

# ECHO

The magazine of

## St John's Catholic Parish HEIDELBERG



**September 2014**

**Message from Fr Mario**

Dear parishioners, visitors and friends,

This spring edition of our parish magazine comes only a few weeks after the celebration of one of the great feasts of Mary, the mother of Jesus: her Assumption into heaven. The importance of this feast is emphasised by the fact that it is the only holy day of obligation left in our annual calendar, and we are invited to celebrate this day by participating in the Eucharist.

The feast of the Assumption has a strong link with the event of the Incarnation, God who became one like us in Jesus, and has special meaning for us even today. At Christmas we celebrate with great solemnity the birth of Jesus. This is an event of great meaning, no other major religion believes that God entered the human story and became one of us. It is not an achievement on God's part but it is a significant event on our side: God became human so that all of us can become like God and share the very life of God.

One way of understanding this truth is by believing that when we die we will go to Heaven and be forever in the presence of God our creator. This is a very true statement indeed and is the final focus of our life as human beings; to return to the one who created us. Yet the event of the Incarnation has a much deeper meaning for us even as we live our daily life; we live the life of God here on earth. Mary says in the Magnificat hymn: 'God has looked with favour on the lowliness of his servant, and has done great things for us'. By taking up our human nature God declared that while we are living our life as humans we are also sharing in God's own life.

The feast of the Assumption of Mary is a very important feast because Mary is the first human being to fully enjoy this new life brought to us by Jesus. It was not enough for Mary's soul to be reunited with

soul. In the Assumption Mary took with her all that is human; in the Assumption God declared once again that to be human is to live the life of God here on earth.

This teaching has profound implications also in our life as a Catholic community that gathers every Sunday at St John's in Heidelberg. It would be very easy for us to say that we gather each Sunday to pray to God, but as we do so, we also bring to our community gathering all that makes us human and offer it back to God. We bring with us all our family and friends, our work and our leisure, our joys, our sorrows and our pains. We approach God as human persons and worship God in our human bodies. These are the tools God has given us to worship him with.

This also means that we come to our worshipping community not to pray as individuals, but to pray as a body. We are the Church who prays and who reaches out in love to people around us. Therefore when we speak of Church we do not only speak about the one hour we spend in the church once a week, but we also speak about the many other social activities and relationships we build and celebrate as a Body of Christ.

We have just gone through a process of choosing new members of our Parish Pastoral Council; I welcome the new members and thank you all for your participation. The role of the Parish Council is to continue building this life of God that we all celebrate in our parish through the various different activities that happen in our midst. Let us ask Mary to pray for us as we continue on our journey as disciples, building the Body of Christ here in Heidelberg. **Fr Mario**



## Paintbox for the future



Those of us who are old enough will remember the Berger paint advertisement, "Keeps on keeping on". Possible some of us have found this slogan helpful in many ways over our lifetime.

We have other pieces of advice for ourselves and others, saying the same thing but expressed differently e.g. "You have to move on", "Get on with it", "Leave the past to the past and live today".

The Church in these lengthy Sundays of Ordinary time is also saying the same thing. "Keep on keeping on". Persistence, perseverance, faithfulness, all combine to lead us together through the liturgy towards worship, inspiration, generosity and peace. Don't look back, don't stray, don't fret, just keep on.

Berger paints used to add an invitation to intending painters with their greeting, "Welcome to a world of colour". Does the liturgy colour our world? Is the Eucharist the highlight of our days? Do we need a new paintbox or new tools to uplift our being and action as Christ's people? What new or renewed colour can we use?

Bergers told us well, "You can paint over old colour without doing loads of coats". What good advice! Renewal is not about a complete makeover: its adding to the base materials for improvement and relative change.

According to Christians, each person's basic design and materials are God-given, but maintenance and improvement are collaborative.

In our lives then it's good to check with the Maker and plan together for the future. What area(s) of my life need attention? Is there a special 'colour' I'm being asked to use?

*Lord of our lives,  
Help us to keep on keeping on.  
Thank you for different coloured blessings  
you give.  
Grant us a share in your faithfulness of love  
That we too may renew the world  
With all our sisters and brothers  
Each day, every day praising and  
Blessing, seeking and finding,  
On and on. Amen.*

This reflection and prayer was given to us by Pat Heywood who gave much to our parish community and died in July 2014. Pat kept on keeping on and although not well at our Easter ceremonies was determined to keep on giving and was one of the main readers on Good Friday.

Pats reflection gives us all something to think about and reflect on in these Sundays of Ordinary time.



*Keep on keeping on*

*CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEW PARISH  
COUNCIL MEMBERS*

LEELA CHERUBIM MAUREEN HEGARTY



LESA MEESE KATE MATHAI



Many people have served our parish over the past 166 years. Not all those who serve our parish are on formal committees or in groups. There are many who go about their work quietly helping others, praying, listening, and supporting the parish in some way.

The Lord gives us all different talents and it is up to us to use these to assist where and when we can.

At this time as our Parish Pastoral Council takes another step in the journey at St. John's it is a good time to say "Thank You". Thank you to all who have served in the past, and those that still assist by using their talents for the good of all in our parish and the wider community.

Big thanks also to those who accepted nomination and were prepared to put themselves forward. We know you also would have made fine representatives. Our parish is enriched by your generosity.

The first meeting of the new Parish Pastoral Council will take place in October.

Existing Members:

RONNIE MALONEY

LIZ TURNER



BILL BARNES

BRENDAN HARTY



CATHERINE ANDREWS

MICHELLE PENSON

