

ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH CHRONICLE

Newsletter of St. Joseph's Parish, South Yarra.

Issue 16.

Winter 2016.

Gardens and a Gardener.

One of the pleasant surprises which greets many visitors who come to our little oasis off Chapel St. is the aspect of the garden areas around the church and priory. The reflection pool beside the church draws many people to pause a moment, leaving behind the distractions which occupy their minds before entering the peaceful quiet of the church's interior.

A bower opening out into the Memorial Garden also exudes an atmosphere of rest, allowing for a grateful remembrance of those whose ashes are buried there, and of the priests, religious and past parishioners who have shared their gifts with us, enriched our community with their presence for a while, and are now held by God in his everlasting embrace.

Different, but just as appealing, is the children's playground surrounded by lawns, trees and a rockery garden on the other side of the Parish Centre, - a space where the sound of excited children is frequently heard, while parents find space to relax, chat, picnic or just read a book.



The lawn in front of the Priory with its hedges and line of bottlebrush sets off in a wonderful way the Priory itself, now 115 years old, while in the backyard a community garden is taking shape, originally set up for residents at the Haven, to provide an outdoor activity for them, but also available to parishioners who in their units deprived of gardens have here an opportunity to put their green fingers to work in a veggie patch of their own.

Much of all this has been the work of Fr. Gerry, as over the years he has planted trees and shrubs, replacing these not doing well, filling gaps in the hedges, creating floral borders and covering walls around the back with climbers and other botanica.



Even now, well past his OBE, and some recent health scares, he continues to make sure gardens are regularly watered, trees and hedges trimmed and pruned, and the general aspect kept in a way that's pleasant, peaceful and relaxing.

Fr. Gerry, we thank you for providing us with such a wonderful ambience to work in.
Fr. Abel.

An Ecumenical gathering.

On Friday evening, 5th August, at 7.00 p.m., on the eve of the feast of the Transfiguration, the symbol of the Ecumenical Movement (shown) will again be lit in St. Joseph's church, South Yarra, as we gather with members of our partner churches, Christ Church, South Yarra, St. Martin's, Hawksburn, Anglican churches, and the South Yarra Community Baptist church for an Ecumenical Eucharist.

The symbol rotates between the partner churches as each community hosts the Eucharist in their respective churches.

The symbol, representing the barque of Christ moving on this world's troubled waters as it strives to achieve unity around the Cross on which Christ died.



It was presented to the partner churches in the early 1990s by Kevin Pethebridge, a parishioner at St. Joseph, in celebration of the efforts made by these local churches to come together, dating back to the early 1970s.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Gardens and a Gardener. Fr. Abel.
- An Ecumenical Gathering. Fr. Abel.
- Looking back over the past 12 months. Fr. Abel.
- "But what shall become of the little ones?" Children's Sacramental preparation. Ona Stewart.
- St. Joseph's Outreach Services B. Dennis.
- A book reviewed. Fr. Gerry.
- Asked to be a godparent? Fr. Abel.
- The Beginning..... The Middle..... And the End.

LOOKING BACK OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS.

On Sunday 24th July we will, once again, hold the AGM of our Parish Pastoral Council, with its presentation of reports from myself as Parish Priest, and of the various Committees and groups active in the Parish.

While this Chronicle frequently carries a report of some of these groups, - our St. Joseph's Outreach Services (SJOS) in particular, other activities are rarely mentioned, and this issue of the Chronicle gives me an opportunity to rectify that.

One item which has struck me forcibly these last 12 months is the impact changes to personnel and leading volunteers has on our Parish. On the one hand there are the gifts of which new blood bring to the Parish, and an example of this is Fr. Michael's concern to help deepen and widen the opportunities for spiritual growth during key seasons of the Church's liturgical year, such as Advent and the Lent/post-Easter periods, which led to the introduction of a Giving Tree in Advent, as well as a series Home Masses in Advent and Lent, and a Parish Retreat day post-Easter.

On the other hand there is the retirement of Joyce Flint as our Parish Pastoral Associate at the end of last year. Her engagement with leading the Advent and Lenten Discussion groups is sorely missed, as is the diminished involvement with the RCIA, no longer part as an ex-officio member of the Parish Council, and the other assortment of hands-on occupations she used to manage outside of her work commitments. To all of that we tip our hat in gratitude.

Last year our social Justice group sponsored a number of Parish Conversations, where Joyce and her husband John took a leading role in organising and arranging these events, but so far this year these have failed to materialise, - not for lack of interest, but through change of circumstances and time constraints not having the opportunity to put in the effort needed. The same can be said of the Spaghetti Nights, which too often depended on just one or two people taking responsibility.

Meanwhile we have welcomed two new faces to our Parish Team. Ona Stewart came to take over Joyce's role as Pastoral Associate, and has already put her own imprint on that role through her engagement with the families coming to the Childrens' Liturgy, of those being prepared for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, 1st Communion and Confirmation, while also reaching out to the families of children who do not attend Catholic schools.

Br. Percival Severeosa joined our Augustinian community in February, initially to complete a 10-week

Clinical Pastoral Education course at the Austin Hospital. He had already completed his theological and spiritual formation and in May made his final profession as an Augustinian. He is now looking forward to his Ordination. Meanwhile he will remain with us for the remainder of the year on Pastoral Experience. When and where his Ordination to the Diaconate and the Priesthood will take place is yet to be decided.

As part of a general round-up I'd like to draw your attention to the changing composition of those who come to St. Joseph's and St. Thomas Aquinas for Mass on the weekends. We see a substantial number of new and younger faces, of young adults who have moved into the Parish, as well as some families with young and infant children, while the average number of those attending Mass is consistently above 250, so we are holding more than our own.

The Parish Pastoral Council saw 6 new members taking office. We are blessed with the experience and insights they bring to the spiritual and material needs and growth of our Parish community.

St. Joseph's Outreach Services (SJOS), thanks to the sterling work of the Exec Committee and its band of volunteers, continues to meet a range of social needs in and beyond our Parish area. Especially the Foodstore is experiencing a substantial increase in numbers of people seeking its help.

Although struggling to raise sufficient volunteers to maintain our various ministries of Welcomers, Readers, Special Ministers of the Eucharist, musicians, sacristans, etc., the Parish continues to function well, attested to by the favourable comments of the many visitors who pass through our doors. A special word of appreciation is due to our tireless Liturgy Committee for their efforts, and to the volunteers who maintain our Communion Services in both churches and in the Aged Care & Nursing Homes, as well as to those who bring H. Communion to the Alfred and to the Housebound.

All of this would not be possible without the cooperation and support of Frs. Gerry and Michael as well as Br. Percival, and our long-serving and efficient Business Manager, Carole McNally, and to our practical and resourceful Parish Secretary, Toni Stuart, on whose skill I depend more than anyone else.

To all of these and the many other unsung heroes who contribute the ongoing ministry of our Parish I offer my heartfelt thanks.

Fr. Abel.

**“But what shall become of the little ones?”
- St Augustine, City of God, Chapter 8**

Saint Augustine, the patron and inspiration of the Order of St. Augustine, whose priests and brothers serve us in our parish, in his book “The City of God”, was asking, “But what shall become of the little ones”? He had similar concerns to those we have today.



In our own time and community, it is not always clear how we can lead our young children to the joy of Christian life. In an effort to be seen as secular, modern states often prohibit many rituals of faith in schools, rituals that have traditionally served the critical purpose of introducing young people to a tried and tested set of values and principles. The Catholic tradition has been always one of supporting and encouraging parents to raise their children according to the Gospel ideals.

From an early age the notion that God is present in a child's life can be developed in simple daily practices and observations. Prayer at meal times, before going to bed, or leaving for school each day can become daily family practice. Bringing the family to Sunday Mass together with other believers introduces the child to the Church's ritual and symbol.

Hence we are pleased to share an outline of the program used recently to prepare the little ones in our Parish for the reception of Reconciliation and First Eucharist.

Supporting parents in their role as first educators in faith, our Parish assists them in the preparation of their child for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Preparation is necessary before any sacraments are celebrated.

The program used is mainly designed for parents whose children attend non-Catholic schools or adapted for others wishing their children to receive Sacraments at our parish.

If parents are practicing Catholics they are able to do much of the preparation themselves. We can provide

them with the Sacramental preparation resources/ books, or the children can attend the Sacramental preparation classes held in our parish library.

Recently our present Sacramental preparation class celebrated receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and the First Holy Eucharist. During a Sunday Eucharist, and together with their parents, the children took part in the Liturgy of the Word, brought forward the Offertory gifts and received the Sacrament of the Eucharist for the first time. It was an opportunity not only for the children to receive the Sacraments, but also for their parents and the whole congregation to share their faith.

And so to answer St. Augustine's question: “But what shall become of the little ones?”, - Seeing the young families on Sunday mornings at our church gives us hope that our Catholic faith and values are alive and we hope that the little ones at our parish are growing into humans with great hearts and deep faith.

ST JOSEPH'S OUTREACH SERVICES JUNE 2016 REPORT

The Committee of Management of SJOS (St Joseph's Outreach Services) would like to thank the parishioners of the Parish of South Yarra for their amazing generosity with the 2016 SJOS Appeal Weekend. We were able to raise over \$5,600.00 during the weekend, and over the following weeks, as envelopes were submitted.

As SJOS is not supported by either state or federal government community services funding, every dollar raised through fundraising is greatly appreciated. We are a volunteer organisation and the work we do in the transitional housing units, the food store and the bread bank assist the many disadvantaged and marginalised in the community. The cost of supplying these services continues to increase, so any financial support we receive is very, very welcome.

There are some SJOS fundraising activities coming up:

Saturday, 6 August 2016
Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings Collingwood
Sunday, 11 September 2016
SJOS Annual High Tea
Late October/ Early November
SJOS Annual Film Night
December 2016
SJOS Volunteers Christmas Celebration

Thank you again to those who donated and we hope you will be able to join us at some of the events.

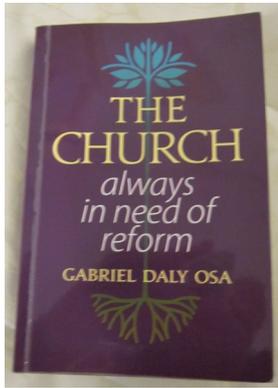


**St Joseph's
Outreach
Services**
Shelter | Opportunity | Support

The SJOS Management Committee

BOOK REVIEW:

“THE CHURCH: ALWAYS IN NEED OF REFORM” is the title of a book written by Fr Gabriel Daly OSA, who, at the launching of the book early this year, was described by Professor Werner Jeanrond of Oxford University as “Ireland’s greatest living priest theologian.” Fr Daly took the title of his book from a statement of Pope John the 23rd announcing his decision to call the Second Vatican Council in 1959.



Pope John the 23rd's election was a surprise to many but recognised by others as a compromise, reached by some 2500 bishops from around the world who couldn't agree on the need for reform in church government and so elected an old man who wouldn't last long nor do anything to upset the establishment in Rome.

Pope John the 23rd lasted only five years but launched a revolution in Catholicism with the 2nd Vatican Council which sat through four sessions from 1962 to 1965 and attempted to drag the institutional church into the mid-twentieth century.

Richard Garllardetz, himself a theologian who has written a book entitled “An Unfinished Council”, reviews Fr Daly's book in THE TABLET (30-04-16) and begins by saying: “A righteous anger reverberates from the Irish theologian Gabriel Daly. He has witnessed sundry abuses at the hands of an authoritarian church and now, in the autumn of his life, he speaks out. He is not content to offer a laundry list of favourite ecclesiastical reforms; Daly's reformist agenda follows upon a sophisticated theological analysis.”

I myself have read the book with great satisfaction and intend to read it again in an effort to further purge my mind and heart of the stale and sometimes unchristian theology that I was fed and required to digest and accept in the seminary days of the 1950's.

You don't have to be learned in theology to read this book. A High-school friend of mine who has retired after a long and successful career as a policeman has read it with interest and satisfaction and has recommended it to his Catholic and non-Catholic friends who are interested in Christianity.

Another review of Daly's book “SCRIPTURE IN CHURCH” – April 2016 (Dominican Publications) says “Everything in “THE CHURCH: ALWAYS IN NEED OF REFORM” is written out of an unshakeable belief that Christians should, under grace, be able to

disagree with each other on non-essential matters while maintaining the bond of love, tolerance, and open-mindedness towards the truth to be found in each other's positions.”

A copy of this book will soon be available in our Parish Library. Gerry Dullard OSA

ASKED TO BE A GODPARENT?

A few weeks ago, while advertising in our Parish Bulletin the preparation dates for children's reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, as an aside mention was made that it is a requirement that Catholics being asked to be Godparents at a Baptism should have received all three of the Sacraments of Initiation, i.e. Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

This mention resulted in a number of adolescents and adults who had missed out on Confirmation enquiring how they could go about receiving this Sacrament as well.

Obviously this cannot be done without some form of preparation. With Confirmation scheduled to take place on Sunday, 14th August, at St. Joseph's, during the 10.30 a.m. Mass, 2 preparation sessions are being organized.

The first, on Sunday, 24th July, will be held at 5.00 p.m. in the Parish Library, and will look at Confirmation in the context of the Sacraments of Initiation and the living out of our faith, while the second, on Sunday, July 31st, same time, same place, will look more specifically at Confirmation and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

These 2 sessions, geared towards preparing adults, will also be open to further enquirers who find themselves in a similar situation, for example people about to be married. These too should have received each of the Sacraments of Initiation.

Each candidate must be able to provide a copy of their Baptism certificate. Enquiries should be directed to the Parish Office.

THE BEGINNING.....THE MIDDLE.....AND THE END.

The following have been added to the Christian community via the waters of **Baptism:** Felix Starmer, Oscar Starmer, Keeley Sbizzirri, James Hamilton, Madeline van Wissen, Imogen Sordello, Caitlyn Young. **The knot was tied between:** Anton Rajadurai & Nimitha Manivasagan, Rupert Laycock & Ursula Udall, William Browne & Isabella Maccioli, Clint Peloso & Stephanie Draycott, Kristin O'Reilly & Lisa Anderson, Jerome Purcell & Jessica Drake, Glenn Richards & Denise Bourke, Edouard Raymond & Julie Dortimer, Steven Stiles & Katherine Stephens, Dean Bassed & Emily Jay, Thomas Lawson & Maryanne Sonnemann **While:** Patricia Trenchard, Joseph Donnelly, Carolyn Stoney, Carmine Iaconese returned to their creator.