



ST PATRICK'S PARISH
MORTLAKE



Parish Newsletter Winter 2021

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Message from Fr Tom

For Christians, the informed conscience must engage in social policy discussion

In Catholicism, an informed conscience is one that is researched and thought out through logic and reason. Over the coming months two important issues are set to be raised in the secular social policy debate. It is important our informed consciences consider these issues.

One is the issue of the merging of all cemetery trusts into a single government-run trust and to dismiss faith-based operators, including the Catholic Cemeteries Trust. This will end 150 years of the Catholic Church's involvement in one of its essential Corporal Works of Mercy, that of burying the dead and the upkeep of grave sites – a task which the Church has done with great dignity, respect and efficiency over the years.

The other issue likely to arise again is that of legalising euthanasia in this state. Informing our views on this issue it is important we seek to inform our conscience with logic and reason, and not merely emotion. To view the great work of palliative care and euthanasia as separate issues. To examine whether we as a society wish to condone the active medical intervention to end a life, and whether in doing so would see us going down a path where we judge certain lives as having a greater dignity than others?

If we say, as we do at Baptism, that the story of Jesus Christ shapes and changes our IDENTITY — then that message is sure to shape our response to both church and secular issues at play in our society. Being a Christian and a person of faith, doesn't extract one from the secular issues. Indeed, it should make one MORE engaged, if we truly believe in the principles of THE COMMON GOOD which underpins Catholic social teaching. That each individual has dignity and we are each interrelated and interdependent on others.

After consideration of all issues with an informed conscience, we may well reach different conclusions which are to be respected in a civilised society.

Fr Tom

Mass information and booking details...

Saturday Vigil: 6:00pm

Sunday Mass: 9:00am
10:30am
6:00pm

Please note: Face masks are **NOT MANDATORY** to wear at mass but **RECOMMENDED**.

Sunday Mass Bookings:

Register online for Mass at:
<https://www.trybooking.com/641739> or
contact the office on: 9743 1017
on Tuesday and Fridays (9:00am-2:00pm).

Weekday Services:

Mass: 8:00am Tuesday — Friday

Communion Services:

8:00am Monday & Saturday

Reconciliation:

5.30pm Saturday

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.

Excellence in Heritage Award for Mortlake Parish

St Patrick's Parish Mortlake is celebrating following two recent awards at the 2021 City of Canada Bay Sustainability Awards. Firstly, the parish received a special Recognition Award for its successful 125th anniversary celebrations held last November.

In the Excellence in Heritage Award, "An Enduring Flame: St Patrick's Mortlake, 1885-2020: An Irish — Australian working — class community" received joint first place. This is the first time the Council has awarded this prize to a history book.

The book, already in its second edition (2021) traverses the history of the Catholic community of Mortlake and Cabarita from the commencement of Irish workers settling in the areas in the 1880s through to the waves of migrants, including the post-World War Two Italian community.

Written from a grass roots approach and using primary sources, "An Enduring Flame" examines in detail the clergy, the Sisters of Charity and the families of the parish. It shows the close connections with Concord and Concord West Catholic parishes, also.

The City of Canada Bay's judges described the

book as 'memorable' and making a strong contribution to local history preservation. Parish representatives at the awards' event included Emeritus Parish Priest, Monsignor John Usher, John Clarke, Chair of the Finance Committee, Brenda Johnston, Parish Secretary, and Historian, Damian Gleeson.

Our parish historian has also written histories of Enfield West, Strathfield, Rockdale and Bexley, and Gympie Parishes. In 2017 he was awarded the prestigious Ron Rathbone Award for Local History by the Bayside City Council.

Dr Damian Gleeson's latest work is a history of early Catholic education in Australia, published in *Australasian Catholic Record*, which overturns a century of inaccurate histories. He is now writing a new history of Irish Catholicism in the penal colony, drawing on primary sources, including the correspondence collection of pioneering cleric, John Therry.

We are very appreciative of Dr Gleeson for producing this excellent book for our Parish, and congratulate him on receiving this Excellence in Heritage award.



Historian, Damian Gleeson, Monsignor John Usher and Mayor Angelo Tsirekas

First Holy Communion

At St Patrick's Mortlake this year we had a record number of 71 boys and girls celebrate their First Holy Communion at two special Masses at 10:30am on Sunday 30th May and on the 6th June. The services were beautifully conducted by Fr Tom and the children received the Sacrament in such a respectful and reverent manner. Unfortunately, due to the number of candidates and the current restrictions, the candidates and their families were limited to one pew per family but many more family members were present at the entrance and outside the church.

So as to celebrate and involve all family members in this wonderful event, all candidates and their families have been invited to a special celebration Mass at 10:30am on the 20th June with refreshments afterwards. We have also had a good response to the parish request to recruit new altar servers from our 2021 First Holy Communicants.

Overall, a great success and a big thank you to those who assisted with the preparation of the children to receive the sacrament and to the families for their wonderful enthusiasm and support.



howard Brown Benefit



30th April 2021 CONCORD GOLF CLUB

Howard Brown has been an advocate and support for Victims of Crime for many years. He received the Order of Australia Medal in 2004 for his work with victims and continues to be a fierce advocate for victims and their families.

He has always been a valuable friend, quick to offer assistance, to all those in need. He has volunteered his time on countless occasions over many years, offering support to his Parish, friends, associates and the wider community.

In December 2020 Howard lost his right leg above the knee, due to an aneurysm. This has completely changed Howard's life and he now faces several adjustments to the way he undertakes his daily tasks.

Anyone who knows Howard appreciates that he would be the last person to ask for help of any kind. The dinner organised on Howard's behalf gave us the opportunity to help and support Howard and thank him for what he has done for so many.

We met some wonderful friends, had our photographs taken with celebrities and had the honour of doing something special for a gentleman who has selflessly served his community for many years.

Many thanks to all who worked behind the scenes helping to make this a very successful evening, including the compère, auctioneer, volunteers and musicians extraordinaire. The evening at Concord Golf Club was an unqualified success, raising over \$40,000. Howard will be able to purchase an especially modified car and have driving lessons with the money raised.

Thank you especially to the Howard Brown Benefit Committee, who put so much time, effort and ingenuity into organising the evening.

Also thanks to The Father Atanasio Gonelli Charitable Fund for their generous donation and their support for members of our community that require assistance. Thank you to all for your support. Your generosity towards Howard is truly appreciated.

*Thank you for the music, the hymns we're singing.
Thanks for the love you're giving
Who can live without you? We ask in all honesty
What would life be?
Without a Howard joke, what are we?
SO we say thank you
for the music, for giving it so free.*





hospitality Mass and Luncheon

The idea for St Patrick's Hospitality Masses and Luncheons is to recognise and welcome specific groups in our parish who would appreciate some support and sense of community.

The first of these events for the year was held on Wednesday 14 April, and focused on the many wonderful carers in our parish who contribute so generously to the welfare of others.

The Mass, said by Fr Tom, took place in the intimate space of the Sanctuary and was followed by a casual lunch in the presbytery. The buzz of conversation and laughter was wonderful to hear and everyone greatly appreciated the opportunity to gather in-person after so many months of COVID-19 restrictions. After such a positive beginning, the organising group is ready to facilitate further events planned for later in the year.

Thank you Father Tom, the carers and Parish volunteers who made this occasion so special.



Bigggest Morning Tea

It was cold and windy but that didn't keep people away from the Biggest Morning Tea in the carpark at St. Patrick's parish church on Friday May 28. The mums from St. Patrick's school did a marvellous job of organising this special event. This was evidenced by the delicious food, the happy crowd, the enthusiastic response to the entertainers and, not to mention, the money raised. Congratulations to this wonderful group of mums and dads.

Entertainment was provided by the Breakfast Point Ukulele Club, the choir from Mortlake Public School and a Bollywood dancer who, after her performance, invited everyone to join in. The school children and some brave adults joined in with enthusiasm.

The organising committee – Amber Kelly-Ringrose, Stephanie Noonan and Stephanie Tse did a wonderful job and an amazing \$5,000 was raised. Well done girls, the Cancer Council is the big winner.



Thank you

Thank you to Peter Coffey for services to assist with the counting and banking each week. All work by our volunteers is gratefully received. Peter has retired after several years of helping out.

Right: Peter and Noela Coffey



It has been a very busy term as we approach Winter this year. We have been fortunate to be able to have many activities happen, as restrictions have eased. The children have attended excursions, and sporting carnivals, participated in The National Reading Hour, celebrated Mary in the month of May and attended the National Mass for Mary Help of Christians at St. Mary's Cathedral. We also managed to complete lots of schoolwork. We were able to celebrate our Mums again this year, which was wonderful (as restrictions happened that weekend).

This term many of our Year 3 students have celebrated their First Holy Communion over two beautiful Sunday Masses and are looking forward to celebrating altogether on the 20th June. Our Year 2 students are coming together for class Reconciliation with four more children participating in the Sacrament.

We have also just commissioned our very first group of 34 Mini Vinnies Children who have taken the pledge to support those in need and raise awareness across our school. We are looking forward to hearing their ideas and suggestions as we all work together to support those in need.

Finally the term will come to a close after we all wear our pyjamas to raise funds for the homeless. Our dads with their children will camp out once again in our Camp Coinda, which will take place on the Parish Grounds

Amanda Westgate
Principal, St Patrick's School Mortlake

Vinnies Mortlake Conference has a wonderful infusion of young, energetic members with the creation of a brand — new Mini Vinnies group at St Patrick's School in May. Coming together in the new group are students from Year 3 to Year 6 who will meet regularly to learn about social justice issues, develop leadership skills and engage with the wider school community and the St Vincent de Paul Society.

St Patrick's Religious Education Coordinator, Ashleigh Cameron, created, and is supporting the group, who will meet regularly during recess and lunchtime to talk, share ideas and concerns, to have fun and support each other. The Mini Vinnies model of "See, Think, Do" is a great way to get young people thinking and talking about their spirituality and to connect their faith with issues affecting their community through volunteering, advocacy and fundraising.

The children received their certificates of membership at a special event in the first week in June. They are already busy working at their first activity which will be to make food packages and sandwiches for the students of St Patrick's, who are sleeping out on the Parish Green on Friday June 18 to support the St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal in June.

The adult conference members are delighted to welcome the new partners and will meet a number of them when they run the breakfast BBQ on the Saturday morning to feed the sleepout crew.



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