



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.

12TH/13TH DECEMBER 2020

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT, YEAR B

Dear friends and parishioners at St John's Heidelberg,

Last Sunday I had the opportunity to be able to visit you again and celebrate two Masses of thanksgiving. I thank Fr Joel for giving me this opportunity to come back to our beautiful parish for this occasion.

Unfortunately, due to COVID, numbers had to be drastically limited and only 60 people could attend at each Mass. I am aware that many more parishioners could not attend because the Masses were quickly booked out, and many others tried their luck and were turned away at the door. I greatly appreciate your friendship and support.

Looking back at the seven years we have spent together, I thank God for giving me this opportunity to get to know you and share my journey with you. I do miss our friendships and the good times we had together celebrating Eucharist in the father's house and reaching out to one another in various ways.

I thank you all for the very generous gift of \$3,627 and the many other gifts that were handed to me on the day. I appreciate and gratefully accept this gift as a sign of friendship. Thank you! Thank you to those who organised the event and to the many parishioners who, over the years, worked close to me to ensure that the different events in the parish were organised and ran smoothly. I will not risk writing down names, because there are too many to mention. In some cases I had the opportunity to thank you personally, in other cases I have not had that opportunity. I will forever treasure our friendships and our time together at St John's. Allow me to thank three persons by name: Fr Ted, the ever-generous and ever-supportive parish priest, Mrs Maureen Stella, a great principal and an even greater friend, and the ever-faithful and hard working Sr Loreto. Thank you all.

For those of you who are Facebook friendly, you can continue following my journey on that platform, otherwise you can make use of my email address: mario.zammit@hotmail.com please do feel free to write.

Go gently dear friends, thank you for all your support and friendship, and may God be always with you.

Mario mssp

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
 VIC 3084
 Tel: 9457 1066
 Email: heidelberg@cam.org.au
 Webpage: pol.org.au/heidelberg
 Facebook.com/stjohnheidelberg
OFFICE HOURS:
 Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm
MASS TIMES: Tues to Sat: 9am &
 Sat Vigil 6pm, Sun: 8:30am &
 9:30am.
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.

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.



It is with sadness and regret that after 38 years of Service to the Banyule Community Heidelbergcare has closed down its services and will no longer operate.

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic Heidelbergcare suspended its services on 16th March 2020. Over 95% of our volunteers are over the age of 70, some in their 80's, and with a still uncertain future they are in the vulnerable category in the community. Younger volunteers have been difficult to find, a number of volunteers are resigning, including monthly coordinators.

This has posed an overwhelming challenge to recommencing services.

An Extraordinary Meeting was held Monday 30th November 2020, and as per the requirements of the Heidelbergcare Constitution, a motion was put forward to dissolve the organisation. This was passed unanimously by the Executive Committee.

The Committee of Heidelbergcare thanks all the amazing, selfless volunteers who have been part of this special organisation, who have so generously given their time to helping others in need. You have been wonderful, and have made a difference in the lives of so many residents of Banyule that you have assisted, and befriended, over the years, a legacy to be proud of indeed!

We wish you and your families the Peace and Joy of Christmas.

Merilyn Kennealy. Heidelbergcare President.

Rosemary Vecchies. Heidelbergcare Secretary and Volunteer Coordinator.

HAPPY 80TH BIRTHDAY ANTHONY CLIFFORD

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY BAPTISED: Priscilla Moate, Jacob & Sofia Stephan.

RECENTLY DECEASED: Dominic Cotroneo, Ann Petts.

ANNIVERSARY: Phillippe Catherine, Ronald Goulding, John & Catherine Smith, Patricia Amos, George O'Callaghan, Ronald Berry, Kandiah Ramanathan.

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.***



THANK YOU: I would like to take the opportunity to thank the St John's Parish and School community and the members of the Heidelberg St Vincent de Paul conference for all the support over the last 12 months. We have experienced challenges like no other but together we have achieved a lot - no request for assistance went unanswered, and we look forward to a new year with a fair degree of optimism.

To date we have raised \$4,170, with the school community raising over \$1,600, as I keep saying the generosity of this parish is very humbling.

Once again thank you and I hope that you and your family and loved ones can enjoy a very safe and joyous Christmas and a new year full of hope, love, compassion, and peace.

Sally Tramontana
President, SVDP Heidelberg

VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL: For direct credit donation the account details are, Name 'St Vincent de Paul Society', BSB 063 000, Account no. 10317778 and please mention, Agent No 911 for reference. Thank you for your continued support to this ministry in our parish.

ST JOHN'S WALKING GROUP: On Mondays the 14th and 21st December will depart from Yarra Street outside the Parish House at 9.30am for our weekly walk. To join us please contact Jan on 0423 478 504.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY ASSISTING REFUGEE STUDENTS: Mercy Connect Melbourne, Mercy Works Ltd. is currently recruiting volunteers to support Refugee Students and Asylum Seekers in Primary and Secondary schools across the Melbourne Archdiocese. The volunteer commitment is approximately half a day per week during school terms. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred but not limited to. Please contact Sr. Mary Lewis RSM for an application form and further information. Training Day for new volunteers with emphasis on Child Safeguarding at the end of January. (preferred) Email at somml@bigpond.com Website: www.mercyworks.org.au Tel: 9326 1895

MELBOURNE OVERSEAS MISSIONS ANNUAL APPEAL: 12th & 13th December: Thank you for your support. Please visit <https://mom.org.au> for more information or to donate. Please note that due to the current restrictions the Melbourne Overseas Missions Appeal of December 2020 will primarily be held online at our website. MOM appeal donation link: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMOM>

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR MASS TIMES

CHRISTMAS EVE: THURSDAY 24TH : 6pm & 9pm
MIDNIGHT MASS: starting 11:30pm with Carols
(If Permitted)

CHRISTMAS DAY: Masses at 8:30am & 10:30am
No evening Mass on Christmas Day.

NEW YEAR'S DAY: 10:30am
No 9:00am Mass on New Year's Day

LIBERATION FROM CAPTIVITY

Last week we heard the witness given by John the Baptist according to the Gospel of Mark. Today we hear the same witness described, from a rather different angle, in the Gospel of John.

Such was the stature of John the Baptist in the Jewish world of the time that it was important for the early Christian believers to sort out the relationship between John and Jesus. Texts such as the one we have today show John making clear his own specific—and subordinate—role. [In the Jewish culture of the day pupils carried their teachers' sandals as a mark of respect. John places himself in an even lower category when he disclaims even this role.]

As the Fourth Gospel insists from the start, Jesus is the "light of the world" (John 1:4-5). His coming into the world replays the conquest of darkness by light that marked the very first act of God in creation (Gen 1:3-5). Wherever Jesus speaks or performs healing acts ("signs")—whether in the Gospel or in the sacramental life of the Church—the light overcomes the darkness, communicating to human beings God's gift of eternal life.

John's task is to point out Jesus as the One who will fulfil this role. Beyond identifying Jesus to his own disciples, he is also a witness in that he "vocalises" the witness of Scripture (Old Testament) to the coming of Jesus. He is the "voice in the wilderness" of which Isaiah spoke in a summons to prepare in human hearts a "way" for the Lord.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.
Indeed, the Lord is near.

FIRST READING

Isaiah 61:1-2. 10-11

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to bind up hearts that are broken; to proclaim liberty to captives, freedom to those in prison; to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. 'I exult for joy in the Lord, my soul rejoices in my God, for he has clothed me in the garments of salvation, he has wrapped me in the cloak of integrity, like a bridegroom wearing his wreath, like a bride adorned in her jewels. 'For as the earth makes fresh things grow, as a garden makes seeds spring up, so will the Lord make both integrity and praise spring up in the sight of the nations.'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Lk 1:46-50. 53-54.

RESPONSE: My soul rejoices in my God.

My soul glorifies the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour.
He looks on his servant in her nothingness;
henceforth all ages will call me blessed. R./

The Almighty works marvels for me.
Holy his name!
His mercy is from age to age,
on those who fear him. R./

He fills the starving with good things,
sends the rich away empty.
He protects Israel, his servant,
remembering his mercy. R./

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Be happy at all times; pray constantly; and for all things give thanks to God, because this is what God expects you to do in Christ Jesus.

Never try to suppress the Spirit or treat the gift of prophecy with contempt; think before you do anything – hold on to what is good and avoid every form of evil.

May the God of peace make you perfect and holy; and may you all be kept safe and blameless, spirit, soul and body, for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has called you and he will not fail you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me;
he sent me to bring Good News to the poor.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

John 1:6-8. 19-28

A man came, sent by God. His name was John. He came as a witness, as a witness to speak for the light, so that everyone might believe through him. He was not the light, only a witness to speak for the light.

This is how John appeared as a witness. When the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, 'Who are you?' he not only declared, but he declared quite openly, 'I am not the Christ.' 'Well then,' they asked, 'are you Elijah?' 'I am not,' he said. 'Are you the Prophet?' He answered, 'No.' So they said to him, 'Who are you? We must take back an answer to those who sent us. What have you to say about yourself?' So John said, 'I am, as Isaiah prophesied:

a voice that cries in the wilderness:
Make a straight way for the Lord.'

Now these men had been sent by the Pharisees, and they put this further question to him, 'Why are you baptising if you are not the Christ, and not Elijah, and not the prophet?' John replied, 'I baptise with water; but there stands among you – unknown to you – the one who is coming after me; and I am not fit to undo his sandal-strap.' This happened at Bethany, on the far side of the Jordan, where John was baptising.



COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Say to the faint of heart: Be strong and do not fear.
Behold, our God will come, and he will save us.