



ST PATRICK'S PARISH  
MORTLAKE



## Christmas Greetings from Fr John

William Shakespeare wrote these words in verse 1 of Hamlet:

"Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes  
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,  
The bird of dawning singeth all night long:  
And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad;  
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,  
No fairy takes, nor witch has power to charm,  
So Hallow'd and so gracious is the time"

Our 2018 year here at St Patrick's Parish gradually draws to a close and, as Shakespeare wrote, Christmas spreads a veil of goodness over us all. It is time to give thanks for the year that has gone by and to praise God for the blessings that have been lavished upon us.

At Christmas we recall the birth of the Christ child in Palestine approximately 2,018 years ago. The story as told to us by St Matthew and St Luke, is about a family gathering in a strange place to experience the birth of a special child and to celebrate that birth with friends and strangers. Jesus is that special child and we are the friends and strangers who celebrate his birth.

I hope and pray that every person who worships at St Patrick's parish this Christmas has an experience of new life and the opportunity to celebrate life with family, friends and strangers.

Mons. John Usher PP

## Parish Newsletter Summer 2018

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## Christmas Mass times....

### Please join us to celebrate Christmas 2018

#### Monday 24<sup>th</sup> December

6.00pm Vigil

(Children's Christmas Mass)

8.00pm (Vigil Mass)

Midnight Mass

#### Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> December

Christmas Day Masses

9.00am and 10.30am



### Acknowledgement of Country

St Patrick's Catholic Parish, Mortlake acknowledges the Wangal clan, one of 29 tribes of the Eora nation and the traditional custodians of this land.

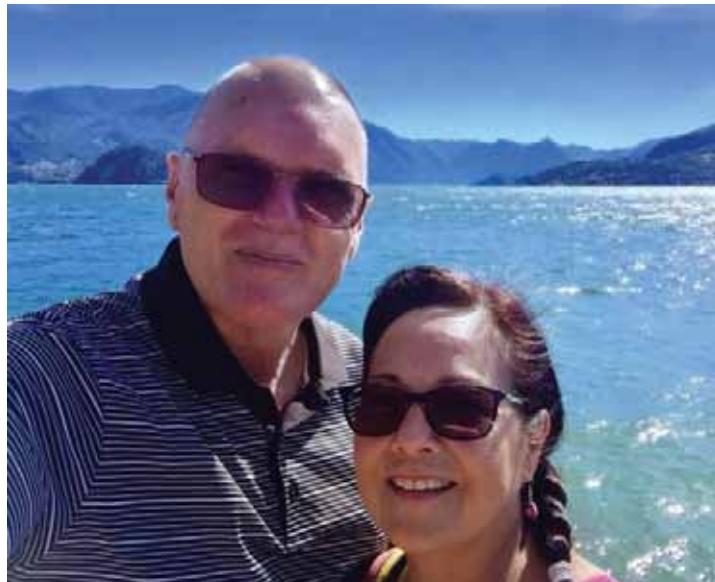
St Patrick's Catholic Parish, Mortlake pays respect to elders past and present and extends this respect to all Aboriginal people living in or visiting the Parish.



## Ruella and Barry Petersen

Our Parish sadly farewells two very involved former parishioners, Ruella and Barry Petersen who have been parishioners at St Pat's since 2004 and have recently moved to Mudgee.

The Petersens were sad to leave the community of St Pat's, but it was time for them to follow their hearts and live out their next adventure. Packing up their busy lives in Mortlake, they set out searching for the perfect change. They fell in love with the Mudgee region and purchased a property near Mudgee, with a small accommodation business, which they have renamed Barella Cabins. The cabins have magnificent views and sound wonderful. A perfect retreat for busy parishioners in need of R and R?



## Ruella and Barry answered some questions for us:

You are busy parents and grandparents...

Yes we are actively involved with our children and our grandchildren, attending their school based activities and events. Also babysitting when needed.

We have 4 married sons and 11 grandchildren — 9 boys and 2 girls — ranging from 12 years old to 1 year old. We are close to our boys and their families. In fact one reason for our tree change was to give our grandchildren a new flavour of experiences with having country grandparents, a role we are thoroughly enjoying.

So, even though we now live on a property just out of the Mudgee Township, we are still in regular contact with our family.

## Ruella's involvement in our Parish

I began my journey at St Pat's as a parishioner in 2004. I became involved in the Music Ministry, first in a guitar and singing group then the choir, which I continued until I was trained as a senior server in 2017. I was invited onto the Pastoral Parish Council in 2006 to coordinate the Liturgy Ministry. Then I moved onto coordinating the Youth Ministry in 2007, which encompassed WYD 2008 in Sydney. This was followed by WYD 2011 in Madrid for the teenagers and young adults of our Parish. I was part of the PPC in Youth Ministry till 2018. I was also involved in the Archdiocesan initiatives of the Pastoral Parish Plan, Parish 2020 and the census.

It has been learning and empowering experience to be involved in the Church Ministry. I was blessed to have had the opportunity to have worked with dedicated faith filled members of the PPC, the young people and leaders in our Parish and the supportive community of St Pat's under the guidance of our wonderful Parish Priest, Mons John.

## Barry's involvement in our Parish

I initially supported Ruella with her Ministry commitments including WYD 2008 in Sydney and later chaperoning a number of our pilgrims to Madrid for WYD 2011. When Parish 2020 was undertaken I again assisted Ruella with her instrumental involvement. From that experience I saw a need for the Communication ministry and knew I could assist with my working career skill sets. Although no longer living in the St Pat's Parish I remain committed to Mons John to maintaining the Parish website, albeit remotely.

Barry has been a key member of the Communications Ministry, setting up the new parish website and monitoring it, as well as instructing the group, for which we are extremely grateful.

Barry and Ruella have been very busy people, both in terms of their Parish commitment and supporting their family. They have been very resourceful, selfless people whose contributions to our parish have been so important and certainly invaluable.

We would like to have the opportunity to acknowledge their contributions, and wish them every blessing in the next stage of their lives' journey.

# Pastoral Care Ministry



We are very fortunate at St Patrick's to have a very committed Pastoral Care Ministry which is co-ordinated by the very gracious Betty Flynn. Betty is a very familiar face at our celebrations and with the support of her committee, Betty ensures that these celebrations are indeed special. From flowers for Mother's Day, chocolates for Father's Day and after mass refreshments the Pastoral Care Ministry makes everyone feel WELCOME.

Their duties are very extensive and include taking communion to the sick, visiting sick and bereaved Parishioners, providing transport to mass and offering assistance with shopping for our elderly Parishioners.

They also distribute the parish bulletins and welcome us to mass each Sunday. They meet three or four times a year and play an enormous part in our Parish Community. If anyone of our parishioners feels they could help Betty and her team they would be made very welcome. Please contact Betty via the Parish office.

## 2019 Sacramental Program Dates

First Reconciliation - Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April - 7:00pm

First Holy Communion - Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> June - 10:30am

Confirmation - Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September - 7:30pm

All services will be preceded with four instruction sessions on consecutive Mondays in the parish hall between 4:15 & 5:15pm. Notices for the Sacraments will be issued to families of students at Mortlake Primary and St Patrick's Primary Schools.

# What's Been Happening...

- † A huge thank you to the Parish and St Patrick's School following the St Vincent De Paul Drought Appeal and Badges for Bales run over the weekend of 18-19 August. Over \$8,000 was raised for the farmers with the appeal which was a wonderful cooperative effort between the Parish and the School.
- † In September a group of 50 Parishioners enjoyed a wonderful bus trip to the Southern Highlands, stopping off at Mittagong for morning tea on the way to Corbett Gardens, Bowral to view the magnificent tulips.
- † The Sacrament of Confirmation was held on Friday evening 14th September followed by a supper in our Parish Hall. Congratulations to all of the 26 young parishioners who were confirmed by Bishop Terry Brady.
- † Catholic Care Presentations. We have had two presentations recently to provide information and contacts for our elderly parishioners who are needing a little extra help at home with their everyday needs. Both were very well received by our Parish community.
- † Our Faith Education events included a Parish Retreat, an Introduction to Prayer, a talk by Cath Kennedy, and a series of lectures by David Patterson on the bible.
- † There were also movie nights on the life of Padre Pio and St Vincent de Paul and St Patrick, our patron.
- † Christmas lunch at Carmen's Restaurant Barnwell Park Golf Club.
- † Monsignor John's invitation to ALL parishioners (young and more senior) to join him for some Christmas hospitality in the presbytery.
- † St Vincent de Paul in conjunction with St Patrick's School collection drive for Christmas hampers for the underprivileged families in the parish. Volunteers from the Parish and the School will soon be packing the hampers ready for distribution.
- † Catholic Care Christmas Giving Tree in the Narthex December 2018.
- † World Youth Day 2019 – Panama, January 2019. Maggie Mattson is a Religious Education coordinator for Sydney Catholic schools and has been a part of our parish since 2010. She is looking forward to attending World Youth Day in Panama 2019. Maggie is excited about her encounter with Pope Francis and hopes to bring many of her experiences back to share with the parish when she returns.

And all of this and more since our last newsletter. Spiritual, Pastoral, Social and Giving: we are a generous and hospitable Parish.

Our thanks are extended to the Parish Secretary, Brenda, for her always ready and generous assistance and to the staff at St Patricks School for their assistance with the printing.



As we start the very last term for the year, we can reflect and say that it has been a very special year at school. Moving into our beautiful building and celebrating with the official Blessing and Opening of the school were certainly highlights for the year. Father John has been at all our liturgies, celebrating our Mums, Dads, Grandparents, St Patrick and Mary of the Cross MacKillop, making the Word very relevant to our young students. They in turn have sung their hearts out each time. They love learning about God.

There have been many exciting events over the year, excursions and incursions, sports days, theatre and a few walking excursions to our local parks. The children have enjoyed a range of outside programs from drama to gymnastics, netball and AFL and ending with swimming in December. Within the school our older classes have enjoyed rotations on music, art and coding as well.

We look forward to welcoming our new Kindergarten children in late November as they come into school for their Orientation. Many of these children are joining in playgroup as well, so they are Old hands at this school business by the time it all starts.

Finally the staff have been amazing, hardworking and always ready to give anything a go....even singing Quando Quando Quando!!!! I am a very lucky Principal.

Amanda Westgate  
Principal,  
St Patrick's School Mortlake

The Communication Ministry would like to wish Monsignor John and all parishioners a very happy and holy Christmas



On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2018, the St Pat's Youth Ministry joined the Sunday morning family Mass to create a beautiful Father's Day celebration. The children really stepped up to take on various roles throughout the Mass, such as altar servers, readers, offertory collectors and presenters of the gifts. Especially in the case of the readers, I was taken aback by the effort they put into practising their parts, as it showed the love they had for their fathers/carers. The Mass was therefore a beautiful means by which the children could show their gratitude and celebrate their fathers on this special day. This brought an atmosphere of celebration and unity into the Church, making the day even more special. Thank you to all who took part in the Mass! To our youth in particular, the Mass was truly a success because of your hard work, so thank you for your contribution! As an additional note, we are currently in the process of developing the run list for the Children's Christmas Mass and Choir, so if you would like to take part please let me know via my email '[erin.white05@gmail.com](mailto:erin.white05@gmail.com)'.

There have been several well received offerings to parishioners over the past few months. These include in August a documentary shown in the parish hall on St Patrick, a presentation in September by Cathy Kennedy on 'What is God's Purpose for Me'. Also in September we celebrated a Family Mass for Father's Day and in October David Patterson presented three sessions on "Introduction to the Bible – A Privileged Place of Encounter" – (please see separate report hereunder). We have several upcoming events planned including our annual Mortlake Primary School Mass in December as well as a couple of film presentations to be offered. We are also planning to have a second presentation from David Patterson on 'The Creed'. The success of these presentations depends on parishioner attendance and we encourage you to come along to support these initiatives.

## Introduction to the Bible – A Privileged Place of Encounter



An outstanding three session presentation was made by David Patterson in October which was very well received by the parishioners who attended. The sessions focussed on a fascinating look at the Bible including the historical development of the Bible including basic biblical terms, the relationship between the Old and New testaments, the fundamentalist or contextual

understanding of scripture, the difference between Catholic and Protestant Bibles and making sense of difficult Bible passages. David is a former parishioner of St Patrick's Mortlake being involved in our St Vincent De Paul Ministry and was more recently the Faith Education Officer for Broken Bay Diocese. He regularly presents & lectures at various venues including universities and we were fortunate to have David make this presentation to our parish. He has kindly agreed to provide a follow up session on a related topic for which we will give our parishioners plenty of notice.

## CatholicCare Home Care Services



**Do you know any seniors in our community who could use a little help at home?**

CatholicCare home care services can help seniors to enjoy living independently in their own homes with comfort and confidence.

From occasional or short-term services to round-the-clock options, we can help tailor the services to meet individual needs, all provided by our professional locally-based care workers.

Whether care is in the form of a Government Package or privately funded, we have a range of services that we can tailor to help seniors live more independently at home:

- Help at home such as housekeeping, assistance with meal preparation and shopping
- Personal care
- Assistance with medications
- Social support such as accompanied visits, outings or company at home
- Dementia care
- Respite for carers to take a break from their caring responsibilities
- Transport
- Specialised nursing care

*Call CCareline to find out more.*

**CCareline 131819**  
[CatholicCare.org](http://CatholicCare.org)



St Patrick's Mortlake is wholly committed to ensuring the safety, well-being and dignity of all children, young people and vulnerable adults, and acknowledges its important legal, moral and spiritual responsibility to create a safe and nurturing environment.

The Parish has a framework in place to ensure we uphold the teachings and values of the Catholic Church and ensure the prevention of abuse and harm in our community.

There are three Parish Safeguarding Support Officers (PSSOs) at St Patrick's Mortlake — Brenda Johnson in the Parish Office, Marie Piccin and Cathy Nelson-Smith (all can be contacted via the Parish Office 9743 1017). They are the first point of contact for any concerns, questions or issues.

All volunteers will need to read, understand and sign 'The Code of Conduct for Working with Children' which has been published by the Archdiocese of Sydney and will be asked to apply for a Working with Children Check. At different times throughout the year induction courses for all volunteers are held in the Parish Hall which covers Working with Children training, and regular training updates will be provided.

Risk Assessment and Control plans will be developed for Parish events to consider risks, impacts and mitigation actions to make activities as safe as possible and to build an ongoing knowledge base that will further increase the safety of events.

If you require further information, please feel free to access more material in the Church Narthex, on the Parish Website and on the Sydney Archdiocese website.

Congratulations on the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of St Pat's Communication Ministry. Christmas 2018

We went live with the updated St Patrick's Mortlake website on November 29, 2017. Find us at:  
<https://www.stpatsmortlake.org.au/>

Since then we have published

- 4 quarterly newsletters
- 295 parish news posts
- 163 parish events
- 56 separate pages of information
- a dynamic eBulletin with daily readings,
- 70 pdf bulletins and
- over 200 images throughout the website.

In the 11 months to November 1, we have had 21,391 page views from 6,031 unique visitors averaging 63 page views per day and about 3 page views per visit.

The most popular information sought is mass times, then parish news. Our most visited month was March (Easter in 2018) with 15% of all year-to-date pageviews coming from 20% of our ytd unique visitors. By the way, 57% of our visitors use a mobile device to visit our website.

All said and done it has been a fun year! Busy, certainly. St Pat's is very grateful for the contribution made by Barry Petersen (now remotely) to creating and maintaining our website. Barry's expertise and enthusiasm as well as the mentoring of others on the team is very much appreciated.

Thank you, Barry.

## Get social with us....



ST PATRICK'S PARISH  
MORTLAKE

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