



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.

17TH/18TH OCTOBER 2020, 29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

ENCYCLICAL LETTER - FRATELLI TUTTI - AN OVERVIEW

OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP

The link for the letter:

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

CHAPTER1: DARK CLOUDS OVER A CLOSED WORLD

The first chapter describes for us the dark clouds over a closed world; these clouds extend to all parts of the world, hindering the development of universal fraternity (FT 9); they are the circumstances that leave many people wounded by the roadside, discarded and rejected. The clouds plunge humanity into confusion, isolation, and desolation. The dreams of a united Europe and an integrated Latin America, among others, appear to be shattered (FT 10). Myopic nationalism prospers, selfishness grows, and our social sense is lost (FT 11). Expressions like "opening up to the world" have been co-opted by the economic and financial sectors. A culture is being imposed that unifies the world but divides people and nations. Individuals are reduced to being consumers and spectators. Globalized society makes us more like neighbours, but it does not make us brothers and sisters. We are more alone than ever (FT 12).

Historical consciousness has sunken into the shadows; human freedom claims that it can create everything from scratch; we are urged to consume without limits and to embrace an empty individualism that ignores and scorns history (FT 13). New forms of cultural colonization extend their reach ever farther; native peoples lose their ancient traditions and end up robbed of their very soul, losing not only their spiritual identity but also their moral integrity (FT 14).

Under the dark shadows of this ever more tightly closed world, precious words like democracy, freedom, justice, and unity are manipulated and emptied of meaning (FT 14). We see people sowing despair and discouragement, hyperbole, extremism, and polarization—these are the strategies for dominating and gaining control over people. The system denies the right of others to exist or to have an opinion. Politics has been turned into marketing (FT 15).

Some parts of our human family are readily sacrificed for the sake of others considered worthy of a carefree existence. Persons considered no longer productive or useful are disregarded and discounted by this throwaway culture (FT 18) that prevails beneath the dark clouds of our closed world.

Inequality of rights (FT 22) and new forms of slavery (FT 24) continue to exist. We are experiencing a "third world war fought piecemeal" (FT 25). We no longer have common horizons that unite us (FT 26). New fears and conflicts are arising, and new walls being built to prevent our encounter with others (FT 27). There is a moral deterioration and a weakening of spiritual values and responsibility; there is a growing sense of frustration, isolation and despair (FT 29).

We are victims of the illusion that we are all-powerful, while failing to realize that we are all in the same boat (FT 30). The absence of human dignity is clearly evident at national borders, where countless thousands of refugees are trying to escape war, persecution, and natural catastrophes. While they seek opportunities for themselves and their families, some political regimes do everything in their power to prevent the arrival of migrants (FT 37), considering them unworthy of fraternal love (FT 39).

Faced with all these problems, we are tempted to isolate ourselves and withdraw into our own interests, but this can never be the way to restore hope and bring about renewal. The path we must follow is being closer to others; it is the culture of encounter (FT 30).

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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:
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OFFICE HOURS:
Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm
MASS TIMES: No Public Masses at
this time

RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
by appointment

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.*

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The COVID-19 pandemic has revived the sense that we are a global community (FT 32). We are called to rethink our styles of life, our relationships, the organization of our societies, and above all the meaning of our existence (FT 33). We experience the illusion of being in close communication with others. Distances are shortened to the point that we no longer have the right to privacy. In the digital world, respect for others is disintegrating, and even as we dismiss, ignore, or keep others distant, we can shamelessly peer into every detail of their lives (FT 42). Digital campaigns of hatred and destruction emerge from the shadows (FT 43). Social aggression expands without shame (FT 44), while lies and manipulation proliferate. Destructive forms of fanaticism are promoted, even by religious persons and Catholic media (FT 46). Despite these dark clouds, we need to be aware of the many new paths of hope, for God continues to sow abundant seeds of goodness in our human family (FT 54). The Pope reminds us that love, justice, and solidarity are not achieved once and for all; they have to be built day by day (FT 11).

The Holy Father calls us to hope. All men and women experience a thirst, an aspiration, a longing for a life of fulfilment, a desire to achieve great things, things that fill our heart and lift our spirit to lofty realities like truth, goodness and beauty, justice, and love. Hope can look beyond personal convenience, security, and the trade-offs that limit our horizons, and open us up to grand ideals (FT 55).that limit our horizons, and open us up to grand ideals (FT 55).

SAFEGUARDING E-BOOK: The eSafety Commissioner has recently published a free e-book resource 'Online safety for grandparents and carers' which provides advice about online safety issues that children and young people may experience. This resource provides "key advice about online safety issues that can affect children and young people" including practical tips to help grandparents and carers to talk about these issues with children and young people and manage them. Helpful topics include: setting up devices safely; managing time online; preventing unsafe contact from strangers as well as a guide to some of the most popular sites and apps. Grandparents and carers can order a hard copy or download view the resource online at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/seniors/online-safety-grandparents-carers>

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.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

ANNIVERSARY: Denise Catherine.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK: Pauline Hewatt, Colin Bolger, Giovanni Mirabella, Patrick Morel, Sandra Ashton, 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.***

'MEDITATION & MINDFULNESS': In Zoom Saturday 7 Nov 2020, 10am-1pm. Facilitated by Carol Dyer (B.A. (Psych), Transpersonal & Experiential Psychotherapy Level 5 (Trainer), Cert. Spiritual Direction). It provides an opportunity to broaden your ways of accessing your inner world and listening to what God is inviting you to at this time. There will be some input to enable participants to learn some theory of meditation and mindfulness practices as well as time away from the Zoom screen for meditation and mindfulness practise. Cost \$25. Bookings and payment via Trybooking at <https://www.trybooking.com/663916> For more information, contact holsc@bigpond.com, tel 98901101.

54-DAY ROSARY NOVENA FOR AUSTRALIA AND VICTORIA: You are invited to pray for God's peace and blessing upon Australia and in particular, upon Victoria from 8th October to 30th November. The 15 decades of the Rosary will be prayed each morning from 7.15am to 8.30am on Zoom. Welcome to join in anytime during the period using Link <https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/93483011034?pwd=NOZNMUd1Rk9xRVNWWURWZzFYZFh6UT09> Meeting ID: 93483011034 Password: 206443 more information contact Sue on 0449 260 206.

FAREWELL & THANK YOU TO FR MARIO: Dear members of the St. John's community, as many of you will want to show appreciation for all that Mario has given to our community we thought we'd organize a group gift. Easier for everyone to pay online and sign the card and we can give one great gift! There's no obligation but if you'd like to contribute, we'll present the gift voucher to Mario in late November. Link to contribute <https://www.grouptogether.com/FarewellFrMario>

Alternatively If you wish to contribute by cheque/cash they can be dropped off at the Parish office or please contact Michelle Penson on 0499891101.

Thank you. Parish Pastoral Council

OUTDOOR MASSES: It's been nearly two weeks now of saying mass outdoors. Overall it has gone rather well. The weather has been very kind to us, thanks be to God. No wash outs yet, though it did get a bit blustery one morning. We pushed through regardless, with a little help from some paperweights and a couple of bulldog clips!

There have been days where no public mass has been held due to lack of numbers. It would seem people are being very polite and obliging and not wanting to push in or attend mass more than once a fortnight. That's very gracious, but feel free to not be so nice! I'll manage the numbers accordingly and let those who haven't had the opportunity to attend before those who have had that chance.

We have masses lined up for next week, on the assumption that we are under the same restrictions as now. Let's hope that changes. There is talk of "significant movements" out of lockdown this Sunday, but I've learnt not to get my hopes up. I will flag that unless there is a large discrepancy in permitted numbers, I will look to say masses inside and at the altar of St John's at the nearest opportunity, as opposed to out in the open.

Fr Joel.

SEEKING ACCOMMODATION: Michelle, a young Catholic girl from the US and currently studying at Melbourne University, is seeking accommodation here in Melbourne. An independent spare room or flat would be ideal. A medical condition makes climbing flights of stairs challenging, so something on the ground floor would be preferable. Michelle enjoys horseriding, cooking and training for triathlons. She was very involved at her home parish in Gainesville Florida and hopes to contribute to parish life here when the opportunity arises. If you are able to assist, please contact me at the presbytery or via the parish email.

With thanks

Fr Joel.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT – WHAT'S IN A FACE?

The question of coinage was a problematic one for first century Jews. The tradition – grounded in the commandments given to Moses on Mt Sinai – forbade the use of 'graven' or carved images. The people of Israel took this prohibition very seriously and did not portray the human face in artwork of any kind. Roman coins were minted with the face of the emperor on them and it was compulsory that taxes be paid with Roman coin. This helps to explain the role of the Temple money-changers who converted the Roman coin into Temple coin that could be used for religious purposes.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT – JESUS AND THE PHARISEES

The gospel of Matthew tends to treat the Pharisees rather harshly. In fact they had more in common with Jesus' style of teaching than other religious groups of the time and some have suggested that Jesus may even have been quite closely associated with the Pharisees. The role of the Pharisees was to interpret the Torah – the Law – for everyday people. They were teachers and preachers who often had a group of disciples who were their followers. The community in which the gospel of Matthew was written regarded the Pharisees harshly because they saw Jesus – not the Pharisees – as the rightful interpreter of the Law.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 45:1.4-6

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whom he has taken by his right hand to subdue nations before him and strip the loins of kings, to force gateways before him that their gates be closed no more:

It is for the sake of my servant Jacob, of Israel my chosen one, that I have called you by your name, conferring a title though you do not know me. I am the Lord, unrivalled; there is no other God besides me. Though you do not know me, I arm you that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from me, all is nothing.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 95:1. 3-5. 7-10

RESPONSE: Give the Lord glory and honour.

O sing a new song to the Lord,
sing to the Lord all the earth.

Tell among the nations his glory
and his wonders among all the peoples.

The Lord is great and worthy of praise,
to be feared above all gods;
the gods of the heathens are naught.
It was the Lord who made the heavens.

Give the Lord, you families of peoples,
give the Lord glory and power,
give the Lord the glory of his name.
Bring an offering and enter his courts.

Worship the Lord in his temple.
O earth, tremble before him.
Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.'
He will judge the peoples in fairness.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

From Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonika which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; wishing you grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all, and constantly remember before God our Father how you have shown your faith in action, worked for love and persevered through hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We know, brothers, that God loves you and that you have been chosen, because when we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words, but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Shine on the world like bright stars;
you are offering it the word of life.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 22:15-21

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, 'Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, 'You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay the tax with.' They handed him a denarius, and he said, 'Whose head is this? Whose name?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He then said to them, 'Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God.'



R./

OBEDIENCE TO GOD

Having entered Jerusalem as its messianic King, Jesus is drawn into a power struggle with representatives of various groups who, under the overall control of the Romans, currently wield power. To remove the threat he poses, they need to portray him as dangerous to the Romans and, at the same time, to lessen his authority with the people.

R./

The tax question offers a perfect stratagem to achieve these ends. If Jesus supports the payment of the unpopular poll tax, he will lose standing with the people; if he forbids payment, he risks being identified with groups rebellious towards Rome and so of appearing as a significant threat to peace and public order.

R./

Jesus' majestic response not only frees him from the dilemma, it actually goes onto the offensive. By calling for them to produce a coin with Caesar's image on it he shows them up as already collaborating with the Romans because they carry around the offensive coinage, while he does not.

Then his dual "Render" instruction throws the dilemma back upon them. They had set the issue simply in terms of obligation to Rome; they had not brought God into the equation at all. Jesus takes possession of the religious and moral high ground by setting responsibility to the civil power (which he does not deny) within the broader and higher framework of obedience to God.

We can find here the beginnings of the later Christian sense of the separation of Church and State. We also have a recognition that believers have responsibilities in both realms that oblige in conscience before God.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ