



St Mary of the Cross
Catholic Parish
EMBODYING CHRIST'S LOVE

Blessings

ISSUE NO. 23

QUARTERLY

JUNE 2022



WELCOME TO ALL

Our Parish Mission

Love God, Love Others, Make Disciples



The anchors that underpin our Parish Mission



Grow deeper in our faith
& discipleship



Grow wider, welcoming those
outside in



Leadership where we are all
called to serve God



Exceptional Weekend Experience –
Hospitality, Hymns & Homilies

Welcome

Blessings is our quarterly magazine where we share stories about our Parish Mission and our community. We warmly welcome newcomers as we open the doors to Christ's love and mission. If you are new to our parish, a **BIG WELCOME!** Please introduce yourself to one of our Welcomer's and pick up a Welcome Pack at our Welcome Desk in our church foyers.

Stay in touch



SUNDAY MASS

6pm Saturday Vigil St Louis'
8am Sunday St Brigid's
9.30am Sunday St Louis'
11am Sunday St Brigid's
RECONCILIATION
Friday 12 noon St Brigid's
Saturday 5.30pm St Louis'

WEEKDAY MASS

9.15am Monday St Louis'
(Communion Service)
9.15am Tuesday St Louis'
10am Wednesday St Brigid's
9.15am Thursday St Louis'
11.30am Friday St Brigid's

PARISH STAFF

Parish Priest: Fr Andrew Jekot
Assistant Priest: Fr Hoang Dinh
Parish Leadership Team:
Fr Andrew, Fr Hoang, Trish Angliss,
Berna Wake
Parish Coordinator: Ann Fitzgerald
Baptism Coordinator: Deb Poynton

6pm Saturday & 8am Sunday Mass live streamed on [YouTube](#)

St Mary of the Cross Parish, Mordialloc & Aspendale

St Brigid's Church: 520 Main Street, Mordialloc

St Louis de Montfort's Church & Parish Centre: 37 Dolphin Street, Aspendale

Blessings Design & Editor: Berna Wake. Please do contact me with ideas for stories & feedback
berna.wake@cam.org.au

**We acknowledge the original owners of the land on which we gather and their leaders –
past, present, and emerging.**

**Front Cover: Fr Andrew, Fr Hoang and Jacob Jhoomun, a student from St Louis' who recently
celebrated his First Communion. Congratulations Jacob!**

FATHER ANDREW'S WORD



'We are the disciples who are called out to continue this work and our parish is committed to being a parish that spreads this Good News. "Opening the Doors to Christ's love is our strategy to honour this call...'

"Peace be with you"

– these words honour the sign of peace ritual just before receiving communion at mass. These words are the first words that Jesus says to his disciples who are in a closed room trembling in fear. On that first Pentecost Day, Jesus reassures the disciples and sends down the Holy Spirit announcing that their sins are forgiven. The disciples are then mandated to go out and be people of forgiveness and spread this Good News.

We are the disciples who are called out to continue this work and our parish is committed to being a parish that spreads this Good News. "Opening the Doors to Christ's love" is our strategy to honour this call and I know that many of you are happy to be on this journey together.

The number of people returning to mass regularly is uplifting to see. I am aware that the winter and the flu season is upon us, and we need to be mindful of how we are feeling and if you sense that you are unwell then please choose to partake in mass online. The online mass facility will continue until further notice.

Have you noticed the newly enhanced Memorial Garden at St. Louis'? There are some pictures in this edition of Blessings. This has become an accessible space, sacred and holy ground that you are invited to come in and spend some time in prayer. I hope to contact families who have a plaque in the garden to attend a special blessing in a few weeks' time. I am grateful to one of our parishioners, Dan O'Connor who has created this space. Dan also enhanced the St. Brigid's Memorial Garden a number of years ago.

In a few months' time, St. Louis' church will have the sound system upgraded. This church space has always been problematic with the acoustics and has a number of "patches" added to the sound system. It is now time to give it a complete overhaul including fixed cameras for the ongoing live streaming. New TV screens will replace the old projectors to give a much clearer image.

I'm really excited about our parish subscription to what is known as "Netflix for Catholics" called [FORMED](#). In this new digital age, we are requiring up to date media that has good Catholic content. Hopefully, you are [subscribed](#) and are slowly navigating your way through the myriad of videos but don't fret as there will be some suggestions offered each week regarding some of the more topical videos. If you are coming to THE SEARCH series, then you will have your first access to FORMED. But wait, there's more!! Soon we will launch the AMEN app as another tool to use in your prayer life.

Finally, our parish has been busy in its sacramental life with First Eucharist being completed and Confirmations in July. A new RCIA team will be formed, and I will be able to offer a process for people who would like to become Catholic. As Big Kev, used to say, "I'm excited!"

Shalom,

**Fr Andrew Jekot
Parish Priest
St Mary of the Cross Parish,
Mordialloc & Aspendale**

THANK YOU, FATHER PETER MATHESON

What a blessing and joy it has been for our parish to have had Fr Peter Matheson assisting as a presider at our Masses and parish liturgies over the past three years.

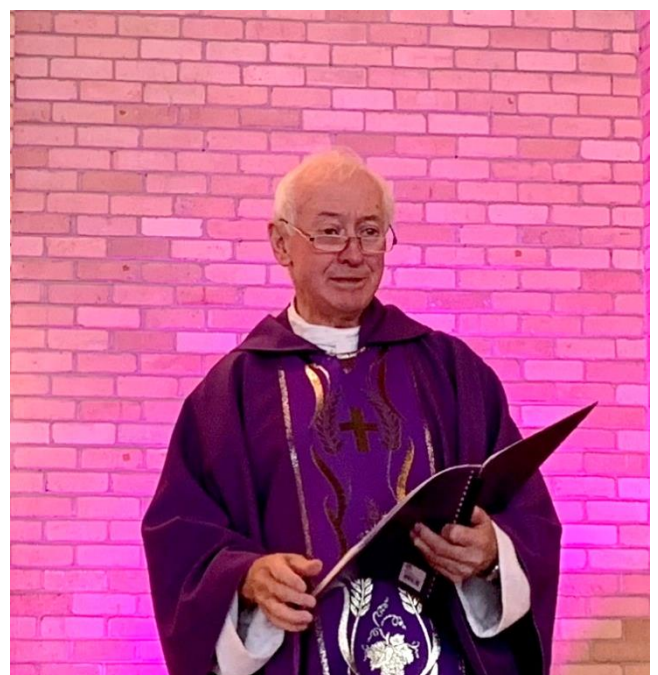


FR ANDREW PRESENTS FR PETER WITH A GIFT FROM THE PARISH INCLUDING ONE OF OUR VERY SPECIAL SEA CROSSES

Fr Peter's masses and homilies have been a "not to be missed" experience. His wisdom, deep faith, and ability to relate the issues of the day (political, social, environmental, and cultural) to the words of the Gospel have made 'Mass with Fr Peter' a very special experience.

I leave Mass with Fr Peter feeling uplifted, and his message in his homily always gives me much to think about. Fr Peter always greets people with a friendly, welcoming smile and makes time for a chat. We hope to see Fr Peter every so often at our Mass celebrations. We send our love and blessings to you Fr Peter and hope that you will get to **fully** enjoy your retirement soon, and perhaps get that elusive "hole in one."

Words: Berna Wake



WELCOME AUXILIARY BISHOP TONY IRELAND

In March, Auxiliary Bishop Anthony (Tony) Ireland visited our parish and celebrated the weekend masses



FR HOANG PRESENTS BISHOP TONY WITH ONE OF OUR BEAUTIFUL SEA CROSSES



Having been appointed Auxiliary Bishop in July 2021, with the lifting of COVID restrictions, this was an ideal time for Bishop Tony to visit us. He is very familiar with the south-eastern suburbs having grown up in Caulfield. Bishop Tony was ordained to the priesthood in 1987 and has served in the parishes of Grovedale and Torquay, Mentone, Sandringham, Langwarrin, and Frankston. Prior to his appointment as Bishop, he was parish priest of St Gregory the Great in Doncaster.

During his priesthood, Bishop Tony has undertaken academic studies in Italy, receiving higher degrees in Moral and Spiritual Theology, as well as a doctorate. He has lectured in Moral Theology at Catholic Theological College in East Melbourne and was Head of the Department of Moral and Practical Theology for eight years. He has been a tutor at Corpus Christi Seminary College in Carlton, was appointed its Dean of Studies and was also Rector for several years. Along with his parish and academic work, Bishop Tony has been Spiritual Director to the St Vincent de Paul Society State Council and has been appointed to several boards, committees, and councils. He has been Episcopal Vicar for Health and Aged Care and is currently the Auxiliary Bishop for the Southern Region of the Archdiocese.

At the conclusion of the Masses celebrated by Bishop Tony, he gave a special address to our community, firstly thanking parishioners for their presence and faith commitment against the background of the unacceptable abuse of children and vulnerable people that have been committed by some church clergy. He made a heartfelt apology for the wrongs and the hurt and said in no uncertain terms that the Church has listened and learned and is committed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all persons.

Words: Berna Wake

THE ST MARY OF THE CROSS SEA CROSS



The Sea Cross

By Marg Deveson

The Cross is a symbol of our Christian faith – Christ's suffering, all- encompassing **LOVE** for us.
The '**wind-grass**', made from the wind, is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.
The **Feather**, a symbol of freedom, Christ's ascension into heaven.
The **Shell**, a symbol of 'The Way' – our journey that Jesus walks with us and when we cannot walk, he carries us every step of the way.
(All the materials used are from the beach shores)

As much as the Sea Cross is a gift of love made by me, it has also become a gift to me! It has helped me with my faith journey. As I make each cross, they are a meditation, a time to reflect as I create. They provide me with a purpose of sharing something I have made from the materials that God has crafted from seashores to share with others.

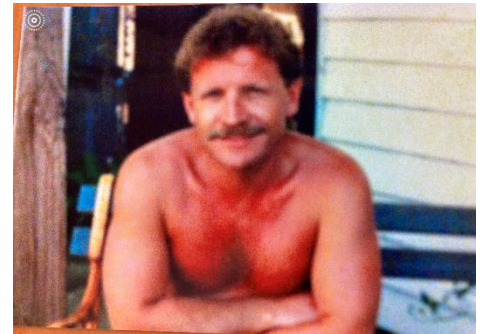
Many of our parishioners are familiar with the Sea Cross I make, so I thought I'd share the story behind them.

Nine years ago, my brother Mark (pictured right) tragically took his life. Anyone who has been touched by suicide will know the devastating impact and rippling effects that a life so loved could be taken. Depression does not discriminate and somehow the person you least expect can be the sufferer.

Mark was one of six siblings, a devoted husband and immensely proud father of three.

Mark worked as a solicitor for the E.P.A. (Environmental Protection Authority) for 23 years where he was highly respected. An annual scholarship has been awarded in Mark's honour as he was a tireless worker in his legal profession. Mark's zest for life, Christian values, social conscience, and passion for the environment carried through with his love of living near the beach, swimming in the bay and surfing when he could get away at Wye River.

Mark's ashes were to be paddled out at Wye to his favourite surf break by his children and friends. My eldest sister asked me if I could make a wreath from our family. I had no idea how I was going to make a wreath, but I walked out onto our beach and picked up two pieces of driftwood and putting them together thought of the Cross. I saw a shell and thought of its symbolism of the way, the seagulls feather – freedom, and the wind grass – the Holy Spirit.



I truly believe it was a gift of the Holy Spirit to bring these elements together and provide the meaning behind them. Father Andrew blessed the Sea Cross I made for Mark.

I knew Mark would have loved the fact that the materials found on his much-loved seashores were all environmentally friendly!

Father Andrew admired the Sea Cross and I made another for him. From then on, I have foraged on our beaches and other beaches we visit for driftwood, shells, wind grass and seagull feathers.

Words: Marg Deveson

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

Our Parish Pastoral Council

(PPC) have met on three occasions this year for a Saturday Workshop (9-1pm) where we have been working through the first of the 5 Foundation Assessments, that of **Discipleship**.

The 5 Foundations Assessments are an important next step in our parish renewal journey **“Opening the Door’s to Christ’s Love”**. It involves an honest assessment of the value, importance, and role of each foundation in our present parish circumstances, learning from best practice elsewhere and being informed by experts in the field, before we can create and implement new plans and actions that will strengthen and build each foundation in our parish.



The Assessment for each foundation involves 6 stages:

- Agree the definition of the foundation – arrive at a common understanding
- Reflect on the place of the foundation in the life of Jesus and in our community
- Create an inspiring 5-year vision for the foundation
- Review how that identity is expressed in the actions and priorities in the parish
- Discern and decide how God might be calling us to strengthen the foundation in our parish
- Develop an Action Plan – 5 - Year Pastoral Plan for the parish

To date we have progressed to the action plan stage for the Discipleship Foundation, and we will craft this at our next workshop on 18 June. By September our plan is to share the results of the full Discipleship assessment with our parish community. It is aimed at supporting each other on our faith journey, providing pathways that nurture and develop the continual process of growing in our love for God, wanting to serve Him with the gifts He has given each one of us.

Please don't hesitate to approach one of our PPC members if you are curious to know more, remember we are here to serve the parish in the best way we can. Our PPC members are: Fr Andrew, Fr Hoang, Trish Angliss, John Bainbridge, Odette Budge, Marg Deveson, Graham Harrison, Mary Nayna, Jon Searle, Niko Tovia, Bob Ward, and myself Berna Wake.

The 5 Foundations

The 5 Foundations represent the vital signs of life in a parish and were central to Jesus' life and mission. Strengthening each of these foundations creates healthy, fruitful growth.

The Foundations are:

Evangelisation – To bring others into an encounter and friendship with the person of Jesus Christ.

Discipleship – Growth in holiness, faith and understanding.

Worship – The encounter with God's mercy in the Eucharist and other sacraments, prayer, and devotions.

Service – A culture where we serve within the parish and reach to the outside.

Community – Where all are known, loved, and supported in their faith.

HOLY WEEK

Palm Sunday



Holy Thursday



Inter-Faith Good Friday Stations of the Cross

HOLY WEEK



Good Friday

Easter Saturday Vigil



THE PASCHAL CANDLE

The Paschal candle represents Christ, the light of the world. During the Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday night the priest carries the candle in procession into the dark church. A new fire, symbolizing our eternal life in Christ, is kindled which lights the candle.

During Lent Father Andrew delivered the candles to my home to be decorated for the celebration of the Easter Vigil and the Liturgical Year. As I had never decorated a candle before, I was daunted by the task that lay ahead, but knowing I was to be working with Michelle Campbell who made the candles the previous year, my concerns were unheeded.

Michelle had discussed with Father that the theme of the candles would be one of **WELCOME**. Being an exceptional welcoming community is very important in our Parish. The fact that St Mary of the Cross Parish is located on our amazing beach, we came up with the hues of our sublime sunsets, the blue of our sea and our sandy shoreline. The dove, the gift of the Holy Spirit hovers over the skies, engulfing everything that exists. The figures of people on the shores have their arms raised and hands open to embrace Him. The crucifix is the central feature.

As Michelle and I dabbled with tissue paper and glue we were both very much aware of the reverence that the paschal candle represents. We prayed that the Holy Spirit would guide us to create something beautiful for the church. As time was running out Michelle finished the work on the candles. I wish to sincerely thank Michelle for her creativity and artistry. But most of all I wish to thank her for the times we worked together. It was such a special opportunity to share our life stories and our journey in faith. It affirmed how privileged we are to be able to contribute to our Parish and how fortunate we are to belong to such a caring, loving Parish community that live in the light of Christ.

Our time together has cemented a special friendship – thank you Michelle. *Words: Marg Deveson*



MARG DEVESON CO-CREATOR OF OUR PASCHAL CANDLE



MICHELLE CAMPBELL CO-CREATOR OF OUR PASCHAL CANDLE

OPENING OUR CHURCHES

I am sure that many of us remember the days when churches were always open, outside of Mass times. The idea of “popping in to pay a visit” when passing by was a key feature of my childhood growing up in an Irish-Catholic household. A trip to the city always included confession at St Francis’ and maybe a holy card or medal from the ‘holy shop.’ Sadly, in the present time, with concerns about safety and security, our churches have been largely closed and the practice of ‘paying a visit’ is no longer as easy as it once was.

At St Mary of the Cross our aim is to have the church doors open again, to offer a place of prayerful time spent with Jesus, a friendly welcome and maybe a chat and a cuppa. To enable this, we need people who have a spare hour or two, in groups of two to assist. Some of our wonderful parishioners have stepped forward to do this and we sincerely thank them, but we need more people to help to open our churches more often. If you can serve our parish and God in this way, please do get in touch with me at Berna.wake@cam.org.au

In the meantime, enjoy these touching stories of the difference that can be made when we ‘open our door’s’ and our loving hearts and truly live the way Jesus asked us to.



My sister Elinore and I agreed to be part of ‘Opening Church’ on Fridays at St Brigid’s after the 11.30 Mass. On our first day we no sooner had set up when a lady ventured up the steps to the front doors. We welcomed her in, and she told us that she had been to a funeral of a dear friend and that after the reception she really wanted to pray for his soul in a church and wondered could she come in and light a candle and pray. “But” she said “I’m not a Catholic, I’m from an Orthodox Church in Oakleigh. Is that alright for me to come in?” We assured her she is most welcome to come in to pray for as long as she wished.

She went on to say that she was looking around trying to find a Church when she spotted the white Cross on top of St Brigid’s and got in her car and followed it and was really hoping the Church would be open. We chatted a little then showed her where the candles were and left her to pray. Another lady had come in just afterwards to sit in the quietness to pray.

It was wonderful to know that our Church doors were open on this occasion to welcome these ladies and anyone wishing to come inside from their often busy lives and spend some quiet time with God.

Words: Bernadette Stuart and Elinore Williamson

The very first Friday we opened St Brigid’s Church at 10:30 am, (outside mass hours), a gentleman entered the Church from the side entrance and asked if he could sit inside and reflect. He was emotional and a bit stressed and tearful, he told us his mother was in hospital undergoing surgery that day. He said he was not a religious person, and he was not a local. He was looking for some quiet time to reflect. He also mentioned he was driving around looking for a church that was open until he came across our Church and noticed the door open. We welcomed, comforted, and assured him he had come to the right place to find peace and we were going to pray for his mother. He sat down for a while and participated in the 11:30 am Mass as well. After Mass he was introduced to Fr. Andrew and was given the Newsletter.

As follow up, a text was sent to him advising him we at St. Brigid’s were thinking of him and keeping him in our prayers. Sadly, we learnt later his mother had passed.

We were happy to see him again at the 11:00 am Mass on Sunday the same week. He continues to attend the 11 am Mass on Sundays when he is in the area. We were happy that our Church door was open outside mass times for people seeking a place for prayer and/or reflection. We hope more parishioners are able to volunteer an hour or so each week during the day outside mass times.

Words: Christine D’Cruz and Vanessa Fernandes

WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS



PRUDENCE NOLAN (DAUGHTER OF JOHN AND CLAIRE) AND KANE BIGNELL (SON OF NORMAN AND BARBARA) PICTURED HERE WITH THEIR TWINS HUGH AND OSCAR WERE MARRIED BY FR ANDREW ON 6 MARCH 2022

*May God bless you
abundantly with love,
joy, and happiness*



RICK CHISHOLM (SON OF JOHN AND TRACEY) AND JESSICA MORRISON (DAUGHTER OF JOHN AND HELEN) WERE MARRIED BY FR ANDREW ON 5 MARCH 2022



SEBASTIAN TEO AND JANELLE CHIANG WERE MARRIED BY FR HOANG ON 1 MAY 2022



WEDDING ANNIVERSARY CONGRATULATIONS



CONGRATULATIONS & BLESSINGS TO
JACQUI AND SERGEI MCINTYRE ON THEIR 60TH
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



CONGRATULATIONS & BLESSINGS TO VAL AND JOHN SUHR ON THEIR
60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

*May God hold you close,
and guide you every day.
And may his blessings
follow you
all along the way.
Happy Anniversary*



CONGRATULATIONS & BLESSINGS TO
BRENDA AND FELICE CORTESE ON THEIR
40TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS



CONGRATULATIONS & BLESSINGS TO MARGARET EVANS ON HER 90TH BIRTHDAY



CONGRATULATIONS & BLESSINGS TO CHARLOTTE CHANDRAMOULI ON HER 80TH BIRTHDAY



CONGRATULATIONS & BLESSINGS TO DORIS COLWELL ON HER 100TH BIRTHDAY

*May God continue to
shower you with
His blessings.*



TEN VALUES ANALYSIS

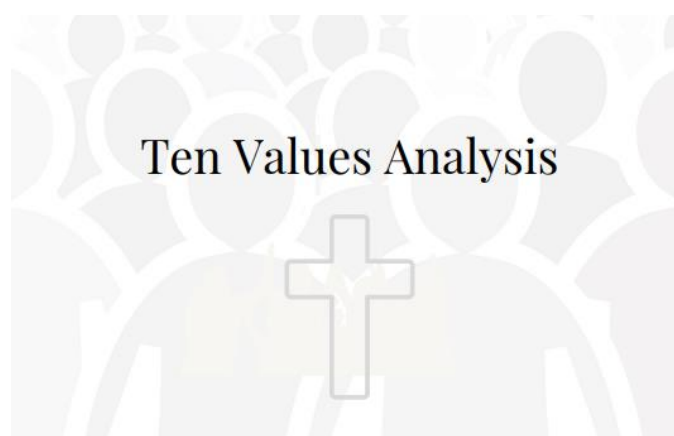
In May 2021 our Parish embarked on a Parish renewal journey. We have a vibrant and vital community, but like many parishes in the Melbourne Archdiocese we acknowledge that we have challenges, declining church attendances, an ageing demographic and for some Catholics a lack of relevance. Our Parish Renewal Plan "Opening the Door's to Christ's Love" kick-started our vision to strive for a parish of missionary disciples, people who joyfully share their love of Jesus with others without judgement and in a spirit of patience, warmth and welcome. We were delighted with the interest from our parish community who attended in great numbers over a 4-week series of presentations. If you missed the presentations, or you are new to our parish you can watch the post-recorded versions on our [parish website here](#)

Assessing our Parish Values

We are open to understanding and learning from our parishioners, as to where we can improve as a parish. For that reason, we invited all parishioners to complete a "10 Values Analysis" in April this year. We are delighted that 102 people completed the analysis (88 parishioners plus 14 PPC members). Thank You! The 10 Values Analysis is an honest assessment of the soil condition, the foundation of how our parish operates. Each of the 10 values relate to a healthy, fruitful parish. Each value had 5 statements and a score of between 0 (Never) and 3 (Usually) was allocated to each statement.



PLEASE PICK UP A COPY OF OUR PARISH MISSION SUMMARY ON OUR WELCOME DESK IN THE CHURCH FOYERS



Rankings - Parishioners n=88 (April 2022)

Value	Score (out of 15)
1. Great Homilies	13
2. Clear expectations	11.6
3. Giving Priority to the Weekend	11.3
4. Hospitality	11.2
5. An Invitational Church	11.1
6. Formation of Small Communities	10.8
7. Strengths-Based Ministry	10.7
8. Experience of the Holy Spirit	10.1
9. Meaningful Community	10
10. Uplifting Music	9.5
Total	10.9

The table above is a summary of the scores for each of the 10 Values. If you would like to see a copy of the complete analysis, it is available on our parish website. [You can access it here](#). The results are very encouraging.

Fr James Mallon of the Divine Renovation Ministry, the author of the 10 Values Analysis says: "The sad reality is that too many parishes score a 5 or less in every single category. Be encouraged if you are scoring between a 5 and a 10 and give thanks to God for the areas you are between a 10 and a 15."

The Parish Leadership Team and Parish Pastoral Council are now working on the 10 Values Analysis, creating actions to address areas for improvement. It is our plan to conduct the 10 Values Analysis every year to assess how we are improving. **Words: Berna Wake**



We welcome children recently baptised

Cillian Brian Lawlor son of James & Jennifer Lawlor
Chloe Harper & Summer Grace Beverley daughters of Casey & Emma Beverley
Zoe Jane Mason daughter of Brendan & Rachel Mason
Summer Lorna Selby daughter of Shannon Selby
Zachary John Costanzo-Dabb son of Andrew Costanzo & Calum Dabb
Cleo Michelle Grimshaw daughter of Kurt & Candice Grimshaw
Myles PJ Wilson son of Matthew & Kimberley Wilson
Finn Taylor Willis son of Henry & Alexandra Willis
Veda & West Damiani daughter and son of Zac & Simmone Damiani
Mackenzie Anne Deveson daughter of Tom & Erica Deveson
Rose daughter of Campbell & Sylvia
Tayte & Alora Cole son and daughter of Michael Cole & Amber Renouf
Tom Harry Neal Ringrose son of Mark & Laura Ringrose
Poppy Elsie daughter of Ryan & Natalie
Lucas Alexander Boxall son of Jarrod & Susannah Boxall
Thomas Henry Robinson son of Danny & Melinda Robinson
Spencer Elsie Eddington daughter of Michael & Ashlea Eddington
Siena Trbusic daughter of Ivan & Rosalinda Trbusic
Charlie Thomas Kokkinos son of Christopher & Michelle Kokkinos
Amelia Mae Crowder daughter of Sean & Kerrin Crowder
Indie Jay Strachan-Haynes daughter of Nathan Haynes & Sarah Strachan
Caleb James son of Kevin & Emily
Alma Geuzi daughter of Mariano Geuzi & Maria Bechelli
Mack Daniel Madafferi son of Daniel & Emma Madafferi
Quinn Maggy Mallisioras daughter of Nicholas & Marta Mallisioras
Noah John Greene son of Matthew & Vanessa Greene
Emma daughter of Richard & Rachel
Eden Scarlet Farrell daughter of Jesse & Sorchia Farrell
Mia Casari-Hanley daughter of Neil Hanley & Sara Casari

**“Whoever welcomes a child in My name,
welcomes Me.” – Luke 9:46-48.**



We hold in prayer all who have passed recently

"It is in dying that we are born to eternal life." St Francis of Assisi



*Mark Goldsmith (57).
Mark passed away on the
2nd of March 2022.
Mark's memorial service
was held at St Brigid's on
16th March 2022.*



*Concetta Campagna (89).
Concetta passed away on the
15th of January 2022.
Concetta's funeral was held
at St Brigid's on
29th March 2022.*



*Anthony (Tony) Medlicott
(89). Tony passed away on
the 19th of March 2022.
Tony's funeral was held at
St Louis de Montfort's on
30th March 2022.*



*Erwin Roschutz (88).
Erwin passed away on the
1st of April 2022.
Erwin's funeral was held at
St Louis de Montfort's on
8th April 2022.*



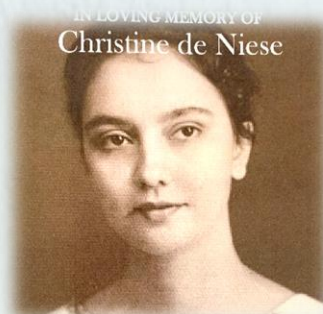
*Angela D'Amelio (39).
Angela passed away on the
31st of March 2022.
Angela's funeral was held
at St Peter's East Benthleigh
on 11th April 2022.*



*Mary Shoppee (79).
Mary passed away on the
7th of May 2022.
Mary's funeral was held at
St Brigid's on
13th May 2022.*



*Philip John Murphy (75).
Philip passed away on
the 8th of May 2022.
Philip's funeral was held
at St Louis de
Montfort's on 18th May
2022.*



*Christine de Niese (86).
Christine passed away on
the 11th of May 2022.
Christine's funeral was
held at Renowden Chapel,
Springvale Botanical
Cemetery on 3rd June 2022.*



UNDERSTANDING FIRST NATION SPIRITUALITY

An evening with Sherry Balcombe

Our Justice Action Group (JAG) Charter* includes working on issues of understanding and respect for First Nation People. We were delighted when Sherry Balcombe, Manager of Aboriginal Catholic Ministry agreed to be a guest speaker online recently.

We advertised Sherry's online talk widely, including to the 35 other Earthcare parishes across Australia, our local primary and secondary schools and social justice groups from other parishes.

More than 55 screens came online, and many had up to and more than 5 people.

We were so lucky to have Sherry share so much of her knowledge and experience of Aboriginal Spirituality and culture -the oldest, longest continuous culture in the world. A spirituality born in "us" which is earth centred and where land is sacred. To live as one with each other and the land regarding the land as our Mother.

Sherry's presentation included slides on Symbols, Ceremony, Belief in the Creator Spirit, ancient Rituals, Myths and Stories often recorded in cave paintings thousands of years old. She then compared the relevance of Aboriginal symbols in ceremony and their equivalent in mainstream church.

The Message stick and stone inlay at St Patrick's Cathedral ***states "to acknowledge the wrongs of the past and highlight the special place Aboriginal People occupy in the Church."***

We learnt that Aboriginal Catholic Ministry was born out of Pope John Paul II first visit to Australia/Darwin in 1986 when he said:

"Until Aboriginal people and their contribution has been JOYFULLY accepted, the Church in Australia will not be the Church Jesus wants it to be. "

Sherry challenged us to be moved to action and make Church open and welcome to all.

To Celebrate Reconciliation and NAIDOC week and particularly with the likelihood of a referendum soon, to vote YES to enable a Voice to Parliament. Our First Nation People need a seat at the table and want to "do nothing for us without us."

**You can pick up a copy of our JAG Charter in the church foyers or on our [parish website here](#).*

If you missed this amazing evening, you can find the recording on the [parish website here](#)

Words: Julie Buick (JAG Steering Group)



STAINED GLASS WINDOWS AT THE ABORIGINAL CATHOLIC MINISTRY



SHERRY'S FAMILY BAPTISM COOLAMON
COMMISSIONED BY HER AUNTY. PAINTED BY HER
BROTHER FROM A TREE SOURCED FROM HER
GRANDFATHER'S COUNTRY MULLARIDGIE.
TO DATE 3 GRANDSONS HAVE BEEN BAPTISED IN IT.

ST LOUIS' CHURCH MEMORIAL GARDEN

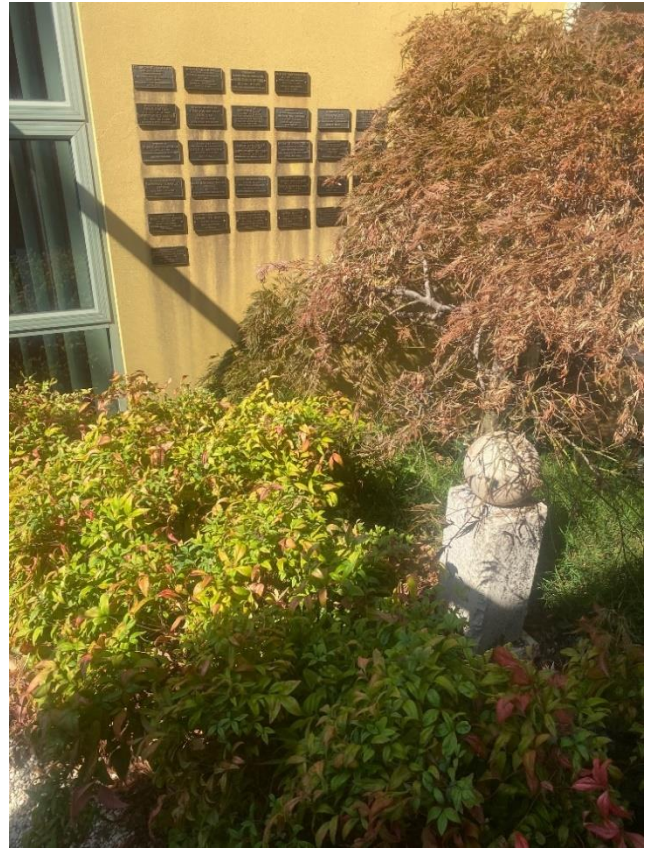


Many will have noticed the beautiful transformation of our Memorial Garden at St Louis'. Under the supervision of Fr Andrew, the buried ashes of the dearly departed were reverently removed and placed in their new home. Fr Andrew will bless the new garden in the coming weeks, inviting the families of those who have a loved one remembered in the garden, to join the blessing.

The area will be delightful for sitting in quiet reflection or catching up with a friend for a 'cuppa'. With thanks to Dan O'Conner and Cameron from MJ Gardening and Landscapes for the work on both the Memorial Garden and cleaning up the garden beds in front of the church, allowing more light into our church and allowing passers-by to clearly see the church signage. Sincere thanks also to our Men's Group who made a significant monetary contribution to the garden's revitalisation.



BEFORE



AFTER



WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO THE CHURCH?

Almost sixty parishioners and two very special friends from the Hawthorn parish (Immaculate Conception & St Joseph's) joined in person at St Louis' to watch a video presentation recently from three of the world's most influential leaders in church renewal - Revd. Nicky Gumbel (Vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton & Alpha pioneer), Bishop Robert Barron (Bishop of Minnesota Diocese, Founder Word on Fire Catholic Ministries) and Fr James Mallon (Parish Priest of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dartmouth, Canada and founder of the Divine Renovation Ministry.). The three men held an engaging and informative session exploring what the last two years have revealed about the Church, what we have learned, and what we need to focus on as we look to the future in the context of evangelisation and discipleship.

As we slowly emerge into a post-pandemic world, mission-minded parish leaders know we have an incredible opportunity to recommit our energies to finding bold and new ways to evangelise. This is so pertinent for the work our parish has begun with our "Opening the Door's to Christ's love" Parish Mission. But there are important questions many are wrestling with: What is the most urgent call for the Church? What have the past two years revealed about the Church and how she is fulfilling her mission? What are we being called to repent of, to turn from, and to turn towards?

If you missed this event, you can watch the recording [here](#)

After the video discussion, our parishioners discussed what the talk meant for our own parish. The discussions were lively and positive. It was indeed a Spirit-filled evening. Some of the anonymous personal commitment's attendees wrote on the night, are highlighted below. Based on the enthusiastic response, we intend to offer similar sessions throughout 2022. **Words: Berna Wake**



"Learn to love more through my words and actions"
"Commit myself fully to Christ's teachings"
"Being open to what the Holy Spirit is saying"
"Be involved in change"
"Become more involved in the church community"
"Step out of my comfort zone"
"Appreciate & use the gifts I have received"
"Support new parishioners and visitors"



"Accept the faith journey of others"
"Build my relationship with Jesus"
"Spend more time with the parish community"
"Give our baptism families opportunities to connect with our parishioners"
"God is moulding me to be part of his plan to spread the Good News"
"Express to others what God has done and continues to do for me"

SISTER JOAN CHITTISTER

Sr Joan Chittister – ‘We are the Church, it is up to us’



American Benedictine nun, Sr. Joan Chittister, is one of the most influential religious and social leaders of our time. Sr Joan is currently in Australia as a guest speaker at a series of events across the country.

Twenty-eight members of our parish community journeyed into the Melbourne Town Hall on Thursday 12 May to be inspired and engaged by Sr. Joan as she energetically and passionately implored us to take up *‘the other half of Jesus’*, His role as the Prophet, as opposed to the Jesus we mostly feel ‘comfortable’ with.

And what is the Jesus that we tend to be comfortable with? In Joan’s words it is a vision of *“Jesus in the jacuzzi”*, the merciful, gentle, kind Jesus. However, Sr Joan stressed that there was another side to Jesus. The one who stood up and called out the religious and civil leaders of His time. He was not timid in confronting greed, self-interest, injustice, arrogance, and outright hypocrisy. Jesus didn’t use excuses to opt out and leave it to others – such as, we are too old, too young, too tired, too uneducated, too inexperienced, too busy, it’s someone else’s job

Sr Joan reminded us that Jesus walked headlong into the issues of His day and held people accountable. She said, **now is the time for us**, all of us, to take on the role we were given at Baptism, to be prophets in our time. Sr Joan was clear in her detailing of where and why **we** in our time, need to stand up for the planet, the poor, the trafficked, women, the marginalised, the working poor, the refugees, and for any person or place in society or in our church – because often nobody else is speaking up.

***“Time changes
nothing...
People do!”***

Sr Joan cast her eyes out into the town hall auditorium filled with over 1000 people and challenged all present to ‘get on with it’ to ensure we do not

leave our planet, our society, or our church in a state worse than when we inherited them from our ancestors. She implored us not to use excuses like church clericalism, self-serving politicians and business interests as being obstacles on the way to a better church, a better society, and a better world.

We are the Church; it is up to us.

I was reminded of another great prophet, *“Be the change that you wish to see in the world” (Mahatma Gandhi)*

Words: Berna Wake

FORMED – THE CATHOLIC FAITH ON DEMAND

We live in a digital age. Reaching people today with Christ's message needs new and creative avenues.

Our parish now has a subscription to [FORMED](#), a premier online platform filled with over 4,000 Catholic studies, movies, audio dramas, talks, e-books, and even cartoons for our children. Often referred to as 'Catholic Netflix', FORMED is an incredible resource to deepen our personal faith and improve our understanding and knowledge of the Sacraments and Scriptures.

Our parish will be using the material on FORMED to support our ministries and provide continuing education for our Parish Leadership Team, Parish Pastoral Council, and parishioners. Our current series **THE SEARCH**, which we are holding in-person gatherings in June and July is part of the content offered by FORMED.



You have easy access to all the material on FORMED, free of charge to support your own faith journey and that of your family members.

You can enjoy FORMED on your computer, tablet, mobile or smart TV. The best way to experience FORMED regularly is to *Just press play – watch (listen) for ten minutes, and if you don't like it, try something else on FORMED.*

To gain free access to all FORMED's content, follow these simple steps:

- [Visit signup.formed.org](https://www.formed.org/signup)
- Enter our parish's postcode (3195)
- Enter your name and your email address

We hope that you and your family will enjoy many happy hours viewing the quality content on FORMED and we will provide regular recommendations on programs to watch in our parish newsletter.

SHAPING THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

Pope Francis has invited the universal church to reflect upon “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission”; the theme of the 16th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops which will take place on October 2023.



The Melbourne Archdiocese has synthesised responses from parishes across the archdiocese. The report will now take its part in a combined national report, which will be sent to the General Secretariat for the Synod of Bishops to be considered alongside contributions from other parts of the Church around the world.

Nine themes emerged that provide a synthesis of the submissions from the Archdiocese of Melbourne:

1. Ongoing impact, learning from and response to the sexual abuse crisis.
2. Co-responsibility between clergy and laity.
3. Welcoming the gifts of women in the Church.
4. Liturgy and prayer.
5. Community beyond liturgy.
6. Welcoming people on the margins.
7. Catholic education and formation of teachers.
8. Zeal for mission.
9. Families at the heart of renewal

All are encouraged to read the full report which is a manageable 16 pages. It is available on our parish website [here](#).

As Sr Joan Chittister reminds us if we want to see change in our Church today, we must get involved personally and not leave it up to someone else.

Here are some direct quotes from the report written by Melbourne parishioners:

“The laity were and still are shaken to the core by the bishops’ betrayal of our trust.”

“We also encourage co-responsibility of the laity because they can help the Church to foster a sense of family.”

“We want a Church... which acknowledges that everyone is equal because of their baptism, so women should have their voices heard, and have roles opened up for them.”

“Above all power of prayer must be cultivated through families, churches, schools, and catechists. May we see revival.”

“Some groups are actively discouraged from taking their rightful place in the Church, most notably: women, the divorced and remarried, LGBTIQ+ people.”

“We have been catechised without conviction . . . we need more than just knowledge but the truth about our faith and the role of the Holy Spirit that has been poured on all equipping us together for mission.”

“The Church is very good at producing Catholics through its sacraments and education institutions, but it falls short of retaining and sustaining all its people as a growing, nurtured and flourishing body of Christ.”

“What is the institutional church doing for young families...?”



CONGRATULATIONS MAX O'CONNOR



CONGRATULATIONS NATHAN LOFFEL



CONGRATULATIONS LOUISA HEALY

Congratulations to all our First Communicants



CONGRATULATIONS JUDE BAILEY



CONGRATULATIONS CHLOE FORBES



CONGRATULATIONS LUCA CARRAZZO



St Mary of the Cross
Catholic Parish
EMBODING CHRIST'S LOVE

Blessings June 2022