

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

ABN 56 751 544 850

Telephone: 9366 2146 Fax: 9366 9876

Email: stalbans@cam.org.au

Website <http://pol.org.au/stalbanssydenham>

4 Winifred Street

ST ALBANS VICTORIA 3021

29th May 2020

PARISH UPDATE 10

Pentecost (Holy Spirit) blessings to everyone!

What a busy Sunday it was going to be in our Parish this coming weekend!

The great feast of Pentecost would have stirred our spirits as we gathered at Mass to celebrate the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, signaling 'the birth of the Church'.

Our churches would be dressed in red, a colour we don't get to use much in our liturgies. I noticed one of the writers during the week: *"if there's ever a moment when we all could use the light and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, it's now. While we wait till we can be together again for Sunday worship, let's make sure we are joining our hearts in prayer with one another."*

For an image of God's Holy Spirit I like the seagull using the wind to fly high and to fight through the tough times – I'm including that at the end of this letter, with another image from someone sailing a small boat. Ah: 'there's more to life than meets the eye':

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful and kindle in us the fire of your love.

Send forth Your Spirit and we shall be re-created.

And You shall renew the face of the earth.

This Sunday was also to be the first day of our First Eucharist/Communion season. Young Parishioners and their families from Sacred Heart were to celebrate that Mass in two gatherings. A fortnight later it was to be Cana's celebration of First Communion, followed by Emmaus the week after. What great celebrations they were to be! For our whole Parish, too: more of our young people coming forward to share the Meal of Eucharist with us at the altar, joining more closely with their families and all of us in our continuing journey of faith, worship, hope. In Eucharist we take the very life of Christ into our lives who draws us together, feeds us, sustains us, reconciles us!

Some of our young people are back at School now – in some ways the same as before and also very different. Our Schools and Colleges are being cleaned to sparkling safety several times a day! Our teachers and these students are undertaking another transition to face-to-face teaching and learning, with more to follow soon. Haven't so many people (including parents, of course) put so much energy into these learning-at-home weeks

The announcement came today that our regional Bishop, Mark Edwards, is to be installed as the Bishop of Wagga Wagga in New South Wales. Bishop Edwards has been an enthusiastic, generous, thoughtful, supportive presence for our Parish and our Schools and Colleges. In particular he has been a very positive support and guide in his role of Chair of the Council of the Federation of Catholic Regional Colleges. There is no word yet of 'what happens for us next'. Already I'm feeling some loss because of his leaving our midst – we worked together well on several ventures.

All the Bishops of Australia meet together twice each year. Most recently that was two weeks ago, keeping their distance by ZOOM. I'm attaching to this letter three of their releases from their conference. The first one acknowledges the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the first Priests to Australia in 1820. Before that, in the years after the European

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

ABN 56 751 544 850

Telephone: 9366 2146 Fax: 9366 9876

Email: stalbens@cam.org.au

4 Winifred Street

ST ALBANS VICTORIA 3021

landing ('First Fleet') in 1788, the Catholic faith had been kept alive and growing through the lay people "whose hunger for the Eucharist was palpable". Aren't we yearning for the time when we can gather together again to share the Eucharist. In the meantime, we will keep up our 'prayer and good works', inspired by the Holy Spirit, being the Church through that within the limitations these times have put on us.

Another of the Bishops' attachments is 'A Word of Encouragement to the Catholic People of Australia'.

The third attachment is 'Entrustment Prayer'.

The numbers permitted at Mass have been expanded slightly. From next week the number will be twenty. So far the Ministers for our streaming Mass (we change them each week) have been dropped off at the church by their families who then return later to pick them up. This change will enable those people to stay and participate. We eagerly await the next stage for increased numbers.

On Friday I will be celebrating Mass with the Years 11 and 12 at Catholic Regional College, Sydenham!! It will be streamed to the students' home groups from a central location within the College grounds - it will be very interesting!!

Again: blessings to all! Look for signs of the Holy Spirit's work amongst us - be a sign for others of the Holy Spirit's work amongst us!

Maurie Cooney

Parish Priest

* * * * *

That image of the seagull to help explore the Holy Spirit:

A cold day by the beach – far too windy for my comfort.

But the seagulls don't seem to mind the wind – in fact they seem to enjoy it!

I watch them flying about:

they go with the wind, they soar into the sky carried by it, it helps them cut fast through the weather.

All the time they are using the wind, availing of its life, its power.

*And I reflect on how we, the disciples of Jesus Christ,
can be buffeted around in our lives.*

Lord, help us to see and feel 'the wind of your Spirit',

who will enable us to keep in the hard times and to rejoice in the easy times,

so that we handle everything that happens to us

in a way that bears us along the way of your Kingdom

And an image from someone sailing a small boat:

Still. And then, before you can detect the beginning of the change in your fortunes, a flutter in the mainsail hooks your heart. It is a false start, and hope plummets. But then, oh then, yes, the sweet salt breathy of God brushes your face, fills your sails; the deck heels beneath you, the tiller comes to life in your hands, a spin drifting wake spreads astern. You offer a silent prayer of thanks. That great unfathomable something is with you again, blowing you on your way. 'Come, Holy Spirit!!'