



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.

28TH/29TH NOVEMBER 2020 - FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

CAFFEINE AND CHRISTIANITY

Our Lord commands us in the Gospel on the first Sunday of Advent to "Stay awake!" He is using figurative language here, imploring us to safeguard our souls in preparation for the coming of Our Lord. But I couldn't help but begin to think of espressos and long blacks – two of the things that help me literally stay awake when things get a bit fuzzy at the desk.

I do enjoy my coffee as some of you know. I have a machine here at the presbytery and recently added to that a coffee grinder. The machine I have is a simple manual one: no pods and no simple press of a button, which is good for a few reasons. The machine was relatively inexpensive and doesn't take up much room on the kitchen bench. It also makes the coffee making a process a little more involved and interesting. The downside is that if you don't know what you're doing, you can end up with a really, really bad coffee. Which in this day and age is something approximating a mortal sin.

There are a number of variables in good coffee making, most of which I've removed. All I have to get right is the amount of coffee in the filter and tamping it with the right amount of pressure. There are two ways you can get this wrong, which you can probably guess. You either pack the coffee too tight or you don't pack it tight enough. Too tight and the water takes too long to filter through the coffee, burning the product and giving it a bitter taste. Too loosely and the water runs through too quickly, leaving you with a weak, watery drink also known as dishwater.

The thought occurred that this isn't too dissimilar to the Christian life. Too uptight, too stubborn and hard of heart and the Gospel message struggles to enter our soul. Whatever we might have taken in is held onto fiercely; very little is given out and the end result is nasty and unpleasant. Too loose and the faith might be readily accepted but much of it readily let go. With no structure to our faith life or a willingness to safeguard our soul, we lack substance and the end result is something rather underwhelming. As in most things Christian, evenness and balance are the rule. Given I'm still working on pouring myself a decent espresso in the morning suggests there's still a bit for me to work on in my spiritual life as well!

...Fr Joel

MASS TIMES: Please note that the Sunday morning mass times will revert back to the previous times of **8:30 and 10:30am as of Sunday December 6**. The mass times changed a little during lockdown, not by design but more happenstance. I apologise for any confusion and inconvenience. I am not reintroducing the 5pm Sunday evening mass just yet, but plan to do so early in the new year.

... Fr Joel

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:
Jan McCaffrey (0423 478 504)
Elizabeth Williamson
(0447195553)

PARISH OFFICE:
52 Yarra Street Heidelberg
3084
t: 9457 1066
e: heidelberg@cam.org.au
w: pol.org.au/heidelberg
Facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg
Instagram.com/stjohn.heidelberg

OFFICE HOURS:
Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm
MASS TIMES: Tues to Sat: 9am &
Sat Vigil 6pm, Sun: 9am & 10am

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.

FR MARIO FAREWELL MASS : ON SUNDAY 6TH DECEMBER. Parishioners will have the opportunity to attend a final mass with Fr. Mario at St. John's to say farewell before he departs for the Philippines! The monies collected and community card on behalf of the Parish will also be presented to Mario after the 10.30am mass.

Fr. Mario will be celebrating 8.30am and 10.30am mass at St. John's on Sunday, 6 December. Places are limited to 70 people so please ring the Parish Centre to book for either mass. *Don't miss this opportunity to say a final farewell to Mario!*

FR JOEL ON LEAVE: From Tuesday the 8th to Saturday the 12th of December. Thanks to Fr Ted who will be celebrating the 9am masses during his absence. Fr Joel will be back to celebrate the Vigil mass on Saturday the 12th of December.

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL: Next weekend, 5th and 6th December, at all Masses. Thank you for your continued support to this ministry in our parish.

COVID-SAFE MASSES AT ST JOHN'S: Inside the church Tuesday to Friday at 9am, Saturday at 9am & Vigil mass at 6pm. Sunday 8:30am & 10:30am from 6th December. Kindly write down your name and contact details in the sheet provided when you enter the church. The church can hold tentatively up to 60 people keeping with the distancing restrictions. No advance booking required.

ST JOHN'S WALKING GROUP: will be leaving from outside the Parish House in Yarra Street on Monday 30th November at 9.30am. You are more than welcome to join us on our chatty walks. For further information or to register to walk contact Jan on, 0423 478 504.



St Vincent de Paul Society
VICTORIA
good works

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL: Christmas is approaching and our Parish would normally be asking for food and toy donations to provide Christmas hampers to our Vinnies community. This year, because of COVID-19, we are asking for parishioners and our school community to assist us with monetary donations. The money will be used to buy food and gift vouchers to be given to our vulnerable families. We are requesting that this be done by the 11th December, so we can deliver the vouchers in time for the recipients to shop for Christmas. Could you place your donations in an envelope, clearly marked "Vinnies Donation", and place it in the chute next to the front door of the Parish House, please. We thank you for your continuing support towards the St John's Vinnies Christmas appeal.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Lesley Alderman, Maria Basilone.

ANNIVERSARY: Kay Dennis.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK: Elizabeth Finn, Pauline Hewatt, Giovanni Mirabella, Patrick Morel, 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.***

ENCYCLICAL LETTER - FRATELLI TUTTI - AN OVERVIEW

OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP

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

CHAPTER 7: PATHS OF RENEWED ENCOUNTER

There is a need to cure wounds and restore peace. We need boldness (FT 225) and truth. Those who were fierce enemies have to speak from the stark and clear truth (FT 226). Only by basing themselves on the historical truth of events will they be able to make a broad and persevering effort to understand one another and to strive for a new synthesis for the good of all (FT 226).

Truth is an inseparable companion of justice and mercy. All three together are essential to building peace (FT 227). The path to peace does not mean making society blandly uniform; rather, it means getting people to work together, side-by-side, in pursuing goals that benefit everyone. The problems that a society is experiencing need to be clearly identified, so that different ways of understanding and resolving them can be found. We should never define others by what they may have said or done in the past; we should value them for the promise that they embody, a promise that always brings with it a spark of new hope (FT 228).

True reconciliation is achieved proactively (FT 229). Working to overcome our divisions without losing our identity as individuals presumes that a basic sense of belonging is present in everyone (FT 230).

There is no end to the building of a country's social peace; rather, it is an open-ended endeavour, a never-ending task that demands the commitment of everyone (FT 232).

Those who work for a tranquil social coexistence should never forget that inequality and lack of integral human development make peace impossible. If we have to begin anew, it must always be from the least of our brothers and sisters (FT 235). There are those who prefer not to talk of reconciliation, for they think that conflict, violence and breakdown are part of the normal functioning of a society (FT 236). But forgiveness and reconciliation are central themes in Christianity and, in various ways, in other religions as well (FT 237). Jesus never promoted violence or intolerance. He openly condemned the use of force to gain power over others (FT 238). Calling for forgiveness does not mean renouncing our own rights when confronting corrupt officials, criminals, or others who would debase our dignity (FT 241). It is no easy task to overcome the bitter legacy of injustices, hostility and mistrust left by conflict. It can be done only by overcoming evil with good (FT 243). Authentic reconciliation does not flee from conflict, but is achieved *in* conflict, resolving it through dialogue and open, honest and patient negotiation (FT 244). Those who have endured much unjust and cruel suffering should not be asked to offer a sort of "social forgiveness" (FT 246). Forgetting is never the answer (FT 246), for we can never move forward without remembering the past (FT 249). Those who truly forgive do not forget, but they choose not to yield to the same destructive force that caused them so much suffering. This does not mean impunity; justice is properly sought solely out of love of justice itself and out of respect for the victims, as a means of preventing new crimes and protecting the common good (FT 252).

War is the negation of all rights and a dramatic assault on the environment. If we want true integral human development for all, we must work tirelessly to avoid war between nations and peoples (FT 257). We can no longer think of war as a solution; it is very difficult to invoke the rational criteria elaborated in earlier centuries to speak of the possibility of a "just war". Never again war! (FT 258).

The goal of ultimately eliminating all nuclear weapons becomes both a challenge and a moral and humanitarian imperative (FT 262). The death penalty is inadequate from a moral standpoint and no longer necessary from the standpoint of penal justice. It is simply inadmissible. The Church is firmly committed to calling for its abolition worldwide (263). A life sentence is a secret death penalty (FT 268).

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.

LIVING THE GOSPEL – STAY AWAKE!

By the time the Church begins to celebrate Advent as a period of preparation towards Christmas, the stores have been filling with Christmas paraphernalia for weeks. It starts out small with a few decorations and wrapping paper and eventually takes over every retail outlet. In the midst of this excess of Christmas consumerism, it is often difficult to draw attention to the season of Advent and the need to prepare spiritually for the celebration of Christmas. It is important to stay awake, as we are cautioned in this week's gospel. Awake to what is happening around us in the world and awake to what is happening within us.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8

You, Lord, yourself are our Father, Our Redeemer is your ancient name. Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways and harden our hearts against fearing you? Return, for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance. Oh, that you would tear the heavens open and come down – at your Presence the mountains would melt. No ear has heard, no eye has seen any god but you act like this for those who trust him. You guide those who act with integrity and keep your ways in mind. You were angry when we were sinners; we had long been rebels against you. We were all like men unclean, all that integrity of ours like filthy clothing. We have all withered like leaves and our sins blew us away like the wind. No one invoked your name or roused himself to catch hold of you. For you hid your face from us and gave us up to the power of our sins. And yet, Lord, you are our Father; we the clay, you the potter, we are all the work of your hand.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 79:2-3. 15-16. 18-19

RESPONSE: Lord, make us turn to you, let us see your face and we shall be saved.

O shepherd of Israel, hear us,
shine forth from your cherubim throne.

O Lord, rouse up your might,
O Lord, come to our help. R./

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.

Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. R./

May your hand be on the man you have chosen,
the man you have given your strength.
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name. R./

SECOND READING 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ send you grace and peace. I never stop thanking God for all the graces you have received through Jesus Christ. I thank him that you have been enriched in so many ways, especially in your teachers and preachers; the witness to Christ has indeed been strong among you so that you will not be without any of the gifts of the Spirit while you are waiting for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed; and he will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ; and God is faithful.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Lord, show us your mercy and love,
and grant us your salvation.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mark 13:33-37

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'

**STAY AWAKE!**

Advent is the time when the Church seeks to stir up a sense of longing for the coming of the Lord.

Stirring up such a sense of longing does not mean, however, that we should take the New Testament allusions to his future coming literally. Such statements seek to communicate the truth that our lives and, indeed, the whole of history stand under the eventual judgment of God and that the Crucified One, the now risen Lord, remains the criterion of what truly human existence should be. His grace and his power continually knock at the door of our lives, seeking to move us along his way. It is this sense of the Lord's coming that the Advent season celebrates and proclaims.

Today's Gospel (Mark 13:33-37) features a parable from the end of the great discourse on the future that Jesus gave to his disciples not long before his death. The householder who goes on his travels gives instructions to all his servants but the focus of the parable lies upon the one charged with watching the door. The master expects to be welcomed when he returns. Everyone else may sleep but this servant must stay awake at night, always on the look-out for the master's coming.

Believers are like that servant: 'gatekeepers' for the coming of the Lord. The rest of the world may 'sleep' but we are 'children of light and of the day' (1 Thess 5:5), our lives bathed in the light of the risen Lord and enriched by the hope of his final coming.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ