



# The Parish of Saint Anthony Glen Huntly

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## Homily at Mass 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent – 1 March 2020

### 1. Lent

Jesus' temptations – his struggle just like ours – Lent has arrived, let's grasp it with both hands!

Ash Wednesday prayer: "Christian warfare"

St Augustine: Christ won his battle with Satan – he conquered sin – he won the war. Encouragement.

We can live each day of Lent with a smile on our face.

### 2. Coronavirus – Archbishop Comensoli

- Holy Communion: Host only. Tongue/hands
- "The Body of Christ" – "Amen"
- Consume host straight away
- Fast: 1 hour without food/drink (water/medicines excepted)

### 3. Parish Stewardship Midway Review

18 months ago we had a Parish Stewardship Program with a commitment to share all parish financial information and establish a Parish Finance Committee. Today's Finance Report 2019 is the second we have published, the first for 2018 was published and distributed last March. Each month the parish bulletin provides a list of maintenance needs, along with income from hire of the Glen and St Anthony's Hall. Each week the Bulletin provides a report on Stewardship and special collections. Our Parish Finance Committee meets each quarter to review Stewardship and monitor Parish expenditure.

Midway Review enables us to look back on last 18 months. First of all, to acknowledge with heartfelt thanks all who support Parish Stewardship and all who take an active part in parish life, all of us who support and encourage one another as we meet for Mass Sunday by Sunday. We thank all who animate our Sunday worship, music ministry, readers, ministers of Holy Communion, collectors, those who prepare the flowers and maintain and care for the sacred vessels, linen, clean the church.

When we think of Stewardship what other words come to mind?

- Belonging
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Openness
- Honesty
- Recognition
- Ownership
- Responsibility for the mission of the Church and Parish life today and for tomorrow.

We have a legacy of parish buildings, a gift from our forebears. Much of our parish income goes to maintaining these buildings, keep them in good repair, addressing maintenance needs as they arise. This is helped by income from rental and hire.

Archbishop Comensoli has highlighted 4 areas that the Church in Melbourne must keep front and centre:

- Sustaining and building up local communities
- Promoting and supporting marriage and family life
- Befriending youth and young adults
- Championing the poor and broken

These 4 aims fall under one heading “Mission”. Pope Paul VI famously said “the Church exists for mission”: Jesus told the 12 apostles: “Go out ... preach, teach, baptise”. This is the Church’s work in every era, in every place.

Maintaining facilities and repairing our buildings is one thing – looking outside ourselves, being Christ here in Glen Huntly and district is another. It’s for this goal, this mission that the Church is planted here in this suburb. It’s for this reason we have a church building, a school, a presbytery, a parish house, a hall and all the rest. One thing that strikes me – and it might be something you’ve thought about too – is that we are blessed with buildings, but there are certain buildings that have little use, at least for our parish. We should be using them for adult faith formation, parish social events and activities that draw others in – eg families, young adults, ...

Today’s parish bulletin offers an outline of Parish life and activities and achievements over the last 18 months to 2 years.

At this midway point of Parish Stewardship I want to invite all of us to affirm our pledge to St Anthony’s Parish. I also open my arms to those who may be new to St Anthony’s, our young parishioners who perhaps are in the early days of their working life, all 220 who completed a Census Card over the last 2 weekends.

As the Pledge Cards are distributed, can we look together at Pope Francis words about parish life?

*The parish is the presence of the Church in a given territory, an environment for hearing God’s word, for growth in the Christian life, for dialogue, proclamation, charitable outreach, worship and celebration.*

*In all its activities the parish encourages and trains its members to be evangelizers.*

*It is a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a centre of constant missionary outreach.*

*Evangelii Gaudium (2013) n28*