

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

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4 Winifred Street
ST ALBANS VICTORIA 3021

21st October

PARISH UPDATE 83

*"The current COVID lockdown means that **our churches will remain closed** for the duration of the lockdown – date and details are not clear at this stage. The exception is for funerals, with ten 'mourners' permitted. There will be no other activity in our churches over that time. See attachment for information for accessing Mass on TV and online."*

Greetings, everyone!

A change of great note happens in our Parish next week. Sr Judith Geddes is moving from our Parish, signalling the end of an era through which the Josephite Sisters (founded by Mary MacKillop) have been such presence for us: a presence, each in their own blessedness, of service, faith, commitment, companionship. They have had significant roles in education, pastoral activity, prayer, community, giving life to our Parish. Most significantly, the Sisters have been 'amongst us'! Let us be so thankful for each Sister who has ministered amongst us, for us. Let us praise God for the gift that the Sisters of St Joseph have been to the life of our Parish. Sr Judith Geddes writes:

To Father Maurie & Parishioners

After seventeen years living in Sacred Heart/Emmaus Parish, I farewell you as I move from St Albans. Always I have been inspired by your great devotion to the Eucharist, and I take that with me. As we come out of lockdown I know many will return to morning Mass, such a powerhouse of prayer for the Parish. I pray St Mary of the Cross will be with each of you on your journey.

Mary wrote: *There where you are, you will find God. (1871).*

Thank you, and God bless you.

Sr Judith Geddes rsj

As COVID restrictions begin to be eased a little, there are still limitations in many ways. Our churches will re-open for Mass on Tuesday 2nd November. This is when the 80% double-vaccination mark in Melbourne will have been reached, and numbers permitted to gather indoors will be increased.

Complying with regulations from government and Archdiocese,

- numbers will be limited to 75 at each Mass: bookings will be essential
- evidence of fully vaccinated(double) required to be shown at entrance
- masks to be worn, hands to be sanitised, one person per 4sq. metres seated, the churches cleaned after each Mass.

There will be an extra Mass for those with 'unknown vaccination' – limited to 20 participants.

I will share more details in next week's letter.

As we get a little closer to re-opening, it's time to indicate your expression of interest in participating in the Ministry of our Parish – see attachment for the list of our Ministries and details of how to become involved. This is for 'experienced' hands, and for newcomers.

What great sounds this week as I called at our three Parish Primary Schools (Sacred Heart, Emmaus, Cana) – children laughing, yelling, cheering one another on in games! "Listen to the kids out there, singing their little hearts out. Who cares if they're in tune – they're just thrilled to be here today, and that's what counts!"

Coincidentally as our young people return to School/College, Australia celebrates the teaching profession on World Teachers' Day next Friday (29 October). The theme is *Teachers at the heart of Education Recovery*. 'Onwards and upwards': we greet you and cheer you, we pray blessings on you!

With several days this week warming up and giving us some sunshine, with the sound of lawnmowers and the sight of great colours in many gardens, with the longer evenings, it's getting safe to talk about Spring's new life finally breaking through. In the northern hemisphere this happens around April, of course, and with the the symbolism of Spring's new life and rebirth, it was fitting to set the time to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at that time of the year. The naming of the celebration as "Easter" seems to go back to the name of a pre-Christian goddess in England, 'Eostre', who was celebrated at the beginning of Spring. That timing is now universal, and it happens in Autumn for us.

This year Spring's breaking through can be for us something of a symbol of our emerging from this extended COVID lockdown into new opportunities of sharing life, tentative and gradual as it will be. One of the attachments with this letter offers some reflections, blending the natural world of Spring and our own experiences of renewal.

A reflection in another attachment puts these words on this: "Despite our shortcomings we can and will get through this, and God has faith that we can."

There is something of this in this weekend's Gospel Reading, too. Its story is of a blind man's, (Bartimaeus) coming to new sight. This image of 'blindness' is a powerful image that is used repeatedly throughout our Scriptures. It is almost always a metaphor for blindness-of-heart or blindness-of-mind rather than speaking of a physical loss of sight. There are multiple accounts of healing this sort of blindness in the gospels. Saul/Paul is blinded on the road to Damascus and only has his sight restored when he is baptised. The Pharisees are described as being 'blind fools'. The prophets make numerous references to the blind coming to see as a sign of the Messiah's arrival. There is another 'blind' man in the gospels who is moved from blindness gradually to new sight, bit by bit. That's what the journey of life involves: c-o-m-i-n-g to faith and hope more and more. The Holy Spirit's work is to draw us onwards further and further into this faith, whose centre is the death and resurrection to New Life of Jesus.

One of St Francis of Assisi's prayers calls out "Cast Your Light into the darkness of my heart, O God ...' so that I may see life more clearly in Your way, and live it in Your way.

As some restrictions begin to be eased, enjoy stretching into life a bit more!

Thinking of the Sisters of St Joseph and being thankful for their roles in our Parish: St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, pray for us!

Maurie Cooney
(Parish Priest)

With this letter come 4 attachments:

*# Reflections on Sprint
world*

#Ministry recruitment

We are at the heart of God's faith, hope and love, in and for the

#Accessing Mass on TV and online.

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Sacred Heart and Emmaus churches are closed in compliance with COVID19 restrictions.

MASS is available through STREAMING and TV

Other Options/Alternatives to view Mass

Mass for You at Home, (MFYAH), is celebrated in St John Vianney Co-Cathedral, Wollongong. It shows at 6.00am Sundays on Channel Ten and is repeated multiple times a day on Foxtel's Aurora channel.

This Sunday Mass is also available on demand on Channel Ten's platform

www.tenplay.com.au/mfyah.

This Mass is also available on Wollongong's YouTube channel which can be accessed on www.massforyou.com.au as well as the Diocesan website, www.dow.org.au. There are also links to it on their Diocesan Facebook page and the MFYA Facebook page.

Channel 31 (usually found at '44' on digital TV's):

Mass at 11.00am Sundays from St Patrick's Cathedral or **online at:**

<https://melbournecatholic.org.au/>

Mass at 11.00am on

Sundays and at 1.00pm on weekdays

Mass continuous daily from Lavender
Bay Parish, Sydney, **online at:**
<http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand>

Springtime Prayer

*For flowers that bloom about our feet
For tender grass, so fresh, so sweet,
For song of bird, and hum of bee,
For all things fair we hear or see,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!*

*For blue of stream and blue of sky,
For pleasant shade of branches high,
For fragrant air and cooling breeze,
For beauty of the blooming trees,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee!*

Ralph Waldo Emerson



Spring is dramatic!
Some think it is sort of raked and mowed and pruned and honed and
preened,
And the trees sit like jewels, fort of isolated in parks.
So that Spring just comes in real easy, it comes in fast.
It's like in a Disney movie, you know: blup, blup, blup, blup, blup.
All the flowers come out blup, blup, blup – and zoom! Spring is here!
It's not really like that.
Spring is a tremendous struggle of life against death.
All those new green shoots along the way
have to force their way up through their dead ancestors
who are lying matted down on top of them.
It's a struggle, its fierce.
And it's not unlike life.
And we do it again: we come to new life.

from Garrison Keilor, [Tales from Lake Wobegon](#)

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Spring dear Spring you're almost here
But oh you'll have some work to do
The bitterness and endless fear
Will need a lot of working through.

Your bees must buzz the whole day long
Your birds their brightest songs employ
Your blossoms plentiful and strong
If there's to be a place for joy.



Leunig

TO SPRING

Thank God. At last! Spring is coming.
I can hear the bees inside me humming.
The mind becomes a flower bed.
A nest is being built upon my head.
The spirit rises from its tomb.
The weary soul is coming into bloom.
We've made it through. We will survive.
The soil is sweet and love is still alive.
The bell of happiness is ringing.
A little bird inside your heart is singing.



Leunig

WHAT THE BIRD SAID
EARLY IN THE YEAR

I heard in Addison's Walk a bird sing clear:
This year the summer will come true. This year. This year.

Winds will not strip the blossom from the apple trees
This year, nor want of rain destroy the peas.

This year time's nature will no more defeat you,
Nor all the promised moments in their passing cheat you.

This time they will not lead you round and back
To Autumn, one year older, by the well-worn track.

This year, this year, as all these flowers foretell,
We shall escape the circle and undo the spell.

Often deceived, yet open once again your heart,
Quick, quick, quick, quick! - the gates are drawn apart.

C. S. LEWIS