

PARISH BULLETIN

St Macartan's Catholic Parish



4 Drake St, Mornington VIC 3931

Parish Office: Tuesday to Friday 9am to 4pm; Ph: 5975 2200

Email: mornington@cam.org.au **Web:** stmacartansparish.com.au

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr Geoffrey McIlroy

Parish Secretary: Theresa Collard

The greatest and the first commandment

Jesus said,
"You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
and with all your mind.

The second is, You shall love your neighbor
yourself.

Gospel MT 22:34-40

MASS TIMES

Sunday's Mass and weekday Masses

On Line found on Parish's YouTube page:
(Ctrl and enter) on this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW8lyzEMe20DLyOppts0Fw/videos>

Also view our Parish website:

<https://www.stmacartansparish.com.au/>

Due to COVID-19 restrictions

ALL MASSES ARE ONLINE

ALSO

See outdoor Mass timetable below

Upcoming Holy Days:

- Wed 25th Oct: Sts Simon & Jude, apostles

Office: CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

If you leave an audible voice telephone message. Fr Geoff will return your call.

BUT PLEASE LEAVE A MESSAGE!!!

Parish Child Safety Officer: Carmel McGrath 0400 076 067

Email:

Mornington.childsafety@cam.org.au

St Macartan's Primary School

Ph: 5979 9200

Principal: Colleen McGreal

Deputy: Philip Hills, Kathleen Ronchi

Padua College Ph: 5976 0100

Parish Pastoral Council: Bernard Butler

0419 427 408

Finance Committee: Frank Crea

0417 104 041

AV Technical: Graeme Wilson

Email: gpw611@bigpond.com

St Mac's High Spirits - Faye Melhem

Email: stmacshighspirits@gmail.com

Parish Caretaker & Memorial Wall: John Spaziani: 0419 598 911

Music & Wedding Co-Ordinator-

Veronica Ryan 5975 6981/ 0418 358 213.

Email vryan22@outlook.com

Marriage & Counselling: Charmaine

Holmes: 5977 2567

Marriage Prep: See Fr Geoff

Baptism Preparation: Kathy Raccanello

Next Baptismal Meeting - Postponed

All Baptisms: **SUSPENDED**

Anniversaries: Raymond John Ellis and Allan Duryea

Mass Intentions

Pray for the sick and their Carers: Janet Smyth, Tony Ryan, Graham Oliver, Laura Castelow, Julie Nash, Margaret O'Connor, Jay Keogh, Sophie Davidson, Cinzia Caboche, Robert Warne, Dean Pratt, Trent Wilkinson, Esma Murphy, Kate Maree Ayoub (Tunks) Frances McLean, Richard Meech, Colleen, Noah Guest, Carly Guy, , Elizabeth Brennan, Bob Barrett, Ally Roe, Colleen & Jim Husin, Maryanne Husin, Eileen Young, Peter Hingston, Dave Mortby, Lynne Anderson, Naomi Andrews, Peter Atkinson, Kevin Paganoni, Jeannie Fox, Phyllis Molloy, Renee Barker, Courtney Stevens, Joseph Aquilina, Helen & Denis Chambers, Mark Allan, Lucas Pingiaro, Fernando Pineda, Jim Kershaw (NZ), Maureen Spargo, Tony Formosa, John Mahony, Terry Smyth, Torquil Hansen **And especially for Ruben Pateman.**

Recently deceased: Margaret (Peg) McCrae - Funeral Wed 28th Oct 1:30pm St Macartan's (It will be live-streamed - A notice will be posted on our website when details are known): Margaret died peacefully, with family around at Andrew Kerr Care Home on Saturday 17th Oct. Margaret was 93 and in her younger days was very much involved in leading the Macartan Club.

First Reading Ex 22:20-26

A reading from the book Exodus

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

"If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

"If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength, my rock, my fortress, my saviour. My God is the rock where I take refuge; my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.

The Lord is worthy of all praise: when I call I am saved from my foes. (R.)

Long life to the Lord, my rock! Praised be the God who saves me. He has given great victories to his king and shown his love for his anointed. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Thes 1:5-10

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread – and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.

Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 22:34-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

Communion Antiphon Cf Ps 19:6

We will ring out our joy at your saving help
and exult in the name of our God.

Living gospel

Compassion

Jesus' words call us to love our neighbour as ourselves. We are called to treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves. To be able to do this, we need to picture ourselves in their place – experiencing all that they are experiencing; not imposing our own values and circumstances. To see ourselves in the place of another is the key to responding with compassion. The origin of the word, compassion, means experiencing with. If we are able to truly 'experience with' another person perhaps then we can genuinely recognise and respond to their needs.

EXPLORING THE WORD

The question the Pharisees put to Jesus lies at the very heart of the Torah – the Law. Jesus' response is the great prayer of Israel, the Shema. 'This then is the commandment... that the Lord your God has commanded, "Hear Oh Israel! The Lord your God, the Lord is One. And you shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength."' (Deut 6:1,4) Jesus ties to this the command from Leviticus, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'. (Lev 19:18) Love of God and love of neighbour is the essence of the Law. If you recall last week the question asked was 'What belongs to God?' This week Jesus gives the answer – your whole heart, your whole soul, your whole mind. That's all! This can seem quite overwhelming. God wants so much and there seems no room

for compromise – your whole heart, whole soul, whole mind. I want to negotiate this a little. 'How about you have 90% and leave me with 10%? That sounds reasonable and very generous really.' But God's reply is unequivocal – 'whole, 100%'.

Part of the problem with God's love is that it seems so unbelievable. How could God possibly love me 100% when my life is so messy; parts of it I don't like so how can I expect God to like it? Surely God just likes the good bits, the successful bits, the public bits. But Love means the whole of me!

Scriptural context – Jesus and the Pharisees

The question and response that we see in this gospel passage was a common form of scholarly debate in the Jewish tradition. The Pharisees ask Jesus which of the commandments is the greatest. Jesus responds by directly quoting the commandment from the ancient scriptures. His reply, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind,' comes directly from

Deuteronomy 6:4. Further, Jesus' follow-up, 'you must love your neighbour as yourself,' comes from Leviticus 19:18. Deuteronomy and Leviticus are two of the first five books of the Bible that make up the Jewish Torah, or Law.

Gospel Focus – Love your neighbour as yourself

There is an implicit, or understood, commandment within the command to love your neighbour as yourself. That is, we must first love ourselves. Whilst to say someone 'loves themselves' is used as a criticism of a person who is a bit too vain, that is not what is intended here. If we are to love others as we love ourselves we must first be content and happy with who we are. It is only when we are comfortable with who we are that we are able to reach out to those around us with compassion.

St Macartan's Parishioners Photo Display



PLEASE SEND IN YOUR PHOTO

The photos will then be included at the start of our Video Mass

Take a selfie and then e-mail it to our Parish Office at—

mornington@cam.org.au

HIGH SPIRITS

(Catechism for State School children)

1st Eucharist classes - Have begun!

**If your child has missed out - Do not fret!
Just let us know and we will see what we can do.**

**Please email Faye at:
stmacshighspirits@gmail.com**

CHILD SAFETY NEWS



Dear Parishioners,

many thanks to the volunteers who have updated or applied for their Working With Children Check. With the new regulations, every volunteer no matter what ministry they serve in needs to have a WWC that specifically states that St Macartan's is an organisation with whom they volunteer as well as any other organisation with whom they volunteer, e.g. St Vinnies. Some of the ministries eg, staff, clergy need to have a police check as well. Some of our volunteers have a police check but no WWC, they will need to apply for a WWC as well. I am in the process of contacting all volunteers that need to apply or update. Unfortunately the Post Office does not have WWC application forms, they need to be applied for on-line. For some volunteers this is not convenient, so when the parish office is open I will be able to assist with applications. VIT registrations also need to update their details, even though they work at schools, if they volunteer at St Macartan's they will also need to add St Macartan's onto their organisations.

Much appreciate your attention & looking forward to being able to "volunteer" in the very near future,

<https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/individuals/current-cardholders/update-my-details>



St Vincent De Paul Soup Van Appeal

75% of calls to the Vinnies Welfare Assistance Line are from people asking for food. Please donate today and help feed individuals and families who are going hungry due to COVID-19.

Vinnies Soup Van have experienced a 25% rise in people coming to them desperate for a meal. For many, it's their first time. Sadly, at the end of the year, they expect this number of people coming to them to rise again. Please help us meet the growing demand for food through our Vinnies Soup Van Programs and donate today by clicking on the link below or copying it into your browser.

<https://donate.vinnies.org.au/donation-hub>



CatholicCare Marriage and Relationship Unit **Remote FOCCUS Program via Zoom.**

FOCCUS is a pre-marriage education program which CatholicCare have been offering, to the great satisfaction of couples, for nearly 25 years. The Program is for individual couples to reflect on their relationship in a private, confidential setting. Couples complete an online inventory then work through their responses with a qualified facilitator. The setting allows couples to talk about their strengths and discuss the challenges they may face as their relationship evolves.

Whilst we know that it is a tricky time to be planning a wedding, we encourage couples to see pre-marriage education as a gift to their relationship. We know that our FOCCUS couples are really appreciating the chance to go deeper into their relationship to prepare not only for their wedding day, but for their marriage.

Couples will find booking and payment details for remote FOCCUS on <https://www.ccam.org.au/page/24/pre-marriage-education-programs>. You can book your sessions by ringing the branch listed closest to you.

St Macartan's Parish Finance Committee - Accountant Required

Our Finance Committee is looking now looking for an accountant that would like to volunteer their services on the Finance Committee.

The role is to assist in advising Fr Geoff with Parish Finance, yearly audit, decisions & attending a meeting approx. every 8 weeks.

If you are interested please e-mail mornington@cam.org.au or call the office on 5975 2200



Deepest Sympathy

**We wish to pass on our sincere condolences to the family of
Margaret Peg McCrae
on the recent passing of their loved one.
Please remember her in your prayers.**



**CATHOLIC
THEOLOGICAL
COLLEGE**



**Catholic Theological College
2020 Knox Public Lecture
Thursday 5th November at 7.00pm**

Sheree Limbrick

Safe Church: Commitment, awareness & action for cultural change

Bookings and Info: ctc.edu.au/knox-public-lecture

Enq: sarah.styring@ctc.edu.au or

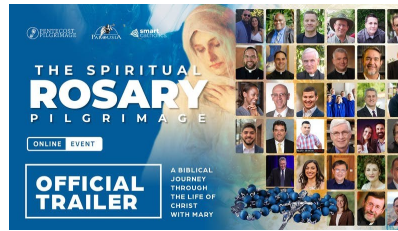
Phone 9412 3333

The Spiritual Rosary Pilgrimage.

Your reflection for 'The First Joyful Mystery: The Annunciation',
by Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, is now available.

Click the link to watch this reflection.

<https://parousiaondemand.com/programs/deacon-harold-annunciation-v2mov-9f62e7>



We are so excited that are sharing the power of the Rosary with us.

'Meditation & Mindfulness - Reflection event via Zoom',

Saturday 7 Nov 2020, 10am-1pm. Facilitated by Carol Dyer (B.A. (Psych), Transpersonal & Experiential Psychotherapy Level 5 (Trainer), Cert. Spiritual Direction), this event provides the opportunity to broaden your ways of accessing your inner world and listening to what God is inviting you to at this time. There will be some input to enable participants to learn some theory of meditation and mindfulness practices as well as time away from the Zoom screen for meditation and mindfulness practise. Cost \$25. Bookings and payment via Trybooking at

<https://www.trybooking.com/663916>

For more information, contact holsc@bigpond.com or tel 9890 1101



Heart of Life

Centre for Spiritual & Pastoral Formation

296 Glenferrie Road, Malvern, Victoria 3144, Australia

Tel 03 9890 1101 Email info@heartoflife.melbourne

Web www.heartoflife.melbourne

Heart of Life is sponsored by the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart

Parish Footy Tipping— The Finals

Last weekend we had the Preliminary Finals The tippers, still in the Knockout Competition, had to choose the two winners. Richmond and Geelong were the favourites but only seven tipped both, This weekend the remaining seven have to tip who they think will win the premiership and they have to pick the winning margin or be the closest to it. All Home and Away tippers will also take part in a special Grand Final Contest. It means we all finish on a good note. They have to choose who they think will be premiers and the closest to the winning margin What a great Saturday this weekend for **VICTORIA!** After nine years both teams in the Grand Final are Victorian. Melbourne Storm are in the NRL Grand Final and we celebrate the octave of the Victorian VIXENS great Grand Final in national Netball competition.



HISTORY. Sydney is celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Olympic Games so let us see what was happening when Melbourne had the greatest and called The Friendly Olympic Games in 1956 (no I am not biased). The top four were Melbourne, Collingwood, Footscray and Geelong Footscray defeated Geelong and played and lost to Collingwood in the preliminary final Melbourne were premiers. Melbourne 17-19-121 to Collingwood 6-12- 48 Melbourne were coached by Norm Smith and Collingwood by Phonse Kyne 115,802 (a record) attended.

Foot5ball Memorabilia Fundraiser—The Parish tippers would like to invite someone to invest in our fundraiser. We have a beautifully framed Richmond 2019 Premiership authentic signed Jumper for sale. It would be great to have especially if Richmond come runners up If you would like to make an offer please ring Geoffrey on 59751707 or email/ amdgrc@gmail.com. or text 0447744802



Six little things you can do for your wellbeing every day

Taking some time each day to focus on your own wellbeing can have a huge positive impact on your mental health. They might seem like little things, but they really do add up. Here are some suggestions to incorporate into your daily routine.

Go for a morning walk

If it means getting only up five minutes earlier and walking around the block, it's still worth it. Starting your day with fresh air and movement not only has physical benefits, it also kick-starts a positive mindset. Try to incorporate a walk into your commute to work/university/school.

Read because you want to

Not because you have to. Pull out that book you were given for your birthday two years ago that is still sitting on the shelf and give it a go. It's true what your primary school English teachers used to say – reading really is exercise for the mind. Few things are better than being engrossed in a good book and losing all track of time. So make time for reading.

Get creative in the kitchen

For many of us, cooking is somewhat of a chore. The easiest way to flip the script on this is to challenge yourself in the kitchen. We all have nights where we're tired and dinner is either a takeaway or a mixture of leftovers from the fridge. But try and make the effort one night a week to create something new. Put some music on to get you inspired while you do it. [Taste](#) have an awesome range of easy recipes.

Address your posture

Even though we know excessive sitting has detrimental effects on our health, so many of us still do it. At home. At work. On the commute in between. Your lower back is crying out for a change. If you have a desk job, try and get up for a walk every 30 minutes. If it means investing in a back-support cushion or a stand-up desk, it's worth it. Talk to your employer – after all, it might be something they are happy to cover financially. Substituting sitting time for standing or walking time might seem annoying – but your body will thank you for it.

Listen to podcasts

Podcasts, for those who are new to them, are basically audio programs on demand. That is, you can choose what you listen to and when you listen to it. And they are taking the world by storm. There are over 700,000 podcasts (and nearly 30 million episodes!) out there about all manner of topics and subjects. Listen to podcasts on subjects you are passionate about, or want to know more about, or simply ones that make you laugh. You'll soon see what all the fuss is about.

Box breathing

There are no shortage of great breathing exercises and guided meditation apps out there. One simple exercise that you can do anytime, anywhere is a technique known as box breathing. It's called 'box breathing' because it consists of four counts of four. Picture a square with each side representing a different count to four. Start with a slow inhale to the count of four, hold for the count of four, exhale for four, hold for four...and repeat.

Finding Christ in a Covid Christmas



Offered over four weeks, these Advent formation sessions are ideal for liturgy and parish leadership teams looking to bring the season to life in their local communities in this time of uncertainty with COVID restrictions.

In Week 1, participants will be given an overview of the Gospel of Mark (Year B of the liturgical cycle), led by Ria Greene (Deputy Principal, Identity, Community and Action, St Bede's College Mentone). In Week 2, Ria will reflect specifically on the Advent Sunday readings. In Week 3: Musician and liturgist Fiona Dyball will explore developing a suitable seasonal repertoire as we begin to celebrate a new liturgical year and in Week 4, The Proclaim: Office for Mission Renewal will lead a discussion to consider practical implications for parish services and an opportunity to share creative responses in the current Covid-19 climate.

Tue 20 Oct	Gospel of Mark
Tue 27 Oct	Sundays of Advent
Wed 4 Nov	Musical repertoire
Tue 10 Nov	Practical tips for parishes to navigate the Advent/Christmas journey

Time	7.30-9.00pm
Venue	Zoom (Link sent upon registration)
Register	www.trybooking.com/BLYHE

Sessions are free



Ria Greene has worked in Catholic education for more than twenty years, with a focus on religious education and faith formation, but has also worked as a parish catechist and sacraments coordinator, and has completed further studies in religious education and theology. She teaches a senior religious studies class at St Bede's College, where she is Deputy Principal.



Fiona Dyball is a musician, teacher, conductor, composer and liturgist based in Melbourne. She works extensively in adult and youth faith formation and in Music Ministry, inspired by her mentor, Sr Deirdre Browne IBVM. Fiona is Music Director at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Hawthorn, and also serves on the Australian National Liturgical Board for the ACBC. Fiona is also member of the Victorian committee for the Australian Pastoral Musicians Network.

For further information

Proclaim: Office for Mission Renewal | Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

Teresa Rhynehart: teresa.rhynehart@cam.org.au | Lorraine McCarthy: lorraine.mccarthy@cam.org.au



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

COVID-19: AND ST MACARTAN'S?

Well the outdoor Masses are happening and I'm glad to say quite enjoyable.



Apart from, the local wind, a bit of rain and the odd non-Catholic Kookaburra laughing at inopportune times in the liturgy, it's all going well and those attending, I believe, are enjoying the experience. But more importantly enjoying coming together and partaking in the Eucharist. So if you want to join in - book in!

- ⇒ MASS OUTDOORS: **Sunday** 9am and 11am - 5people + Priest
- ⇒ MASS OUTDOORS: **Tue, Wed & Thur** - 5people + Priest

TO BOOK - You must live within 5km of the Church

Contact: Ann Hancock 0438 315 272

Leave message with Name, Contact No, Any day of week that is NOT suitable?

You will be allocated the next available spot.

You will receive a text / phone call to confirm your booking.

Please note:

You must wear masks, bring an umbrella if weather looks inclement.

Parking is on Drake St or behind Church - Not in the presbytery driveway!

Be there 10minutes prior to service start time!

Where? In the garden behind Presbytery (Parish Office). No 4 Drake Street.

To enter - walk down driveway to back of house.

If booked but you cannot attend, please call Parish Office and leave a message.

RECONCILIATION

I must obey the Gov't rules - I can meet up to 5 people from one household outside, or you may stay after the outdoor Mass.

Individuals; we are allowed to walk/talk and meet together outside, so again call me, to come to the garden and I will hear your confession.

Blessings
Fr Geoff



St Mac's - POETS CORNER

*Have you got something to say, that's said in a nice poetical way.
That's kind and uplifting, or spiritual and Christian.*

You maybe a Poet and just don't know it - Just send it in and we'll see?

YELLOW WATTLE

**Yellow wattle blooms again
When springtime comes around
Golden nuggets cover it
Not hidden in the ground
A gold rush still in different form
Covers all our land
Not coaxed forth by avarice
Nor work of digger's hand
But sun's the master artisan
Nature reigns supreme
When yellow gold that's never spent
Tarnished or run out
Brings glory everywhere you look
On everything about.**

(Pauline Kelly Dunn)

New era for Catholic education in Melbourne with the establishment of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) has been established to assume the governance and operation of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Melbourne, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli says.

The change in governance arrangements will see all 293 schools owned by the Archdiocese, its parishes or associations of parishes in the Archdiocese of Melbourne transferred to MACS, which will be responsible for the governance and operation of the schools.

‘Building on the significant legacy of parish priest led and governed schools, MACS will usher in a new era for Catholic education in the Archdiocese’, Archbishop Peter said.

‘Education is integral to the mission of the Catholic Church to proclaim the Good News, and Catholic schooling forms our young people so they may be equipped with the knowledge, skills and hope to live meaningful lives and enrich the world around them.

‘The establishment of MACS is a necessary and constructive change to the operations for schools that not only reflects community expectations about the operations of schools, but keeps our Christ-centred mission at the heart of all we do in Catholic education.’

A Steering Committee was established in November 2019 to consider changes in governance for Melbourne Catholic schools. The Steering Committee has overseen 11 months of significant consultation and deliberation which has culminated in today’s announcement, Archbishop Peter said.

Archbishop Peter has appointed Mr Gerard Dalbosco as the inaugural Chair of MACS to lead this historic new path for Catholic education in Melbourne.

Formerly a senior partner at EY, Mr Dalbosco has had a distinguished career holding several significant leadership roles with EY across Oceania and the Asia-Pacific region. He also has significant governance experience, with current roles including positions with the Committee for Melbourne, Loreto Mandeville Hall Toorak and Newman College.

‘Gerard brings a wealth of strategic vision and governance experience to our efforts’, Archbishop Peter said.

‘I am very pleased to appoint him to this position and excited for what the future holds under his leadership.’

Mr Dalbosco said that he was honoured to be appointed as the inaugural Chair of MACS.

‘Catholic schooling in Melbourne has a profound footprint across our community’, Mr Dalbosco said.

‘We are the largest diocese in Australia and, together with Catholic religious institute schools, provide Catholic education for more than 153,000 students across 335 schools in Victoria, employing over 20,000 teachers and support staff.

‘I look forward to working with Archbishop Peter and key leaders in the Archdiocese to appoint fellow board members as we move the mission of Catholic education in Melbourne forward.’

CONT >>>>>>>

Mr Dalbosco also said that he was looking forward to helping foster the renewed relationship between parishes and schools.

‘Parishes are the core of Church life in Melbourne’, he said.

‘These communities have not only planned for but, in many cases, built and paid for schools out of their own pockets because of their understanding of the need for Catholic education in the Archdiocese.

‘I am looking forward to MACS working closely with parish priests and parishes, which will continue to be central to the care and education of Catholic school students.’

Archbishop Peter announced that Catholic Education Melbourne, the service arm for Catholic schools in the Archdiocese, will also move to MACS, with recently announced Executive Director of Catholic Education Melbourne, Mr Jim Miles, to serve as MACS Executive Director.

‘The contribution of Catholic education in Melbourne and greater Victoria is an ongoing fruit of the gospel and a gift of Catholic educators to Victorian society’, Archbishop Peter said.

‘Jim will continue to play a critical role, as MACS will build up the leadership, transparency and fairness of that great tradition.

‘I have no doubt that he and Gerard, along with the rest of the MACS board and staff, will continue to ensure that each Catholic school is a valued and essential community in the life of the Catholic Church, and honour the relationships of trust and friendship between school and parish communities.’

MACS will officially begin its governance responsibilities on 1 January 2021.

So, how does this affect the Parish? - I hear some of you saying.

Well in many ways it doesn't affect the Parish. The school has been, is, and will always be, an integral part of the Parish. St Macartan's is a school built by the Parishioners for Parishioners children, with land and buildings still remaining under Parish ownership.

The major change is that no longer will I be the employer of the Principal and teachers, the new MACS board will be but I will be on any panel for the hiring of any Principal, Deputy and Religious Education leader. My role as Parish Priest doesn't change and In some ways, it frees me up to concentrate more on my Pastoral role as a Priest, for the students, parents and staff.

It allows some of the bureaucratic features, of being an employer, to be taken up more specifically, by a dedicated education board.

I am fortunate to have a wonderful working relationship with Colleen St Macartan's School Principal and with her staff - I feel very blessed to be amongst these wonderful teachers and I am delighted with the support of the many Parents I have been fortunate to get to know.

Together we will maintain the Catholicity - the Catholic identity of our school.

Believe me, this is a win, win situation for Parish and the School and I look forward to 2021 as we all continue to grow together in Christ.

Blessings

Fr Geoff

COVID-19: AND ST MACARTAN'S?

Written before Sunday 25th

What's NEW?

Well each week, recently, we seem to have some more freedom from lock-down but so far - the Church seems to have been left out.

Except for being allowed to be OUT - Outside that is.

Why?

Well according to the Premier, he follows "Medical" advice, therefore, Medical opinion must be saying Churches (of any faith) are still a high risk. A higher risk than allowing patrons in a pub or restaurant or café. Even a higher risk than a hairdresser touching you and breathing closely over you (through their 80% effective mask)

But to be fair; there must be some logical reason for their decisions?

So I have come up with some reasons that may possibly justify the perceived risk:

1. The average age of parishioners attending Mass is in the higher risk age group? Therefore, it might be for their safety that Church closures continue? Although, many of that age still get their hair cut and visit pubs, restaurants and cafes together. Even though, when in the Church they are seated further apart and not facing each other, as they are in pubs, cafes and restaurants.
2. The Church is a closed in area, without a lot of air-flow or ventilation? Maybe semi stagnant air is seen as a higher risk? I suppose that doesn't occur in hairdressers, pubs, restaurants or cafes - really?
3. In Church we all respond together and sing together with ONE voice. Thus possibly increasing air-borne contamination risks - even with masks on. Therefore that is still seen as a higher risk than a hairdresser and their client speaking face-mask to face-mask together, within centimetres. Or a person in a pub, café or restaurant not wearing a face mask, sitting next to you, speaking closely and directly to your face.
4. That because of some Churches overseas (*these were used as examples by the Gov't*), where BEFORE Covid-restrictions and compulsory mask wearing was introduced, (which we NOW use), had outbreaks which contaminated many attending their services. Again, the few examples cited don't account for the thousands of Church services since, with NO contamination outbreaks recorded using safe practices. Let's see - any outbreaks recorded from pubs, Cafes and restaurants? Yes there have been. But apparently they are still seen as safer than a Church.
5. Maybe we, of faith communities, cannot be trusted in keeping adequate records. I have personally kept records since day one, when we first faced restrictions and so do all other Priests I know. Plus we know our parishioners. We also insist on all in the congregation to keep their masks on during Mass. But strangers in a café, pub or restaurant can remove their masks.

Anyway, you can probably read some of my frustration come out by my facetious remarks above, which I offer no apology for. One thing I think we all want and what I ask for; is parity - that the Church is treated equally and fairly, the same as pubs, cafés and restaurants and not left on the outer - literally!

So, maybe call or write (nicely), to your MP, let him know about this unfair treatment.

Fr Geoff