



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

52 Yarra Street
HEIDELBERG



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH
& PRIMARY SCHOOL

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our parish stands, the Wurundjeri-Balluk clan of the Woi wurrung people in the Kulin Nation.

Central to the mission of St John's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe and supportive environment in which to flourish.

12TH/13TH SEPTEMBER 2020, 24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

This weekend, the Catholic Church in Australia marks Child Protection Sunday. St John's Catholic Parish Heidelberg is committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and people at risk in our community. We uphold that child protection and the dignity of every person is the responsibility of every adult.



"BLESS THESE MEN THAT GO TO FIGHT FOR THEIR RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES" - PETER LALOR, BAKERY HILL, 1854

This Thursday, September 17, is the feast day of St Robert Bellarmine. Born in Montepulciano, Tuscany in 1542, Bellarmine became a Jesuit priest and later a Cardinal of the Church. A holy and influential man in the church, he also had great influence in more public matters. Namely, the Galileo affair, in which he offered Galileo much helpful advice and support. Given the place of their upbringing, I'd like to think the two men enjoyed some quality wine together!

On the topic of quality, a friend recently forwarded me an excerpt from a book she's been reading. It was from *Life is Worth Living* by Bishop Fulton Sheen. Many of you would know it. The book is a collation of talks he gave on television back in the 1950s, and one of my father's favourite reads. The friend sent it to me as she was quite amazed at how relevant the quote was, despite being uttered nearly 70 years ago. Sheen was reflecting on a quote by our friend Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (in case you were wondering where I was going with this). It was a quote, amongst many other insights of Saint Robert, that American founding father Thomas Jefferson took up and made his own in helping formulate the Declaration of Independence. The quote reads, "Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." Here is part of what Bishop Sheen had to say:

In the light of the above, what is one of the greatest dangers facing America...? The danger is that American people may degenerate into a "mass". They do this when they lose their sense of personal responsibility and, instead of being self-determined, allow themselves to be determined....The more people become enslaved to evil habits, the more ready they are to be enslaved to others. Losing a sense of soul or personality, they are capable of being herded like little pigs into a collective pigsty..."

It's a prophetic insight. He says America but the wisdom applies universally and very much to our situation today. Whether the decisions government bodies of Australia have made over the past months in trying to battle the Coronavirus are right or wrong, what I am troubled by is the ready willingness of Australians to hand over their personal freedoms and be subject to such severe restrictions on their daily lives. I always thought this country had a healthy suspicion of authority and a mild rebellious streak. It's certainly been a part of our folklore: the tune of *Waltzing Matilda*, the tales of Ned Kelly and the uprising at Eureka to go off the top of the head. Peter Lalor would be doing barrel rolls in his grave at the moment with what is going on in Victoria.

Given Sheen's reflection, perhaps we shouldn't be surprised. As Our Lord said to the civil authority in his day, "You would have no power over me if it had not been given to you from above" (John 19:11). When you abandon the ultimate authority of truth and justice then earthly rulers and their laws are really all you have left. God help us.

PARISH PRIEST Fr Joel Peart
PARISH SECRETARY: Mary Peeris
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
CHAIR: Michelle Robertson
COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Domenica Ashworth;
Timothy Boyle
Margaret Bradley
Adrian Daly
Moiria Di Cesare
Karen Frost
Russell Lew-Kee

SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE CHAIR:
Michelle Penson (0499 891 101)

PARISH PROGRAMME COORDINATORS:
Jan McCaffrey (0423 478 504)
Elizabeth Williamson
(0447195553)

PARISH OFFICE:
52 Yarra Street Heidelberg
3084
t: 9457 1066
e: heidelberg@cam.org.au
w: pol.org.au/heidelberg
Facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg
Instagram.com/stjohn.heidelberg

OFFICE HOURS:
Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm

MASS TIMES: No Public Masses at this time

RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
by appointment

WEDDINGS: By appointment

**FIRST RECONCILIATION,
FIRST COMMUNION,
CONFIRMATION:**

Parish Secretary (9457 1066)

LEGION OF MARY: meeting on Zoom All Welcome. contact Sue mob 0499260206.

PARISH PILGRIM STATUE OF MARY:
Statue not in circulation until further notice mob Sue 0499260206

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

HALL HIRE:
Contact parish office during hours.

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.*



Dear Friends

In Child Protection Week, our whole nation is invited to 'put children first'. In fact, that is the theme in 2020, which marks thirty years of Child Protection Week in Australia.

Although the Pandemic has changed the way we are all living and working, it doesn't change what is most important. For Christians, the Lord Jesus shows us that at all times, the most vulnerable among us are those requiring our greatest care. In particular, the safety and the protection of children is one of our most important priorities.

The Professional Standards Office of our Archdiocese along with our Mission Team have developed some resources to be of help for all in our communities. These are designed to support children and young people's right to be safe and feel safe.

My heart breaks for those who were not cared for and protected in the past. When a child is neglected or abused, the pain and suffering endures throughout their whole life. I am sad and angered that the Church has not always been a place that has put children first. We continue to address the horror of abuse, to walk with those in need, and to build a culture of safety and protection for our most vulnerable. Personally, I will continue to meet with survivors of abuse; listening to them, hearing them and trusting them, and helping our Church be continually converted.

Please pray with me that we would put children first always, and protect their safety.

*Most Rev
Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne*

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Pauline Garland (nee Booth).

PRAYER FOR THE SICK: Pauline Hewatt, Colin Bolger, Giovanni Mirabella, Patrick Morel, Sandra Ashton, Sam Palmieri.

*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.***

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

THE LEGION OF MARY MEETING: is on Zoom All Welcome. Contact Sue at 0499260206. Also the Parish Pilgrim statue of Mary is not in circulation until further notice.

GEMS AND FRIENDS: Praying and thinking of you all and admiring your stoic attitude in this difficult time. You may remember a few weeks prior to our last gathering we had started a raffle. It was decided to draw it and the results were as follows: 1st prize Maureen, 2nd Carmela and 3rd Pauline. Thank you to the Bortolin family for providing the first prize. Prizes will be delivered shortly.

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS: Thank you to all who have continued to support the parish through this time. You can also give your contribution by using the link on the parish web site (bottom left) or by using our parish bank account details are Account name: *St John's Catholic Parish*, BSB: 633 000 Account Number: 138400957. Please indicate purpose of donation in the comments sections. Thanks.

LIVING THE GOSPEL – JUST LIKE PETER

Throughout the gospels, Peter is a fantastic example of the common person. He has insights of faith at times but usually messes it up with his next breath. His question in this week's gospel is one that any one of us might ask. I try to do what's right, but how long do I have to hang in there? There has to be a limit to patience with someone who keeps upsetting me, surely? Jesus shows us that if we operate from a motivation of compassion and a desire to constantly build relationships that are life-giving for both parties, then there is no end to the number of times that we try to re-build that relationship

FORGIVENESS BEYOND CALCULATION

In the parable of the Unforgiving Debtor that Jesus tells in response to Peter's question about forgiveness, the debt of "ten thousand talents" is an utterly fantastic sum: "billions of dollars" in today's terms—something that the servant, despite his plea for time, could never hope to repay. He stands to lose absolutely everything—freedom, family, possessions—for his whole life long. The master's generosity in cancelling the debt in effect restores his life.

In contrast, the debt that the servant himself is owed by a fellow servant and is violently unwilling to remit is paltry. The equivalent of a few hundred days' wages, given time it could easily be paid off. Hence the wickedness of the servant in not passing on to his fellow even a tiny portion of the immense generosity he had himself received.

The Lord would have Peter and all members of the community understand that they live as people who, through Christ's costly love, have received remission of a debt (the debt of sin) that they could never repay. How inappropriate then an unwillingness to forgive fellow members of the community the "debts" set up by injury on a much smaller scale.

That said, we know that forgiveness is not something to speak of lightly. For people who have been deeply wronged finding the capacity to forgive may be the task of a lifetime. It cannot simply be willed—still less prescribed, urged or imposed by others who have not shared the loss. It is a grace, an entrance into the mystery of God's own generosity.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ

GOSPEL FOCUS – HOW MANY TIMES?

Peter asks, 'How many times should I forgive? As many as seven times?' Peter probably thought that he was being pretty generous. The religious law of his time required people to forgive three times, so by suggesting seven times, Peter would have thought that he was really going the extra mile. To forgive someone seven times is a pretty big call. But the number seven has great significance in scripture; it is regarded as a number of perfection. Peter is suggesting that there is an ideal number of times that one should forgive. Jesus blows this out of the water by saying, take that perfect number of times and multiply it by seventy. There is no perfect number of times to forgive

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

You Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you,
that your prophets be found true.
Hear the prayers of your servant,
and of your people Israel.

FIRST READING Ecclesiasticus 27:30 – 28:7

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins? Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment; who will forgive him his sins? Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments. Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 102:1-4. 9-12

Response: The Lord is kind and merciful;
slow to anger and rich in compassion.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.

R./

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion.

R./

His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults

R./

For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins.

R./

SECOND READING Romans 14:7-9

The life and death of each of us has its influence
on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if
we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead
we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ
both died and came to life, it was so that he
might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

I give you a new commandment:
love one another as I have loved you.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL Matthew 18:21-35

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often
must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As
often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not
seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'

'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared
to a king who decided to settle his accounts with
his servants. When the reckoning began, they
brought him a man who owed ten thousand
talents; but he had no means of paying, so his
master gave orders that he should be sold,
together with his wife and children and all his
possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant
threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me
time," he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And
the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he
let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this
servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow
servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and
he seized him by the throat and began to throttle
him. "Pay what you owe me", he said. His fellow
servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying,
"Give me time and I will pay you." But the other
would not agree; on the contrary, he had him
thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His
fellow servants were deeply distressed when they
saw what had happened, and they went to their
master and reported the whole affair to him.
Then the master sent for him. "You wicked
servant," he said. "I cancelled all that debt of
yours when you appealed to me. Were you not
bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant
just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the
master handed him over to the torturers till he
should pay all his debt. And that is how my
heavenly Father will deal with you unless you
each forgive your brother from your heart.'

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

How precious is your mercy, O God!

The children of men seek shelter in the shadow of
your wings.

or

The chalice of blessing that we bless
is a communion in the Blood of Christ;
and the bread that we break
is a sharing in the Body of the Lord.