



ST PATRICK'S PARISH
MORTLAKE



Parish Newsletter Winter 2020

Telephone: (02) 97431017
Email: parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au
www.stpatsmortlake.org.au

From Fr Tom

TO GROW, OUT OF THE ASHES

Dear St Pat's parishioners.

Well, what a challenging 2020 we have had to date!! Over this time I have been keeping you all in my prayers and know that you are a vital part of the ever-growing St Pat's community. I pray that there be peace within yourselves, and your families at this time.

I have recently been down the south coast and took some time to walk through the ravaged townships of Mogo and Cobargo, so badly hit by the bushfires. It was indeed a solemn and, even what I would call, a 'sacred' experience. As solemn as any Sunday liturgical procession. The devastation of seeing debris from burned out homes and businesses was raw. It's real. It hurts and moves you. People are still in shock and numb with uncertainty of where life will now take them. Life's unpredicted events, be they bushfires, pandemics, death of loved ones, losing my job and financial tensions, relationship breakdowns, etc, are all real and raw. There's no 'black and white' answer on how to move on — but move on we must. The message of Jesus Christ is that in the midst of this uncertainty and destruction, there is always Hope.

The attached photo is of a burnt out charred gumtree I came across. Burnt black, but now in the early stages of recovery, it has an almost 'Napisan White' core in its stripped back trunk. It is an image of hope. Yes, the tree is in trauma from the force of the effects of the bushfire, yet there is a resilience. The old established exterior bark is gone. There is now the possibility to move on — to grow into something fresh, green, new and vibrant, whilst maintaining the core of the old tree.

continued page 2

Mass information and booking details..

Saturday Vigil: 6pm
Sunday Mass: 9am, 10:30am & 6pm
Limit of 50 people

Weekday Services:
Mass: 8am Tuesday - Friday

Communion Services:
8am Monday
9am Saturday

Reconciliation: 5.30pm Saturday

New automated booking system for Sunday Masses. Click link to make bookings, or call parish secretary on Tuesday and Fridays during office hours to register for a Mass. Telephone bookings must be received by 2pm Friday.
<https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?embed&eid=641739>

Please note that all parishioners are encouraged to wear face masks during mass

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.



This is the challenge for each one of us daily. To see potential to turn away from old self-centred manners of living, and to begin afresh. This is the challenge in my relationships first and foremost. My relationship with my wife, family, friends and importantly, my relationship with the stranger. My relationship with my God. Tragedies and unprecedented events yes, are a terrible shock, but yes, also provide me with an opportunity to grow in some strange way, which may be hidden from my eyes. To maybe reignite that love in my life that surrounds me, that maybe I have taken for granted. This is a challenge for we as individuals, we as a community, we as a Church. Each one of us has the opportunity to see and engage with the brilliantly white gumtree trunk in our lives. This is the hope we must focus on when we go through unprecedented and unpredictable times and events. God Bless You and Go Gently.

Fr. Tom

Meditation at St Pat's

Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for pearls, when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

Matthew 3: 4-5

The Call of Jesus: "Jesus bent down and started to write with his finger". This moment in St John's Gospel occurs after a crowd that had been about to stone a woman to death dispersed and the woman is left alone with Jesus. Like other great teachers of the Spirit in all traditions, Jesus lived what he taught and taught by example of his own behaviour... time and time again we see him teaching by silence. And again there were times when in the face of contradiction and hostility, he kept a pure and truthful silence.

Compassionate presence, loving attention and truthful silence. These are the essential elements of the

way we follow Jesus as our teacher and friend.

Meditation is a universal practice that leads beyond words, images and thoughts into the faith-filled and presence-filled emptiness we call the presence of God.

What is particularly Christian about it is the awareness that it takes us in faith, into the prayer of Jesus himself.

And the fruits of the spirit appear - love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness and self control, so also does the grace of recognising Jesus in ourselves and in one another.

Father Lawrence Freeman OSB, A Pearl of Great Price.

You are all welcome to join the Meditation Group every Wednesday 11am-12pm, in the Lady Chapel, St Patrick's Church when restrictions are lifted.

Damian King



Around the Parish

The presence of the Sisters of Mercy at St Pat's. In 2017, two Sisters of Mercy, Sister Barbara Bolster and Sister Jan Holahan moved to Mortlake and joined our parish community at St Pat's.

They were originally from the Grafton Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. In 2011, 15 congregations of Sisters of Mercy around Australia and in Papua New Guinea joined to form a new congregation – The Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

This was a time of change for the many regional congregations of the Sisters of Mercy of which Grafton was one, in deciding to join the Institute.

Sister Barbara was on the first leadership team of the new Institute – this necessitated her moving to live in Sydney where the Leadership team was based at Stanmore.

Since joining our parish as parishioners, Sisters Barbara and Jan have been actively involved in the Pastoral Care ministry, and Barbara is also part of the Liturgy and Communication Ministries.

Sister Barbara's story

Sister Barbara has been a Sister of Mercy for 54 years, serving in the Grafton and North Coast areas of NSW working in various ministries, including teaching and as the Congregational Leader at Grafton for 20 years.

However, the highlight of her life as a religious has been working with disturbed children and young people who were no longer able to live at home or in foster care. This was in Grafton where she also worked with Sister Jan. The 108 year old institution, St Joseph's Cowper still functions as both a residential facility, a foster care service and providing support to families, children and young people. It is now under the auspices of MacKillop Family Services.

Although this was challenging work it was a very rewarding one when children and young people were able to respond to care and change their lives.

Sister Jan's story

Sister Jan has been a Sister of Mercy for 50 years, and will celebrate her Golden Anniversary later this year. She entered the convent after teaching for a year in Grafton and observed how the Sisters there, showed such a genuine love and care for the people they were serving. This same sense of genuine caring and love for others has been experienced here at St. Pat's. Jan's teaching ministry lasted for 32 years which included 15 years being a carer for disadvantaged children in residential care at St. Joseph's Cowper. As with Sister Barbara this has been a most important part of her life and she feels privileged to have been able to care for those young people and to try to restore them to



their families. From this experience Jan was given the opportunity to undergo further study in U.K. and USA to become a Therapist, which enabled her to expand her work on the north coast, with young people and their families.

Jan retired from her Practice and Ministry, in 2017 after 55 years working with children.

A New Ministry: St Pat's. As new parishioners at St Pat's the Sisters were immediately impressed by the Parish where parishioners are empowered to be involved and caring under the encouraging leadership, firstly by Monsignor John and now Father Tom. It has been so impressive to observe people taking up their rightful roles in the Parish community.

The Sisters believe that our future at St. Pat's is filled with hope as we are a generous supportive community composed of people of all ages, including teenagers who attend mass regularly. This was evident at our Easter liturgies last year where so many were involved.

The parishioners of St Pat's have been empowered to use their gifts and to uncover their hidden potential in their love and generosity to others. This was shown in the recent Bushfire and Drought appeals. It was love in action!

We at St Pat's are so fortunate that the two of you settled in Mortlake, such a long way from Grafton. Thank you Sister Barbara and Sister Jan.

During these Covid times many parishioners have died and as a parish we have not been able to celebrate their lives. We acknowledge them here and offer our prayers and love to their families.



Gerald Lopez
Born: 26/3/1945
Died: 18/2/2020



George Cepak
Born: 24/8/1944
Died: 19/3/2020



John Walker
Born: 30/7/1930
Died: 20/3/2020



Samira Hanna
Born: 25/8/1950
Died: 5/4/2020



Fr Peter Morrisey
Born: 14/8/1928
Died: 28 /4/2020



Maddalena Ciacciarelli
Born: 25/11/1933
Died: 7/5/2020



Maria Segui
Born: 17/1/1938
Died: 7/5/2020





Lynette Monaro
Born: 9/10/1971
Died: 12/5/2020



William "Bill" Young
Born: 18/5/1941
Died: 3/6/2020



Josephine Grech
Born: 10/10/32
Died: 17/6/202



Carrie Gatt
Born: 18/5/1935
Died: 8/6/2020



Peter Burnicle
Born: 3/5/44
Died: 20/7/2020

Recently Deceased

- Barry Peterson
- Alf Sidlauskas
- Michele Vezza
- Augusta Ramirez
- Noeleen Smith
- Baby Pasquale Romeo
- Michael Gay
- Pamela Ryan



Our oldest parishioner, Jose Teran aged 102, passed away on 24 June 2020.

His coffin was covered in the Ecuadorian flag and topped with a wreath of Australian native flowers to honour his old country and his new. He and Eva migrated to Australia in 1972 with their 4 youngest children, the 3 eldest having arrived in Australia in the late 1960s. A skilful carpenter and cabinet maker, he worked for NSW Rail but he also created a font base and altar pieces for Our Lady of the Assumption in Homebush as well as furniture treasured by family members. A special gift after his 100th birthday was a trip back to Ecuador to visit remaining siblings. He received a papal blessing on his 100th birthday.



ur Parish In the Time of the Pandemic, 2020

A hundred years ago, parishioners of St Pat's endured a pandemic, the so called Spanish flu. Now in 2020, we are in the midst of another pandemic, the so called COVID-19, nothing like this having been experienced in our lifetimes.

This year began in an exciting way for our parish. After the terrible bush fires and drought of the summer months 2019-2020 we were going to celebrate our 125 anniversary since our founding. Lots of plans were made and we did get to celebrate St Patrick's feast day on 15 March with a parish morning tea, but then there came the lockdown. Our last Sunday mass, the week before Palm Sunday was an open air mass, with the congregation spread out exercising social distances of 1.5 metres apart. The last 'hymn' this weekend was "What a Wonderful World", sung with optimism that we would all get through the coming weeks. Our prayer was that Australia would be able to 'flatten the curve' and the casualty rate would be lessened.

However before this could happen, one of the measures adopted by our government was to close the churches. This was two weeks before Easter, the most important season of our church year. During this time our church Narthex, with its big plate glass windows, overlooking Gale Street has been decorated to suit the passing special feasts: Palm Sunday, Good Friday, The Resurrection, and Mother's Day with its beautiful rosary display and flowers. There was also a display for Anzac Day. For me, walking or driving past, has been so reassuring. St Pat's was still there, patiently awaiting our return, when we could celebrate Mass again as a community.

Thankfully, we became aware through our connections to our church family that St Pat's would still be producing a weekly Bulletin, that there would be phone buddies and help for those in need. An email link was quickly set up to send parishioners the weekly Bulletin. This soon grew from 100 addresses to over 250 and is still growing. We were also aware that Dr Damian Gleeson was continuing with the history of our parish, to be available later this year. There were also the many online Masses we could view and receive 'spiritual Communion'.

And moving ahead: from 2 June we were able have mass on Sunday with 50 people attending. Father Tom has become our booking agent. This was a big advance on the 10 people allowed the month beforehand. The size of our church means that 50 is still the maximum number that can attend services, because of the 4 square metre separation rule.

What's been happening?

- ✚ The Pastoral Care and Social Ministries have visited or phoned many people each week. During this Covid-19 pandemic many of our senior parishioners have been isolated. Most of these do not have computers. It has been very comforting to drop off the Weekly Bulletins, sweets for Easter and also chocolates for Mothers' Day. This has been a great way to express our care from the St Patrick's Parish Community.
- ✚ A Communion Service was held at 10 am on Monday 29 June, the feast day of St Peter and Paul, followed by a morning tea in the hall. Social distancing and sanitizing were addressed and over 40 parishioners attended. This was organised by the Social Ministry.
- ✚ Meetings of the various ministries have been held via Zoom technology. Again, a steep learning curve for some of us.
- ✚ The First Reconciliation program, for 2020 was celebrated for 63 young candidates over the two evenings of 29 and 30 June. The difficulties of Covid-19 were overcome with the assistance of families with home schooling of the final two lessons and social distancing during the two services. The 2021 First Reconciliation program will hopefully be scheduled in the first quarter of 2021.
- ✚ Baptisms also will soon be resumed, with restrictions on the numbers attending.
- ✚ First Holy Communion will be celebrated in St Patrick's Church Mortlake this year at two 10:30am Sunday morning Masses on the 13th and 20th September.

Our prayers are directed to those now unemployed, temporarily or permanently, to those who are encountering mental stress, to the front liners, the nurses and doctors etc who are working to keep us safe, to the teachers who have worked so hard to provide remote learning for the school students. There are so many people to thank and pray for. I pray for Father Tom and our St Pat' community, that everyone will remain safe and will come through this time still singing:

"I see trees of green, red roses too / I see them bloom for me and you And I think to myself what a wonderful world".

Maureen

Winter Appeal

The annual St Vincent de Paul Annual Winter Appeal is asking for your assistance for those in need at this difficult time of the year. This year Vinnies is also supporting those impacted by COVID-19 as part of their Winter Appeal, because so many Australians have been seriously impacted by job loss or income reduction due to the pandemic lockdown of countless workplaces.

Many individuals with usually secure jobs in a wide variety of industries are now suddenly unemployed and large numbers of Australians are facing an uncertain future.

This upswing in need has collided with the shutdown of Vinnies stores, closures of churches and a significant drop in finances for the Society. Your assistance at this time is more important than ever.

While parish life at St Patrick's at Mortlake is impacted by the pandemic we are asking you to support those in need by donating to the appeal on the St Vincent de Paul website.



For those unable to access the website or uncomfortable donating online, there will be some envelopes at the back of the church at St Patrick's. You can deposit your envelope into the Poor Box at the back of the church, drop it into Brenda at the parish office on Tuesday or Friday, or place it in the beige locked letterbox located outside the Presbytery.

We thank you in advance for supporting the St Vincent de Paul COVID-19 Winter Appeal and look forward to seeing you all at the church when normal Mass attendance is permitted.

My family's isolation experience

For my family, our experience during the "isolation" period proved to be both positive and negative. While we were unhappy at being unable to visit family and friends and unable to play sport, we found other ways to entertain ourselves. There were lots of walks around Concord, bonding over Scrabble, backyard basketball, and yes....more time for iPads and PS4! Easter was a new experience – attending Mass with Archbishop Fisher without having to leave home! Through remote learning, the boys were able to reconnect with their

friends and teachers and continue their lessons. The teachers at their school adapted very quickly to the new model and, in our family at least, things went smoothly most of the time. As a family, we have a lot to be thankful for – I was able to continue to work (from home), my sons had each other for support and were able to stay in contact with their friends and schoolmates, and (most importantly) my husband was able to continue with his weekly game of golf!

Christine

Pastoral Help

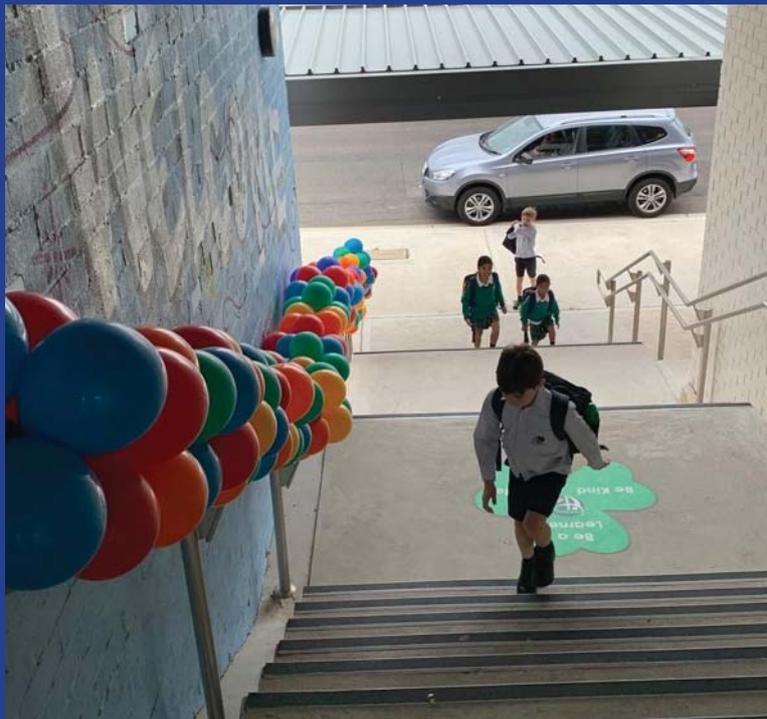
In these times especially, please let the parish know if you, or anyone you know, needs assistance with food, a prepared meal, shopping, or general welfare. We have volunteers and resources to help. Phone 9743 1017.



St Patrick's School

It has been a very different term at school, just like everyone else has experienced. The teachers have completed a lot of work to produce quality online lessons and resources to support remote learning, including making their own video clips to explain tasks and concepts as well as reading to the children. The parents did a marvellous job navigating our learning portal and supporting their children through all the different tasks. The teachers in the meantime were juggling online learning and teaching as well as managing lots of different children attending through the day. We have all missed the real community contact through this time, but lots of positives happened as well. Children created new friendships, lots of great learning happened and in the last week of school the teachers met personally with parents to share reports and look towards positive learning goals for Term 3. Many of our Year 2 students celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the last week of school and it was a very special occasion to be part of the Church community in these times. We continue to pray that we will work towards celebrating with the Parish in larger groups as the restrictions ease.

Amanda Westgate
Principal, St Patrick's School Mortlake



Parish Youth Ministry – Leader Position

The Parish Youth Ministry (SPY) is looking for candidates who are interested in taking on the very important role of our parish Youth Ministry Leader. The role's main focus is to encourage the youth of the parish to become involved in the life of the church and build relationships with other youth around the same age.

Some of the key activities include organising social events for the youth group (such as pizza and movie nights) organising Sunday Masses in which the youth group participate, as well as representing the Youth Ministry at the Parish Council meetings. If you are interested in learning more about the role, or wish to apply, please contact Father Tom or send an email to the parish office: parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au with your details. We would love to hear from you.



Get social with us...



www.stpatsmortlake.org.au



Search Facebook -
St Patrick's Mortlake



Search Instagram -
stpatsmortlake