

ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PLAYGROUP

Looking to meet other families from the parish & school with similar preschool aged (0-5yrs) children St John's Catholic Playgroup (SJC Playgroup) is a very casually run playgroup that has an inclusive approach, with the aim of having fun and is available to the St John's Catholic Parish and Primary School Community.

This year saw more grandparents and extend family members participate in playgroup and the children also enjoyed Fr Mario popping in for a "High Five" during various sessions throughout the year. We have 10 – 14 families participating each week.

Anybody interested to register and join our friendly parish playgroup in 2016 is welcome to contact Vanessa Javier or Bernadette Inman via email sjcplaygroup@gmail.com or <https://www.facebook.com/stjohnscatholicplaygroup>

When: Monday mornings from 9:15am to 11:00am, during school terms (commencing Term 1, 2016)

Where: St John's Parish Hall

Costs: Fee 1 - Playgroup Victoria Membership: \$40.00 per family (compulsory insurance)

PLUS... Fee 2 - SJC Parish Playgroup: \$40.00 annual



CHURCH COUNTERS

Parishioners will notice each week in the Church newsletter the naming of parishioners who act as counters of the weekly collection. Counting usually occurs after the 8:30am Mass each Sunday, although some teams make their own arrangements to suit their particular needs.

Counters work in groups and counting takes around one hour. Counters are on a roster and are required once every six weeks.

We are interested in new members to assist with the counting, contact Des O'Brien on 0438 796 986 for more information and to join a team.

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

St John's faith community is fueled by commitment, volunteers and resources in equal measure. The material needs of the community, its buildings, facilities and operational costs need to be met so that the good work of our fathers, parishioners and volunteers can continue. A predictable income stream is a precondition for this work to continue. And so for the first time since 2010 the parish council resolved to conduct a thanksgiving renewal campaign in 2015.

The campaign commenced with planning in July and ran through August. As is always the case, many hands made light work with a committed team of leaders including Adrian Daly, Peter Byrne, Marco DiCesare, Christopher Ratnayake, Vincent Chung, Brendan Harty and Marguerite Ryan who took responsibility to talk at Masses throughout August. We were also greatly assisted by our guest speaker Father Jude Pirotta from St James the Apostle in Hoppers Crossing.

Throughout the campaign we were ably supported by Tony Biviano from the Catholic Development Office. In the final stretch of the campaign the leadership team were joined by Giuseppe Amoroso, Charito Cosio, Barbara Dabal, Stanley Devasia, Kate Garrone, Margaret Hansen, Ronnie Maloney, Greg Millard and Sally Tramontana who assisted in following up with parishioners.

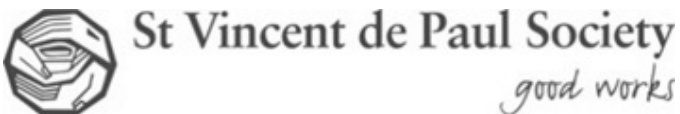
The campaign resulted in an increase of weekly pledges from \$3,000 to \$4,200, representing a 42% improvement. Pleasingly, 54 of the 290 givers were new thanksgiving contributors. In addition, 90 parishioners filled out a time and talent sheet. The success of the campaign was due to the efforts of so many parishioners all of which I wish to thank for their commitment, time and talent.

Xavier Csar
Chair, Stewardship Campaign

I would also like to add my special note of thanks for the generosity of all volunteers who took part in the stewardship campaign and also to your generous support, as we look forward to upgrading our material assets in the coming months and years. Thank you.

Fr Mario

St Vincent De Paul Helpers with Hampers



This Christmas the St Vincent de Paul Society will provide people in Victoria with financial assistance, clothing, utilities, food hampers and gifts for children. During the last six months, the Heidelberg conference has provided over \$14,000 worth of assistance to 92 families (including 74 children), across the Heidelberg/West Heidelberg area.

With the successful completion of our Christmas appeal this year, we would like to thank the parishioners of St John's, the students, parents and staff at St John's Primary School, the Austin Hospital (intensive care unit) and Active Socks, who have all overwhelmed us with their generosity. We would also like to thank the Rosanna scouts and some parents who helped with wrapping gifts and toys, and packing hampers - future Vincentians!!

It is only through the continuing generosity of the parish and community, that we are able to provide assistance to those most in need, and restore hope to many people who are finding it difficult to celebrate during this time.

ST JOHN'S TWILIGHT PICNIC

November 2015

(photos on opposite page)

It may have been a little wet to start with but that did not dampen the spirits of those who attended and many turned out with umbrellas and coats to keep the fine rain at bay and to have a fun filled night.

The jumping castle was well used as was the tug of war rope which saw the tugging sides enjoy changing teams and pulling away across the oval.

Many had made cakes for sale and a team of ladies sold these. Some OLMC students assisted and ran the snow cone stall which was very popular. OLMC lent us their canvas stalls which were a great help. Rodney Van Orshot ran the sausage sizzle and we congratulate Maureen Hegarty and a team of willing helpers who organised a lovely relaxed social evening.

This fun and fund raising activity raised a total of \$500 which will be added to the monthly Gold Coin collections to be forwarded to Aid to the Church in Asia office, where we, as a parish, have nominated the Church in Syria as our beneficiary.