



ST PATRICK'S PARISH
MORTLAKE



Parish Newsletter Spring 2022

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Message from fr Tom

"I'm not looking to pass the baton"

A good friend of mine, Danielle, has recently had her art displayed in an exhibition. Her work predominantly focuses on the personal lives of women, especially single mothers, because she is a single mum.

Her series of pieces entitled *The Solo Mum*, I find inspiring. She describes, through her art, experiences of her life as a single mum, through societal expectations, judgment and thoughtless comments people make, and the all-powerful love between her and her son, Henry.



The above image is entitled *I'm not looking to pass the baton*, which she describes:

"During a first date I was telling my potential suitor about Henry. His face dropped and he said, 'I don't think I could raise someone else's kid.' Talk about jumping the gun. I have a hard time sharing food, let alone my child. Needless to say he didn't get a second date. I'm not looking to pass the baton. Henry's mine, all mine forever."

Her art makes me think about how we so easily pigeon-hole individuals and groups. Single mothers are indeed empowered and powerful . . . they have to be. What sense of pre-judgment do I make of different groups I know very little about and have never walked in their shoes? Similarly, I ask myself, what am I as an individual, we as a society, we as a church, doing to empower different individuals and groups?

<https://www.daniellemilnestudio.com/>

Father Tom

Mass information

Saturday Vigil: 6:00pm

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

Weekday Services:

Mass: 8:00am Tuesday - Friday

Communion Services:

8:00am Monday
9:00am Saturday



www.facebook.com/St Patrick's Mortlake



[stpatsmortlake](https://www.instagram.com/stpatsmortlake)

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.

Congratulations Monsignor John on your Golden Jubilee

Congratulations to Mons John who recently celebrated his 50th Jubilee of priestly ordination as a Sydney Archdiocesan priest. What an illustrious career and how lucky is this parish that he spent 33 years of his priesthood at St Patrick's Mortlake!

Progressing through the seminaries at Springwood and Manly, John was ordained on 26th August 1972. Despite being a learned scholar, having attained a Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Social Work and Master of Social Work, he was best known as a good bloke who could engage with all people, young and old, rich and poor.

As Parish Priest of Mortlake, he exercised his pastoral ministry with love, great care, and diligence. His love of life and people, together with his strong sense of social justice and inclusion made him a friend and priest to all. Over the years he celebrated daily Masses, innumerable Christenings, weddings and funerals, and became a loved member of all the parish families. He led the parish in a dedicated, yet uncomplicated ministry of faith, providing us all with scholarly-researched sermons that were simple, yet full of depth and rich meaning. Under his leadership the Parish flourished with the addition of the new St Patrick's School, the refurbishment of the Church and the building of the new presbytery. When he retired in August 2019, he left the parish with a strong foundation of parishioner commitment that Father Tom has inherited and strongly built upon.

Alongside his parish duties, Mons John was Director of Centacare for 25 years, leading staff, clients, Church officials and Government(s) in an era in which the scope and work of the agency expanded greatly. John's skills in social welfare were recognised by the NSW Government when appointed in August 1991 as Chairman of a Ministerial Review Committee dealing with children in long term institutional residential care. In the early 2000s John accepted the invitation to undertake the role of Vicar General for the Sydney Archdiocese, stepping in for the Archbishop when he was away.

The 50 years of priesthood encompassed an era of rapid change in the Archdiocese of Sydney, Centacare, and the St Patrick's Mortlake Parish. John has been a significant catalyst in positioning us all to face the challenges which could not have been imagined when he was first ordained.

Despite his distinguished CV, Mons John's greatest achievement over his 50 years of priesthood has been his deep faith and his love and care for people. His kind and generous nature, alongside his commitment to social justice has provided a legacy which will never be forgotten by his multitude of friends and parishioners at St Patrick's Mortlake.



Faces of St Pat's: Roberto and Gina Zegarra

Roberto and Gina, along with their daughter Maria, joined St Patrick's Parish in 2020, after moving to Concord from Stanhope Gardens. This was at the start of the pandemic, and Roberto and Gina wanted to be closer to their family, who also live in the Concord area, and so that Maria could go to school with her 3 cousins, Valentina, Jade and Ivanna. Maria is in Year 4 at St Patrick's Mortlake.

Roberto and Gina both come from Lima, Peru, and arrived in Australia in 2006. They met while attending their local Catholic School and have beautiful memories from that time. They remember there was a strong relationship between the Parish and the school, noting that "we even had religion classes given by either a priest or a nun. We believe they left a seed in our hearts that is growing now that we are in Australia".

Roberto and Gina have been married since 2005, with the grace of God. They have been through ups and downs together, and are grateful for all the blessings they have received over the years, especially their daughter Maria.

Roberto says "We are lucky to have family members in Australia, and we have made many new friends over the years, so we can say that Australia is truly home now".



Roberto and Gina have become active members of the parish community at St Pat's. They started their involvement by helping Stephanie Parker with the St Pat's Parklands, although they say they didn't know anything about gardening! Roberto says "it has been quite a journey for us - we have learnt a lot (and still do) from Steph. We are very blessed to have her as our friend."

Roberto and Gina are also helping as catechists in Mortlake Public School, and this has been a truly enlightening experience for them. They said, "We thought we were going to teach the kids,



but many times it is us who end up learning new things from them. They are truly eager to learn about our faith." Their daughter, Maria, always gives feedback on the lesson they are preparing to give or does a drawing for them to show during class - the kids love it!

Gina and Roberto were involved in organising the Twilight events, noting that they reminded them of their festivals back home in Peru, especially the St. Pat's Fiesta one!

Roberto and Maria sometimes read at Sunday Mass, and this is something Maria enjoys a lot. Maria also attends the Children's Liturgy and she loves the way Father Tom involves the kids during Mass.

Roberto, Gina and Maria enjoy doing things together as a family. "We always receive more than we give, and for this we are grateful to God."

Thank you,
Roberto, Gina
and Maria.



What's been happening at St Pats

Faith Education Ministry

Our Faith Education Ministry is active in providing information and education including preparation for first sacraments in our parish. We provide scripture lessons to the 140 Catholic students at Mortlake Primary School with our 14 Catechists and Assistants providing a weekly lesson.

We assist children from local schools and St Patrick's Primary School with their first sacrament preparation with the significant numbers for the 2022 sacraments being 61 for **First Reconciliation**, 55 for **First Holy Communion** and 41 for **Confirmation**.

Parish Heartbeat Prayer Sessions are provided by Susan Neylan with Zoom sessions on a weekly basis and, whilst our Parish Faith Education sessions have been affected over the past couple of years

from COVID, these will recommence in coming months. Earlier this year, Father Tom facilitated the interactive **Alpha** Course over a period of 10 weeks. This created a very welcoming space to engage with Jesus and the Gospel. It was much appreciated by those who attended.

We also conduct the preparation for people wanting to join the Catholic Church through our **RCIA** (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) which is presently conducted by two of our catechists. We currently have three ladies undergoing instruction who will hopefully be baptised into our church in late September.

If anyone would like to be involved, or receive information on any aspect of our Faith Education Ministry please contact Bob Mayor at: mayor2411@gmail.com or call him on 0418 228689.





Christmas in July Lunch

On Wednesday 6th July, 2022 a very enjoyable St Pat's Parish lunch as held at Massey Park Brasserie. Social Ministry member Anne Manenti welcomed 60 guests — parishioners and friends. Anne said Grace and gave a special welcome to those new people who have not attended a prior parish social function.

There was an apology from Father Tom who could not attend due to illness. Anne thanked Marie Piccin for her work and contribution to our parish community

and also the ladies who help at Bingo every Monday.

Parishioner Jane Kent was introduced as a surprise vocalist entertaining everyone with a beautiful repertoire of songs. Though the weather was miserable with heavy rain, those present had a most enjoyable time till late afternoon. It was very gratifying to see so many happy parishioners join in the celebrations after a long pause due to COVID.



Henry Indorato and his staff served a delicious 3 course Christmas fare meal. Twelve bottles of wine were donated by Anne for Lucky Door Prizes and Massey Park Brasserie donated a gift voucher which Anne presented to **Denise Norman** as a thank you for assisting Anne at Bingo over many years.

Many thanks to all involved in making the day such a success, especially Anne Manenti and the Social Ministry.

Social Justice Workshops at St Pat's

St Pat's recently hosted a series of four workshops focusing on Social Justice. These workshops invited discussion on the various ways we as a parish, or individually, can become more engaged in social justice – moving beyond just providing charity to those in need.

The first session: *Faith, Action and my Identity*, was held in May and saw 15 people attend the discussion run by Father Peter Smith. He provided an excellent overview on what social justice means and what it means in the context of the Catholic Church. This session provided insight into the way that we as Catholics could become more involved in social justice action. <https://justiceandpeace.org.au/>

The second session: *Living in a world worth living in*, we were joined by a group of Year 12 students from St. Patrick's Strathfield and they really provided some insight into the way our young people feel about the world we are leaving behind. This session focused on how we as individuals can use sustainable practices to help make our world a better place. While the road ahead is a long one, we were very heartened by the way in which corporations, governments and institutions are coming together to discuss and put into practice policies, regulations and targets that will help tackle the climate crisis.

Third session: *Ethical Purchasing, how many slaves work for you?* Once again, our wonderful speakers opened our discussion and provided us with a comprehensive look at what the Catholic Church is doing to help those who are being exploited in so many countries, including our own. We touched on modern slavery and human trafficking, child and immigrant labour and how fair and dignified working conditions

should be a right for all. Further information on this topic can be found at: <https://justiceandpeace.org.au/home/resources/catholic-social-teaching/>



Social Justice Talk

The fourth and final session: *Shut Out, Shut In and Shut Up* was held on 30th August, and our special guest speaker was Julie Macken from the Archdiocese Justice and Peace Office. Julie was able to provide the group with many details around the treatment of refugees in Australia – both in the past and how they are currently being treated. She provided details of a website called Catholics for refugees: <https://catholicsforrefugees.org.au>, which provides further details about refugees and how we, either as individuals or as a parish, may wish to become involved.

These thought-provoking sessions were a wonderful introduction for our Parish to further explore not only the work of the Archdiocese Justice and Peace office but to see where we could make a difference in a world that is constantly struggling but hopefully changing and evolving for the better.



Social Justice St Pat's group

Sunday Masses

At St Pat's there are many volunteers. At each weekend Mass there is a friendly, committed group of people who offer their services. These include acolytes, servers, musicians, greeters and helpers.



Here are photos of some of those who assist faithfully at the Vigil Mass, 6pm, Saturday nights. We are grateful to these people and acknowledge their generosity which helps to make our attendance at Mass a prayerful and meaningful experience.



Blessings

Happy 50th Wedding Anniversaries to



Mary & Fred De Roma



Marisa & Enzo Cusumano

Father Tom blessed their marriages at the 10.30am Mass on 24th July, 2022. It was delightful to see the happy couples with their families in attendance. See St Pat's web site for more photos. <https://www.stpatsmortlake.org.au/happy-50th-wedding-anniversary/>



It certainly does feel like Spring is in the air, with many of our school activities and events starting up again after our two years' winter COVID hibernation. There have been many different excursions and sporting days this year as well as a lot of involvement in Sydney Catholic Schools Eisteddfods in choir, instrumental and dance. We have enjoyed participating in Family Masses and our Year 3 children received First Holy Communion at the end of June in two very reverent Masses.



The children with their dads camped out on the Parish Parklands as part of Winter Sleepout and raising awareness about homelessness.

Our Mini Vinnies have also worked with parents to participate in preparing food for the 'Adopt a Night' Food Van. These are all great steps in raising



awareness of the many different situations across our community and how we can all do simple actions to help create change.

This term we are working with **Uncle Jimmy** who is sharing his amazing knowledge of this beautiful Wangal land. All the children from Kindergarten through to our Year 6 children are learning about the flora and fauna, the history and geography of this amazing area and the great importance of honouring what has gone before.

I'll finish by saying that we are close to having our long awaited playground finished, which is very exciting as we start to begin the design of our last set of classrooms. Part of the playground will be a mural on the fence that we hope shares the story of the area, the church and the school. Hopefully we will be able to share photos in the next edition. Definitely new beginnings are happening at school!

Amanda Westgate

Principal, St Patrick's School Mortlake

