

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

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PARISH UPDATE 57

Hello everyone!

Items have come to my desk during last week from various parts of our Church, from local to universal.

Our frustration and annoyance continues about the '2 square metre rule' still placing limitations on the number who are allowed in our churches. Included in a letter from the Archbishop at the end of last week was this:

As you may also be aware, recent media has indicated that the MCG could be welcoming in 100% capacity for the ANZAC day match. I want to assure you that I have personally raised our concerns around parity for places of worship with both State and Federal Governments this week, and our Archdiocese has joined voices of other faith communities in strongly expressing our marginalisation s restrictions continued to be eased. There are also concerns being raised around electronic record keeping and QR systems. A great deal of work is being done in this space to ensure that we have the correct information, and you will be given guidelines very soon.

In our Parish we're continuing to 'hold the line' according to current instructions. When will we be allowed to change?!?!?

Archbishop Comensoli also wrote seriously about the establishment of a new process for reporting and responding to abuse in the Archdiocese. His introduction of the consultation phase towards a new model is an attachment with this letter.

In our Parish we have established the role of 'Child Safeguarding Officer' to help us comply with all government and Church requirements in this area. Contact can be made directly through mobile phone number 0413 841 936 and by email StAlbans.csc@cam.org.au . Reports received through these contacts will be forwarded to authorities within 48 hours as required by law.

One aspect of the role of our Child Safeguarding Officer is to ensure that everyone involved in all ministries in our Parish has a Working With Children Check – the Parish will assist in acquiring these.

A national item came from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, encouraging us to 'take the jab' – the vaccine for the COVID virus. It's a strong statement, putting our decision about the vaccine in the context of moral life. The Bishops urge us to take the vaccine as it becomes available, and continue:

For those who have 'a serious reason' not to receive the vaccine, they are morally obliged to do their utmost, by other protective means and appropriate behaviour, to avoid contracting COVID-19 themselves and to avoid transmission of the disease.

That's strong talk, isn't it!

And a strong observation and comment came from the Vatican.

"The Church is a great school of prayer," Pope Francis said in his weekly general audience last week.

"And this is an essential task of the Church: to pray and teach how to pray, to transmit from generation to generation the lamp of faith with the oil of prayer," he said.

Pope Francis encouraged Christians to examine their lives to ensure that personal prayer is a priority. "Everything in the Church originates in prayer, and everything grows thanks to prayer," the Pope said. Speaking into the camera from the Vatican's Apostolic Palace, the Pope posed a question to everyone watching his weekly broadcast: "Do you pray?" he asked.

“How do you pray? Like a parrot? Or do I pray with my heart? How do I pray? Do I pray as part of the Church and pray with the Church? Or do I pray a little according to my ideas and make my ideas become prayer? This is pagan, not Christian prayer,” he said.

As we are hearing in the Sunday Readings from the Acts of the Apostles, from the beginning the Church community has held prayer, the teaching of the Apostles, and good works as basic essentials.

And locally: young Parishioners at Sacred Heart School gathered during the week with their families for their first experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This was another ‘carry over’ from the postponements due to the COVID restrictions of last year. Frs Tom Cleary, Ray Scanlon and Peter Hudson assisted us. May these young Parishioners and their families always keep in mind God’s love for them.

It feels like we’re really heading towards the winter months. The Acts of the Apostles talks about the ‘warmth’ of the faith of the early Church in Christ Risen, and the ‘fire’ of enthusiasm to live the life of the Risen Christ. Another attachment with this letter reflects on the impact of Easter faith.

Continuing Easter blessings to you!

Maurie Cooney
(Parish Priest)