

The Eyrie

St John's Catholic Parish Heidelberg



At midnight mass, Desmond Tutu said “I love you.”

Brian Garrone, St John's parishioner

In 2001 and 2002 my wife and I volunteered with the Church in South Africa. We were involved in a number of schools and youth programs that supported young people who lived in poverty and were affected by HIV/ Aids. It was an extraordinary time of personal growth, understanding the world and seeing the amazing work that the Church is involved with. It was a blessed time.

On Christmas eve of the final year we drove into Cape Town to attend midnight mass at St Mary's Catholic Cathedral. We took a wrong turn, got lost and ended up outside St George's Anglican Cathedral. Back in the early 2000's it wasn't safe to walk around the CBD at night, let alone midnight, and walk a few blocks to try and find St Marys. St George's midnight mass was about to begin, so we saw it as a sign...our little contribution to ecumenical relations!

I hadn't been to an Anglican service before and was enthralled by the line of over one hundred people processing into the Cathedral. It really was a sight to behold! And what a delight it was to find that the Nobel Peace Laureate, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, was at the end of the procession. Whereas all the others were quite formal, the Archbishop was smiling and waving as he walked

down the aisle. This little man in full regalia was magnetic (I am often reminded of this time whenever I see our own Pope Francis and the way people respond to him).

After the Christmas Gospel was proclaimed, Archbishop Tutu delivered the homily. To hear the voice and words of this great Christian peace builder was amazing. He shared stories of pain and hope, fear and faith, as he broke open this very special Word of God. At the end of his homily he stated that at the **heart of Christmas is a reminder that God is saying I love you, year after year.**

For almost a minute, Desmond said the words, *“I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you...”* getting softer and slower.

As I heard this, I closed my eyes and had an overwhelming feeling of peace, knowing that this night, and every other night of my life, Gods loves me. A Noble Peace Laureate, in a Church and country that is not my home, channelled the words of God to remind me of **the most simple yet profound promise of Christmas...you are loved and you can share that love.**

Every Christmas Eve I take a moment to remember that night when Desmond Tutu said I love you and



opened my heart to receive that eternal love that God has for me and His dream that I try and share it abundantly.

Happy Christmas and may you feel Gods love again this year!

~

Post Script: Twelve years later I had the opportunity to revisit St Georges very early one morning with a group of Catholic teachers from Australia. The Archbishop, now Emeritus and quite aged, said mass on Fridays when he was feeling well. Kate and I had our daughter Claire with us, who was two at the time. At the end of the service we were able to get a photo with the Archbishop. Claire didn't quite get the importance of the situation and grizzled all through it. Rather than try and rush us on, Desmond declared he was also a grandfather and could solve Claire's angst. He proceeded to make funny noises and faces at her until she burst into laughter. Once again, Archbishop Tutu, through his actions, told another Aussie that God loves us!

Helping others at Christmas

St Vincent de Paul volunteers

Being a Vincentian at Christmas time for me is the most rewarding time, and it's in three parts.

We have approximately 100 families that we assist, and we have close to 100 children that we provide gifts for.

We have been preparing hampers for the last four years, and over this time I am amazed at the generosity of St John's parishioners and primary school. Without this support we would not be able to provide as much as we do to those in need.

On the evening that the hampers are packed and gifts are wrapped, the Rosanna scouts assist us. These children give up their evening to assist us, and it is a night of laughter, some repacking and sharing. The children ask questions about who the hampers and gifts are for, and are told that they are for the less fortunate. Hopefully these children will grow in their generosity, and maybe go on to be our future Vincentians.

The delivery of the hampers and gifts is the most rewarding. I don't cease to be humbled by the look on



people's faces when we deliver the hampers and gifts. From the mothers who whisper to us not to let the children see the gifts, so they can surprise them on Christmas day; the grandparents who have tears in their eyes because they now have a gift that they can give their grandchild, or the little ones who have the gift

handed to them and hold onto it as though it was the most prized possession.

The gift of Giving is definitely the most rewarding, and being a member of St Vincent de Paul has allowed me to experience all of this.

- Sally Tramontata

"As a volunteer for Vinnies, I feel the deepest gift we receive is the gratitude we feel for the privilege of working freely for others.

Volunteering is a way to live out our Faith and what we believe. With

Vinnies we just try to "DO" what we can and to use the Gifts we have been given.

We are called as Vincentians to feed, clothe, house and assist our brothers and sisters who are forced onto the

margins of society. We are also called to ask why they are left out and pushed out."

- Sr Jean

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 and sisters, working for justice and reconciliation.

"I am in the process of transitioning out of my full-time employment, where I have served the Community in the public sector for over 30 years. It has always been a passion and interest of mine to assist and serve the public. I was in the process of seeking volunteer work to help people in need, when I was exposed to a presentation delivered by a representative from St Vincent de Paul Society. The message behind the organisation and its teachings and values were of significant importance to me.

I was that impressed and inspired by the reflection that I volunteered to become a member of the Heidelberg Conference. I have now been a member since June, 2019 and it has been a life changing experience. I absolutely love and enjoy spending time with quality people who display amazing care, compassion and commitment to assisting and helping those in need of assistance or who are less fortunate than ourselves. These people are selfless and outstanding members of our Community. I look forward to

continuing this journey and also assisting people in need and having a positive impact of their lives. I look forward to the upcoming festive season, where as a volunteer I will be able to assist in the preparation of Christmas Hampers and the delivery of same. This effort will go a long way in touching the lives of others and letting them know that they are not alone and cared for very much".

- Mark Chetcuti

Christmas is a time when we can be very focused on our own family, friends and work colleagues. The work that Vinnies does is spiritually grounding as it reminds us that there are needs in the community and that some people are quite desperate and have no-one to turn to. It is especially comforting that the anonymity of individual Vinnies members ensures that those we help are not put in a position where they may feel guilt, distress or shame.

Hamper packing and present wrapping with Rosanna Scouts has been happening for a number of years. It has brought the two organisations together twice annually and there is a fantastic positive atmosphere as the youth bring a vibrancy and enthusiasm as we work



to one goal of fulfilling the orders. It also provides an opportunity for some Scouts who may graduate to

retail to remember not to put canned ham on top of fragile biscuits!

Your local finance specialist

If you are considering a new property loan, restructuring your existing mortgage or looking to release equity in your home, Pietro Sciotto can help you achieve your finance goals.

Contact **Pietro Sciotto** on **0427 700 750** or
pietrosciotto@avenuefinancial.com.au

avenue
financial

Avenue Financial ABN 92 194 525 405 is an authorised Credit Representative of Australian Finance Group Limited ABN 11 066 385 822 Australian Credit Licence Number 483507

Slavery-free tea or coffee anyone?

Rosie Hoban, Organisation

Imagine Catholic schools and parishes in Australia auditing their goods and services to ensure nothing is produced with the use of forced or slave labour. Rose coloured glasses or a glimpse at the future?

The Victoria-Tasmania Catholic Modern Slavery Taskforce, set up almost two years ago, believes it is achievable and in fact some schools in the Melbourne Diocese are already well down the path of becoming 'slavery-free'.

The Taskforce, whose membership includes ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans), CARITAS, the four Victorian Dioceses and the Archdiocese of Hobart as well as Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM), is creating awareness of, and working to eliminate human trafficking.

The most recent project is the development of a ***Make your staffroom slavery-free kit***, which will be launched at the start of the 2020 school year by Melbourne Archbishop Peter Comensoli.



Mark Clarke from the Archdiocesan Office for Peace and Justice is a regular visitor to Victorian primary and secondary schools where he is asked to speak on justice issues including human trafficking.

"I am always very kindly offered a cup of tea or coffee when I arrive, and now I ask if it is Fairtrade, which ensures it is slavery-free. It can be



awkward when organisers tell me it isn't. I realise then that the connection, between what we talk about and what we do, simply hasn't been made," Mark said.

The connection is clear. Slave labour is used to produce some tea, coffee and the cocoa beans used in some drinking chocolate. Slave labour is also used in the production of some sporting equipment used in schools. Slave labour may be used in the production of some school uniforms worn by students.

The Taskforce decided to produce the ***Make your staffroom slavery-free kit***, to get schools and parishes to start looking at what products are being used in their staffroom and to then make the swap to Fairtrade, UTZ or Rainforest Alliance products. These certifications on the products ensure they are slavery-free. The development of the kit was spearheaded by CEM who have placed it on their website. If you would like to make your school, home, workplace or parish slavery-free, this [kit](#) will help you take the first step in the right direction. It's a comprehensive 'how to' guide.

ACRATH's Executive Officer

Christine Carolan said: "It would be a wonderful example to everyone if St John's parishioners and school staff took this issue on and decided the school and parish would only stock slavery free products in the staffroom. This would make a difference to people enslaved around the world. It's how we bring about change."



"It is estimated that over 40 million people globally are trapped in slavery or slavery-like conditions – one in four of them are children. I am fairly certain that none of these children will ever taste the drinking chocolate that they help produce."

The ***Make your staffroom slavery-free kit*** can be found at: <https://resourcecem.com/slavery-free-resources/>

My experience of attending mass with my family

Noel Micallef, St John's Parishioner

I grew up in a single parent household, as my mother died before my first birthday. Dad always took my sister and I to mass each Sunday. As a child, I had assumed that my father had always had great faith, but I later found this wasn't the case. Dad had always attended mass, but it wasn't until he met my mother that his faith crystallised into something more meaningful. This concept of my mother sharing her faith with my father fascinated me as a child. It made me see my faith as an inheritance from a mother that I never knew.

I fluctuated in my enthusiasm for mass growing up, but I never stopped attending. Even as a teenager, as I felt waves of rebellion course through my veins, something kept drawing me back to that sacred insular place that I found within the mass. I now recognise that feeling as longing to be in relationship with God.

My wife, Silvana was raised a Catholic but her family did not attend mass regularly. When we first started dating as young adults she asked if she could attend mass with me. This brought me joy that I was not expecting. For me, this felt like an invitation to share my sacred insular space with another. This brought with it a vulnerability which was initially scary, but was ultimately liberating. We have now been attending mass together for over 25 years.

When we first became parents, we took great joy bringing our son Elijah to mass. We welcomed the good will of other parishioners, as they marvelled at the beauty and

innocence of our newborn. As Eli became more loud and active, mass ceased to be an enjoyable and prayerful experience for us. We now have three children ranging in age from 5 to 14 and it seems that we have lived this roller coaster of unpredictable behaviour at mass over and over again.

within other parishes. This has meant the world to us and has transformed how we now experience the mass together as a family. I'd also like to express my thanks to the many people, over the years, who have reached out to us in stressful times when others might have been more quick to judge. Your kindness and your solidarity has given us the will to persevere.



At times, we found attending mass with a young family incredibly stressful. We entered each service with a sense of trepidation that often left us wondering whether the stress of bringing the children to mass with us was worth it. We seldom felt that mass offered us a chance to connect to God as we were too busy worrying whether our children were ruining the experience for everyone around us. I imagine that this is a common experience for many young families.

Fr Mario has been so kind to us since we joined this parish in 2017. He has shown us a degree of understanding that hasn't always been offered to us

I think the manner in which a parish welcomes families with young children says a lot about the type of community that it aspires to be. If we truly are a welcoming, loving community which models Christ, then we all have a role in welcoming everyone in our liturgical celebrations. Yes, children can be noisy and disruptive at mass, but they also bring with them a sense of innocence, joy and goodwill that the whole community benefits from. God bless the little ones. Especially those with the loudest lungs!

Maureen Stella

Principal

As we come to the end of another school year, it is often a time for reflection, gratitude and hope in reflecting back on the year and looking forward to the upcoming one.

The end of this school year is touched with both gratitude and sadness as we farewell two of our school leaders who are retiring at the end of this year. Carmel and Carolyn have given so much of their time and commitment to St John's over many, many years. Firstly, I thank Mrs Carmel Armiento who over the past 25 years, has been a St John's parent, teacher, Literacy Leader and Deputy Principal and Mrs Carolyn Walsh who has also. Over the past 20 years, been a teacher, Learning and Teaching and Student Wellbeing Leader at our school.

Carmel and Carolyn have been integral members of our Leadership and Staff Team and their talents, skills and kindness will be missed by not only myself but many in our

school and parish community. I also thank and acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our leaving teacher and Mathematics Leader Angela Pope and class teachers Beth Miller and Rachel Devine. We wish them all the very best for the future as they begin a new chapter in their lives.

My gratitude is extended to Fr Mario for his continued support throughout this year, the enthusiastic parent and parish community and my caring staff, who always have the children at the heart of all we do at St John's.



To our fabulous students, I congratulate you on all your learning achievements this year and the way you have shown care and kindness to others. I wish our 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.

Wishing you all the joys of the Christmas season and may the true meaning of Christmas; the birth of Christ, be present in our thoughts and prayers, as we celebrate this special time of the year with our families and friends.

Mrs Carolyn Walsh

Learning & Teaching Leader / Student Wellbeing Leader

What are your memories of your 20 years at St John's school?

My favourite memories of St John's always involve the wonderful students and staff I've worked with over the years. St John's is a vibrant, positive learning environment, with a tangible sense of community and that is the overall impression that will always stay with me.

What have been some of the highlights?

The privilege of sharing a student's learning journey - getting to know them, finding out their interests and talents. sharing good and sometimes difficult times, listening to their funny stories, having a laugh, witnessing and celebrating their learning growth and development each year.



Mrs Carmel Armiento

Deputy Principal and Literacy Leader

What are your memories of your 25 years at St John's school?

My early memories of St John's take me back to classrooms without computers or interactive whiteboards, teachers writing on blackboards with chalk and students kicking footballs on real grass! One thing that has never changed is the warm and friendly community upon which St John's has built its reputation. I am very proud to have been a part of St John's Parish School and to have had the opportunity to contribute to this vibrant community as a parent, teacher and leader.

Other highlights include being part of the incredible energy and enthusiasm of the PIC, (Partners in Community) the commitment of our SAC (School Advisory Council) and the opportunities I've had to meet so many wonderful families over the years.

I have always looked forward to the annual school ball with Ken Marshall and have delighted in the excitement of the Prep students' presentation, the students' dancing skills and the joy on parents' and grandparents' faces.

As a classroom teacher, nothing was more rewarding than to see students improve.



What have been some of the highlights?

One of my highlights is the first school day of each new year. I enjoy the excitement and energy that is in the playground on those days. Engaging with the Preps on their first day of school brings another level of excitement for new families, as well as families bringing their next child. Amongst the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and friends, we used to have cameras flashing inside and outside the classroom; now we have a sea of mobile phones!

What advice would you give to a young teacher?

My advice to young teachers is that if you are excited and challenged, you will love teaching whatever it is you are teaching and the students will also be motivated to learn. Most of all, get to know those young students you are privileged to teach every day.

What are you looking forward to doing next year?

To have time and choice, more family time, more reading, more travel.

How would you like to be remembered by the St John's community?

I would like St John's to remember me as a dedicated and friendly teacher who loved being in this community and was committed to making a difference.

*As interviewed by our 2019 School Captains Mariah Kairouz and Matthew Daminato.

Growing my professional knowledge through study, collaborating with other teachers and interactions with students (students have taught me a lot!)

The many community celebrations for example: The Sacraments, Better Buddies Days, Book Week, the Carols, the Fete, the School Balls and the Productions.

What advice would you give to a young teacher?

To always remember one of the most

important elements of teaching is building relationships; with students, other teachers and with parents. Also, you will never know everything about teaching - you will always be learning!

What are you looking forward to doing next year?

Spoiling my four beautiful grandchildren, travelling and being open to all possibilities - who knows what's around the corner?

How would you like to be remembered by the St John's community?

As a teacher that has made a difference.

*As interviewed by our 2019 School Captains Mariah Kairouz and Matthew Daminato.

PARISH EVENTS

St John's Carols on the lawn

11th December, 2019



KUMON

Tailored Learning. Endless Discoveries.

For 30 years, Kumon has been developing children's reading and calculation abilities, providing a strong foundation for learning in the classroom and everyday life. Contact your local Kumon Centre to find out more today.

KUMON HEIDELBERG EDUCATION CENTRE
187 Burgundy Street
Instructor: Maureen Hegarty
Tel: 0423 877 736



<http://au.kumonglobal.com>

Planning a funeral?
We understand your needs

The Loneragan & Erbacher families have a long association with St. John's Catholic Parish

LONERAGAN & RAVEN
EST. 1849
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

contact Robert Erbacher:
0408 179 553
or our Clifton Hill office:
03 9489 8711
for an obligation-free quote

www.ravensfunerals.com.au

143 Lower Plenty Road Rosanna T. 9459 4933
159 Burgundy Street Heidelberg T. 9458 1555

sales@meridiantravel.com.au
meridiantravel.com.au

ESCAPE
EXPLORE DREAM DISCOVER

meridian
travel & cruise

ATAS
travel accredited

PARISH EVENTS



Stephens

GRASS FED FREE RANGE FAMILY RUN

Warringal Shopping Centre

Open 7 days 6am-7pm



With Respects Catering

withrespects.com.au

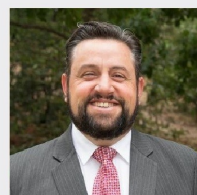
37 Greville Rd Rosanna 3084
T: 0422 038 817 ABN: 81870746819

FLETCHERS

THOMAS BECHELLI
Director & Auctioneer

114 Lower Plenty Road, Rosanna
thomas.bechelli@fletchers.net.au
m 0413 181 461 | t 9430 1133

fletchers.net.au



Contributing to the
Communities we serve.

Mauritius my homeland

Marie Rose Auguste, St John's parishioner

Mauritius, Pearl of the Indian Ocean, tiny pearl, beautiful land of the dodo, of pristine beaches, of water clear as crystal, of magical sunsets, of sugar cane *fléchettes* swaying gently in the wind in July, of flame trees covered with red and orange blooms in summer, of purple jacarandas, of mango and lychee trees laden with fruits in December. **Mauritius**, land of intriguing mountains with names like *The Thumb*, *The Three Udders*, *The Two Udders*, *The Lion*, *The Cat and the Mouse*, *The Corps de Garde*, and *Le Morne* so called because slaves escaping from their masters plunged to their death in the sea raging at its feet.



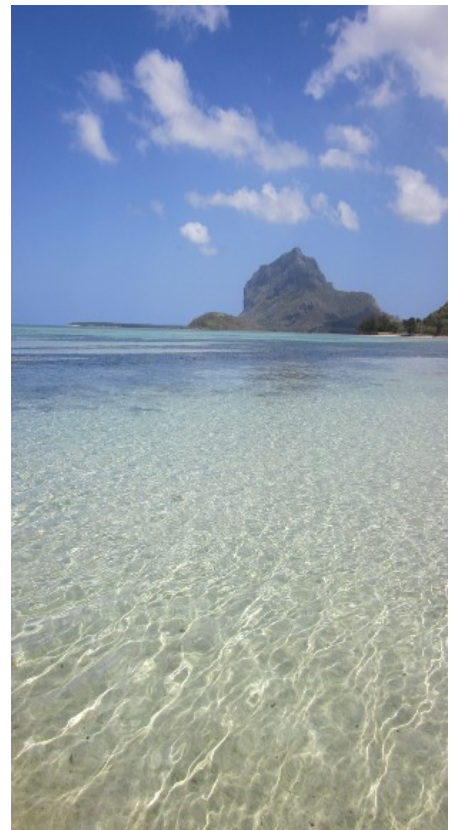
Mauritius land of seven or more colours reflecting the many faces of its population: white, yellow, brown, black, olive; **Mauritius** land of many faiths where muezzins call to prayers at dawn and early in the evening, where church bells sound to invite Christians to mass, or to stop a moment for the Angelus, where the bells toll gloomily to express a mourning, or ring joyously to celebrate a wedding. **Mauritius** where Eid, Christmas, Easter, Diwali, Chinese New Year are feasts in

which everyone partakes. **Mauritius** where pilgrimages to either Christian or Hindu shrines are common occurrences. **Mauritius** the land of total religious freedom where churches, temples, and mosques cohabit in peace and harmony.

Mauritius land of glorious food, a culinary heaven, where the delicious cuisine, a blend of French, Chinese, Indian, Arab, and Creole cooking traditions, offers dishes unique to the island whether they be *gratins*, rice, noodles, pickles, breads, curries, biryani, *rougailles*, or *daubes*. **Mauritius** where street stalls are often the best places to eat, where at street corners, vendors will offer mouthwatering food cooked on the spot with enticing flavours hard to refuse, as well as a variety of exotic fruits, not to mention the refreshing coconut water savoured from the coconut itself.

Mauritius where one can hear French, Urdu, Hindi, Tamil, Mandarin, Hakka being spoken; where French and English may be the official languages but where the delightful and colourful Creole is the lingo understood by all. **Mauritius** where saris, shalwar kameez, cheongsams, dresses, jeans, sneakers walk alongside each other in all sizes and colours. **Mauritius** where no one can resist the pull of the *séga* when its pulsating rhythm invites you to dance.

This is the land my husband, my daughters and I came from in 1981 to rejoin parents and siblings who emigrated in the 1960s during a huge



diaspora of Mauritian migrants. We came to a faraway land, a land also of many colours, many faces, many faiths, many cuisines, many languages, a land of beautiful beaches, unique fauna, majestic gumtrees. This is our land now, Australia, a land that I have come to love, a land where my children have blossomed.

But deep in my heart there is a place, a special one where I go to when there is a little shadow lurking in my horizon: **Mauritius**, the land of my birth.

Fr Mario

Parish Priest, St John's Heidelberg

“And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

I would have to admit that I love Christmas. It is a great festive season not only for people who participate in Christian religious celebrations, but also for those who do not. For many of us, it is a time when the family spends time together. The Christmas season has also integrated itself with non-religious culture.

In his gospel, John explains this great mystery: the Word of God, God himself, took on human flesh, and set up his dwelling among us. For people of other faiths, the fact that God bothered to put his divinity aside and live as one of us, is a heretical concept. The distance between God and humanity is so immense that no other god is understood to have undertaken to engage with us. In other faiths, god watches humanity from a safe distance.

The great Christian mystery teaches us that God not only spoke to us in a language we could engage with, but chose to live our own life. This has great significance even for the way we live our faith today. God did not become human within a ‘bubble,’ out of context. He lived within a particular culture and within a defined time space. Jesus was a Jew living in Palestine like any other Palestinian two thousand years ago. The good news was preached in

Aramaic, the spoken language of the time.

The apostles understood the message and continued the incarnation. Since the prevailing culture of the day was Greek, in order to be able to communicate the message with those around them, they wrote the gospels in the Greek language and dressed up the gospel news in a Greek culture and Philosophy. Some centuries later, when the community of believers had established itself in Rome, which eventually became the centre of the ‘Church,’ it as decided to adopt the Latin language and culture. Much of our liturgical dress and words still reflect this decision.

This continued incarnation of the Word of God, or what today we would refer to as inculturation, continues to this day and we need to take responsibility for it. We see it happening around us in the architecture, music, and other cultural expressions. Just like God always spoke to us in a way that could be accepted and understood by us, so today we need to continue to speak the good news in a way that is acceptable to today's culture.

Over the centuries the Church has stopped and reviewed how the good news was being ‘incarnated.’ The Council of Trent (1545-63) was one

such great event, but it was not the only one. Even the way our liturgy was celebrated was reformed a number of times. The last reform of the Mass introduced at the Council of Trent was reformed in 1962. The language used was not the proper classical Latin language, but a watered-down popular version.

Change is always difficult, but it happens around us and in spite of us. Our duty is to make sure that the good news is not lost because it is not translated into our current culture. Many of our younger people struggle to understand how we lived fifty years ago. Today they have a different cultural understanding expressed in the way they speak, in their music and in their art and architecture. The beauty of the incarnation is that God still wants to be born and participate in our life and culture today. As we celebrate this mystery we need to be very careful that we do not stand in the way of the incarnation because of our own personal cultural preferences. Rather, we need to facilitate the process of the incarnation, helping our younger generations become part of this great mystery.

Christmas is a strong reminder of this reality of God who wants to be part of our life, the way we live it today.

Happy Christmas!

The Eyrie

OUR TEAM

Emma Daly

Margaret Ferma • Michelle Penson

Design & Layout • Margherita Bechelli

Printer • Peter Burke

YOUR FEEDBACK WELCOME

heidelberg.eyrie@cam.org.au

52 Yarra Street, Heidelberg 3084

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

Sat 1st & Sun 2nd February

Blessing of school children, uniforms and school bags; Blessing of families with young children; Parish Safeguarding Commitment.

Sunday 2nd February

Commissioning Mass for St John's Parish Primary School staff at 10:30am mass, followed by morning tea and sausage sizzle in Parish Hall.

Thursday 6th February

Beginning of School Year Mass at 6pm.

Wednesday 26th February

Ash Wednesday; Start of Lent and day of fasting and abstinence. Masses at 9:15am, 2:15pm (Primary School) and 7:30pm.

Thursday 27th February

Parish Annual Meeting; Francis Xavier Meeting Room at 7pm.

Saturday 7th March

Parish Community Dinner. Venue to be announced.

Tuesday 17th March

St Patrick's Day.

Monday 23rd March

Mass of Anointing of the Sick at 9:15am followed by morning tea.

Sunday 5th April

Palm Sunday.