIDELBERG

We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which our parish stands, the Wurundjeri-Balluk clan of the Woi wurrung people in the Kulin Nation. We respectfully recognise elders, both past and present, and join in a silent prayer for healing of the pains caused by our ancestors.

Central to the mission of St John's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

29TH / 30TH DECEMBER—Feast of the Holy Family, YEAR C

A CHILD IS BORN FOR US!

Dear parishioners, visitors and friends,

We have just celebrated Christmas, the memorial of the great event when God took human flesh upon himself and lived among us as a human person—just like each and every one of us! This is a great mystery which is very difficult to explain, how God could find it within himself to forego his position as creator and to take on the form of a part of his creation! God did this for one simple reason: to be able to show his face to us. The opening lines of the letter to the Hebrews tells us that God had been trying to communicate with us for a very long time, using different ways, through the prophets. Sending his only son as one of us was his last attempt. Now God has spoken to us in a full and final way; our job is to listen and absorb what God has spoken.

Some of the readings prepared for the feast of Christmas, spoke about light and darkness. On our own we walk in darkness, through the birth of his Son, God has shone a new light upon us, his creation. No one can create darkness; it is the total absence of light. When the light comes, there is no longer any darkness. Light and darkness are not compatible with each other.

In the same way, we can often find ourselves in darkness if we do not let the light of God shine in and through our life. Sin, evil and spiritual darkness are places where God does not exist. God came to be the light of the world and of our whole life. When we get to know and see God, then we can no longer live in darkness.

We can find ourselves in darkness because of choices we make or because of things that happen around us, over which we often have no control. Sickness, death and misunderstanding can cause darkness in our life. At times we find that we have lost trust in people we had looked up to or institutions that we formed part of. Darkness can easily engulf us.

Darkness is the absence of light—the absence of God!

The birth of the God-child in Bethlehem is a source of new light and of hope. We need to continually celebrate the fact of God-with-us. God is born as a human person not just one day two thousand years ago; nor is he born again for us on Christmas day. We celebrate Christmas to remind us of the reality of God who live in our midst, God who lives our life.

We need to hang on to the new light, new life and new hope that the Son of God made human brings in our life. People and human institutions around us can and have indeed failed us, over and over again. Even if these people and institutions claim to be working in God's name, it does not mean that God has failed us. God is love and God will never fail us. This is the sure hope that the birth of Jesus at Christmas brings in our life. This is the light and hope we need to hang on to!

Happy New Year 2019!

Fr Mario



PARISH PRIEST: Fr Mario Zammit
PARISH SECRETARY: Mary Peeris
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL CHAIR:
Christopher Ratnayake
CHILD SAFETY OFFICER:
Michelle Robertson m:0409 533 100
SACRAMENT COORDINATOR:
Sr Loreto Lynch rsm

PARISH OFFICE:
52 Yarra Street Heidelberg 3084
t: 9457 1066
e: heidelberg@cam.org.au
w: cam.org.au/heidelberg
facebook/stjohnheidelberg
OFFICE HOURS:
Mo, Tu, Th, Fr; 9:30am to 2:30pm

MASS TIMES:
WEEKEND: Saturday: 6:00pm
Sunday: 8:30am, 10:30am, 5:00pm
AUSTIN HOSPITAL:
3rd Sunday of the Month at 9:30am
WEEKDAYS: 9:15am

RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
Saturdays at 9:45am & 5:30pm
or by appointment
BAPTISMS: Sundays at 11:45am, by
appointment
BAPTISM INFORMATION EVENING:
Last Thursday of each month at
7:30pm in the parish house, except
Dec and Jan
WEDDINGS: By appointment

ROSARY: Monday to Saturday after
morning Mass
EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT:
Wednesday: 7:30pm - 9:00pm;
Thursday: 9:40am - 11:00am,
Friday: 8:00am - 9:00am

LECTIO DIVINA: Every second and
fourth Monday of the month at
7:00pm, in the parish house
LEGION OF MARY: Every Tuesday night
at 7:00pm in the parish house;
contact Sue 9459 8604
PARISH PILGRIM STATUE OF MARY:
To have the statue of Mary in your
home for one week contact Marj
McBroom m: 0414 289 304

ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH PRIMARY:
PRINCIPAL: Maureen Stella
ADDRESS:
55 Cape St Heidelberg 3084
t: 9459 2963;
office@sjheidelberg.catholic.edu.au

HALL HIRE:
Fran Gasior: m:0417972317
10:00am-5:00pm; Mon-Fri only

NEW PARISHIONERS WELCOME:
Please contact parish office to
introduce yourself

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.*

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF COMMUNION During Weekend Masses: We urgently need more parishioners to come forward and take on this ministry in order for us to be able to continue offering Communion as both Body and Blood at our weekend Masses. A workshop will be held on Monday 28th January at 7:00pm in the parish church. All welcome to join.

DOWNLOAD THE MELBOURNE CATHOLIC APP FOR IPHONE AND ANDROID: Enjoy Melbourne Catholic on-the-go with our new free app. Search for Mass times across parishes and deaneries, access the archbishop's homilies, read trending news, daily Mass readings, prayers and weekly reflections, events and updates from Plenary Council 2020. iPhone App Store: <https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/melbourne-catholic/id1440438862?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>; Android Play Store: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ionic.melbournecatholic>

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020: What is God asking of us in Australia at this time? Have your say by Wednesday 6th March, 2019. Details: <http://www.cam.rg.au/plenary/>

Make an Encounter in 2019: Timor Leste, Samoa or Myanmar. Visit: www.palms.org.au/encounters.

DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY: Fr Mario will be accompanying a group of parishioners on the first Mission Immersion Trip to the Philippines. The group will have time to learn about the culture of the Philippines and work among some charities in Manila. They will also spend one week in St Catherine's parish in Bataan, this parish is situated in a poor area of the Philippines, north of Manila. The group leaves on Friday, 4th January and returns on Saturday 19th January. You can participate in this experience by your prayers for the group. Please follow us on Facebook (facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg/) and on Instagram (instagram.com/stjohnheidelberg/); we will try to post as many photos and reports as possible! Any further financial support for this mission experience will be appreciated. Money will be forwarded to the parish and the charities we visit.

During this time, Fr Ted Teal and Fr Wayne Edwards will be celebrating Masses at St John's. There will be a Communion Service on Mondays 7th and 14th January at 9:15am.

During the month of January, Communion will only be offered as Body of Christ, due to lack of ministers.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

THE SICK: Jenny Ferriere, Marie Hankin, Elizabeth Larkin, Francis Micallef, Joyce Quinn, Frank Walton, Noeline Zerna.

ANNIVERSARIES: Maureen O'Brien.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Patrick Carra, Fay Smeaton.

*Names on the sick list remain for six weeks, unless otherwise advised.
Please submit any items for the newsletter, including sick, recently deceased and anniversaries, by **Thursday morning** latest. Thank you.*

29 Dec / 30 Dec	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Brain Garrone	Elizabeth Williamson	Claire Newsome	Rosemary Vecchies
2 nd Reader	Jan Mc Caffrey	Michael Leonard	Grace Lew-Kee	Mary Kotefski
Communion	Leela Cherubim	Stanly Devasia	Geraldine Manuel	Sally Tramontana
	Donna Richardson	Pauline Griffiths	Sue Lew-Kee	Matthew Sanders
	Jeanette O'Sullivan	Peter O'Donoghue	Doris Schembri	Olivia Sanders
	TBA	Val Wallis	TBA	TBA
5 Jan / 6 Jan	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Leela Cherubim	Jack Naden	Robyn Laurie	Mary Kotefski
2 nd Reader	Zen Zebrowski	TBA	Bob Dowling	Sandra D'Souza
Communion	Maria Basilone	Margaret Bradley	Tim Boyle	Des O'Brien
Counters	30 Dec: Des O'Brien, Shane Byrnes & 6 Jan: Graeme Foote, Michael Tilley.			
Collection Weekly Average for November			Heidelcare Co-Ordinator	
Parish		Presbytery		December: Elaine 0490 254 928
Stewardship	\$2965.34	Stewardship	\$599.69	January: Elaine 0490 254 928
Loose	\$638.68	Loose	\$320.00	N.B. No morning tea in January
Thank you for supporting St John's financially. Please advise if your credit card is lost/stolen or the expiry date has changed.				

*WISHING ALL PARISHIONERS,
VISITORS AND FRIENDS,
A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR 2019
FILLED WITH GOD'S
ABUNDANT BLESSINGS !*

END OF THE YEAR / NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES: Masses on the last day of the year will be at 9:15am and 7:00pm. Mass on New Year's Day will be at 10:30am—there will be no 9:15am Mass on Tuesday.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE: St John's parish office will open on Monday 7th January 2019. For any urgent requests, please email the parish on: heidelberg@cam.org.au or leave a message on the parish answering machine (9457 1066—press 3 to leave a message). Thank You.

2019 SACRAMENT PROGRAMME at St John's: Reconciliation (year 3 and higher) on 17th & 24th October (St John's Primary), 7th November (students from other schools); First Communion (year 4 and higher) on 15th June at the OLMC Nalleijerring Centre; Confirmation (year 6 and higher) on 11th August at St Patrick's Cathedral. For St John's parishioners who do not attend St John's primary, enrolments for all sacraments need to be in by not later than Monday 5th March. Contact parish secretary for details.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS: At this time of the year we send and receive a number of Christmas cards and greetings. Used postage stamps can be resold to stamp collectors and the money sent to help missionary activities in different parts of the world. Please save your used postage stamps and drop them off at the parish office or at the sacristy. Thank you.

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL: French young organists recital will be held on Friday, 4th January from 6:30pm. The performers are: Alexandre Bonnemort, Jean Nouvel-Alaux, Jean Poitevin, and Arthur Scandola. Entrance fee: \$20.00 no concessions available. Children under 15 enter for free. Tickets can be obtained from <https://www.trybooking.com/ZONC>; for further enquiries email music@cam.org.au or phone 9926 5753 from Wednesday to Sunday).

ST PIUS PARISH, HEIDELBERG WEST: is looking for a parish secretary and a domestic support person. For further information and a job description, please go to: <https://www.cam.org.au/Jobs>. Applications are to be sent to recruitment@cam.org.au by 2nd January. A covering letter and a current resume need to be submitted with the application. For further information contact Nandi Adams, HR Officer on 9926 5793.

VOLUNTEERS AT THE AUSTIN HOSPITAL: As a parish we have a very old history of doing voluntary work at the Austin Hospital. This volunteer work has different forms. Some volunteers offer to visit the hospital during the week, offering prayer, support and Holy Communion to Catholic patients. Others help once a month checking which patients would like to attend Mass at the hospital chapel, other volunteers help wheel the patients to and from the chapel, while others attend Mass offering support to the patients. Mass at the Austin Hospital is on the third Sunday of each month at 9:30am. (There is also Mass at the Repatriation Hospital chapel on the fourth Sunday of each month at 11:00am.) All volunteers working at the hospital need to be registered. If you can help with any of these ministries, please contact the parish office (94571066 / heidelberg@cam.org.au) thank you.

FIRST READING

Ecclesiasticus 3: 2-6, 12-14.

The Lord honours the father in his children, and upholds the rights of a mother over her sons. Whoever respects his father is atoning for his sins, he who honours his mother is like someone amassing a fortune. Whoever respects his father will be happy with children of his own, he shall be heard on the day when he prays. Long life comes to him who honours his father, he who sets his mother at ease is showing obedience to the Lord. My son, support your father in his old age, do not grieve him during his life. Even if his mind should fail, show him sympathy, do not despise him in your health and strength; for kindness to a father shall not be forgotten but will serve as reparation for your sins.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM*Psalm 79: 2-3, 15-16, 18-19*

TOGETHER: Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)

O blessed are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper.

RIGHT SIDE (PRIEST'S SIDE)

Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table.

LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)

Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
all the days of your life.

TOGETHER: Happy are those who fear the Lord and walk in his ways.

SECOND READING

Colossians 3:12-21.

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful.

Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Wives, give way to your husbands, as you should in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and treat them with gentleness. Children, be obedient to your parents always, because that is what will please the Lord. Parents, never drive your children to resentment or you will make them feel frustrated

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! May the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, and the fullness of his message live within you. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 2:41-52.

Every year the parents of Jesus used to go to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up for the feast as usual. When they were on their way home after the feast, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem without his parents knowing it. They assumed he was with the caravan, and it was only after a day's journey that they went to look for him among their relations and acquaintances. When they failed to find him they went back to Jerusalem looking for him everywhere.

Three days later, they found him in the Temple, sitting among the doctors, listening to them, and asking them questions; and all those who heard him were astounded at his intelligence and his replies. They were overcome when they saw him, and his mother said to him, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been, looking for you.' 'Why were you looking for me?' he replied. 'Did you not know that I must be busy with my Father's affairs?' But they did not understand what he meant.

He then went down with them and came to Nazareth and lived under their authority. His mother stored up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men.

MY FATHER'S BUSINESS

Luke's story of the loss and finding of Jesus in the Temple brings out very strongly the element of misunderstanding between him and his parents. When his Mother complains, 'My child, why have you done this to us? See how worried your father and I have been looking for you,' Jesus' response seems to reflect adolescent impatience: 'Why were you searching for me? Did you not know I must be about my Father's business?'

On Mary's lips, 'father' refers to her husband, Joseph. But Jesus is speaking of his Father in heaven. Into their tranquil family life has burst a sharp reminder of his true status as unique Son of God and of the destiny ('My Father's business') to which they are going to have to surrender him.

It would be trite simply to say that here we see that the Holy Family was not immune to the trials of children going through adolescence—though, of course, some comfort can be drawn from that. The gospel is bringing out the uniqueness of Jesus as well as his identification with the ordinary human condition. 'His Father's business' is to draw the entire human family into a 'family' relationship with God.

The family life of Jesus underwrites the dignity of all family life. But growing into Christian adulthood is no easier than growing into human adulthood and no less immune to the trials that all growth entails. Each of us is called to discover and 'be about' our Father's business in our own unique way—often involving pain and misunderstanding for those who love us most.

Fr Brendan Byrne sj