



ST PATRICK'S PARISH  
MORTLAKE



## Parish Newsletter Summer 2021

Telephone: (02) 97431017  
Email: [parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au](mailto:parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au)  
[www.stpatsmortlake.org.au](http://www.stpatsmortlake.org.au)

## Message from Fr Tom

### ***Cultures become sick when they become self-referential***

One of my favourite galleries I try to visit whenever I am overseas is the Natural History Museum in London. I remember the first time I visited, being amazed that such a large section of it features the findings and analysis carried out by Joseph Banks, the English botanist and naturalist, involved in Cook's Endeavour voyage to Australia (1768-1771).

Whilst acknowledging Banks' shortcomings, I am amazed at the outward looking nature of his findings at the time, with many of his writings and studies on display at the Museum. Though what intrigues me most about Banks, is not so much his findings and observations (significant as they are), but rather I am fascinated to understand his mindset, of how he was so enamoured to learn of flora and fauna and discover matters outside of his world, and come to an understanding of them within their context.

I've been sitting and seeking to unpack a speech I recently read from Pope Francis, when he visited a new innovation into the history of humanity in the Vatican library. The Pope said:

*"I appreciate this endeavour to open a dialogue. Life is the art of encounter. Cultures become sick when they become self-referential, when they lose curiosity and openness toward others. When they exclude instead of integrate."*

I pray that we as individuals, as a parish, as a Church and as a society, can be people who seek to always look outwards, to grow and have a sense of empathy and compassion. For only in empathy and compassion surely comes communion (with a small 'c', and importantly also with a capital 'C').

As we approach Christmas 2021, may this be a time when we recognise the importance of being open, inclusive, and broad minded in our families, society and Church. Merry Christmas and God bless.

Fr Tom

## Christmas Liturgies

### Join us at our Christmas Celebrations

#### **Thursday 23 December**

10.00am — Mass for Seniors

6.00pm — Christmas Outdoor Family Nativity Liturgy service for children.

Following the success of our children's liturgy 'Nativity for Children' last year we will be holding a similar event this year. If your children would like to take part as angels and shepherds, please contact Sinead Kent on 0420 653 637 or [skent00@gmail.com](mailto:skent00@gmail.com) or the Parish Office [parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au](mailto:parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au)

7.30pm — Carols and Communion Service Liturgy in the Church.

#### **Friday 24 December Christmas Eve Masses**

6.00pm — Children's Vigil Mass

8.00pm

Midnight Mass

#### **Saturday 25 December Christmas Day Masses**

7.30am

9.00am

10.30 am

#### **Sunday 26 December Mass**

9.00am Mass only



#### 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.

# Month of November - St Pat's Remembers



The St Patrick's Community gathered in weekly Masses in November, 2021, the month of the Holy Souls to commemorate the loss of their dearly departed. Whether it's loss of a baby, or a child or a loved one by suicide or self-harm, healing for the marginalised, our grief is the price of our love for them.

As Fr. Tom so wonderfully said, in these moments, we long for a voice that we don't hear, a touch that we no longer feel but the wonderful message of Christianity is that one day we will see them again. It is in the messiness and struggles that Christ is with us the most and we have to push on.

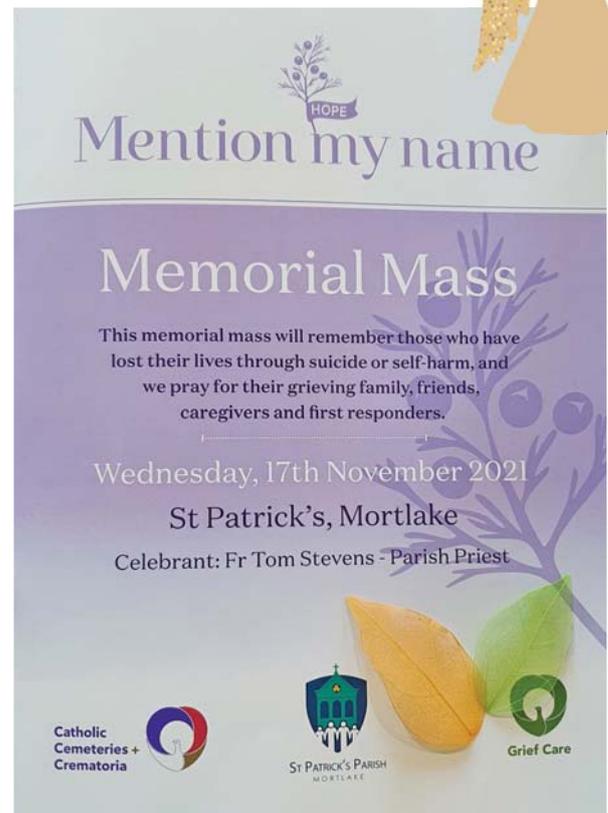
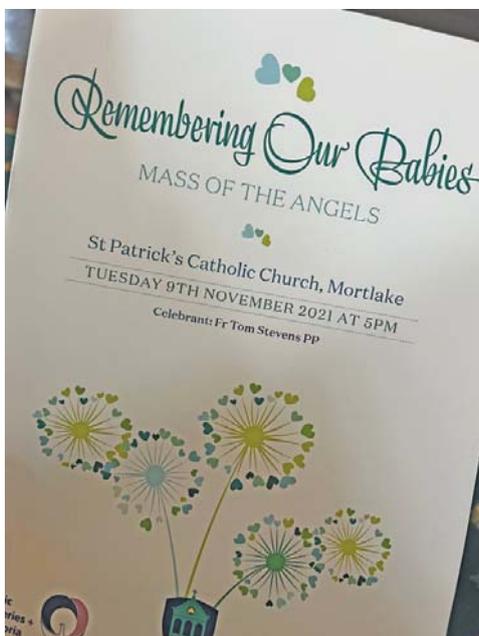
*'May we know that this is your home'.*

During the Holy Souls month we were also invited to write the names of our deceased family members and friends on cards and place these cards in a basket at the foot of the altar. Our family members and friends have been remembered as each Mass is celebrated. This is the Communion of Saints at work!

## Comments after the Remembering our Babies Mass

It was a beautiful celebration and so amazing the age range of people who were grieving for a lost child - from the quite old to the young. Congratulations to Sinéad Kent who organised the Mass.

The attendance was great with about 60 people and we actually ran out of candles! It was a very moving and emotional mass. The music was so good too, a beautiful choice of hymns. Many thanks to the musicians... a wonderful gift for our parishioners.



## Mention My Name

The second special Memorial Mass was also very sad and poignant as we remembered those who lost their lives through suicide or self harm.

We prayed for their grieving families, friends, caregivers and first responders. Many thanks to Sinead Kent, Patricia Thomas from Grief Care Managing Consultant and our musicians, Lauraine Muir and Jane Kent.

A parishioner commented:

*We can say that we have never experienced anything so profound and positively meaningful as this program, apart from marriage.*

Only three parishes, Marrickville, Mortlake, and Liverpool have supported the program to date, in Sydney. Lighting a candle and putting it on a table near the altar was the task of those who had a relative who died by suicide or self harm. If there were 50 people at the celebration, more than 45 lit a candle. St Pat's parishioners took the matter to heart and made a meaningful statement. We were also given the gift of a fragile leaf. These leaves represent life and in a particular way the lives of those we remember, their fragility, vulnerability and strength. A powerful reminder.



# The Miracle of Fatima Celebrated at St Pat's



On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2021 over 50 parishioners and friends gathered outdoors in our parish greenspace to pray the Rosary to commemorate the 104<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Miracle of Fatima.

This was part of a nationwide public Rosary asking Our Lady of Fatima to intercede for God's merciful blessing on our nation and to pray for the grave challenges confronting the world today. The Rosary was organised by parishioner Maria Dovico, and it was wonderful to see so many familiar faces after our long lockdown and church closure.

Despite a very cold breeze, it was a very prayerful and uplifting experience, and all present were very grateful for the opportunity to participate. We look forward to beginning a tradition at St Pat's of holding this event annually.

Thanks again to Maria and all those who attended. We're sure our prayers will be answered.



**Best wishes to everyone for a happy, holy and safe Christmas 2021.**

**Looking forward to 2022 with prayers and hope for a peaceful world which is safe from the pandemic.**



# The Sacrament of Confirmation 2021



Due to the current pandemic, the Sacrament of Confirmation, conducted by Bishop Brady and Fr Tom Stevens, was rescheduled to take place at a 7pm Mass on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November. Congratulations to the 42 candidates and best wishes that they may enjoy every blessing as they continue their faith journey. Many thanks to Bob Mayor, Denise Norman and Sinead Kent for running the program.



# St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal Thank You



season and into 2022.

The members of the St Patrick's Mortlake Conference of the St Vincent de Paul are extremely grateful for the Parish assistance in 2021. Huge thanks also go out to the families in the School and the St Pat's Mini Vinnies. This year has again resulted in some normally independent families, impacted by COVID, needing to contact the Society for the first time. Your help has allowed the St Vincent de Paul to offer a dignified hand up to these families that will support them getting back on their feet.

Thank you again for your wonderful generosity.

Heartfelt thanks to the St Patrick's Parish and school for their generous support of the 2021 St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal. The school Mini Vinnies group, active in its first year, provided wonderful support to the main Appeal and I'm sure you saw some great posters in the Narthex advertising the hamper and financial appeal. It is heart - warming to see the children involved in assisting families in need.

Despite the difficulties imposed by COVID restrictions again this year, the wonderful Parish and School donations of hams, puddings, cakes, bon bons and all things festive mean that many local families can have a plentiful Christmas meal and a bright, seasonally decorated table.

Because of your generosity, local children in need were provided with beautifully wrapped gifts to ensure a very happy Christmas. Donations in excess were sent to Catholic Care, the social services arm of the Archdiocese of Sydney who assists needy families across Sydney, and the Jesuit Refugee Service who assists refugees and their families, a group that has been particularly hard hit during the COVID crisis.

St Patrick's community also provided their renowned wonderful support for the Christmas envelope appeal and bucket collection on the weekend of 20-21 November. Thanks go out to Fr Tom who

generously donated the money from the first collection at all Masses to the Appeal. These financial contributions will allow our Mortlake Conference to support struggling individuals and families across this holiday



## Birthday Celebrations

Congratulations to Mary Anderson who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday on Sunday 31 October 2021. Mary is the mother of our long-standing parishioner, Denise Norman. Peace & Joy.



Mary, celebrating her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday, is about to cut the cake



Mary cuddling her great great grandson Tadhg James McCabe who was at the party and was born October 2021 while Mary was born October 1921.

# What's Been Happening

Despite being unable to celebrate Mass for a large part of the year, the Parish was still busy, as we celebrated 76 Baptisms, 4 weddings (in 6 months, with some postponed to next year) and sadly conducted 13 funerals throughout the year. St Pat's certainly has an important place in the lives of parishioners in a social as well as a spiritual sense.

## Bingo Returns after Lockdown

It was wonderful when Masses resumed on Tuesday 19 October 2021 after the long closure of the churches due to the COVID-19 lockdown in Greater Sydney.



Mass at Bingo

How fantastic to see so many regulars return to Bingo on Monday 1 November with a beautiful Mass celebrated in the Parish Hall by Father Tom. This was also the occasion of All Saints' Day. The Mass was well attended by many parishioners who were very happy to enjoy a social gathering after 17 weeks in lockdown.



New pedestrian crossing in Gale Street  
Mayor Angelo Tsirekas, Principal Amanda Westgate & Fr Tom

Many thanks to Anne Manetti, who gave up her time to distribute the weekly Parish Bulletin to 25 Bingo parishioners and encourage them to stay in contact with us in the parish. It was good to be able to provide some words of encouragement.

Also during lockdown, the much needed pedestrian crossing in Gale Street was completed, ensuring the safety of students and parishioners. Father Tom and Principal Amanda Westgate were there to mark this important safety feature with the Mayor of Canada Bay, Angelo Tsirekas.

## Other Events in November and December

- ✚ Our HSC students began their delayed exams after such a long time with remote learning caused by two years of the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- ✚ Memorial Mass for parishioner Mike Bailey, 20 November — A chance to say goodbye to Mike and acknowledge his many generous contributions to our parish. Mike died during the COVID-19 lockdown and at the time of his funeral, numbers were limited to 10, so the Mass provided a wonderful chance to celebrate his life and in particular his impact on our community.
- ✚ Blessing of the Animals at all weekend Masses 27/28 November.
- ✚ Prayer and reflection throughout Advent with 'Heartbeat'.
- ✚ Buy a Brick Program
- ✚ Christmas Lunch at Carmen's Restaurant, Barnwell Park on 8 December.
- ✚ Classical Christmas Concert at St Pat's on 11 Dec
- ✚ Vinnie's Christmas Appeal — Hamper and toy collection through November, Christmas Envelope Appeal at all Masses 21-22 November.
- ✚ For further details of the above, please see the Parish website:

[www.stpatsmortlake.org.au](http://www.stpatsmortlake.org.au)

email: [parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au](mailto:parish@stpatsmortlake.org.au)

We have been finally able to welcome all our children back to school, which has been wonderful. Our Kindergarten and Year 1 students were the first back and have settled into their routines once again.

Our playground and timetables certainly look different as we keep all our year groups separate when we are outside, and our car pick up is a finely tuned military style operation to ensure we get all our children home safely.

We have been thoroughly supported by our parents through remote learning and all their efforts, now as we return to the business of face-to-face learning.

There have been many positives in this unusual time we have all experienced.

As the poem, *When This Is Over* (Laura Kelly Fanucci) states,

*May we find we have become the people we wanted to be, we were called to be, we hoped to be and may we stay that way - better for each other because of the worst.*

We are looking forward in hope and energy for a special Advent and Christmas ahead.

**Amanda Westgate**  
Principal  
St Patrick's School  
Mortlake



# Looking Ahead to 2022



## Some possible dates for special Masses & hospitality functions

### Sunday, 13 March 2022

10.30am Mass and luncheon for Vinnies' clients serviced by the local Conference.

### Wednesday, 4 May 2022

11am Mass and light luncheon for Carers in the Parish.

### Thursday, 26 May 2022

9am-12 noon. Cancer Council — Australia's Biggest Morning Tea community function on the Parish Green.

- 9am Mass followed by morning tea
- 2-5pm Afternoon Delight on the Parish Green.

### Sunday, 21 August 2022

10.30am Mass and luncheon for a yet to be specified group

## Twilight 'festival' functions on Green Space

2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month **mostly** during daylight saving, 5-8pm:

- Thursday 10 February 2022
- Thursday 17 March 2022 - St Patrick's Day
- Thursday 13 October 2022
- Thursday 10 November 2022
- Thursday 8 December 2022



## Parish 'Spring' Clean Dates

- Saturday 2 April 2022
- Saturday 3 September 2022

## Get social with us...



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