

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

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PARISH UPDATE 53

Hello everyone!

A couple of months ago we had the Priest from Mallacoota in West Gippsland visit for a wedding in Sacred Heart church. He shared with me something of his experience a year ago during the bushfires as people were evacuated from the area by the Navy. During this week those people have been preparing to survive the floods as the torrential rain moves down from NSW. These extremities perhaps lose some of the charm that so entranced Dorothea Mackellar when she wrote:

I love a sunburn country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of rugged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains.

(She wrote this while visiting England, homesick for Australia, in 1908.)

Water has that double symbolism in the writings of the New Testament: it can be destructive, and it gives life. St Paul used that when speaking of the New Life in Christ and in the community of the Church that Baptism brings, and along with that the end of being 'lost' in the confusion of life.

The Water is one of the major symbols in our celebration of Easter, of course. Following our extra prayer, penance and good works, at the end of Lent we leave behind some aspects of our lives that draw us away from living our faith, and are renewed in the life of Christ and the community of the Church – and we take the new Easter Water and become renewed in our life of faith.

An attachment is titled 'Holy Week Offers Opportunity to Link Home with Faith Life'. This could be helpful as we continue in the situation where numbers permitted in our churches remain severely limited. I'm eagerly waiting for an update from the Archbishop's office, hoping to hear that the easing of numbers in other places (homes, and at the footy) will be carried over into 'places of worship'. As soon as I hear I will send an email to all.

Because of the limitation on numbers permitted in our churches, all Holy Week-Easter liturgies are already fully booked. An opportunity to gather in much larger numbers has been created by our holding a procession of **Stations of the Cross on Good Friday morning, at 11am, on 'the oval' beside Sacred Heart church (St Albans).**

To allow this: ***bookings are essential***; you will be 'signed in' as you arrive; there will be sanitisers in many places, and 'marshals' with reminders to maintain the appropriate social distancing.

One feature of Parish life over the past year has been our 'streaming' of Sunday Mass from our own churches. Many people have commented over that time on the high quality of the production that we have enjoyed and benefited from for our prayer. We have come to the

situation where this is not able to continue from a couple of weekends after Easter in the same way.

Firstly, we are so grateful to our 'technician' who has provided this facility over the year with such great style and with enormous generosity of time, equipment, and skill - we thank you! Mass is available online and on TV from various sources. Many of our viewer participants have remarked on 'the difference it makes when it's coming from our own church'.

I've been told that a simpler form of streaming can be done through the use of SmartPhone / tablet / iPad - singly or with several working together. If you know about this sort of thing, and are available to help us to continue this service, please contact me through the email address that comes with this Weekly Letter and attachments. It may be that several Parishioners could share in this on a rostered arrangement. Our current technician will readily provide training.

I will keep you updated on progress.

And so into Holy Week. We take up the palms this weekend (at church in limited numbers or in prayer at home). Just that title suggests that we are invited to enter this time with reverence and with wonder, care and devotion.

The 'events' during the week will include the Blessing of the Oils by the Archbishop in the cathedral on Tuesday, which I will bring back for our use in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Anointing of the Sick across our Parish until next Easter. These Oils will be presented to our communities on Holy Thursday.

The 'Triduum' is the single ceremony that spreads over the three days of Holy Thursday-Good Friday-Easter Vigil, and Easter Eucharist.

We do not merely remember these days in the life of Jesus - his Last Supper, his arrest, torture and death on the cross, and his being raised to New Life. We also reflect on, claim anew and celebrate the New Life that He has brought to us for our own lives. For he was born into the human experience of which we all are part, and in him we are raised into a New Way of being: *"In him a new age has dawned, the long reign of sin is ended, a broken world has been renewed, and we are once again made whole!"* (4th Preface of Easter).

May Holy Week-Easter celebrations renew us all in our journey of shared faith!

Blessings

Maurie Cooney
Parish Priest

GOOD FRIDAY STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Bookings are essential:

go online to <https://www.trybooking.com/BMKXC>

OR

go online to <https://www.trybooking.com/BMLBL>