

SACRED HEART/ EMMAUS PARISH

ABN 56 751 544 850

Telephone: 9366 2146 Fax: 9366 9876

Email: stalbands@cam.org.au

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

4 Winifred Street

ST ALBANS VICTORIA 3021

23rd December 2020

PARISH UPDATE 40

Greetings all!

And we wondered at times how we would make it! And we have!

A major part of our Christmas prayer must be 'thanks' to those who have helped us, supported us, encouraged us, guided us.

Of course it's not time yet to 'let down our guard'. Nonetheless I like what an attachment with this letter says: 'we have con-genital need to celebrate, pure and simple. As human beings we have a healthy, God-given, genetically encoded need to sometimes make festival, to have carnival, to celebrate an elaborate Sabbath, to park our prudence for a few hours'.

Another attachment reflects the joys that Christmases and summer breaks can bring. 'The way we were at Christmas' remembers times when we weren't as wary and weary as we have become this 2020.

Other attachments show times of Masses coming up: at Christmas; the weekend of 26/27 December (which is the Feast of the Holy Family of Joseph, Mary, Jesus); New Year's Day; and then the new schedule of Masses we commence on the weekend of 2/3 January and will continue with until further notice.

The numbers in our churches are still limited to 160 because of COVID restrictions. Even with the extra Masses we are having, many, many people will not be able to gather directly. We will be 'streaming' our 5pm Christmas Mass from Sacred Heart (YouTube and Facebook at SHEPARISH). On TV the Christmas Midnight Mass (with carols at 11.30pm) and Christmas Day Mass at 11am at St Patrick's Cathedral will be televised on free-to-air on C31 (channel 44 on digital TV) and streamed live on the Archdiocesan YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/archmelb).

Our second Priest, Justel Callos, moves on from our Parish during next week to another appointment in the Archdiocese – Administrator for the Parish of Holy Family, Mount Waverley. He leaves us on Tuesday 29th December. Thank you for your presence and service amongst us, Justel! Blessings for your ministry that opens into new endeavours with this move!

(Coincidentally, I was Administrator for Holy Family Parish back in 1999-2000. The Parish Priest was on sick leave, and with my appointment as Parish Priest of Mary Immaculate Ivanhoe coming to an end, I was asked to 'cover' at Mount Waverley for six weeks. The Parish Priest's recovery was slower than anticipated, and I stayed there for eighteen months in six-week blocks as his sick leave was extended each time!)

The weekend before Justel moves in there is the Feast of Holy Family – a fitting time to have a new chapter of that Parish's life open up.

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The image below is one I like for Christmas, and for Holy Family. It gets closer to the reality of that Bethlehem birth, I think, than many of the other images that are around. And it gets closer to the reality of that family – much like every other family. That is the whole point of the birth of Jesus, isn't it – Son of God born into the human experience that we are part of, known formally as Incarnation – 'coming into flesh'. He is Son of God, and he is one of us!!!!

And that's worth celebrating! And worth seeing encouragement and hope for ourselves in there!



To all who have given life to our Parish during this extremely demanding
year:
well done! thank you!

May Christmas be a great blessing and reassurance for us
seen and felt in those around us,
celebrated in our prayer and worship, for

JESUS, SON OF GOD, IS WITH US, IS ONE OF US !

Maurie Cooney
Parish Priest