



ST PATRICK'S PARISH
MORTLAKE



Parish Newsletter Autumn 2021

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Message from Fr Tom

LENT & EASTER

The Reality of Presence and Absence

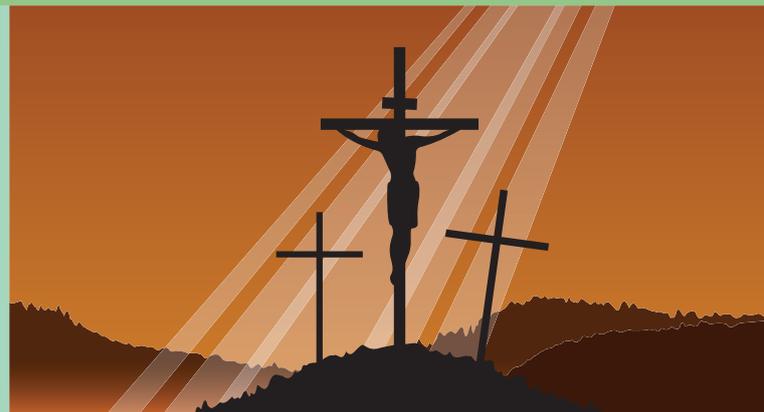
Last week I visited my late father's house on the south coast. I hadn't visited the family home since his death. There was some personal trepidation of going back without my father being physically there for the first time. What would it feel like? Would it all be too sad?

The house certainly lacked a soul, a warmth which had previously permeated its walls. The cups of tea weren't as meaningful. A physical PRESENCE was missing. Yet upon reflection I saw that in the lack of presence how blessed and fortunate one had been to have such people in one's life. There's a tremendous joy in seeing a life well lived, a life that shapes us into who we are (for better or worse!). This is the true gift of Jesus in our lives, to have such people present showing us love.

I need to see this gift of Presence in: marriage; family; charity; workplace; home; my addiction; my illness; my joy. God must be Present in the midst of all these things.

We are now in the final period of Lent and approach Easter. During this time, we as Christians have been asking the biggest questions humanity ponders – *What will make me truly happy? Where and how do I ensure my life is lived as a life-giving presence to those around me?* The Easter message is about realising the PRESENCE AND ABSENCE in our lives. Lent is about acknowledging the Absence, and of my need for something more. But Easter promises Presence. A Presence and Hope which never leaves us, *"And remember, I am with you always, to the end of time."* (Mt 28:20)

Fr Tom



Passion & Holy Week

Passion (Palm) Sunday: March 28

Mass times: Vigil – Saturday 6.00pm

Sunday: 9.00 am, 10.30 am, 6.00pm

Holy Thursday: April 1

7.30pm – Mass of the Lord's Supper followed by Exposition and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Good Friday: April 2

10.00am: Stations of the Cross

3.00pm: Celebration of the Passion of the Lord

Easter Sunday: April 4

7.00 pm Saturday April 3 – Easter Vigil, Festival of Light

Sunday April 4 Mass times:

7.30am; 9.00am, 10.30am, 6.00pm

Bookings can be made online

<https://www.trybooking.com/BPTXF> or by phoning the parish on 9743 1017 on Tuesday and Friday's between 9am and 2pm.

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.



f aces of St Pats: Marie Piccin

Most of you would be familiar with Marie Piccin who is very involved in both our parish and community in many ways. Her generous and time-consuming contributions, especially in Stewardship, the Social Ministry, and the Communications Ministry have been invaluable to the parish.

This is Marie's story

I have lived in Concord all my life, went to St. Mary's Concord as a Primary School student and later Rosebank and Santa Sabina at Strathfield.

I became a primary teacher in the late 70s and my first job as a Year One teacher at St. Mary's Concord, was in the same classroom where I had been taught as a Year 2 student. I had been teaching for about seven years when the family opened Angelo's Bayside Restaurant in Cabarita. The business went from strength to strength and I made the decision to leave teaching and work in the family business. Although I had very little experience in hospitality, it was a decision I never regretted and I worked at Angelo's for just over thirty one years, retiring four years ago.

During the years I was at Angelo's I met people from so many different walks of life, along with their families and friends. We organised their weddings, wakes, christenings, Holy Communions, Confirmations, birthdays, anniversaries, retirement dinners and even the odd divorce party. It was always a privilege to be involved in the most important moments of their lives and to this day I have the fondest of memories. We had the most dedicated and loyal staff for over 31 years and many have remained our dearest friends to this day.

When I finally had more time on my hands, Mons John said that he had a little job for me to do and suddenly I was a volunteer at St. Pat's. The past four years have flown but it's been a joy to meet and work with so many dedicated and enthusiastic Parishioners. As PSSO, (Parish Safeguarding Support Officer) and with Parish Secretary, Brenda Johnston's help and guidance I have been able to support our volunteers and ensure that we are compliant and up-to-date with the latest legislation.



Also as a member of the Communications team and the Social Ministry committee I have been able to offer my support where needed and I have made many new friends gaining valuable skills along the way.

2020-2021 has been a difficult time for all of us and St. Patrick's has continued to be that beacon of light for so many in our community. As coordinator of the Stewardship ministry I have been overwhelmed by the generous support of so many offering to take on Covid Marshall duties, help with volunteering and generally offering their assistance where needed.

St Patrick's is truly a remarkable Parish and Fr. Tom continues to walk with us along the journey that began 125 years ago. A journey that has benefitted from the stewardship of so many dedicated clergy, enthusiastic parishioners and the wider community. I feel very blessed to have been asked to 'do a little job' and look forward to doing so for as long as I'm able.

Many thanks Marie for all you do and have done for St Patrick's and the wider community. It's definitely more than "a little job".



Marie, with her brother Guy and sister Gabby

Covid 19 Marshals

A New Ministry at St Pat's: our 2021 COVID-19 Marshals

Gracious, friendly, courteous, helpful, understanding, eyes a smiling, patient: some of the descriptions made by our marshals of our parishioners, as they have been confronted with the NSW government's guidelines for entering our little church before Sunday Mass.

Our Stewardship ministry, Marie Piccin and Brenda Johnston together with Father Tom, needed to put in place an updated COVID Safe Plan for Places of Worship, particular to St Pat's, especially taking into account social distancing and permitted numbers. This has been displayed in the secretary's office, the Hall and the Church.

After a year of experiencing a pandemic we are all now fully aware of our responsibilities in ensuring we worship in a safe way, protecting ourselves and others. We have been so fortunate to have been able to celebrate Mass for most of this time, and also to have musicians playing or singing on our behalf. Many thanks also to the generosity of these musicians.

Our COVID-19 Marshals, all volunteers, have also been very generous with their time. Theirs has been the task of monitoring everyone's check in using the government's QR code or manually and hand sanitising. Let's hope and pray not for much longer. We thank you.



The School Year 2021 started back with gusto and 60 more kindergarten children. The weather, COVID and reduced playground locations have kept us all busy. The children enjoyed Shrove Tuesday, preparing for Ash Wednesday.

The Opening School Mass, our very first one with Father Tom, was a very special outdoor Mass. Father spoke beautifully to the children and they remained very reverent throughout the celebration. Father has also helped us celebrate our 5th St Patrick's Day, in the year where Sydney Catholic Schools are celebrating 200 years of Catholic Education.

As part of our celebrations, we have also begun our House Colours and House Names for the school.

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|--------------|----------------|
| Green | Patrick |
| Blue | Charity |
| Gold | Wangal |
| White | Usher |

We believe these names honour the great past and wonderful future of the school.

We will look forward to further liturgies with Father Tom, including Masses and the celebrations of the Sacraments of Communion and Penance.

Throughout Lent, we have also collected over 400 dollars for Project Compassion. A great start in many ways.

Amanda Westgate
Principal, St Patrick's School Mortlake

At Midnight Mass, Christmas 2020, as a fitting conclusion to St Patrick's 125th Anniversary celebrations, Father Tom blessed the renovated foundation stone from 1894 and plaque. The plaque transcribes the wording of the original foundation stone which has very much deteriorated over the years.



Congratulations



Luisa & Sam Campagna 50th Anniversary

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h ealing Mass

The Healing Mass — Anointing of the Sick, held at St Pat's on Saturday 6th March 2021 was just beautiful.

Thank you to ALL the amazing organisers, musicians and singers that made this event a time of joy and connection. A special mention to Howard Brown (guitarist and singer) who knows how to make a grand entrance! The liturgy was amazing. The hymn's "Come as you are" refrain echoed from our group ranging from young to more mature.

Gladys (see below) who will be 100 years old soon was one of the attendees! The refreshments that followed were very much appreciated.



Bingo

All parishioners were invited to a special **Seniors' Week** Bingo on Monday 15th March 2021 followed by morning tea. You're invited to join this group which also enjoys monthly lunches at the Massey Park Golf Club Bistro.



Left: Denise Norman and her 99 year old mother, Mary Anderson

Special Welcome

St Patrick's Parish at the 10:30am Mass on the 14th February, 2021 was delighted to welcome Chantel and her daughter Genevieve into our church with the wonderful Baptism of both and the Confirmation and First Communion of Chantel. The joining of the church by Chantel was preceded by several months of instruction from our parish RCIA team and Fr Tom. Chantel was a very committed candidate who took great interest in learning about our Catholic Faith.

Two weeks after joining our church, on Saturday 27th February, Chantel married Robert at St Patrick's in a most lovely ceremony. We all look forward to welcoming Chantel, Robert and Genevieve into our parish family and we wish them a wonderful future.



Easter Reflection



“But you,” he said *“who do you say I am?”* Then Simon Peter spoke up, *“You are the Christ,”* he said, *“the Son of the Living God”*. (Matthew 16: 15-16)

Jesus asked this question again in Mark 8:29, and to which Peter answered him, *“You are the Messiah”*.

How about you? If Jesus would ask you the same question today, what would you reply to him? Who do you see Jesus to be in your life today? Can we, like Peter, answer with full confidence that *“You are the Christ, the son of the Living God!?”*

Every Lent is an opportunity to deepen our faith and understanding of the great love that God has for us. As we go through Holy Week, beginning on Palm Sunday, we are invited yet again to fully experience the passion of Christ — his crucifixion, death and resurrection. It is an opportunity to relive the moments leading up to the greatest love story of all, and that is of God giving up his only Son because of his tremendous love for us. What is so **good** on that Friday when Jesus died to even be called Good Friday? What does the cross personally mean to me?

Before long, we start celebrating and rejoicing that Jesus has risen and saved us from our sins. How much do we truly accept God’s deep love for us? Have you surrendered your heart to God? What difference does this make in how we live our daily lives?

**The question still begs an answer.
Who is Christ to you?**

Recent celebrations at St Pat’s



Alexandra and Henry Yeates (left) were welcomed to our community in Baptism on Saturday 20th March before the 6pm Mass.

Veronica and Vincent Peterson also on Saturday 20th March, during the 6pm Mass, received a blessing from Father Tom. (right). They had been married 50 years ago here at St Pat’s.

