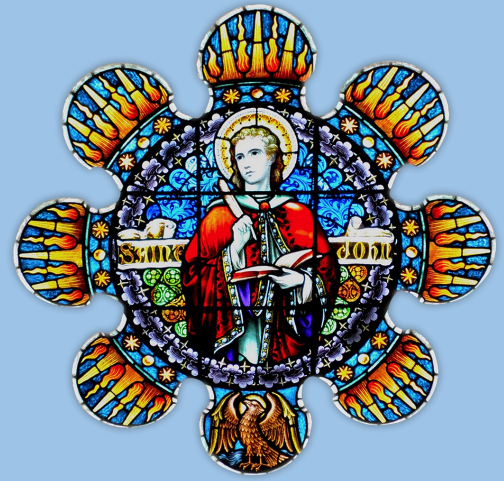


The Eyrie

St John's Catholic Parish Heidelberg



The true meaning of JOY

Lisa Salemmme

As people, we usually love anything new. Whether it be a new house, a new piece of jewellery or a shiny new car. We associate positive and excited feelings when we acquiring these things and how could we not allow ourselves to become immersed and excited about brand new things.

Recently my family and I welcomed the birth of our second daughter, Sienna Josephine Salemmme.

The journey to meet the new addition to our family was not anything like a shiny new car or piece of jewellery. It was magic. But magic of a different and incomparable kind and one that all parents may be able to relate to.

We find joy in changing nappies and countless sleepless nights. But how could this be, because everything we understand about joy doesn't exactly look like this. It's the meaning of bringing a brand new baby into the world that creates true joy for an individual and family. Each making sense of what it means in their own special way.

The responsibility of nurturing and caring for this new child for the rest of their lives is a job that I have not seen advertised anywhere. My partner and I applied for this job when we discussed starting our own family and accepting the responsibility that comes with it.

We have two beautiful girls, Sienna and our oldest Mia Miranda Salemmme . We are extremely lucky to have the support of both extended families in helping us care for and the living of life with our girls. But the help doesn't end there.

Paul and I are both catholic and believe in the Sacrament Of Baptism. Both of our girls have now been



Fr Joel, Sienna, Lisa and Paul Salemmme

baptised here in our Parish of St John's.

It is our relationship with God and our faith that underpins our family values. The Sacrament of Baptism allowed us to share our joy in faith with our daughters as they commence their life . We welcomed them into the Catholic faith and Tradition and we look forward to all being on this faith journey through life.

With God's help and joy in our hearts we will journey together in family and faith.

The Joy of Family

Margaret Andrews

I grew up in rural Victoria, the third of my parents' six children. As we lived on a farm, I had plenty of open space to roam, siblings with which to play and argue, and time to indulge my childhood love of riding horses. It was a relatively straightforward life with firm, but caring parents and few worries.

My oldest brother was brain-damaged at birth and as a result, suffered cerebral palsy and an intellectual disability. This didn't stop him enjoying life - in fact he taught his siblings how to experience joy in the simplest things, like a ride on a merry-go-round. Observing Bernie's pure delight became a source of our own delight that we learnt early on. Our oldest brother was able to live with our family for most of his life, attending Special Schools and later a Sheltered workshop, until his passing 20 years ago at the age of 49.

My father died some years ago at the age of 85, but my mother lives on - now aged 92. Marita (I've always thought hers a beautiful name) lives independently in a modest unit in the rural town of Yarrawonga, with the

support of my only sister and one of my brothers. One of the blessings in life is to be able to give back to your parents following their lifetime spent caring for their children. My observation of the generation of my mother (and my mother-in-law, who is 96) is that they live an uncomplicated life of generosity and gratitude, always trusting in God.

Following School, I attended Melbourne University, living in a residential college, which is where I met my husband, Kevin. We married at Newman College Chapel at the age of 23. Our wedding was a joyous occasion for our respective families, as we were the first to be married on both sides. Two years later we experienced the miracle of the birth of our first child. Emily was quickly followed by three more children - four children in five years! There followed busy but happy years as we experienced the joys and challenges of raising a young family.

When the children were young - and Kevin had a regular job where he would usually arrive home by train around 6pm - we would quickly have dinner and

pack up the kids in a pram, on trikes and bikes and go for extended walks around the Rosanna parklands. This sometimes included a stop for icy poles.

There were two years when all four children attended St John's primary school together. I remember meeting them after school, sometimes buying doughnuts for afternoon tea, or setting off to the Warringal Parklands, with the kids on their bikes. As I reminisce on those family times together, I am reminded of the joy that comes from the simplest of activities.

Ten years later, the Good Lord sent us another blessing to add to our family. At the time I was a bit miffed, but as often happens, one looks back and realises the joy that can come from opening one's heart to life and love. Ben became - and still is - very much the centre of our family.

Of course, it was not all 'beer and skittles' as any parent knows. However, there is great joy in working through challenges and disappointments. know our Lord and Saviour is by our side on the journey.

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

Margaret Andrews Continued.....



The Andrews family

As Christians, we all know that joy doesn't come without sorrow, trial and tribulation. But we take heart and have faith to face the future; as we know our Lord and Saviour is by our side on the journey.

Two of our children were able to obtain places in Programs which initially seemed almost impossible, so the success in each case was a cause of much joyousness and gratitude. Events like this are a source of wonderful and enduring family celebration.

With three of our children now married we are empty nesters; however we are now experiencing the joys of grandchildren.

To hold a divine infant in one's arms brings back dear memories; to watch unique

personalities emerge is exquisite. It is heart-warming to see your son tenderly handle his fragile newborn. And it is satisfying to see your children's love of and delight in their children.

I had the privilege of giving family support to my daughter and her husband during the first three months following the birth of our twin granddaughters two years ago. I went to my daughter's home for 4 to 5 hours each morning, to help with feeding, bathing and cuddling babies. I insisted the new mother had a hearty breakfast, and offered emotional support, as we all know any new mum needs. I helped with other tasks, such as washing and drying dishes and clothes, and even walking the dog! It was so special to share

this time with my daughter and my granddaughters.

It is an honour to engage in 'grandparent duties'. As well as babysitting, this is when we can take our grandchild/ grandchildren to a park, a movie or on an outing where memories can be created. Over time, very special and enduring relationships can develop between grandparents and grandchildren. Grandparents have more time to watch and listen than perhaps they had when they were busy raising their own children.

My lasting reflection on family joy is that the most fulfilling experiences happen in the simplest and ordinary life events.

Parenting Joy - Anita and AJ share their stories



Thomas Edward Nason brought joy into our lives on 3rd February 2021. He is our first born and as much as you're told what to expect, nothing can prepare you for the roller-coaster of parenting! As much as there are adjustments, lack of sleep and a complete change of lifestyle,

Thomas has enriched our lives with love, excitement and pure joy.

The character he's developed and grown into over the last 10 months has been a pleasure to watch. His cheeky and charismatic smile is embedded in our minds and is an example of how joy is present in our lives every single day.

Thomas' grandparents, great grandparents, aunts and uncles as well as relatives in Croatia love him and share the joy of having him in our lives. Thomas was baptised at St John's Church on Saturday 22nd May 2021. This was the perfect opportunity to not only welcome Thomas into the Christian faith but to also share in this joy with friends and family. **Anita Nason**

And a story from AJ & her family's JOY at their baby's Christening.....

Our baby daughter's Christening this year came upon us suddenly in a wave of joy. Born during lockdown, she hadn't had the usual visitors or family gatherings. The Christening would be her special day, we thought. We booked it months in advance, looking forward to thanking God for his blessing and welcoming her into His family. But as virus case numbers climbed and lockdown was extended, gatherings remained forbidden and we were forced to cancel the Christening. We felt resigned to it.. However, two days before the original date of the Christening, we learned that restrictions would be eased and our gathering would be permitted. In a flurry of excitement, we contacted our family - the Christening was back on! In two days we organised the church booking, the baptismal candle, the dress, cake, everything. Nothing was as we had originally planned but that didn't matter. This was better.

Sitting in the pews at St John's on that Christening morning, I looked around at the small family group we had been able to invite. This was the first time we had been together for many months. It was also the first time we had been back to St John's since the lockdown began. My eldest daughter spoke excitedly to her cousin next to her in the pew. My usually wriggly baby sat calmly on my lap, looking around with wide eyes at all the beautiful colourful stained glass windows.

Father Joel welcomed us, glad to have people back in the church again and especially to be celebrating a Christening. In his homily, he spoke of a child's complete trust in their parents and how we could all benefit from coming to God with a more child-like trust and faith. I could relate to that. If these last two years have taught me anything, it is that we cannot control everything. We truly rely on God. ***Even in difficult times, He can bring us unexpected and immeasurable joy.*** I looked around at my closest family in the church and down at my newly-christened baby girl, and I knew this to be true.

Parenting Joy - Carla Easton

There's nothing like newborn cuddles, this new baby so vulnerable yet so content and happy in our arms. Nine months of anticipation and in what feels like a mere moment this new bundle of joy joins the world. We joyfully welcomed our second daughter into our family in August, and she's definitely meant to be part of this family...she joins a long line of August babies in our extended family!

Those tiny fingers, those tiny toes, her big sister exclaimed beaming from ear to ear "Big hug!" She looked like the happiest child in the world to be cuddling her new baby sister. And as we were able to gradually see the rest of our family we were able to re-live these joyful moments at a slower pace than perhaps the first time around, time to savour the moments for longer. We are still enjoying new meetings with friends and family today, there is something very special when your loved ones meet your baby for the first time.

We were blessed to be able to finally get our eldest baptised in November as the restrictions dropped, and it made for a very special day as she was doubly blessed to be able to do it with



Fr Joel Peart with Justin, Carla, Stella and Greta Easton

her baby sister. It was a wonderful time celebrating the sacrament with our family members, of course we would have liked to include a wider circle but we were privileged to be able to have it at all considering the topsy turvy last two years.

Like the spring air has turned into summer days we look forward to what the next few months bring as we are all able to experience life to the fullest again.

We look forward to a joyous first Christmas with our newest family member!

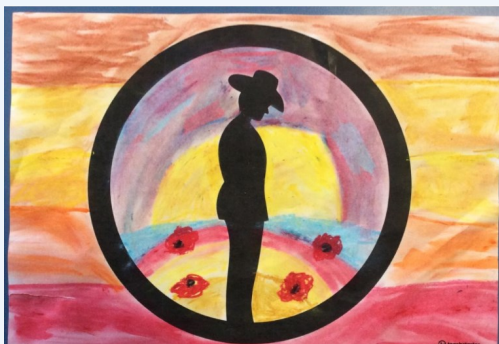
Term 3

St. John's Education in Faith Sphere Goal:

To strengthen and enrich our school as a contemporary Catholic community

Remembrance Day

11.11.2021



At 11am on Thursday the 11th November the students and staff at St John's paused to honour those who sacrificed themselves for the freedoms we all enjoy to-



The students spent the day reflecting and learning about Remembrance Day through prayer, reading and art.. Picture Yr 1

Carols Night—1W



What a fabulous night it was on Tuesday 7 December where the St John's school community could finally gather together to enjoy the beautiful sounds of the children singing traditional Christmas Carols.

Maureen Stella—St. John's School Principal

The end of the 2021 school year is almost upon us and what a remarkable year it has been for us, filled with joys and challenges, as we look forward with hope to 2022. I wonder what we will say in the future, when people ask us what it was like to be in a school during this COVID time. Reflecting on this year, as Principal of St John's school, I feel very proud of our wonderful school community and what has been achieved, despite the challenges presented. The commitment, determination and resilience shown by our students, their families and our staff, has been testament

to the way we have worked together in partnership, in the best interests of our students.

My thanks to our St John's community, from our engaging students, to our amazing staff, to our generous parents, to St John's Parish Priest Fr Joel and parishioners, all who have supported one another in words and actions.

To those who are leaving St John's community this year, my very best wishes are extended to them as they embark on a new direction. I especially wish our 2021 Year Six students much success in the years ahead and hope they will look back on their time at

St John's with many happy memories. I will be on Long Service Leave in Terms 1, 2 and 3 next year and Elizabeth Whiting will be Acting Principal and Connie Bandiera, Acting Deputy Principal, during this time. I wish Elizabeth and Connie all the very best in their leadership roles and I am confident they will continue to lead the school with passion and commitment.

May the true meaning of Christmas; the birth of Christ, be present in our thoughts and prayers

***With warmest wishes,
Mrs Maureen Stella,
Principal***

Advent

As the countdown begins to Christmas, the students have begun preparing for the coming of Jesus. During this Advent season we learn about the Advent wreath and the significance of the candles which surround it.



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The Joy of Singing



Maria La Civita

Maria sings at St. John's 6pm Mass on Saturday evenings and adds much to our Eucharistic Celebration she shares her story below with us.....

"I can't remember a time when I did not sing! I grew up listening to my Italian parents playing Mario Lanza records and other Italian artists on our portable record player. My father, who was a Carpenter by trade, use to really enjoy singing (even though he wasn't professionally trained). At our family functions he would delight in any opportunity he was given. I don't remember what type of voice he had but I do remember him being perfectly confident and relishing every moment on stage with the band. I was the complete opposite!

Although I loved to sing, I was a very shy child. I have a memory from the early 70's when I was at a family function. My older cousin approached me and asked me to go onto the stage with the band to sing an Italian folk song to surprise my dad. I

immediately declined. My cousin was determined and then 'twisted my arm' by offering me her Barrel of Monkeys (which I loved). Without any further hesitation, I accepted! I'm happy to say that I no longer need to be bribed!

When I was in my early twenties, I decided to take singing more seriously and found an amazing singing teacher named Margaret Bennet who lived in Moreland. She was a strong Catholic woman who had a diploma in singing and piano and a doctorate in Theology. She lived on her own and had devoted her life to God but taught singing as an income. Teaching singing for her was a joy as her singing students were like family to her.

Over time Margaret became my mentor. I had lost my mother when I was young so whenever I had a problem, I would bring it to Margaret and she would always have a solution for me. Margaret not only taught me to sing Opera but she showed me a God that I had never previously known. My singing lessons with Margaret

would last for a couple of hours as we would have cups of coffee, do sing exercises and songs, as well as discuss spiritual things. Margaret made God sound beautiful to me and when I was 33 years old, I had a strong conversion to the Catholic faith. My two loves came together – God and singing".



Although I found learning to sing quite challenging for many years, it has always brought me a sense of deep joy because it's a wonderful way for me to express what I have in my heart. ***Words with music allows for a greater expression and in turn allows me to share my joy with others and even to God.***

Maria La Civita

CONGRATULATIONS FR TED 80



Although restrictions only allowed 60 people Fr Ted Teal (a past Parish Priest of St. John's and good friend to many) was joined by his cousins and parishioners (some over 80 themselves) for a special 80th Birthday morning tea after mass in early November. All enjoyed the occasion, catch up, cake and cuppa.



Friends for a long time from working for our parish over many years.
Margaret Urqhart, Pauline Griffiths, Elaine Tyrell & Marie Craven.



Behind the masks are familiar faces helping in the kitchen, Barbara Dabal & Marguerite Ryan



OLMC Students reflect on JOY

Emma Gazzola, Mary Kyriakopolous & Mila Seabrook

Christmas brings so much joy in my life. The joy of spending time with loved ones and finishing school, the joy of driving around to see lights, the joy of decorating the tree and wrapping presents. The wonderful feeling of being with family and friends, breaking open bon bons, writing wish lists and singing carols to your heart's content. Christmas is such a joyful time!

Emma Gazzola

Joy is something that we all need in our lives and is something that we can find or make, out of any situation. Whether it's at school, with friends, family, there is joy everywhere. During this 18 month lockdown period, it has been hard to find joy in our lives however, coming out of isolation and with Christmas fast approaching, there is more joy evident in our lives. The Christmas season, the happiest time of year, is really working its magic and bringing everyone together despite the difficult period we have all been through. We are able to spend time with our loved ones, laugh, smile, have fun and this brings everyone joy.

It is important to make the most out of every situation and if we have learnt anything out of this lockdown time, it is to never take anything for granted and be grateful for even the smallest of things. After everything we have been through over these 2 years, we really don't know what the future holds, so we need to look at the positives, spread, find and live a joyful life.

Mary Kyriakopoulos

Even though there have been many challenges over the past 18 months but now coming back to some sort of normality the joy of being connected with our school, faith and wider communities is more clear than ever. I know personally being able to reconnect with my teachers, coaches and friends as well as watching the amazing videos from our talented music students have really bought back motivation, joy and hope into my life - things I felt were missing during what felt like a never-ending cycle of lockdowns. It has also been amazing to see the Christmas spirit really come alive, especially this last week.

Mila Seabrook

The Eyrie

OUR TEAM

Editorial • Design & Layout

Michelle Penson

Printer • Peter Burke

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.

Christmas Masses– December

Friday 24th & Saturday 25th
Christmas Day & Vigil masses

Friday 24th –December -
6pm,9pm & Midnight;

Saturday 25th-Christmas Day -
8.30am .9.30am, 10.30am

Fr Joel - Parish Priest, St. John's Heidelberg

The solemnity and season of Christmas should have us feeling and experiencing a deep sense of joy. Of all the fruits of the Holy Spirit though, joy is the one we might have been the most bereft of in recent times. It is a term that is synonymous with levity and exultation. Sadly, many of the day-to-day things we would typically conduct with ease have become turgid and onerous.

This is not to say that there have not been joyful occasions taking place in the parish here at St John's. Far from it! Since the opening up of our churches I have celebrated many baptisms, a number of weddings and seen so many more souls gather together for the celebration of mass. It has been something that has lifted my spirits immensely, as I hope it has yours. Further to that, the reopening of hospitality venues and having home gatherings has seen the city and suburbs come to life.

That said, we have to be careful not to confuse joyful occasions and good times with 'joy' as we understand it in our Catholic faith. If we do, then we are making it something conditional on our experiences; as something we can almost manufacture ourselves if we try hard enough and have enough family and friends to invite and oblige us. This is not the same joy that the Holy Spirit bestows on us, truly understood.

The joy that this season highlights and that God wants for us always is something that touches us at the deepest level of our being. We hear a lot from the prophet Isaiah during the season of Advent in the readings of the mass, because much of his prophecy foretells the coming of the Messiah. What does Isaiah tell us this Messiah will bring? He will bring glad tidings to the poor. He will heal the brokenhearted. He will bring liberty to captives.

I can't say I have experienced the joy of being truly alleviated from poverty or freed from prison. But take these and put them into a spiritual and existential context - which is where God wants us to put them - and they take on a truth for every one of us. Certainly,

Our Lord's heart goes out to those economically disadvantaged, but more so to those who on a deeper level have lost their sense of meaning and purpose in life. To have a person deprived of their freedom through incarceration would suffer Jesus, but more so the person imprisoned through their sin and addiction. These are things that each person is battling with or has battled with in their life.

The celebration of Our Lord entering this world at Christmas should also be the rejoicing of Him breaking into our hearts. Forget whatever might end up under the tree or in the stocking: this is the greatest gift we will ever get. That God himself is willing to go to such lengths as to enrich, heal and free us in the most profound way should be something that gives us the greatest joy imaginable.

With every blessing,

Fr Joel.