

ECHO



The magazine of ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH HEIDELBERG

DECEMBER 2015



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Happy Christmas!

A few days ago, on Tuesday 8th December, feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, Pope Francis inaugurated the jubilee Holy Year of Mercy. A jubilee Holy Year is an invitation to engage once again in a deep relationship with God.

The pope wants to remind that God is full of mercy; he is forever ready to engage with us and welcome us back. The great image of the father in the parable of the prodigal son, waiting to welcome back his younger son after he had squandered all his inheritance, and the figure of the good shepherd who goes out of his way to look for just one sheep that is lost.

God's great mercy and love led him to create us in his own image and likeness and to provide the universe for us to inhabit. God wants us to encounter him so as to enjoy his great love. He does this by constantly revealing himself to us. Creation itself is an image of God: as we look and meditate upon the greatness of creation, we can see aspects of God. In the Old Testament God continued to reveal himself through his chosen people by sending them innumerable prophets and messengers.

God's revelation of himself reached its fullness when he sent his only Son, his Word, to be born among us as a human person. God first hid himself for us to discover him in creation, then he hid himself in the message of the prophets, finally he hid himself in the form of a small human child for us to discover him and engage with him.

Christmas is the moment when God's mercy shines out: Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem is the ultimate sign of God's great love and mercy for each one of us. God invites us to listen and participate in his mercy and love. How do I accept this invitation in my daily life as a Christian? How do I show God's mercy to those around me?

Christmas Blessings

Fr Mario



Logo for the Jubilee Holy Year of Mercy



Logo for the celebration of the parish 165th anniversary, prepared by Sarah Riitano.

165th Anniversary

2016 is the 165th Anniversary of St Johns Heidelberg. We really URGENTLY need **your help** to put together a commemorative journal, particularly the years from early 80's onwards as that is when the History **St Johns on the Hill** was completed by Eileen Vaughan. If you can help provide any photos or memorabilia. Please contact Michelle 0499891101 or pmpenson@hotmail.com. Many thanks. All photos will be returned to their owners.

ST JOHN CATHOLIC TENNIS CLUB

Our parish tennis club has just completed its spring season of tennis. Membership of the club consists of members of our parish, and neighbouring parishes and other suburbs, including from St John's Primary School and other schools within the deanery.

Over the years Catholic tennis clubs from the parishes of Mary Immaculate, Ivanhoe and St Bernadette's, West Ivanhoe have folded due to insufficient numbers making use of parish facilities.

In what has been a consolidation of local parish tennis clubs St John's has been the beneficiary, in that members of those clubs have been and are members of our parish tennis club.

In addition to 30 plus members enjoying social tennis at various times during the week including Friday mornings and Sundays, the club has in excess of 90 boys and girls competing in Friday night and Saturday morning competitions and 60 or more members representing the club in night tennis competitions.

The club caters for all levels from beginners to those competing at the top level in local district competitions.

We are extremely proud of our section 1 girls who for the second season running were premiers and of our young boys' and girls' teams.

People interested in further information about the club are asked to contact the secretary Des O'Brien 0438 796 986.

ST JOHN'S FETE - SATURDAY 5TH MARCH 2016

Next year a fete will be celebrated by St John's Parish School. Please put this date in your diaries A day for the whole family to celebrate and for the parish to come together!

ST JOHN'S PARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE

In accordance with Church requirements our parish has a Finance Committee appointed by Father Mario to assist him with financial matters.

The committee which meets quarterly comprises of Father Mario, Des O'Brien as chairperson, Peter Penson, Teresa Lincoln, Bernadette Nzenza, and the recently appointed Giuseppe Amoroso. The parish accountant, Brendan Harty, is an advisor to the committee. John McGrath, a representative of the parish council is also a member of the Committee.

The Finance Committee works closely with the Parish Council.

FR LONGINUS' FAREWELL MORNING TEA

November saw many parishioners attend morning tea in the hall to say thank you to Fr Longinus and wish him farewell as he takes up his position as Parish Priest of Yea and Alexandria.

On behalf of the parish Michelle Penson presented Fr Longinus with a cheque and a print of our St John's rose window to remember his days at Heidelberg.

We will miss his smile, his homilies and his singing as well as the happiness he exuded and shared in his time with us.

