

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

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PARISH UPDATE 55

Hello everyone!

Happy Easter-ing! We're in the most important week of the Church's year, the 'octave of Easter'. In the daily Masses we speak out the Easter praise ('Glory to God in the highest') and conclude the Mass with 'Alleluia, alleluia!'

Rather than leaving the celebrations of Holy Week-Easter as a memory that we move on from, the Easter Season continues for seven weeks. Each week we will have stories from the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles and the writings of St Paul that continue to proclaim 'He is Risen' and explore what impact this can have in our lives. 'Easter-ing' is the extended process that last weekend has moved us into – until Pentecost. Two prayers following this Letter express this 'Easter-ing process' well.

We had 'Full House' signs at the doors of our churches for the Holy Thursday-Good Friday-Easter Vigil/Sunday gatherings in both our churches. As sacred, prayerful and enlivening as they were for those who were present – 190 each time – we carried a sense of disappointment about all those others who wanted to be present but were blocked by the COVID-safe restrictions that are applied to us. When will it end, when will we be allowed to do what is so important to us – gather as communities of prayer, worship, mission? Roll out that vaccine!!

Our Good Friday Stations of the Cross on 'the oval' at Sacred Heart has received many compliments, all recommending that we use that location in future years even if there are no COVID-safe restrictions. The booking system, the entry procedures (there were 554 people assembled), the set-up of staging and sound equipment, the prayerfulness that all allowed for - yes, it went so well! To those Parishioners who enabled Stations this year to be a significant part of our Holy Week prayer – we thank you!

Another huge 'thank you' goes to our '5pm Saturday streamed Mass technician', Brian. After more than a year of very high quality 'streaming' of Sunday Mass from our own churches each week, we are unable to continue that service beyond this weekend. Brian has done an extraordinary job in providing such a high quality service for our people for over a year! His humility in saying that 'it's just another form of ministry' disguises the great skill, commitment and generosity he has given to our Parish!

A worthy alternative, I think, is that the Diocese of Wollongong (New South Wales) has taken on the production of the former Channel 10 'Mass for you at home'. I've had a look at its Easter Sunday Mass - the quality is much better than many of the other services that are available – almost as good as own has been! Access it at www.massforyou.com.au. The Mass is celebrated in St John Vianney Co-Cathedral, Wollongong.

It also shows at 6am Sundays on Channel Ten and is repeated multiple times a day on Foxtel's Aurora channel.

What wonderful sunny autumn days we have had over the Easter weekend and through this Easter Week. And cold, cloudy weather forecast for the next few days. Whatever else shapes our lives, let's make sure that always we let ourselves be impacted by what we celebrated in Holy Week

through Easter – that God is real, and really part of our lives; that Jesus Christ has raised us all into New Life. Alleluia!

Maurie Cooney
(Parish Priest)

Lord, you set your face towards Jerusalem and walked alongside those who suffer -
be our vision that we too may walk the way of the cross and extend a hand to those we meet.

You stopped to heal the sick, cure the lame and give sight to the blind -
be our vision that we too may give time to others and respond to their needs.

You said, "The first shall be last and the last first" -
be our vision that we too may work towards your kingdom when the exalted will be brought low
and the lowly exalted.

You ate with tax collectors and sinners and heard their stories -
be our vision that we too may listen to the despised and rejected and value their lives.

You took time to pray and time to be silent -
be our vision that through our prayers, fasting and almsgiving we too may draw closer to you and
find your way.

Lord, you entered Jerusalem with peace in your heart -
be our vision that we too may desire peace where others desire war.

Annabel Shilson-Thomas

Christ has no body but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
Compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good,
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.
Christ has no body now but yours,
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks
compassion on this world.
Christ has no body now on earth but yours.

Teresa of Avila (1515–1582)