

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

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PARISH UPDATE 5

Continuing Easter greetings to everyone!

There is an approach to developing our Christian faith that has three steps in the process: *Remember* (the basis of our story) – *Imagine* (what it would be like if we took those beginnings more seriously today) – *Act* (put what you are imagining into practice).

That process can readily apply to our observance of **Anzac Day**. *We remember* that they gave their lives so that freedom in society, democracy, respect for the dignity of all, opportunity for the wellbeing of all would be made the hallmarks of our world. *Imagine* if those marks were real in our world today! Well, let's put them into *action* in our own lives! "Lest we forget." (See attachment for the Ode and an Anzac Day prayer.)

Right now in this virus drama we are seeing many around us who 'put their lives on the line' for the good of others, aren't we. That self-giving is in what we used to take as 'ordinary' parts of life, such as keeping our supermarkets functioning; it is in the public risks that security personnel and health care providers take to protect us; it is in families who have changed 'rock solid' routines into dedicated thoughtfulness for others.

At the core of our recent Easter celebrations – muted as they were – is the proclamation at the centre of the Gospel of Jesus: "I have come **that they may have life** – to the full!" – His death gave New Life to us! (Watch the video clip attachment for the Archbishop of Lima, Peru's drawing the Jesus story and the virus drama together.)

The **Easter stories continue** to be told in our Sunday Readings. Do you recall that Jesus shared meals often throughout his ministry? Think of the wedding feast, the home of Peter (whose mother-in-law was ill), Zacchaeus' home, with Simon the Pharisee, with the crowds outdoors, the 'Last Supper', ... and more. This weekend we have the story of the Jesus joining friends at the meal after they had walked to Emmaus. And as others had recognized Jesus in meals during his ministry, now these disciples recognize 'New Life Risen Christ' in the meal they share as he 'took the bread, said the blessing, broke it, and gave each a piece'. Those are exactly the actions that we do in our gatherings in Eucharist: take (the bread and wine to the altar), bless (in the words of the Eucharist prayer as we re-tell the Last Supper), break (while we sing Lamb of God), share (at Communion). In our Eucharist we, too, have the opportunity for the encounter of New Life Risen Christ with us!

Our other meals have the potential for being experiences of the life of Christ showing through us as we remember together, respect one another, resolve

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tensions, share our lives, relax together, and are rebuilt for life. Recognising Jesus' experience of meals with others, we can see our own meals as good opportunities to pray. One family I know raises their glasses, mugs, beakers at each main meal and say "Here's to our gracious God who gives us so many blessings!", and someone tells about a particular blessing they have seen during the day. They even do that if they're having a meal out – people at other tables just think that they're having a regular toast. See another attachment for some possible **prayers at meals**.

Once again this week I have been so impressed by the commitment of the staffs of our **Schools and Colleges**, and parents, and students, to the new experience of 'remote learning'. I heard someone say that 'we've had to learn to turn on a dime'. To which someone else said 'no: we've had to learn to pirouette on a dime and keep juggling at the same time!'

We continue to **live-stream Sunday Mass** from our Parish. A new entry is that Channel 31 (located at 44 on digital TVs) is now broadcasting Mass from St Patrick's Cathedral each Sunday at 11am. Details, and other opportunities, are on an attachment.

Quite a number of **Thanksgiving** contributors who have been using envelopes have transferred to the new CDFPay for Parishes system: details are on an attachment. New sets of envelopes will be mailed next week: I encourage you to consider transferring your method to CDFPay for Parishes, or to Debit or Credit card. If you were putting money aside during Lent for **Project Compassion**, the best thing at this time is to keep it aside. When we re-gather we will call for those generous donations. There are calls on the resources of Caritas Australia throughout the year, so our donations will always be gratefully received!

Amongst everything else we managing in these times, perhaps there are opportunities to re-introduce ourselves in new ways to our lives of faith. John Henry Newman, English Priest of the nineteenth century who was canonised 'Saint' last year had a saying: "I sought to hear the voice of God and climbed the topmost steeple, but God declared 'Go down again – I dwell among the people'."

Let's make room in our prayer this week for the families of those Police Officers who were killed on the freeway: how tragic - 'Hold those families, O God!'

Best wishes and blessings to all! We're keeping one another in prayer!

Maurie Cooney
Parish Priest