



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.

18TH / 19TH APRIL 2020, SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A

Dear Parishioners, Friends and Visitors,

We continue celebrating Easter. The Church celebrates this great event over eight days in the Easter Octave which concludes this Sunday. This COVID Easter has been different to any other Easter we have celebrated before. While we have been through the ritual celebrations, these seemed to be devoid of any life. For myself, having to celebrate on my own, surrounded by a only very small group of people, felt extremely strange. It is difficult to celebrate life without the family gathered around us.

As has been said many times, it is only our Church buildings that have been closed down, not our Church. The Church, the People of God, the Body of Christ is very active in our families and in our homes. Many have found new ways how to celebrate this Easter.

Perhaps this Easter was very similar to the way the apostles and the first Christians celebrated Easter. We are told that on the day of the resurrection, the first Easter Sunday, the disciples were locked away in a room, afraid of the people outside. They were still 'in the dark' and could not understand what was happening. Today, once again, we are locked away in our homes; we too are afraid and protecting ourselves from a very highly contagious virus that has taken over our world. Our advantage is that we are no longer in the dark, we do have faith!

Like the first Christians we cannot celebrate this year; perhaps like them too, we cannot understand what is happening around us, probably we too are afraid. The good news that we share in this period of Easter is that Jesus stood among his apostles even when they were locked away in the darkness of the room. Nothing can stop God from entering our lives. We can put up barriers and lock our doors, but God can reach in through our locked doors and our fortresses. God is always with us, even COVID cannot stop God!

At this time the apostles came to understand what the resurrection really was, embraced it and let it change the way they saw things happen around them. For us this COVID Easter is also a time to reflect about who we really are and the meaning of the good news in our life. Some have learnt to reach out to those who are in need. I strongly encourage you all to continue listening to the needs of friends and neighbours and, if you know someone who we, as parish office, can reach out to, please let us know.

At this time we can perhaps ask: where does God really live today? God lives in our heart and in our sisters and brothers, especially the poor and needy and those who require our assistance. How can I get to know God more at this time? How do I grow to recognise God in my daily life?

Mario mssp

PARISH ROSE GARDEN: Our parish is proud to have a very nice rose garden that is enjoyed by us as a parish and by many visitors. In order for this rose garden to keep flowering regularly, it needs the commitment of one hour each week, during the flowering season, to remove the dead roses. The parishioner who used to keep our roses going is leaving the parish and needs to be replaced. It would be great if we could have a number of parishioners who can take on this weekly ministry. Anyone interested please contact the parish office for more information. Thank you.

PARISH PRIEST: Fr Mario Zammit mssp

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:

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.*

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.

PRAYER TO ST JOSEPH: You were receptive to God working in your life. Help us by your prayers at this time of trial. You kept Jesus and Mary under your watchful care: may your prayers assist our local Church to respond to those in need. You taught the Christ Child your trade and prayers: help us to follow his example of love. You were part of God's plan for all humanity: assist us to be vigilant and responsible this day. You spent your life in service: may we be mindful of others, particularly the elderly and vulnerable, caring for them in these difficult days. You trusted in the clear primacy of God over all history and every situation: help us to grow in faith and pray to the Father, Thy will be done.

FOR DAILY PRAYER YOU CAN VISIT:

<https://www.pray.com.au/>

GLORIA: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

PROFESSION OF FAITH: I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Happy 60th Wedding Anniversary: Bill & Barbara Barnes.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY BAPTISED: Charlie De Petro.

THE SICK: Sally Hodgson, Alan Castles, James Artinopoulos, Doreen Booth, Charles Garraid, Giovanni Mirabella, Vita Nativo, Matais Navajas, Brett Ralph, Naoise Wheeler, Mary-Teresa Wright.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Ken Fisher.

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.***

FIRST READING

Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 117:2-4. 13-15. 22-24

TOGETHER: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

LEFT SIDE

Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say: 'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say: 'His love has no end.'

RIGHT SIDE

I was thrust, thrust down and falling
but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour.
There are shouts of joy and victory in the tents of the just.

LEFT SIDE

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad.

TOGETHER: Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

SECOND READING

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me;
happy those who have not seen me, but still believe!

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you. 'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

ENCOUNTERING THE RISEN LORD

We all know people like Thomas. Perhaps there's a bit of him in ourselves. Stubborn, pessimist, born loser, he has missed out on the Easter night appearance of Jesus. He won't believe in the resurrection simply on the other disciples' report. He must see, touch, and hear for himself.

Eight days later, with the divine 'courtesy' that is a feature of all the resurrection stories, Jesus meets Thomas' conditions exactly. But the sight of his risen Lord is enough for him to abandon them. He, the late-comer, the obtuse one, goes on to make the highest act of faith in the Gospel: "My Lord and my God!". Thomas, the hesitant, the doubter, is the first to acknowledge the full identity of Jesus.

Jesus adds a comment that brings us into the picture too: "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe". Thomas has believed because, like the other disciples present in the room, he has now seen the risen Lord. Succeeding generations of believers will not have the privilege of seeing, hearing, and touching the risen Lord. We have to believe simply the testimony handed down in the Church: "We have seen the Lord".

In this we are not at a disadvantage. We are in fact "blessed"—because from us a faith greater than that of Thomas will be drawn. And the greater our faith, the more scope for the power of God to enter and transform our lives. The Gospel provides to those who believe all the knowledge necessary for a life-giving encounter with the Lord.

Fr Brendan Byrne sj