

The Eyríe

St John's Catholic Parish Heidelberg



Hospital and Nursing Home Ministry



Keith Comerford was one of the main organisers for many years and Jim Lanigan often sang at the mass.

These days there is Multi-faith space on the 2nd floor between The Mercy Hospital for Women and The Austin which, until last year, was used for Mass on the third Sundays of the month. To the side of this there is also a Catholic Chapel with a Tabernacle with the presence of the Holy Eucharist.

Parishioners from Ivanhoe, Rosanna and Heidelberg are a dedicated group of volunteers who joyously undertake hospital ministry by visiting those in the Austin and Olivia Newton John Centre. Volunteers in this ministry bring patients the Holy Eucharist, prayer, a listening ear and a chat as hospital patients can often be away from their family and friends and it can be lonely and frightening for them.

Over the years hundreds and hundreds of patients have appreciated the work of parishioners from the parish who support our priests and give of themselves to this Ministry to the sick and elderly. The Sisters of Mercy (including St Jean and Sr Loretto) have always been a vital part of supporting our priests in hospital chaplaincy at the Austin and Warringal Hospitals.

Other individuals undertake to visit just one person perhaps in their home but unable to get to mass. These volunteers take The Holy Eucharist as often as they can and they are blessed by Fr Joel as they go out from our parish masses into the community to do this valuable work.

Some of the hospital and nursing home volunteers are pictured above (from left) Therese Brandon, Margaret Bradley, Elizabeth Williamson, Hector Pidutti, Ronney Maloney and Rosa Poon, others not in photo are Margaret De Silva, Cath Kemp, Bryan McIntosh, Bill & Barbara Barnes, to name a few and there have been many over the years; they do not seek recognition but feel rewarded in the knowledge they are doing the Lord's work.

Until Covid 19 intervened St John's parishioners have been volunteering to assist patients to the celebration of Sunday Monthly Mass at the Austin Hospital for over 60 years. Sr Jean remembers her father and brother being Volunteer bed wheelers taking the patients from the Wards over to the Austin Zeltner Hall for Mass.

Margaret Bradley

Marist Values

Marcco Di Cesare—Principal of Marcellin College



I recently attended a meeting with a few old collegians who were 80 years young. Their energy and passion for Marcellin College was evident. On the other end of the spectrum, a few weeks ago, I welcomed back all students to Term 2 and established our expectation for the term. Their energy and sense of expectation was also palpable. The meeting with the old collegians highlighted the importance of connection and belonging and how valuable a school can be to foster a sense of worth, identity and community and my meetings with our current students gave me that same sense of a proud community standing tall, with all their expectation and sense of excitement, hope and optimism that comes when one has one's whole life to look forward to.

Embedded in the walls of Marcellin College is the charisma, spirit, dedication and vision of the Marist Brothers. Since the Marist brothers started the school over seventy years ago, with only 107 students to today, where we stand 1400+ strong including 210 members of staff, we have enjoyed the confidence of the community and have celebrated many achievements. We are also a college with an eye to the future as challenging as it might be.

Like generations before us, and with St Marcellin Champagnat as our example, we are called to 'respond to the signs of the times' and the enormity of that does not escape me Marcellin College has been a beacon for quality education because of its ability to adapt to the changing times while being firmly grounded in the Christian story and its Marist values.

While I am a new member of the Marcellin community, I have a long association with the College, having completed my teacher training at the College many years ago now. But my formation as a young Marist began with my work in the Marist Christian Leadership Programme and it was here that Br Mark Paul and other significant Marists educators encouraged me into teaching. I thank him for awakening that call in me. He and others, through their example, taught me the importance of human dignity and inspired me to answer the call of service to those on the margins – that is, to treat the "the other" in society with dignity and respect by being inclusive and welcoming of all. In many ways, this is reflected in our St John's Parish Prayer, where we welcome and acknowledge the stranger, the needy, the sick and the lonely.

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People and their Elders past and present, the traditional custodians of this land on which our church and school stand. The St John's Community joins together in solidarity with our Indigenous brothers



Marco, Moira and their family

In honouring the richness of our past, I look to the future with a sense of hope and optimism that at Marcellin College, we will strive to be the best we can be. Marcellin College is a good school not only because we teach a broad range of subjects and because we provide many opportunities to broaden life skills through a wholistic education. Marcellin College is a good school because all the commitment, drive and energy of its leaders, teachers, students and parents, past and present - in fact, all of us who belong to this community. We are a good school because we know who we are, and we live by our Gospel values and a set of strong Marist principles that define us.

I am honoured to be the Principal of this fine College and hope to add my own mark in the servicing and leading of this Catholic Marist Community.

Let Us Dream, Pope Francis writes *“This is a moment to dream big, to rethink our priorities—what we value, what we want, what we seek—and to commit to act in our daily life on what we have dreamed of. God asks us to dare to create something new.”* In his characteristically pastoral way, Pope Francis urges us to move out by seeing, judging, and acting with the Holy Spirit, responding to God’s ever-present challenge: “Dare to create something new.” As the newly appointed Principal, and with Jesus at the centre of my daily work, I dedicate myself both to the leading and serving of the Marcellin College community, as we ‘dare to create something new’.

As members of Marist Schools Australia, we celebrate the feast of St Marcellin Champagnat on or close to the 6th June each year. We pray that as Marists we can continue to be a witness to the Marist characteristics of:

- **Presence**
- **Simplicity**
- **Family Spirit**

Recognising Volunteers

May 17–23, 2021 was National Volunteers Week. Each year in Australia volunteers dedicate over 600 million hours to help others. The theme for this year was **Recognise. Reconnect. Reimagine.**

RECOGNISE, celebrate and thank volunteers for the vital role they play in our lives.

RECONNECT to what is important by giving our time to help others and ourselves.

REIMAGINE how we better support volunteers and communities they help.

Volunteers are wonderful people and come in all shapes and sizes, we often don't know who they are and what they do. Some volunteers are in many groups, some perhaps just offer their time for one thing and that one thing can make a real difference to the person on the receiving end.

A famous person once said.....“**Ask** not what your **country** can **do** for you – **ask** what you can **do** for your **country**,” this saying challenged every **American** to contribute in some way to the public **good**.

We can apply this saying to our faith, our parish and our community -**Ask not what your parish, your faith, your community can do for you but rather.....What can YOU do to contribute to your faith, your parish and your community?**

Prayer for Volunteers

We pray for all those who volunteer in our parishes. May we value the many talents and gifts that God has given to these people.

We thank them for generously offering their time to parish ministries. For all these gifts, given out of your love, we thank you, God of all goodness.

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Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

Liz Sier

It's one of Australia's most well-known fundraising events and plays a vital role in raising money towards Cancer Council's work in research, education, prevention and support. As an independent, not-for-profit organisation, the Cancer Council plays a leading role in reducing the impact of all cancers on all people.

Here at St John's, a Biggest Morning Tea was held on Tuesday 25th May, with about 30 people in attendance.

Elizabeth Williamson was the organiser with a little band of helpers who made this day a success. Rosemary Hyland manned the entry table taking payment from participants as they arrived. Claire Newsome, the MC with her trusty microphone, welcomed us and soon had us laughing and singing "I'm a little teapot", complete with actions!



Tables had been decorated with colourful, handmade 'teapot' design placemats, which was a nice touch. There was a raffle, a door prize, lucky seat prizes and a lucky number prize. The prizes, as well as the wonderful array of food, were all donated by generous members of the group.

Jan McCaffrey displayed a table of her very artistic cards and notepaper, and Donna Richardson brought lemons from her garden, all offered for a gold coin donation. A big thank-you goes to Stan Jernejcic who ably assisted with setting up and later packing away all the tables and chairs. That was a big job! And we can't forget to thank the ladies who helped to prepare and distribute the food and cuppas to the tables.

The conversation buzzed throughout the hall which was a clear sign of people enjoying themselves. Old friends were catching up and new friends were being made. Too soon it was over, but by then a wonderful \$455 had been raised for this worthy cause. If you missed it, keep an eye out for another Biggest Morning Tea in the future!





Maureen Stella

St. John's School Principal

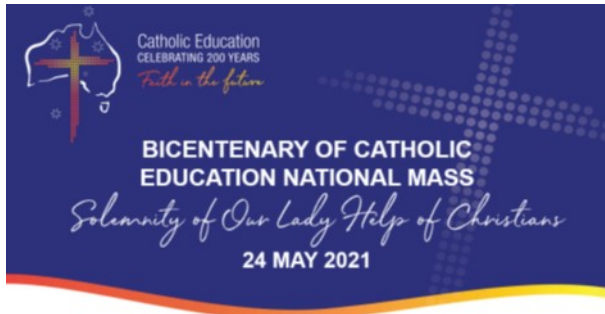
It is always a pleasure to write about our school for the Eyrie Parish Magazine each term and as I write at this time, we are currently in COVID Lockdown4.0 and our students are undertaking the Remote and Flexible Home Learning Program. As always our school's foremost intention in any situation is to support our students and families, particularly in response to this evolving lockdown situation and any adjustments to their children's learning, which suits the individual situation of their family, is supported by our school.

As I walk throughout the school today and into the silent and empty classrooms, I am reminded of our amazing school community-students and families, whom we miss at present. I look out onto the empty playground, without laughter and noise of our students playing and eagerly await the news of the return to on-site schooling for our students. I imagine that we will look back on this time in years to come with many mixed emotions, however I hope and pray that the support, encouragement and sheer hard work of many in our community will be remembered with appreciation and gratitude.

In May, across four Saturdays, we congratulated our Year Four and Five students who celebrated the Sacrament of First Holy Communion. The students and their families are to be congratulated on the way they presented and participated in the celebration of this special sacrament.



CATHOLIC EDUCATION



Bicentenary of Catholic Education

On Monday 24th May, a group of St John's students, made up of Year Six Leaders and Student Action Team members, attended a National Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral to celebrate the **Bicentenary of Catholic Education in Australia** and the Solemnity of Our Lady help of Christians. Archbishop of Melbourne Peter Comensoli led a celebration of Mass with more than 600 Catholic school students and teachers at St Patrick's Cathedral.



We were reminded that in October 1820, the first Catholic School was opened by Irish Catholic priest Fr John Therry in Parramatta N.S.W. Over 200 years later, Catholic Schools educate 1 in 5 school aged children in Australia.

Thirty one years later in 1851, Bishop Gould formally established the Heidelberg Parish. Today, our beautiful bluestone church, with its magnificent stained glass windows, continues to service our parish. St John's Primary School today stands on the site of the original weatherboard chapel, St Monica's, built in 1851 and this building continues to be a valued part of the school by staff, students and parents as a much loved library and also houses relics from past education, currently on display in the school hallway.

Thank you to the following Year Sixes who proudly represented St John's at this special occasion:- Ruby C, Tussanee D, Amelia B, Liam D, Charlie P, Marc R, Danielle T, Alexandra O, Sibella M, and Archie V

SAT (Student Action Teams) Lunchtime Clubs and Initiatives at St John's Heidelberg—with much excitement these teams continued lunchtime initiatives throughout Term 2. The student leaders and their teams have shown excellent leadership with preparing for, leading, facilitating and packing up activities. This is the Environment Action Team Miss Davis and the team are enrolled in the Colgate Oral Recycling Program



Thank You

Kate and Evelyn McKeag



First Communion Day-Thank You

I loved being part of such a special occasion with my friends and family. It felt very important to me. After the ceremony my family had a celebration. I didn't want the day to end!

Evelyn McKeag

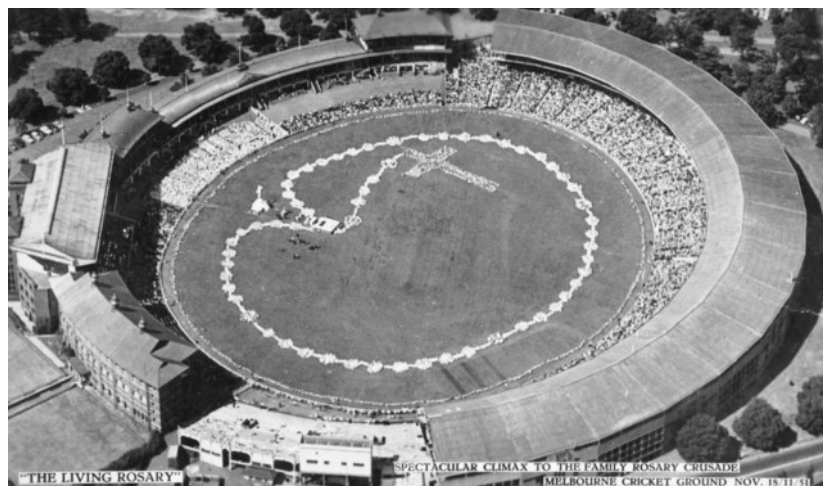
Evelyn had been looking forward to her First Communion for weeks. She was very proud to be finally receiving this important sacrament in front of her friends and family. A big thank you to Father Joel and the Saint John's community for such a beautiful day!

Kate McKeag

(Picture – Evelyn with her two younger sisters Lucinda and Isla enjoying the celebrations after First Communion).

From the archives

From April to November 1951 (70 years ago) St. John's along with other parishes in the Diocese, participated in the Rosary Crusade. It culminated in a remarkable demonstration of faith on the 18th November, when 80,000 people recited the Rosary at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. On the oval 2,500 children formed the beads and cross depicting a giant string of living Rosary beads. It was a most spectacular sight.



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Generations continue

Marilyn McCann and Jessica McKirkle

Marilyn - When we moved into St. John's parish in 1981 the school was a lot smaller, and all the children at the school knew each other. There were only approx. 180 children and to make a football team it took three year levels. There were also separate play areas for boys and girls which changed when Mary Penny arrived as our new Principal.

The Parents and Friends Committee was very strong and we had many fundraisers throughout the years including fetes and we started Pancake Day for the children which is still going strong today. There were no female altar servers in our parish then but when Fr. Michael Moody had his knee operated on he needed a server and called Jessica up to help him, so she was officially the first female altar server at St. Johns.

There were no gates around the school back then as there are now - a sign of the times. The oval was just mud in winter and when it rained our sons came home covered mud top to toe, which was all good fun for them but took me many a good soaking to get all the mud out. St. Monica's building was pretty much a storage room and it's great to see that it is now a library. Our tuck shop sold a lot of things that wouldn't be allowed today but we had fun serving them.

Many fond memories of Parish and School in times past. My husband Ron and I give thanks that our children Christian, Jessica, Lachlan and Patrick were given such great opportunities to live in such a caring parish community.

Jessica - Choosing to send our children to St John's was an easy choice for us. While the ethos and values of the school were fitting, returning to St John's felt like coming home.

Over the 20yrs that I had been gone (overseas for many) there were many changes that had occurred. The buildings had been redeveloped, areas that I spent a plethora of hours playing or hiding in (during hide and seek tiggly) were gone. The tuckshop as I knew it -was no more. Instead of parties pies and a big M for a lunch order on Friday's, the 'classroom cuisine' now sold sushi with a side of hummus dip and celery! The concrete basketball court that we played British Bulldogs on was gone, and that game banned. Instead of the old chalk boards interactive whiteboards now lined the school classrooms, I remember teachers getting us to bang the chalk duster with a big bamboo cane- that would never happen today.

Despite the changes that had taken place, there were things that had not changed. The first thing I noticed was the welcome you received; like being welcomed back by an old friend. I wasn't the only alumni to return; with the likes of Maloney's, Vecchie's, Pelazzaro's, Comito's, Bechelli's, Gazzola's- really too many to mention all coming back as well.

The Hall looked the same and the smell of it brought back so many memories; it is funny how the olfactory system can affect memories.



Marilyn & Ron with daughter

Jessica her husband Gordon and their sons Archie & Callum

Seeing so many faces that I knew from my childhood, members of the parish and still part of the school. We may have all aged, but I look upon these faces fondly. It elicits memories of the great times I had as a child and allows me to create new ones for me as an adult and as a mum with my own kids at St. John's. For instance, Miss Williamson, Mrs Grist (my grade 3 teacher), Mrs Lew Kee (My grade 5 teacher, who now teaches my son Archie), even now I still find it difficult to call them by their first name. Then there is also Sr Loretto (who taught everyone the recorder) still power walking the streets of Heidelberg and playing the organ at mass.

We have had numerous Parish Priests over the years, and each one holds a special spot in my heart as they strengthen my faith in different ways.

Faith and Family

Wendy and Leo Hernandez



We have been parishioners at St John's since we were married here in 2013. This has always made our connection to the parish even more meaningful, because it has been a part of our family life from day one. In the last 8 years we have had three beautiful children: Clara (7), Javier (5) and Isabel (almost 2).

Going to mass every Sunday with little ones hasn't been easy at times, but we know that that this contributes towards building a strong faith foundation for our children.

We love having Clara and Javier attend the parish school as this not only makes our family feel part of the wider community but it also reinforces the Christian faith and values we are trying to instil in our children's lives.

We also found that volunteering has been a great way for us to give back to our parish community and it has been a privilege to be able to serve in a small way.

Vinnies winter appeal

Please leave your donation of non-perishable food items in the basket at the back of the church or drop them in o the parish house

Tuesday– Friday 9.30-2.30

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FR JOEL

Parish Priest, St John's Heidelberg

It should be at the heart of our Christian life to try and make good out of a bad situation. We preach a crucified Christ joyful in the knowledge that with God we can overcome and find blessings in all things. These lockdowns are disappointing events, especially the latest one just as we seemed to be gaining momentum and seeing the parish really come alive. But not having the usual parish activity and chaplaincy work that typically consumes the week has allowed me to turn some attention to other work. Namely, here in the backyard at the presbytery.

Though a pleasant area, the grass out back was either very patchy or non-existent. So I had the inspiration to dig it up, with the idea of levelling it all out ready for either seed or instant turf. It's a bit of a novelty doing manual labour as a priest (hands made for chalices, not calluses!), because it's not often that we get to see the tangible effects from our efforts so readily. Which has always been the case. St Paul tells us as much in his first letter to the Corinthians: *I planted, Apollos watered, but God gives the growth* (1 Cor 3:6)

Speaking of God giving growth, we might be needing something of a miracle for the yard to flourish as I plan. The problem being that the lawn is south facing. I remember my brother-in-law during his time in real estate often yapping on about the 'northern light' enjoyed by a home. I'd hear this and wonder what Aurora Borealis had to do with a property being sold in Moonee Ponds. But as I've been working away on the Yarra Street side of the block, it has dawned on me (no pun intended) that the yard is getting little or no sunlight during the day, due to the shadow cast by the house. This is of course due to the trajectory of the sun this time of year which bends its way across the north (nicely warming and lighting homes facing that way) and not directly overhead as it will in summer. This is not good.

Though there are some shade tolerant grasses (fescue, buffalo, rye grass), they still require around 3-4 hours of sunlight per day. One fella online boasted that his Sir Walter Buffalo survived a winter in complete shade, so perhaps we'll lean towards that variety, but it still isn't overly promising.

It had me reflecting on what is required for us to thrive, in the spiritual sense. Being kept in the dark and not exposing ourselves to the light of faith, the light of Christ, will lead to a spiritual weakness and ultimately death. Being able to access the nourishment and strength provided by the mass and communion is necessary in the Catholic life. Like grass in the shade, you can only hang in there for so long without it. It's why in times past, faithful priests and people would risk their lives for the ability to offer and hear the mass and receive Our Lord in the Eucharist. They realized what was at stake.

We don't know what these winter months will see as far as restrictions go. But whatever the numbers permitted and availability, do your best to get to mass if and when you can. Either here at St John's or a parish nearby. I researched as to whether it was possible to simply add more water and fertilizer to grass that doesn't get much sun to help it grow; turns out that this will only lead to more disease problems. Grass needs the sun. Souls need the Blessed Sacrament. There really is no substitute for it.

Blessings

Fr Joel

The Eyrie

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The views, thoughts and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and should not be interpreted as theology or moral and ethical teaching.

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 1st—2pm

Sacrament of Confirmation

OLMC Nalleijerring Centre

August 8th

Feast day of Saint Mary of the Cross

MacKillop

August 15th

Assumption of Our Lady

Holy day of obligation

August 22nd

Parish Community Luncheon

12.30pm

(Venue to be announced)

September 5th

Father's Day

September 11th & 12th

Children preparing for Reconciliation

Presented to community at

6pm and 10.30am masses