

FIRST COMMUNION IN OUR PARISH

On Saturday August 29th, fifty-nine young people from the parish received their First Communion. For the first time the First Communion was celebrated at OLMC.



Father Mario and Father Fr Think (uncle of one of the First Communicants) were the celebrants.



Special thanks to the wonderful support provided by OLMC principal Ms Julie Ryan, college staff and in particular to Ms Marie Jenkins.



FIRST COMMUNION REFLECTIONS

When I arrived I felt nervous and excited for my First Communion. I got into the hall and saw mum and dad and I felt happy. I enjoyed folding the cloth. When I had the Body and Blood of Christ I walked back to my seat with a smile knowing that I was welcome to the feast of the Lord.

My prayer:

Dear God, thank you for guiding me as I received my First Holy Communion.

(Timothy B)

On August 29th my class made our First Communion at OLMC. My favourite part was receiving the bread and wine. After my First Communion I felt happy and proud of myself because I can now be part of the Table of the Lord.

My prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you for this special day and thank you for my parents who guided me throughout the day. I now feel very special that I can receive you in the Eucharist.

(Emma B)

I enjoyed having my First Communion because I felt grown up and invited to the Table of Jesus.

Three learnings I made:

- ✦ The bread and wine have to be blessed for it to be Communion.
- ✦ To take Jesus into your mouth you do it with the hand you write with.
- ✦ When you go to communion you get closer and closer to God.

My prayer:

Dear Lord, the bread and wine I have received will bring me closer to you O Jesus, Lord of all.

(Cora)

Our prayer is that these children will always be as eager to receive Jesus in the Eucharist as they were on their special day.

FEATURE PARISHIONER -ZEN ZEBROWSKI

Zen's zest for life.

Each week when come to Mass and say "good morning" to the people in the same seat or just behind and in front of us. We may have been doing so for years but not really know the person.



In this edition of the Echo we have chosen to tell you a bit about Zen Zebrowski. Born in Poland in 1937 Zen is now 78 and has been a parishioner here at St John's for the past 39 years. I asked Zen if he would share his interesting life story with us and he agreed. I then found out that he

had already shared his life story as he was interviewed by the living history project for the National Archives.

As I listened to his story on the archive CD what came through to me was Zen's gentle nature, his love of family, people, life and living and most of all the rich love of his catholic faith. He still has the well-travelled metal crucifix that his mother kept throughout their war time journeys.

On 01.09.1939 Germany invaded Poland. Zen's father was called up for military service. On 17.09.39 Russia invaded Poland and Zen's father became a Russian prisoner of war. As he was in military police he would have been executed as some 24,000 were, but because he could speak the local dialect and borrowed a railway workers coat he managed to get the Russians to release him. When he returned home he had to go into hiding or be killed. He then joined the underground army.

In June 1941 Russians rounded up Zen (then 3 years old) his mother, two sisters and aunt and deported them to Siberia; his 13 year old brother escaped through the bedroom window and joined his father.

The family was sent on a three week journey in cattle railway wagons with little water and hardly any food; thousands did not survive the journey. In Siberia Zen's mother had to dig trenches and had to dig at night to finish her allocated tasks. Food was short, no hygiene and

people were literally eaten by lice.

When Germany invaded Russia the Communists granted "Amnesty" to Polish prisoners of war and their families. Zen and his family were allowed to move south to Uzbekistan where the food situation was even more critical than in Siberia. Zen became very ill and survived only because a poor Muslim grandmother gave him a half cup of goat's milk every day. Zen and the whole family came down with typhoid but they managed to catch a Polish army train to the Caspian Sea and then a ship to Persia (now Iran).

Straight from the ship Zen was taken to a Polish military hospital. He was so emaciated and suffering from dysentery that the doctors said there was no hope for him and attributed his survival to his mother's prayers.

From Persia the family went to a Polish refugee camp in Lusaka (now Zambia). The camp functioned like a small Polish town and had its own schools a mud brick church build by them with their own polish priest to say mass.

After more than 8 years in Africa, Zen and his family migrated to Australia arriving in Freemantle on 14.02.1950. They were housed in a migrant camp in Cundenin, some 170km east of Perth. There he learnt English in a camp school but to help him master the English language his mother sent him to an orphanage run by the Christian Brothers.

In 1952 the family moved to Perth where Zen went to Christian Brothers College Perth and matriculated in 1955. He went on to the University of WA and attained a Bachelor of Arts. In 1960 he moved to Melbourne and gained a Bachelor of Commerce studying part time.

He met and married Wanda and they had 5 children all 4 of whom are university graduates. Zen's wife died some 15 years ago and he misses her greatly but he lives every day giving thanks for his life and the blessings sent his way.

Zen can often be seen in St John's Rose Garden trimming and caring for the roses (and often bearing the scars of the thorns). Zen is also one of our readers.

Zen says one of the main reasons the Polish people integrated so well into Australian society was the fact they shared the catholic faith, they felt they belonged and did not feel alienated. The Catholic community was and is always welcoming to people from all nations.

He hopes that today's refugees can assimilate into our community and become true Australian Citizens and put their energy into becoming part of this wonderful country.

ST JOHN'S PARISH DIRECTORY

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

Parish Office:

Ph: 9457 1066 Fax: 9459 7874

Email: heidelberg@cam.org.au

Web: www.cam.org.au/heidelberg

Parish Priest: - Fr Mario Zammit

Assistant Priest: - Fr Vargheese Katikattu

Sacrament Coordinator: - Sr Loreto Lynch RSM

Parish Secretary: Mary Peeris

(Parish Office is open Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri from 9am to 2.00pm)

Parish Primary School

55 Cape St, Heidelberg 3084

School Principal: - Mr Nick Marinelli

Ph: 9459 2963 Fax: 9459 0133

School Secretaries:

Teresa Mattei / Melanie Sharples

WEEKEND MASS TIMES

Sat: 6.00 pm,

Sun: 8.30 am, 10.30 am, 5.00 pm

Mass at the Austin Hospital at 9.30 am on the third Sunday of the month as of January 2015.

(On Christmas Day in December.)

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

Mon to Sat: 9.15 am

RECONCILIATION

Saturdays: 9.45 am & 5.30 pm.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

Wednesday: 7.30 pm – 9.00 pm

Thursday: 9.45 am – 11.00 am

Friday: 8.00 am – 9.00 am

BAPTISMS: On Sundays at 11:45am, by appointment.

Baptism Information Evening:

Last Thursday of each month at 7:30pm in the parish house, except the months of December and January.

WEDDINGS

By appointment

Articles for the next Echo most welcome. Please email to the parish secretary or hand in at the parish office.

ECHO - Magazine of St John's Catholic Parish Heidelberg - October 2015

After Care – Stacey – 9457 6573

Altar Servers – Fr Mario – 9457 1066

Altar Society – Pauline Griffiths – 94597093

Children's Liturgy of the Word – Sr Loreto 9457 1066

Choir & Music – Sr Loreto – 9457 1066

Cycling Group – Peter Symes – 9458 2332

Echo Magazine – Michelle Penson – 9457 2351

Finance Committee – Des O'Brien (Chair) – 9457 1066

Hall Hire – Fran Gasior 0417 972 317

Heidelcare (Ecumenical) –

Rosemary Vecchies – 9459 0729

Legion of Mary – Tues 7.30 pm. New members welcome.

Liturgy Committee – Ronnie Maloney – 9459 1798

Parish After School Religion classes –

Sr Loreto 9457 1066

Parish Council - Michelle Penson - 9457 2351

Playgroup – Vanessa Javier – 0418 382 915

Readers' Roster – Mary Peeris – 9457 1066

St Vincent de Paul – Sally Tramontana – 0419004405

School Education Board –

Justin Lachal – 9459 5527

School Maintenance Committee –

Nick Marinelli – 9459 2963

Sunday Counters – Des O'Brien – 9499 9056

Sunday Morning Coffee – Barbara Dabal – 9459 3990

Tennis Club – Des O'Brien – 9499 9056

Thanksgiving Committee – Xavier Csar – 9455 1706