



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH
& PRIMARY SCHOOL

ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

52 Yarra Street
HEIDELBERG



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.

19TH/20TH SEPTEMBER 2020, 25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A



We proclaim a crucified Christ
1Cor123

16 September 2020

Dear friends in Christ,

As we now welcome the beginnings of easing in COVID-19 Restrictions in Victoria, I would like to take this opportunity to write to you, the Clergy and people of our Archdiocese. It is great news that regional Victoria will, from tonight, move into the Third Step of the Roadmap to reopening, which includes our parishes located outside the metropolitan zone. However, we have a long

way to go.

The deprivation in sacramental life has been a profound loss for our people. As well as all the other sufferings of the Pandemic, the sense of estrangement from the Eucharist has been a particular struggle for Catholics. The Mass is our primary means of gathering together in faith; it is the source and summit of our Christian life, and its life-giving nourishment and healing is dearly missed.

All of us are anxious to open church doors, but I want to emphasise our need to be creative in the ways we do so, especially with the thousands of children who have been waiting for Sacraments of Initiation. Countless Catholic families are awaiting Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation for their children. Adults, too, have longed to be received into the life of the Church. We shall be exploring possibilities such as outdoor liturgies in parish and school settings to facilitate these crucial events of grace and welcome.

Throughout the pandemic, I have been advocating directly with the Government, reminding authorities continually of our respectful compliance with each stage of restrictions, and seeking a fair consideration in what is permitted. The Catholic community throughout the pandemic has been constructive and positive. We have, and continue to act in a mature way, caring for the safety and vulnerability of Victorians facing great risk. Thankfully the signs of driving down COVID numbers are looking good at this moment and Catholics join other people of faith in giving thanks for this outcome and working to ensure the steps ahead do not take us backward.

Now, it is essential that the Government does not treat faith communities as an afterthought to the opening up of other sectors. Our churches are locations for communities of care and essential service, and must be treated fairly and reasonably.

Practically speaking, I have been in discussion with the Premier to thank him for overturning the restriction on spiritual ministry to the sick and the dying, and have assured him that the Catholic Church is able to manage restrictions (including good hygiene, face coverings, social distancing and density requirements). If pubs and restaurants can open, then places of worship should be open under similar conditions and numbers.

If case numbers track well, I expect we will see larger outdoor gatherings in regional Victoria become possible over the next few weeks, and proportionate opportunities for gathering in metropolitan Melbourne. I am hopeful that this may occur sometime in October, which would be a deeply welcomed improvement on the current Roadmap indications. If we can open our churches, even for outdoor gatherings, then we should open them.

The Deputy Premier and the Multicultural Affairs Minister are conducting discussions this month through the Multifaith Leaders Forum. The Archdiocese will be contributing to these meetings. In addition I will continue to engage with the Premier and Ministers directly on the Church's need for opening doors, carefully and safely.

Be assured of my ongoing closeness in prayer and concern. I have heard your cry, and I am working to bring your voice to the authorities. The Lord has promised he will be with us always; let us place our hope in Him.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli

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
 Moira 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.*

SOCIAL SERVICES SUNDAY - A TIME TO REFLECT AND GIVE THANKS

Today we mark Social Services Sunday within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. We are invited to give thanks and pray for all who stand with and provide support to those who are marginalised and vulnerable within our communities. We recognise with deep gratitude, those working within Catholic Social Services Victoria's 45 member organisations, the 7,000 staff and 17,000 volunteers, who together, serve more than 200,000 people in need each year. We also give thanks for all in our parishes, who are so often at the forefront of providing practical support and care to those in need within their local communities, and beyond. We call to mind the 2020/21 Social Justice Statement brought out recently by the Australian Catholic bishops, **To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today**, and so draw your attention to a recent event hosted by CSSV, **Counselling and Therapeutic Support in a Time of COVID**, which provided an opportunity to become more familiar with mental health services, and how to practically reach out for or point to assistance. Parishioners will find the resources in this article helpful.

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PRAYER FOR COURAGE AND COMPASSION

Compassionate God, Your unconditional love for all inspires our hearts and empowers our actions for those who are most vulnerable. May we boldly and humbly serve one another and be steadfast in our work for justice for all people. Keep our hearts open to the joys and the hopes of our world, and our ears ready to hear your call to truth, justice and reconciliation. Let us continue to draw inspiration and strength from those, like St Mary MacKillop, on whose shoulders we stand. We gather in Jesus' name to be nourished and to move forward together in hope and joy. Amen

PRAYER FOR THE END OF THE VIRUS

Almighty and merciful Father, who show your love to all your creation. We come before you asking for a quick control of the Coronavirus currently ravaging our world. Hear graciously the prayers we make for those affected by the virus in various parts of the world. Grant healing to the sick, eternal life to the dead and consolation to the bereaved families. We pray that an effective medicine to combat the sickness be speedily found. We pray for the relevant governments and health authorities that they take appropriate steps for the good of the people. Look upon us in your mercy and forgive us our failings. Amen.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

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**.*

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.

SIGNIFICANT BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES: If you or a loved one are celebrating a significant birthday (18th, 21st, 30th, 40th...) or a wedding anniversary please let us know at the parish office (Heidelberg@cam.org.au) so we can celebrate and pray for you as a community.

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.

WELL-BEING: The COVID-19 pandemic and its associated social distancing and self isolation measures has transformed the everyday fabric of society. In times of such extreme crisis and change its very easy to get caught up with our own struggles and to feel isolated from our own community. While we firstly need to look after our own well-being, we also need to remember that everyone is struggling in their own way and a simple kind gesture can help someone in a profound way. During this time when we cannot physically wrap our arms around each other, let us find ways to care for and be connected to our neighbours and loved ones.

GOD'S JUSTICE AND GENEROSITY

Today's Gospel is introduced as is a parable "about the kingdom of heaven". That is, it illustrates the way in which Jesus is reclaiming the word for God's rule and for values that allow people to live lives that are human in the fullest sense of the word.

In the Palestine of Jesus' time, employment was for many a day to day business. Whether labourers got work—and the wage they needed to support themselves and their families—depended on whether they were hired for that day in the marketplace.

The story presupposes a long working day with successive hirings during the day. The "just wage" agreed upon at the start of the day would have been a denarius, the standard wage for a day's labour. This is in fact what everyone receives, but when those who have laboured since early morning see even the latecomers paid this wage, they expect that in their case "a just wage" will mean considerably more. Hence their grievance.

Jesus' message is that we cannot simply take the conventional idea of justice and apply it without qualification to God. God is just, but, beyond justice, reserves the right to be overwhelmingly generous as well. If the landowner, out of wider social concern, chooses to be generous and to pay everyone, deserving or not, what social justice today would call a "living wage", this truly reflects the will and action of God. Aligning ourselves with this view of God has much to do with allowing the values of the kingdom to transform our lives and our world.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ

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.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT – KINGDOM PARABLES

A feature of the kingdom parables that Jesus used is a challenging 'shift' to the unexpected. Jesus only ever uses parables to describe what the kingdom is like, and never says exactly what it is or isn't. In each parable he compares the kingdom of God to something that would be familiar to a 1st century audience but then he twists the familiar and makes the challenging shift by making the familiar, unfamiliar. (This 'shift' is sometimes called a 'discombobulating shift'.) Jesus tells us that the kingdom of God disrupts our normal way of thinking, it turns our expectations upside down and it completely challenges our 'normal' relationships.

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord.
Should they cry to me in any distress,
I will hear them, and I will be their Lord for ever.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Psalm 144:2-3. 8-9. 17-18.

Response: The Lord is near to all who call him.

I will bless you day after day
and praise your name for ever.
the Lord is great, highly to be praised,
his greatness cannot be measured.

R./

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.

How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures

R./

The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts.

R./

SECOND READING Philippians 1:20-24. 27

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results – I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake. Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Open our hearts, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard.

Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last" they said "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go.

I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'



COMMUNION ANTIPHON

You have laid down your precepts to be carefully kept;
may my ways be firm in keeping your statutes.

or

I am the Good Shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.