



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.

26TH/27TH DECEMBER 2020 , FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

*Wishing all Parishioners, Visitors and Friends a
Very Happy New Year 2021
Filled With God's Abundant Blessings!*

Merry Christmas!

There's something of an irony in that people will often wish us a Merry Christmas in the days leading up to and on the 25th of December and then move on and not mention much of it again after that. It really should be the other way around! As the church goes, Christmas doesn't start until from the Vigil of the 25th and THEN continues on for 8 days, up to the feast of the Epiphany. It's a lovely reality that so much joy can't be contained in one day that it needs to flow over into another entire week!

That Christmas octave will take us into the new year of 2021. I can empathise with those who would like to scrub 2020 from the books and never have anything like it again. It has been so difficult for so many and in so many ways. For Christians though, our specialty is seeing the good in bad situations. And making sure good comes out of them. If we don't do our best to see even the small blessings from the past 12 months and open our eyes to what it has taught us, then we are missing an opportunity.

One of those blessings, which I think many have experienced, was the return to a more close knit family life. In times gone by families did work, cook, learn and have fun all around the home. Though it took some adjusting to, many parents said how nice it was not to battle the traffic each day and how good it was to head out for walks or go shopping during the daylight hours when typically everyone was at work or school. I'm not advocating for a return to an agrarian lifestyle, but it was interesting to hear of gardens being planted and families cooking from things they'd grown. I know I've still got a few containers of soup in the freezer from the huge cauliflowers the grew in the patch out the back!

On this feast of the Holy Family, let's look to the model of family life lived by Jesus, Mary and Joseph. And as we look to a new year, I hope we see one where we don't stretch ourselves and our families to breaking point, running far and wide to provide our families with ever more when the truly important things are right at home.

With every blessing,

Fr Joel.

ENCYCLICAL LETTER - FRATELLI TUTTI - AN OVERVIEW

OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP

Link: http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

AN APPEAL

God, the Almighty, has no need to be defended by anyone and does not want his name to be used to terrorize people. For this reason, I would like to reiterate here the appeal for peace, justice and fraternity that we made together:

Cont'd...

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
VIC 3084
Tel: 9457 1066
Email: heidelberg@cam.org.au
Webpage: pol.org.au/heidelberg
Facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg

OFFICE HOURS:
Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm
MASS TIMES: Tues to Sat: 9am &
Sat Vigil 6pm, Sun: 8:30am &
10:30am.

RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
by appointment, Sat 9:30-10am

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.

....CONT'D

In the name of God, who has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and who has called them to live together as brothers and sisters, to fill the earth and make known the values of goodness, love and peace;

In the name of innocent human life that God has forbidden to kill, affirming that whoever kills a person is like one who kills the whole of humanity, and that whoever saves a person is like one who saves the whole of humanity;

In the name of the poor, the destitute, the marginalized and those most in need, whom God has commanded us to help as a duty required of all persons, especially the wealthy and those of means;

In the name of orphans, widows, refugees and those exiled from their homes and their countries; in the name of all victims of wars, persecution and injustice; in the name of the weak, those who live in fear, prisoners of war and those tortured in any part of the world, without distinction;

In the name of peoples who have lost their security, peace and the possibility of living together, becoming victims of destruction, calamity and war;

In the name of human fraternity, that embraces all human beings, unites them and renders them equal;

In the name of this fraternity torn apart by policies of extremism and division, by systems of unrestrained profit or by hateful ideological tendencies that manipulate the actions and the futures of men and women;

In the name of freedom, that God has given to all human beings, creating them free and setting them apart by this gift;

In the name of justice and mercy, the foundations of prosperity and the cornerstone of faith;

In the name of all persons of goodwill present in every part of the world;

In the name of God and of everything stated thus far, we declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard (FT 285).

Charles de Foucauld directed his ideal of total surrender to God towards an identification with the poor, abandoned in the depths of the African desert. In that setting, he expressed his desire to feel himself a brother to every human being, and he asked a friend to "pray to God that I truly be the brother of all". He wanted to be, in the end, "the universal brother". Yet only by identifying with the least did he come at last to be the brother of all. May God inspire that dream in each one of us. Amen (FT 287).

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

ANNIVERSARY: Sheila and 'Bill' Jackson, Mary Sullivan, Nicola Tino.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK: James Artinopoulos, Philomena Misale and Brett Ralph, Elizabeth Finn, Pauline Hewatt, Giovanni Mirabella, Patrick Morel, 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**.*

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS TIMES: : 10:30am . There is No 9:00am Mass on New Year's Day.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSURE: St John's parish office will be closed to Monday 4th January 2021. For any urgent requests, please email: heidelberg@cam.org.au or leave a message on the parish answering machine (9457 1066—press 3 to leave a message). Thank You.

ENVELOPE THANKSGIVING CONTRIBUTIONS: The next instalment of envelopes start from January 2021. Those who would want to continue the Envelope contributions, kindly collect them from me at the parish office during office hours or please do email or leave a message for me to post them to you. Thank you to all who have continued to support the parish through this time.*Mary Peeris*

CALLING FOR NEW READERS, EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS AND SACRISTANS: As we prepare for 2021, if you are interested in supporting our liturgies by fulfilling any of these roles please contact the parish office on 9457 1066. Training will be provided.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY ASSISTING REFUGEE STUDENTS: Mercy Connect Melbourne, Mercy Works Ltd. is currently recruiting volunteers to support Refugee Students and Asylum Seekers in Primary and Secondary schools across the Melbourne Archdiocese. The volunteer commitment is approximately half a day per week during school terms. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred but not limited to. Please contact Sr. Mary Lewis RSM for an application form and further information. Training Day for new volunteers with emphasis on Child Safeguarding at the end of January. (preferred) Email at somml@bigpond.com Website: www.mercyworks.org.au Tel: 9326 1895

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.

HOLY FAMILY

The prayer at today's Mass speaks of the Holy Family as an "example" for "imitation." For most people present, however, the gap between the small family at Nazareth and the reality of family life today may appear far too wide for comparison.

In one aspect, however, there may be some likeness.

Joseph and Mary dutifully bring their child to the temple to observe "what stands written in the law of the Lord". The custom of "redeeming" a first born (whether a child or animal) acknowledged that fact that all life was ultimately the possession and gift of the Lord. Joseph and Mary were in this sense "buying back" their child from the Lord.

Their Child was, like all children, the Lord's gift to his parents. But, unlike all other children, he was uniquely the gift of God's only Son, not just to Mary and Joseph, but to the entire world as its Saviour. One day they, especially his mother, would have to surrender him back to the Lord, to carry out this role, one that would not be without cost both to him and to them.

Simeon senses this with his prophecy about a "sword" that would "pierce" Mary's soul.

All parents know that the joy of receiving children from God is accompanied by endless calls upon their time, energy, and understanding. Ultimately too they have to allow their children to claim their own individuality and freedom as they move through adolescence to adulthood. In this they are not so far from the surrender asked of Mary and Joseph.



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.

LIVING THE GOSPEL – FAITHFUL

A strong image that emerges from this passage is the faithfulness of Mary and Joseph. Their whole purpose in visiting the Temple is to fulfil the requirements of their faith. They are faithful to the Jewish tradition and it is into this tradition that they initiate Jesus. The faithfulness of Mary and Joseph is a hallmark of their life as a family. Their faithfulness is a significant element of what we celebrate in the feast of the Holy Family and their faithfulness to God and to one another is a model for all families and for all people.

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 104:1-6. 8-9.

RESPONSE: The Lord remembers his covenant for ever.

Give thanks to the Lord, tell his name,
make known his deeds among the peoples.

O sing to him, sing his praise;
tell all his wonderful works!

R./

Be proud of his holy name,
let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice.
Consider the Lord and his strength;
constantly seek his face.

R./

Remember the wonders he has done,
his miracles, the judgements he spoke.
O children of Abraham, his servant,
O sons of the Jacob he chose.

R./

He remembers his covenant for ever,
his promise for a thousand generations,
the covenant he made with Abraham,
the oath he swore to Isaac.

R./

SECOND READING

Colossians: 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 2:22-40

When the day came for them to be purified as laid down by the Law of Moses, the parents of Jesus took him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord – observing what stands written in the Law of the Lord: Every first-born male must be consecrated to the Lord – and also to offer in sacrifice, in accordance with what is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons. Now in Jerusalem there was a man named Simeon. He was an upright and devout man; he looked forward to Israel's comforting and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death until he had set eyes on the Christ of the Lord. Prompted by the Spirit he came to the Temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the Law required, he took him into his arms and blessed God; and he said:

'Now, Master, you can let your servant go in peace,
just as you promised; because my eyes have seen the
salvation which you have prepared for all the nations
to see, a light to enlighten the pagans and the glory of
your people Israel.'

As the child's father and mother stood there wondering at the things that were being said about him, Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, 'You see this child: he is destined for the fall and for the rising of many in Israel, destined to be a sign that is rejected – and a sword will pierce your own soul too – so that the secret thoughts of many may be laid bare.'

There was a prophetess also, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was well on in years. Her days of girlhood over, she had been married for seven years before becoming a widow. She was now eighty-four years old and never left the Temple, serving God night and day with fasting and prayer. She came by just at that moment and began to praise God; and she spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When they had done everything the Law of the Lord required, they went back to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. Meanwhile the child grew to maturity, and he was filled with wisdom; and God's favour was with him.