



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH
& PRIMARY SCHOOL

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.

23RD / 24TH MAY 2020, ASCENSION SUNDAY, YEAR A

Dear Parishioners, Friends and Visitors,

VOLUNTEER SUNDAY!

In Australia, from Monday 18th May to Sunday 24th May we celebrate National Volunteer Week with the theme of **'CHANGING COMMUNITIES. CHANGING LIVES.'** As a parish we come in at the tail end of this celebration to recognise, celebrate and thank our many volunteers who keep our parish ticking. Volunteers do indeed change communities and lives, without our generous volunteers our parish community would fall apart.

In my message last week I used the image of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples, and his command to 'wash one another's feet' (Jn 13:14). While it is important for the community leaders to show servant leadership and to 'wash the feet' of the members of the community, certainly not ceremoniously on Holy Thursday, but by their ministry every day of the year, this is also the role of each of us. We all are invited to wash each other's feet.

Some communities have suggested that they should be washing hands instead of feet, to make it easier and include more people, but, in my opinion, that greatly diminishes the symbolism of what Jesus set out to do. The feet of healthy people are usually smelly and dirty, and it is not often that anyone would offer to wash them. In Jesus' time this would have been even more pronounced as people either walked barefoot or wore sandals as they walked along dusty unsealed roads. Yet Jesus asked us to wash each other's dirty feet!

This is what our volunteers continually do, they offer service to the Body of Christ, the community that gathers to celebrate and give worship. Some volunteers help in our liturgies as readers, ministers of communion, choir members, organists, altar servers, power-point and sacristans, while others do work behind the scenes. Every Friday volunteers come together to ensure the altar is kept clean for the service, flowers look fresh and tidy, and the church is clean for the weekend. Others offer to take up the collection and to count the money collected. We often tend to take our volunteers for granted; they are always there so we tend to forget the great work they do for our sake.

Volunteers also ensure that as a parish community we reach out to people in need. In our parish prayer we pray that we remain open to welcoming the stranger, the needy, the sick and the lonely. Some volunteers do this through their involvement with Vinnies, Heidelcare and the Legion of Mary, going out of their way to assist others. Volunteers also provide services to grieving parishioners, friendship groups, visit people in hospital, nursing homes and the home-bound. Our catechists run preparation classes for parents before the baptism of their children and for the children as they prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Communion and Confirmation. As a community we are asked to look around us and see who are those who are in need in our midst. The stranger, the needy, the sick and the lonely could be the person who lives down the road, but who feels isolated from the community. How can I wash their feet and be Jesus to them?

Thank you to all who volunteer in our community, making our parish richer by their generosity.

Go gently and may God continue to bless you all!

Mario mssp

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 MARY: O Mary, You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the foot of the cross, were united with Jesus' suffering, and persevered in your faith.

'Protectress of the Roman people,' you know our needs, and we know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial.

Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us. For he took upon himself our suffering, and burdened himself with our sorrows to bring us, through the cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God; do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from every danger, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

Dear brothers and sisters, through the Paschal Mystery we have been buried with Christ in Baptism, so that we may walk with him in newness of life. And so, now that our Lenten observance is concluded, let us renew the promises of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and his works and promised to serve God in the holy Catholic Church.

Do you reject sin so as to live in the freedom of God's children? I do

Do you reject the glamour of evil and refuse to be mastered by sin? I do

Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness? I do

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth? I do

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father? I do

Do you 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? I do

God, the all-powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ for ever and ever. Amen.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY DECEASED:

ANNIVERSARY:

*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.***

MEDITATION & MINDFULNESS - REFLECTION EVENT VIA

ZOOM: Saturday 30 May, 10:00am to 1:00pm. Facilitated by Carol Dyer, this event offers participants theory and practice in meditation and mindfulness. Join us for an opportunity to broaden your ways of accessing your inner world and listening to what God is inviting you to at this time. Cost \$20. Bookings and payment via Trybooking at <https://www.trybooking.com/BJNSJ>. For more information, contact holsc@bigpond.com or tel 9890 1101.

PLEASE CONTINUE LOOKING OUT FOR EACH OTHER: is there anyone you are aware of that is sick or needs help? Can you offer to do shopping for them? Can you keep in touch especially with those who are lonely and isolated?

SAFEGUARDING PRAYER: We the parishioners of St John's Heidelberg commit ourselves as a community in which our children, young people and vulnerable adults are nurtured and have a voice that is heard. May we treasure them, be vigilant and fearless in protecting them from harm, and live as a community ensuring that the well-being and safety of all children is at the forefront of all we do and each decision we make.

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.

A prayer by Pope Francis:

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realise that we are all members of one great family and to recognise the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

FIRST READING

Acts of the Apostles 1:1-11

In my earlier work, *Theophilus*, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 46:2-3. 6-9

Response: God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

All peoples, clap your hands,
cry to God with shouts of joy!
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,
great king over all the earth.

R./

God goes up with shouts of joy;
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.
Sing praise for God, sing praise,
sing praise to our king, sing praise.

R./

God is king of all the earth.
Sing praise with all your skill.
God is king over the nations;
God reigns on his holy throne.

R./

Response: God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

SECOND READING

Ephesians 1:17-23

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make

him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 28:16-20

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

UNFINISHED BUSINESS, ... BUT HOPE

Having escaped the clutches of his enemies by rising from the dead, the Lord ascends, like the prophet Elijah, to heaven.

In biblical language and imagery this manner of describing the close of Jesus' earthly ministry signals that the One who had been crucified on the trumped-up charge of being a political Messiah has now entered into his true messianic glory at God's right hand.

Entrance into heavenly glory does not mean that Jesus abandons either his disciples or his saving mission in the world. Rather, he will continue to exercise that mission through the ministry of the Church, empowered (at Pentecost) by the same Spirit that rested upon him.

Just before he departs, the disciples voice an understandable concern: 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' The question betrays a strong sense of 'unfinished business'. Despite the Easter victory, forces hostile to God and to true humanity continue to hold sway in the world—as, not only the disciples, but we ourselves remain acutely aware.

Jesus does not give a direct answer. The time of the Kingdom's full arrival remains shrouded in the mystery of God. The disciples' task is to take up the messianic mission of Jesus, bringing the hope of the resurrection to an often despairing world.

The Ascension is not, then, simply something that happened to Jesus. As the Preface of the Mass says, 'he ascended, not to distance himself from our lowly state, but that we, his members, might be confident of following where He, ..., has gone before.'

Fr Brendan Byrne sj