



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.

12TH / 13TH JANUARY 2019—BAPTISM OF THE LORD, YEAR C

THE YEAR OF THE LORD, 2019

Dear parishioners, visitors to our parish and friends,

We have started a new year! In the past we used to refer to the year as 2019 AD. Those two letters stand for Anno Domini, the Year of the Lord. Today it is more common to see the letters BCE and CE (Before the Common Era, and Common Era). For us Christians the reference to the year of the Lord is certainly more significant. The Lord's era started at his birth. (Even though historians tell us that when the computation of the year was worked out in the sixth century by a monk named Dionysius, he made a miscalculation of between 4 and 6 years, which that Jesus was actually born some time between 6BC and 4BC!) It is important for us to remind ourselves that we live in the year of the Lord!

There is a tradition of making some resolutions for the new year. This may be a good tradition as long as we try to be careful to choose resolutions that we can actually keep and not ones that do not last to the end of the first week. Hopefully when one is making these resolutions, one is looking back on the year that was trying to determine how things could be done better.

Another way of looking at this process is to look back at the Year of the Lord 2018 and 'wonder' at which moments was God present in one's life in the past year. What were the moments when one was aware of God's love and which were the moments when one struggled to see God. I am sure that each one of us has stories one is proud of, and other stories one would rather forget.

As I look back at 2018, I know that there were some very dark moments. The moment I really struggled was when, at the conclusion of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the report with its recommendations was published. The Australian Catholic Church Institution was revealed as having been seriously misguided and sinful. I have to admit that I struggled to take on board those findings. Many times during the year events happened that reminded me of this disastrous situation and how badly the human element in our Church as failed us. It was very difficult to meet people who shared my anger at the Church Institution, trying to help them see beyond the Church's sinfulness.

I rejoice at the many beautiful moments where I know God was definitely present in my life. I am proud to be part of a parish community that is still vibrant and is still trying very hard to continue on its faith journey. I appreciate the families who have 'adopted' me as one of their number and constantly offer me God's love through their friendship, love and support. I appreciate the moments when I am invited to share special moments with families, parishioners who have invited me to share anniversaries with them and welcomed me into their humble homes. I also greatly treasure the moments when I journeyed with those who are seeking to deepen their faith journey and are engaged in RCIA programmes leading to fuller communion with the Body of Christ, and those who gather to discuss the Word of God in their lives.

I know that even in the darker moments, God is present, even if at times I fail to see him. I pray that I can continue journeying with God and with my community.

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

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
**FIRST RECONCILIATION,
FIRST COMMUNION, CONFIRMATION:**
Parish Secretary (9457 1066)

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.

DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY, Communion will only be offered as Body of Christ, due to lack of ministers.

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.

EASTER 2019: A short note about Lent and Easter this year. Ash Wednesday this year is on 6th March. Palm Sunday is on 14th April and Easter Sunday is on 21st April. On Easter Sunday this year we will be having three morning Masses: 7:00, 8:30 and 10:30.

DURING THE MONTH OF JANUARY: Fr Mario is accompanying a group of parishioners on the first Mission Immersion Trip to the Philippines. The group have time to learn about the culture of the Philippines and work among some charities in Manila. They are also spending 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 returns on Sunday 20th 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/stjohn.heidelberg); we will try to post as many photos and reports as possible!

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.

THE AUSTRALIAN CHURCH IS CELEBRATING A PLENARY COUNCIL IN 2020: We as Church are invited to participate by reflecting on: 'What is God asking of us in Australia at this time?' Please register your response by Wednesday 6th March at <http://www.cam.org.au/plenary/> or by mailing your response.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

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

ANNIVERSARIES: Gerard Sharkey, Michael Francis Lucy, Martine Hewatt.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Mary Margaret Harty.

*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.*

12 Jan / 13 Jan	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Anita Metcalf	Claire Newsome	Elizabeth Williamson	Rosemary Vecchies
2 nd Reader	Pamela Smith	Pietro Sciotto	Michael Leonard	Candida Rowlands
Communion	Leela Cherubim	Stanly Devasia	Leonore Giliberto	Tony Rowlands
19 Jan / 20 Jan	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Zen Zebrowski	Ronnie Maloney	Jan Mc Caffrey	Des O'Brien
2 nd Reader	Michael Leonard	Barbara Barnes	Bob Dowling	Leela Cherubim
Communion	TBA	Pauline Griffiths	Maureen Howard	Leo Cosio
Counters	13 Jan: Nigel Mant, Shane Byrnes & 20 Jan: Vincent Chung, Bill Barnes, Peter O'Donoghue.			
Collection Weekly Average for December				Heidelcare Co-Ordinator
Parish		Presbytery		January: Elaine 0490 254 928
Stewardship	\$3,498.83	Stewardship	\$725.95	February: Joan 0490 254 928
Loose	\$659.08	Loose	\$350.00	
Thank you for supporting St John's financially. Please advise if your credit card is lost/stolen or the expiry date has changed.				

AUSTIN MASS: There will be no Mass at the Austin hospital this month. Mass at the Austin will return next month. Thank you.

BLESSING OF SCHOOL CHILDREN, UNIFORM AND SCHOOL BAGS: As we praise God for the start of a new school year, we invite school children to come forward for a special blessing at all Masses of the weekend of the 2nd and 3rd February. All school children are invited to come to Mass wearing their uniform and with their school bag carrying a few books in it. This can also be as special occasion especially for children starting kinder this year!

BLESSING OF ST JOHN'S PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL STAFF: at the 10:30am Mass on Sunday 3rd February. Let us welcome our school staff as we start a new year. Celebration continues after Mass with morning tea and a sausage sizzle at the parish hall.

THE FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE is celebrated by the Church on the 2nd of February. This is a good opportunity for us to acknowledge, bless and thank God for the presence of children in our parish community. We celebrate this feast with a prayer of blessing for our children and their families during all the weekend Masses of the 9th and 10th of February.

2019 SACRAMENT PROGRAMME For St John's parishioners who do not attend St John's parish primary school, enrolments for all sacraments need to be in by not later than Monday 5th March. Details about catechism classes will be available at a later stage. Contact parish secretary for enrolments. (Reconciliation: year 3 and higher in October, First Communion: year 4 and higher on Saturday 15th June, Confirmation, year 6 and higher on Sunday 11th August).

THANK YOU: It is my great privilege to minister within St John's parish community and I have no doubt of your prayerful support and appreciation of the ministry offered at our parish. During the Christmas season your support becomes even more obvious. Thank you for the many gifts, cards and greetings that you have given me. Thank you also for your generous contribution through the Christmas Offering. Thank you and may God bless you all.

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. **A.)** Some volunteers offer to visit the hospital during the week, offering friendship, prayerful support and Holy Communion to Catholic patients. **B.)** Others help once a month checking which patients would like to attend Mass at the hospital chapel. **C.)** Other volunteers help wheel the patients to and from the chapel. **D.)** 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.

PARISH NURSING HOMES: Catholics living at The Views, (corner of Waiora street and Lower Plenty road) and Clevedon Terrace (Upper Heidelberg Road) are visited weekly by members of the parish offering them friendship, prayerful support, and the sacrament of Communion. Parishioners who would like to participate in this ministry, please contact the parish office. Training will be provided.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 40:1-5,9-11

'Console my people, console them' says your God. 'Speak to the heart of Jerusalem and call to her that her time of service is ended, that her sin is atoned for, that she has received from the hand of the Lord double punishment for all her crimes.'

A voice cries, 'Prepare in the wilderness a way for the Lord. Make a straight highway for our God across the desert. Let every valley be filled in, every mountain and hill be laid low. Let every cliff become a plain, and the ridges a valley; then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all mankind shall see it; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Go up on a high mountain, joyful messenger to Zion. Shout with a loud voice, joyful messenger to Jerusalem. Shout without fear, say to the towns of Judah, 'Here is your God.'

Here is the Lord coming with power, his arm subduing all things to him. The prize of his victory is with him, his trophies all go before him. He is like a shepherd feeding his flock, gathering lambs in his arms, holding them against his breast and leading to their rest the mother ewes.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *Psalm 103(104):1-4,24-25,27-30***TOGETHER:** O, bless the Lord, my soul.**LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)**

Lord God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe!
You stretch out the heavens like a tent.

RIGHT SIDE (PRIEST'S SIDE)

Above the rains you build your dwelling.
You make the clouds your chariot,
you walk on the wings of the wind,
you make the winds your messengers
and flashing fire your servant.

LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)

How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches.
There is the sea, vast and wide,
with its moving swarms past counting,
living things great and small.

RIGHT SIDE (PRIEST'S SIDE)

All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up:
you open your hand, they have their fill.

LEFT SIDE (AMBO SIDE)

You hide your face, they are dismayed;
you take back your spirit, they die.
You send forth your spirit, they are created;
and you renew the face of the earth.

TOGETHER: O, bless the Lord, my soul.**SECOND READING**

Titus 2:11-14,3:4-7

God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race and taught us that what we have to do is to give up everything that does not lead to God, and all our worldly ambitions; we must be self-restrained and live good and religious lives here in this present world, while we are waiting in hope for the blessing which will come with the Appearing of

the glory of our great God and saviour Christ Jesus. He sacrificed himself for us in order to set us free from all wickedness and to purify a people so that it could be his very own and would have no ambition except to do good.

But when the kindness and love of God our saviour for mankind were revealed, it was not because he was concerned with any righteous actions we might have done ourselves; it was for no reason except his own compassion that he saved us, by means of the cleansing water of rebirth and by renewing us with the Holy Spirit which he has so generously poured over us through Jesus Christ our saviour. He did this so that we should be justified by his grace, to become heirs looking forward to inheriting eternal life.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! John said: He who is to come is mightier than I; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Luke 3:15-16,21-22

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. Now when all the people had been baptised and while Jesus after his own baptism was at prayer, heaven opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily shape, like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

THE DIVINE COMMUNION OF LOVE

The feasts of Christmastide celebrate some aspect of the revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ. Christmas celebrates Christ's revelation to Israel. Epiphany celebrates his revelation to the nations. Today's feast of the Baptism celebrates the revelation of God as Holy Trinity.

It is important then to bring out this Trinitarian aspect of Christ's baptism. What occurs after Jesus has emerged from the water is more significant than the actual baptism itself.

In Luke's account Jesus is at prayer following his baptism. Prayer for Luke pierces the barrier between heaven and earth, accessing the realm of God. The heavens open and the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus in bodily (that is, visible) shape like a dove. The voice that then comes from heaven is that of the Father, assuring Jesus that he is the Beloved Son, on whom the Father's favour rests.

So what we should find in this scene is a revelation, not in inaccessible heavenly remoteness but here on earth, of the Holy Trinity—Father ('Voice'), Son, and Spirit—as a divine communion of love.

This sense of being love and favoured by the Father will be the 'engine' empowering the ministry of Jesus now about to begin. His role will be to draw human beings under that divine declaration of love, making all the baptised beloved sons and daughters of God. In this sense, as John points out, he will 'baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire'—the 'fire' of divine love that is the Holy Spirit.

Fr Brendan Byrne sj