



ST PATRICK'S PARISH
MORTLAKE



Parish Newsletter Spring 2020

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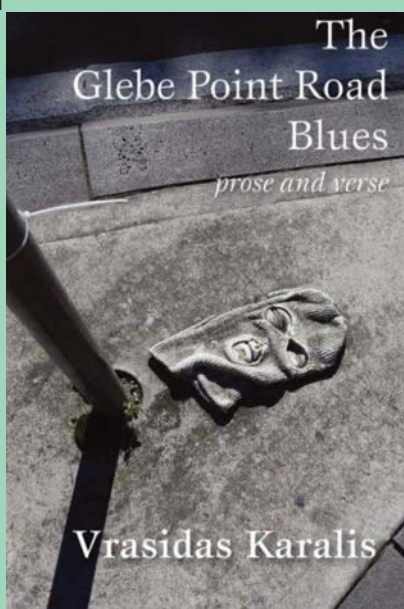
Message from Fr Tom

I've recently been reading *The Glebe Point Road Blues*. It is a book described as "depicting the quirky microcosm of social outcasts and eccentric individuals with a metaphysical twist". It's a great easy read. In it the reader is given the privilege of meeting and hearing the back - stories of some of the local characters of Glebe Point Road, Glebe. We meet: Menny, the Jewish Iraqi man who fled Iraq in 1954, found regularly sobbing in the street, Charbel the Maronite womanising romantic poet, Kurt the annoying racist Nazi, Joseph the young man who struggles with addiction and finds himself working as a male sex worker, Morag, now deceased, accused of robbery and assault and known as the 'witch' of the area.

The characters we meet are real, raw, flawed and beautiful. They live in our city. None of them seek to create a perfect 'Facebook' or 'Instagram' post or image to portray an illusory 'perfection'. We initially see their quirks and flaws, but each character delves deep in their story and we view their essence, being, meaning and sense of the transcendent.

The people, with all their joys and flaws, are authentic and walk along a similar path in Glebe, just as we too struggle with joys and flaws here at Mortlake. Joseph the male sex worker sums it up best when he says: "Maybe because you are, we all are, more than the total sum of our actions"

Fr. Tom



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&id=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.

Our Parish Honours two generous People

THE DEMPSEY Medal is awarded annually by the Archbishop of Sydney to members of the Catholic clergy and laity. This Honour is named in recognition of a lay Catholic pioneer from Sydney's early European settlement, James Dempsey. It especially honours and recognises those who have made an outstanding contribution in the context of their local parish.

This award was presented at Mass on Sunday 27 September to two of our parishioners Mr William (Bill) Cramsie and Mr Ottavio (Otto) Petrin by Monsignor John Usher and Father Tom Stevens. Because of Covid-19 restrictions the award was unable to be presented at St Mary's Cathedral, by Archbishop Anthony Fisher.

Bill and Otto have each given over 50 years of outstanding service to St Pat's in various volunteering capacities.



Council and Finance Committee. He also serves as a member of the local St Vincent de Paul Society. As Monsignor Usher said at the presentation, if there was something to be done, Bill would do it.

Otto has likewise merited this award because of his dedication to the Church's mission through his service to our parish. Otto has been a parishioner for more than 50 years with six different parish priests during this time. He has served as an Acolyte, mentor, and maintenance man. Of course Otto is remembered especially for his wonderful care of the parish gardens. To quote Archbishop Anthony Fisher: "He continues to inspire through his commitment at the age of 91." Both men have been supported by their wives, Marie Cramsie and Claire Petrin, who accompanied them at Mass along with many family members and friends to witness the presentation of their awards. Marie and Claire certainly deserve a share of the honours of this award.

Congratulations Bill and Otto. <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/about-us/the-dempsey-medal/>



Bill has merited this award because of his dedication to the Church's mission through his service to our parish where he has worked as a volunteer cleaner, reader and as a member of the Parish Pastoral



Faces of St Pats - Mrs Brenda Johnston, Parish Secretary

Mrs Brenda Johnston has been working in the St Pat's parish office since June 2008. During this time she has worked mostly with Father (Monsignor) John Usher and now in the last 12 months, Father Tom Stevens. The other assisting priests in this time were Father Mark Podesta, Father Robert Doohan and Father Silvio. She has had a wonderful working relationship with each of them. They have also been very receptive to any ideas she might have suggested over the years.

A typical day in the office might involve answering the phone, helping to prepare the weekly Bulletin, seeing to the needs of parishioners as they come, finalising details and printing Baptismal Certificates. Of course now with the Covid-19 precautions there is more checking to do to ensure we are all safe.

Brenda can name several highlights during her time at St Pat's. One of the most memorable involved her being part of the team during the 2009 restoration of the church. This was a most exciting time and a wonderful experience. Brenda was very much in awe of Mrs Ann Johnston who coordinated the restoration.

Brenda is also a member of the parish Social Ministry and thinks our parish is unique in all the events that are organised for Parishioners. In a normal year the Annual Parish Dinners are very popular and are well attended. The First Holy Communion breakfasts have also been very special in the past. Let's hope they will return next year, as well as all the other parish functions that have had to be cancelled this year especially the many that were to be part of our 125th Anniversary celebrations.

The opening of St Pat's school has also been quite special. As Brenda and I were talking in the office we could hear the shouts and laughter of the St Pat's school children who use the nearby St Pat's Parklands as an overflow playground. The sounds of the children bring a liveliness and vibrancy to the parish, and in youth there is a positive force for change in the future of the church. It demonstrates the extent to which we are a community based parish and this is one of St Pat's main strengths.

However, this year, during the Covid-19 pandemic has been unlike any before.

Brenda has felt the loneliness of people especially during the initial shut down period. A church without its people is a very lonely place. She says some of the actions taken by Father Tom to lift our spirits during this time have been very positive: music amplified from the church, the different feasts' decorations in the windows of the Narthex and the revamped colourful weekly Bulletins, emailed to parishioners. Of course, Father Tom has been helped by creative parishioners, and credit must go to Mr Mario Sita for

his work on the Bulletin and the new Mass Booking system.

This ability to book your attendance at Sunday Mass is yet another positive outcome. It will be a long while before our church can hold more than 50 people at a time, but at present this is of course better than the church being closed.

Brenda has a very positive outlook, too, about our parish and its future. She believes that St Pat's will continue to grow: we have a strong caring community and the youthfulness of the children at the parish school and at Mortlake Public School where our catechists volunteer will spill over and keep us all young — from the children to the sacraments to all of us.

Many thanks Brenda for your cheerfulness, service and dedication, we appreciate all you do so much.



This year has seen lots of changes within all schools with regulations reducing activities and excursions. This has only helped the school team to become more inventive as to how we go about giving children different experiences and keeping our community connected.

We have still been able to celebrate many special occasions through technology and every single child at our school was able to mime and wish their dads a very different Father's Day as part of a special liturgy. Our Year 2 children were still able to make their first Reconciliation and our Year 3 students their very first Eucharist. Both Sacraments were a great collaboration between Parish and School, respectful, thoughtful and reverent.

We had a "Sportswear for Catholic Care" mufti day, with lots of amazing sporting teams being represented. The children raised over \$500.00 to support the wonderful work of Catholic Care.

All our children from Year 1 to Year 5 have participated in Public Speaking with finals in early September, ready for a big Zoom Grand final towards the end of term. Two professors of Public Speaking from the parish were invited to be adjudicators. Professor M Piccin and Professor B Johnston. They were very impressed with the calibre of the speeches and the children have really enjoyed the opportunity to take part in public speaking this term.

We are looking forward to term 4 and more celebrations ahead, especially having a school in the 125th year of the parish.

Amanda Westgate
Principal, St Patrick's School Mortlake



We may have missed out on lots of our usual planned spiritual and social activities during these last 7 months but our parish community is still very vibrant as you can see in this Spring edition. We have much to be thankful for. So keep calm and read on.

- ✚ Congratulations to Sister Jan on the celebration of her Golden Jubilee (14th September 2020).
- ✚ Congratulations to Bill Cramsie and Otto Petrin on being awarded the Archbishop of Sydney's Dempsey Medal, recognising their outstanding contribution and service to the parish of St. Pat's over 50 years. Their medals were presented by Father Tom at Mass on 27 September.
- ✚ Congratulations to all the First Communicants. Many thanks to those who prepared them and of course, their parents, their first educators.
- ✚ Our own book, An Enduring Flame written by Dr Damian Gleeson celebrating 125 years of the history of St Pat's is soon to be launched. Watch out for more news.
- ✚ The collection of recipes from St Pat's Mortlake is also being compiled in a special anniversary book. Have you contributed your favourite recipe yet?
- ✚ Have you seen the historic Travelling altars that have been displayed recently in the Narthex?
- ✚ Our parish gardens are showing a beautiful display of spring flowers thanks to Stephanie and her band of volunteer gardeners.
- ✚ The new look: people attending Mass are now encouraged to wear masks. Safety first.

The Communication Ministry hopes you enjoy our Spring 2020 edition of the St Pat's Newsletter and that our parish community keeps well and stays safe.

Get social with us....



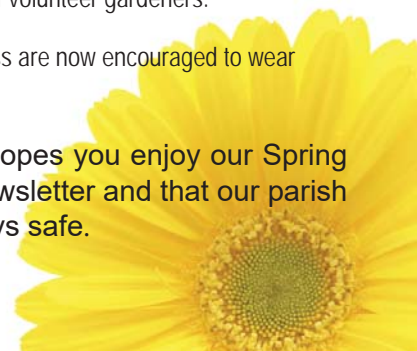
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First Sacraments in 2020



The past six months have presented challenges in our parish and at home where we have been forced to face situations that we have not encountered before. This was the case with our First Sacrament parish programs for Reconciliation and First Holy Communion where we had the choice of deferring the programs till 2021 or finding a safe way to proceed and offer the sacraments to the children this year. We took the latter challenge and it was a good decision as we were able to offer 63 young Catholics their First Reconciliation and 40 young Catholics their First Holy Communion.

Addressing the issues was different for both sacraments with our parish instruction for Reconciliation needing to be suspended due to the coronavirus after two of the four instruction sessions. We decided that as the parents were becoming familiar with home schooling, that they could give their children home instruction for the final two sessions. This worked well and following a brief recap with the candidates on both evenings the First Reconciliation for the 63 candidates went ahead wonderfully.

With the First Holy Communion we were not able to properly instruct the 40 candidates in our parish hall and church due to the distancing requirements. As most of the candidates were from St Patrick's

Primary School, School Principal Amanda Westgate offered the school to conduct all of the instruction for the St Patrick's children at the school during school hours. The lessons and practices were coordinated by the Religious Education Coordinator at the school, Ashleigh Cameron and the result was that the 27 St Patrick's Primary School children were presented beautifully to receive their First Holy Communion at a special Mass on Sunday 13th September. The other candidates, mostly from Mortlake Primary School, who had been instructed safely by our parish catechists received their first Holy Communion at a beautiful service the following Sunday 20th September. Both First Sacraments were such a blessing and a big thank you to all who made it possible especially to our Catechists Sinead Kent, Denise Norman, Camilla Vozzo and Bob Mayor and the staff of St Patrick's Primary School.



Gardening at St Pat's - Volunteers Maintain Parish Gardens

Here's a little background about our parish garden and volunteer group.

The structural plants we see around the church were planted by Otto Petrin who looked after the church gardens for over 40 years until quite recently when he was in his 90's.

We love the poinsettia and the echiums that are Otto's garden legacies along with most of the other larger plants we still see in the gardens.

Our garden volunteers are ensuring we keep Otto's plants looking great, however there's enough garden and land around the church for some new plantings as well.

We've got a native garden growing with some of the new plants being sourced from The Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney (from the Nursery attached to the Garden). We've got a hardy succulent garden at the back of the church and it's growing beautifully with bird of paradise plants, yuccas and a range of aloes. We've planted cottage gardens down the lane way behind the church and it's this garden which gets the most positive comments from our local community. The laneway garden is filled with bright poppies, nasturtiums, some herbs and a large mix of other colourful cottage plants.

We're also starting to plant a vegetable and herb garden and it's here that we're really looking to get some more volunteers on board. We're hoping to make a local community garden accessible to everyone. We've started to plant chillies (Gina, Maria and Roberto are our Volunteer chilli gurus) and some other of the more unusual herbs and veggies that you don't find every day.

We've just started sowing a large range of seeds and what we don't plant in the gardens we'll add to Johns' Organic Produce Market in the church hall which is open on Saturday mornings (we're taking an organic approach to our gardens as well).

We're also trying to be as water conscious as we can be, and all of the gardens are mulched to try to conserve as much moisture as possible during the hot summer months.

You are more than welcome to pop in and see how our garden is growing and we'd love to see a few more volunteers on a Saturday morning if you're available.

Stephanie Parker,
Volunteer Gardener



Many thanks Stephanie and helpers.

An Enduring Flame
St Patrick's Mortlake 1895-2020
An Irish-Australian working class community

COMING SOON!

Our own book, celebrating the story of 125 years of St Patrick's Parish Mortlake, is being launched in November.

Watch for further details.

An Enduring Flame

St Patrick's, Mortlake, 1895-2020
An Irish-Australian working class community