

ST PATRICK'S MORTLAKE

33 GALE STREET MORTLAKE

Parish Newsletter Summer 2017

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

At the beginning of the season of Advent, I am honoured to pass on this message in the first edition of this St Patrick's Parish newsletter.

At the outset I would like, on behalf of everyone in our Parish, to express deep appreciation to the team who have launched this Parish Newsletter. It is the beginning of a range of new communications throughout our Parish, including new electronic and social media platforms.

This is the advent of new communications for our Parish and it coincides with the beginning of the 2017 Season of Advent throughout the whole Church.

Unlike the season of Lent, Advent is not a time of fasting but, rather, a period of joyful expectation leading up to the great feast of Christmas.

The word 'Advent' is derived from the Latin word 'Adventus' and means 'The Coming'. We are about to celebrate 'the coming' of Jesus into our human family four weeks from now. Of course, our English word 'adventure' also derives from the word 'Advent'. It is hoped that this 2017 Season of Advent will be an adventure for each and every one of us. Everything we do over the next four weeks can be a prayerful adventure.

Every gift we buy for a family member, or a friend, is a prayer. Every human act of kindness is a prayer of thanks to our God who, in the person of Jesus, became a human being like each one of us. In so doing we have all been drawn into God's life. Because of the Christmas event every human being has a new dignity and a new purpose in life.

Charles Dickens, writing about this season, said:

"This is a precious time..in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their hearts freely".

May the sacredness of Advent open our hearts to the wonder of the incarnation of Jesus.

Monsignor John

WELCOME

Welcome to this first edition of the 2017 newsletter. At the Parish Assemblies earlier in the year, one of the key suggestions was better communication. One aspect of this better communication is this newsletter.

We've included a round-up of what's happening in the Parish and some interesting stories and quotes from our parishioners. If you would like to contribute, please contact one of the team.

The next edition will be issued in Autumn 2018. In the meantime, stay tuned for the launch of our new website. Enjoy Christmas and a good read.

St Pat's Communication Team

Christmas 2017

Please join us to celebrate

Sunday 24th December

6.00pm Vigil (Children's Christmas Mass)

8.00pm

Midnight Mass

Monday 25th December

Christmas Day

9.00am

10.30am



Parish Assembly Update

Our Parish Assembly which was held in May was attended by many parishioners who showed a great interest in the future of our parish of St Patrick's Mortlake. As a result many wonderful initiatives have taken place and the fruits of these are starting to emerge now.

The objectives of the Assembly were to re-energise the parish and to encourage parishioner ownership of St Patrick's here in Mortlake. We hoped to move toward a more self-managed parish to relieve the parish priest of his administrative workload and to focus on evangelisation.

Initiatives that have been started include the establishment of a Communications Group with a representative on the Parish Council. This group has been focussing on the parish website which is now restructured and up to date. This newsletter is another initiative of the group which will be issued on a quarterly basis.

A Social Justice Group has been established and has already had several meetings and a guest speaker presentation.

The focus on Evangelisation is evident on our website & this new ministry has been absorbed into the Faith Education Ministry. Much more is happening with our youth with that ministry being expanded following the Assembly. You will have seen our Youth Mass in November & the promotion for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival in December. The Faith Education Group is offering an Advent "Heartbeat" program which is detailed in this newsletter and there are many other initiatives which will be released in early 2018.

One recommendation which has been deferred is the appointment of a part-time parish administrator. This will be revisited in early 2018 with the objective of easing the workload of our parish priest and the parish ministry leaders. We still have much to do but we are very encouraged with the progress to date and thank all who volunteered to be part of our parish renewal moving forward.

Jose Turns 100

Parishioner Jose Teran celebrated his 100th birthday on Sunday 19th November. Jose and his late wife Eva migrated to Australia from Ecuador in 1972 and he has lived in the Concord area close to our church since he arrived in Australia. Jose and Eva brought seven of their eight children to Australia having lost one in Ecuador. Jose now has 17 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren. Jose is also a skilled cabinetmaker and has made some wonderful furniture over the years. When he first arrived, Jose worked in a furniture factory but spent most of his work years as a carriage and wagon builder for NSW Railways. He shares his birthday with granddaughter Monique who turned 22 on the same day. No doubt there was a big family celebration. In January, his children Sylvio and Sharon are taking Jose back to Ecuador for three weeks which will be his first return trip. A Papal Blessing was organised to recognise the great milestone and we all wish Jose our warm congratulations.



Our Pastoral Care Team Helps Jose

Our Parish Pastoral Care team assists Jose with bringing him to and from church each Sunday. Team member Denise Norman has done this for Jose for the past seven years and transport for parishioners needing assistance to and from church is only one of our Pastoral Care Group's activities. The group has 18 active members and they also assist with:

- Taking communion to the housebound.
- Transporting the unwell to medical appointments & shopping.
- Offering light refreshments on occasions following Mass.
- Distributing chocolates on Father's Day & flowers on Mother's Day.
- Sending welcome letters to those new to the parish.
- Sending cards to housebound and needy parishioners at Christmas.

If anyone is keen to become involved in this important parish ministry they can contact Betty Flynn on 8757 3307

Advent Invitation

A Faith Education initiative is planned for Advent with the popular "Heartbeat" sessions being offered in the parish hall on Monday evenings at 7:30pm on four consecutive Mondays during Advent commencing on Monday 27th November. It is recognised that there is a great need within our world for support in our prayer lives. This support nurtures the development of our relationship with God and in turn supports our day to day wellbeing.

The "Heartbeat" programmes offers a process for praying the scriptures with the hope that we may deepen our relationship with Jesus and draw on the wisdom of the Spirit which offers us guidance, compassion, direction and peace.

Gathering around the scriptures unites people from all places within the church.

The need to refuel and take the time and space to pay attention to the Holy Spirit is answered in meeting weekly and using the Lectio Divina method to ponder on the Gospel of the coming Sunday, reflect on what is happening in our own life and pray in connection with others.

All are welcome to attend — we hope to see many of you in the parish hall at 7:30pm on Monday 27th November. A note on your calendar perhaps.



With Parish 2020 in full action after the Parish Assembly, Youth Ministry at St Patrick's Mortlake has been revitalised. With enthusiasm and interest both young and old are working together to encourage and support the faith development of the youth in our Parish. To achieve this a group of young and older parishioners have joined together and have formed a group that has met twice to discuss the issues and ideas of Youth Ministry that were brought up at the Parish Assembly.

The first meeting centred around ideas of how the Ministry could empower the youth of our Parish. It decided that we would begin the process with a Youth Mass & Social focusing on 10-12 year olds across a number of Parishes in our Deanery.

As a result, flyers were created and distributed and announcements made at Masses at St Patrick's, St Ambrose, Our Lady of the Assumption. Flyers were also distributed to Public schools in the local area through the schools and Parishes. A big thank you to those schools, particularly the Family Educators and Parishes for their generous support.

The Mass & Social was held on Sunday 5th November with Mass at 6pm and a BBQ at the Presbytery.

The Mass focussed on our children and Youth who participated as Acolyte, Musicians, Singers, Readers, and took part in the Offertory procession, both collections and welcoming everyone as they arrived. A big thank you to all the young people who so willingly gave of themselves in service.

Following the Mass, a BBQ social was held at the Presbytery attended by parents, children and youth and was enjoyed by all who attended. As a result of this joyful experience the Youth Ministry has been asked if another Mass & Social could be held.

At future meetings the group will review this first event and discuss and organise the next Mass and Social with a view of it being held in early December.



If you feel you have something to offer Youth Ministry or are interested in being part of this enthusiastic group, please contact ruella@bigpond.com with the subject line "Youth Ministry". For more photos of the event go to stpatsmortlake.org.au

The Parish Social Justice Mission Group is up and moving. We have had two meetings and there are 11 members and growing.

At the first meeting a light meal was shared and a discussion took place on what the members understood social justice to mean. They also spoke about the ideas that each of them had that held a special interest or passion in relation to our fellow humans, our community and issues of faith and of the world.

The group was joined by Mrs Chantelle Ogilvie-Evans who currently works for The Sydney Alliance in the area of refugees and asylum seekers. Chantelle spoke about a number of Social Justice issues that the Sydney Alliance are focusing on and offered ongoing support, for table talks in the future or for us to get involved in the current Sydney Alliance initiatives regarding Affordable Housing and a Living Wage For all.

At the second meeting another meal was shared. Dr Kimberley Doyle from the Justice and Peace office of the Archdiocese assisted us to break open our understanding of Catholic Social Justice, as per the teachings of the church. A workshop followed covering proven methods of small group organisation, how to select topics of focus and tools to include our Parish, Parishioners and the wider community without making anyone feel they have to commit for life! Inviting people with certain skills and interests to 'dip in and out' of a core group, has proven to be an excellent way to engage individuals, in a time poor society. This may suit those who have knowledge and skills to share but who cannot commit fully.

We started a list of topics that the group is interested in and would invite Parishioners to email or contact us with areas of Social Justice that you are interested in highlighting. (Contact Sinead Kent at skent00@gmail.com or via the Parish Office). Please contact us for further details of meetings.

"Catholic Social Teaching covers all spheres of life – the economic, political, personal and spiritual. With human dignity at its centre, a holistic approach to development, founded on the principles of CST, is what Pope Paul VI called 'authentic development'"



2017 has been a very exciting year for our very new St Patrick's Catholic Primary School. We have 50 students across Kindergarten to Year 2 in three classrooms and by the time this article goes to print we will have welcomed our 60 new Kindergarten children for 2018 at their special Orientation Morning.



We have shared many special moments this year and thank Father John for all his support and his beautiful Parish Parklands. We started by welcoming the new parents as school started in Father's backyard. Other special moments included our small Blessing and Opening, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day and our most recently, Grandparents

Day. Opening the school for the community on the 5th March was so successful, with hundreds of parishioners and community visiting that we will ensure we open our beautiful new building, again, this coming March. To listen to the children praying and singing to their Grandparents last week was truly special.

The children have grown and learnt so much this year. It is really a privilege to be part of their learning journey. They have enjoyed many extra activities such as Dance and Gymnastics, an inaugural Sports Day, a visit to Wangal reserve, the Zoo and a live performance in at Darling Harbour, finishing with swimming in December.

We have also watched our amazing building rise up out of the ground. The builders have been polite and helpful and very focussed to have a December completion date. The inside spaces are really starting to look amazing and we have some very



special vistas in the building. I hope we will be able to focus on learning and not the views!

I'll look forward to sharing our beginnings in our new building in the next newsletter.

Amanda Westgate
Principal, St Patrick's School Mortlake

Our parish Social Ministry has expanded since the Parish Assembly and is very active in offering opportunities for our parishioners to have some fun. These initiatives include our Parish Dinner, Christmas in July, and Weekly bingo in the parish hall on Mondays at 10am followed by morning tea (all welcome).

The group also support our Catechists by providing refreshments after our children receive the Sacraments and following the annual Mass for the Mortlake Primary Catholic students and their families. An upcoming event is the Bingo / Parish 2017 Christmas Lunch to be held at Carmen's on the Park at the Barnwell Park Golf Club at Canada Bay on Wednesday 29th November. The cost is only \$30 which includes the main meal, desert and coffee and tea.



If you would like to come please contact
Anne Manenti on 8765 8260

"Faith makes all things possible, Love makes all things easy, Hope makes all things work."

My name is Kirsty Lucas, and I am the Family Educator at the St Patrick's School. My role is a relatively new initiative by Sydney Catholic Schools to enhance the faith life of the parents of our school community. It is a diverse role where I create opportunities for our families to enhance their faith through prayer, education, social interaction and outreach programs.

This year, we have been busy working with our parents to create the foundation relationships which will build our community. Next school year we will welcome a greater number of families, and thus greater opportunities to grow our links to the Parish community through some new initiatives involving both school and parish families.

I will be using this parish newsletter to reach out and invite the parishioners of St Patrick's Church to participate in our initiatives such as asking for nannas who may want to help teach children to knit, or seeking grandfathers who can assist in making hand tooled art works with the school children, and a plethora of other opportunities to come together as one family. Take care, God Bless

Kirsty Lucas
Family Educator, St Patrick's School Mortlake