



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.

26TH / 27TH JANUARY 2020—3RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A WORD OF GOD SUNDAY

Dear parishioners, visitors and friends,

Today the Church celebrates the Word of God. This celebration was announced by Pope Francis in an apostolic letter published on 30th September 2019 (*Aperuit illis*). Pope Francis wants the focus on the Word of God to lead us to renew our parish communities.

To understand why this change is important, we need to recall two previous church teachings about the word of God.

At the Second Vatican Council, in the document on divine revelation, *Dei Verbum*, the bishops wanted to speak about who God is and how we know who God is. We know God because God chose to enter into a relationship with us. Instead of studying facts about God, the council challenges us to know God in a personal way. The way that God enters into that personal, loving relationship with us is through the gift of God's word.

What is the 'Word' of God?

'Word' can mean many things in this context. Pope Benedict XVI wrote about the different ways we understand the 'symphony of the word' (see *Verbum Dei*):

- **Logos**—is the cosmic dimension of God's word;
- **Creation**—we experience God's word as the enactment of the divine image;
- **Reality**—"The word of God makes us change our concept of realism: the realist is the one who recognises in the word of God the foundation of all things" (*Verbum Dei*, 10).
- **Christ**—"Jesus' unique and singular history is the definitive word which God speaks to humanity" (*Verbum Dei*, 11).
- **Ultimate destiny**—the culmination of revelation and the fulfilment of all God's promises in Jesus Christ.
- **Tradition and scripture**—"The word of God is given to us in sacred Scripture as an inspired testimony to revelation; together with the Church's living Tradition, it constitutes the supreme rule of faith" (*Verbum Dei*, 18).

If you think about all the ways God shows up in our lives, it is a bit overwhelming. God, it seems, is seriously trying to get our attention.

Why do we need to take scripture so seriously?

Pope Francis, in his letter, is focusing on just one of the meanings of 'word'—scripture: "The relationship between the Risen Lord, the community of believers and sacred Scripture is essential to our identity as Christians." That does not mean he is leaving out all the other meanings. But it is impossible to ever fully realise or define God's word. Pope Francis quotes St. Ephrem:

"Who is able to understand, Lord, all the richness of even one of your words? There is more that eludes us than what we can understand. We are like the thirsty drinking from a fountain. Your word has as many aspects as the perspectives of those who study it. The Lord has coloured his word with diverse beauties, so that those who study it can contemplate what stirs them. He has hidden in his word all treasures, so that each of us may find a richness in what he or she contemplates" (*Commentary on the Diatessaron*, 1, 18).

The reason we need to take this seriously is not so that we will become better scripture scholars. Pope Francis wants us to have a deeper encounter with the living Christ, through scripture, so that we will become a Church and a people committed to mercy.

To listen to sacred Scripture and then to practice mercy: this is the great challenge before us in life. God's word has the power to open our eyes and to enable us to renounce a stifling and barren individualism and instead to embark on a new path of sharing and solidarity.

(Adapted from an article by Nick Wagner, published on *mnnews.today*, 26th November 2019.)

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Mario Zammit

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: cam.org.au/heidelberg

Facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg

Instagram.com/stjohn.heidelberg

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

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

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.*

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMME 2020: for candidates **NOT** attending St John's Parish School: Reconciliation 12th November (Year 3 and over), Eucharist 13th June (Year 4 and over) and Confirmation 2nd August (Year 6 and over). Enrolments for all sacraments close on Monday 2nd March. For application forms and information contact elizabeth.williamson@cam.org.au.

GEMS 50+ (GREGARIOUS ENERGETIC MEMBERS OF ST JOHN'S): Our first gathering for 2020 will be on Tuesday, 4th February at the Old England Hotel for lunch at 12:30pm. Join us to catch up with each other's news following our Christmas/New Year break. New members are always welcome. Come regularly or once in a while. Bring a friend if you like. Transport available. Contact: Elizabeth 0447195553. A copy of the first quarter GEM activities to take home is available at the back of the church.

UPCOMING OUTING: Banyule Waste Education Centre, Tuesday 11th February, 10:00am to 12:00pm, at 307-325 Waterdale Rd, Bellfield. Do you wonder about what happens to your recycling when it is collected from your street? The session at the Bellfield Operations Centre explains what happens and includes a tour of the recycling facility. Contact Elizabeth: 0447195553.

ST JOHN'S WALKING GROUP: will meet on 3rd February to walk the Main Yarra Trail; meeting outside the parish house at 10:00am.

TAP AND GIVE: thank you to parishioners and visitors who are using our new facility to contribute to our weekly collections. Each time you tap your card, you donate \$5 to the parish. Two thirds of this goes to the parish collection and a third to the presbytery collection. Thanks.

CONGRATULATIONS To Richard Sullivan who celebrated his 95th birthday on 22nd January and to Richard and Maureen Sullivan who celebrated the 62nd anniversary of their wedding on 1st February; they were married at St John's. Congratulations also to Bernice and Perce Makin who celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary on 25th January. Our thoughts, prayers and best wishes go to Maureen and Richard, Bernice and Perce.

HAPPY AUSTRALIA DAY! We pray for our nation as we celebrate this day together. We may use the words of the famous 1987 song by Bruce Woodley and Dobe Newton for our reflection: "We are one, but we are many and from all the lands on earth we come. We'll share a dream and sing with one voice 'I am, you are, we are Australian.'"

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY BAPTISED: Thomas Carne.

THE SICK: Mary-Teresa Wright, Gordon Eng, Giovanni Mirabella, Vita Nativo.

ANNIVERSARIES: Nicholas Stella, Ezio Sturma, Giuseppe Sturma, Frances Booth, Marlene Hewatt, Gino Piermarini, Anttina Piermarini, Anthony Pesavento, Cyril Browne, Patrick Kenny, Dorothy Collier.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Gisella Lucietto, Arthur Corgas, Maddalena Hoang Thi Thong, Noela Bermingham, Rita Nathan.

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.*

25 Jan / 26 Jan	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Michael Leonard	Pietro Sciotto	Claire Newsome	Rosemary Vecchies
2 nd Reader	Noel Micallef	Peter Penson	Bob Dowling	Margaret Andrews
Communion	Jan McCaffrey	Chris Ratnayake	Leo Hernandez	Jenny Hollaway
	Maria Basilone	Bobbie Bartkus	Brian McIntosh	Des O'Brien
	Donna Richardson	Peter O'Donoghue	Ann Domaingue	TBA
	Leela Cherubim	Val Wallis	Elizabeth Williamson	TBA
1 Feb / 2 Feb	Sat 6:00pm	Sun 8:30am	Sun 10:30am	Sun 5:00pm
1st Reader	Peter Penson	Claire Newsome	Marguerite Ryan	Leela Cherubim
2 nd Reader	Jan McCaffrey	Jack Naden	Maureen Stella	Mary Kotefski
Communion	Emma Chang	Margaret Bradley	Tim Boyle	Matthew Sanders
	Adrian Daly	Stanly Devasia	Yannick Jonas	Olivia Sanders
	Lorraine Mascarenhas	Pauline Griffiths	Sue Lew-Kee	TBA
	Michelle Penson	Alice Wong	Geraldine Manuel	TBA
Counters	26 Jan: Vincent Chung, Bill Barnes, Peter O'Donoghue 2 Feb:			
Collection Weekly Average for December				
Parish		Presbytery		HEIDELCARE : 0490 254 928
Stewardship	\$3,498.83	Stewardship	\$725.95	
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.				

BUSH FIRE APPEAL: This weekend, we will join the Church in Australia as we collect money in support of the National Bush Fire Appeal launched by the St Vincent de Paul Society. Money collected will be used to assist those in need after the severe bushfires that have consumed our nation in the past months. Thank you for your assistance. Please donate generously. You can also donate by visiting: vinnies.org.au or by sending a cheque to Vinnies Bushfire Appeal, PO Box 243, Deakin West ACT 2600. Thank you. There will be no gold coin collection this weekend.

SUNDAY 2ND FEBRUARY: Next weekend we celebrate the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple. This is a special feast as it celebrates Jesus' childhood.

1: BLESSING OF SCHOOL CHILDREN: We take this opportunity to celebrate children in our parish community. We encourage school children to attend Mass in their school uniforms and with their school bags. They will be called forward for a special blessing, as they start a new school year.

2: BLESSING OF YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE PARISH: Children have a special place in our community and we want to recognise their place and try to make them feel special. We invite mothers of young children to come forward for a special blessing.

3: COMMISSIONING OF STAFF AT ST JOHN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL: At the 10:30am Mass on Sunday, we will bless and commission our St John's Catholic Parish Primary School staff.

4: SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY: These celebrations are a good moment to talk about, and revisit how we, as a parish, ensure that our children and vulnerable adults are safeguarded during all our celebrations and activities. We are invited to renew the commitment of our parish in this regard.

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 help once a month checking which patients would like to attend Mass at the hospital chapel. **B.)** Others are trained to wheel the patients to and from the chapel. **C.)** 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 (heidelberg@cam.org.au / 94571066) 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.

CELEBRATION OF SIGNIFICANT ANNIVERSARIES: Please inform the parish office so we can celebrate with you as a community.

WELCOMING NEW PARISHIONERS AND VISITORS: As a welcoming community of faith it is important to keep an eye out for new members in our community. Please introduce yourself to new parishioners and make them welcome. New parishioners please contact the parish office (94571066 / heidelberg@cam.org.au) to give us your details. You can also pick up a welcome pack from the church porch. Thank you!

FIRST READING

Isaiah 8:23-9:3

In days past the Lord humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in days to come he will confer glory on the Way of the Sea on the far side of Jordan, province of the nations.

The people that walked in darkness has seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone.

You have made their gladness greater, you have made their joy increase, they rejoice in your presence as men rejoice at harvest time, as men are happy when they are dividing the spoils.

For the yoke that was weighing on him, the bar across his shoulders, the rod of his oppressor, these you break as on the day of Midian.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 26:1.4.13-14

TOGETHER: The Lord is my light and my salvation.

LEFT SIDE:

The Lord is my light and my help;
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
before whom shall I shrink?

RIGHT SIDE:

There is one thing I ask of the Lord, for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord, all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple.

LEFT SIDE:

I am sure I shall see the Lord's goodness
in the land of the living.

Hope in him, hold firm and take heart.
Hope in the Lord!

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 1:10-13,17

I appeal to you, brothers, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, to make up the differences between you, and instead of disagreeing among yourselves, to be united again in your belief and practice. From what Chloe's people have been telling me, my dear brothers, it is clear that there are serious differences among you. What I mean are all these slogans that you have, like: 'I am for Paul', 'I am for Apollos', 'I am for Cephas', 'I am for Christ'. Has Christ been parcelled out? Was it Paul that was crucified for you? Were you baptised in the name of Paul?

For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the Good News, and not to preach that in the terms of philosophy in which the crucifixion of Christ cannot be expressed.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom and healed all who were sick. Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 4:12-23

Hearing that John had been arrested Jesus went back to Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he went and settled in Capernaum, a lakeside town on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. In this way the prophecy of Isaiah was to be fulfilled:

Land of Zebulun! Land of Naphtali! Way of the sea on the far side of Jordan, Galilee of the nations! The people that lived in darkness has seen a great light; on those who dwell in the land and shadow of death a light has dawned.

From that moment Jesus began his preaching with the message, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' As he was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and his brother Andrew; they were making a cast in the lake with their net, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, 'Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.' And they left their nets at once and followed him.

Going on from there he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. At once, leaving the boat and their father, they followed him.

He went round the whole of Galilee teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness among the people.

THE COMING OF A GREAT LIGHT

In today's Gospel Jesus moves back to Galilee to begin his public mission. Matthew describes his return as the coming of a 'great light' to people who 'sit in darkness and the shadow of death.' Taken from the prophet Isaiah, these words beautifully capture the hope that his appearance and his message have to bring to darkened world—then and now.

Central to that message is the summons: 'Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.' For Jesus, 'repent' means more than sorrow for sin. The Greek word implies a 'change of mind'—not merely in an intellectual sense but in the sense of a wholesale transformation of attitude at a deeply personal level. It means being prepared to let the rule of God ('the kingdom of heaven') rearrange one's life.

In Jesus' day there was a widespread sense that Israel had somehow fallen out of God's hand and lay in helpless bondage to malign influences, chief among them the oppressive occupation of the land by the Romans. People longed for the restoration of God's 'rule.' Jesus proclaimed the coming of that reign of God. But for him what was central and prior to any political or economic freedom was a transformed relationship with God, a divine reclaiming of the human heart.

And his first action is to call disciples, the nucleus of the later Church. From now on, these fishermen will 'fish for people,' 'catching' them for the community of the Kingdom, to be hope and light for the world.

Fr Brendan Byrne sj