



MoyneCatholic

Wednesday 28th October 2020

Dear Parishioners,

I write to you as a shepherd without a flock! That's how things have *felt* for most of the year, anyway. In between lockdowns, I navigated the strict government conditions and visited a few parishioners. I learned that people have been very intentional in staying connected to each other. Back in the second century, Tertullian wrote that many pagans marvelled at the new Christian religion: "*Look!* they say. *'See how these Christians love one another?'*" I think Tertullian could write something similar about our 21st century parish communities in Koroit and Port Fairy. This poor shepherd may be bewildered, but the flock knows what it's about.

As of today the State Government permits indoor religious gatherings for up to 20 people in regional Victoria, and the Koroit and Port Fairy churches have reopened. Weekday Masses will now be scheduled as normal, attentive to social distancing and contact tracing. Moreover, Monday is All Souls' Day, so Requiem Mass will be offered in Koroit at 10am, and in Port Fairy at 12pm and 5pm.

Hopefully, the restrictions around indoor religious gatherings will be eased further in the next few weeks. The Youtube Mass broadcast from St Joseph's in Warrnambool attracts 500 viewers each week. Until government restrictions accommodate the numbers which tune into Youtube, we'll hold off replacing the online Mass with regular Sunday Masses.

This short newsletter updates you on some important matters which have occurred during lockdown. To keep track of our response to changing regulations, access the weekly bulletin at www.moynecatholic.org.au.

May God bless and protect you and your families,

Fr John Corrigan

ONLINE MASS

Mass is recorded at St Joseph's Church in War-rnambool every Sunday. It is available to view on Youtube from 8:30 Sunday morning. Visit www.moynecatholic.org.au for access.

DIAL-IN ROSARY

Join in an online half hour of prayer, which starts at 12pm each day. We begin with the Angelus, then we pray five Mysteries of the Rosary, and a Litany to the Blessed Virgin Mary or another saint. The online prayer gathering concludes with a reading of the day's Gospel and a short commentary. Watch on Facebook (www.facebook.com/moynecatholic) or join in on Zoom. Your camera is switched off, and your microphone defaults to mute. For more details and instructions on how to join, visit www.moynecatholic.org.au.

SACRAMENTS AT HOME

Fr John Corrigan is very willing to visit parishioners at home to minister the sacraments. This is never an imposition. Our Lord loves you and longs for communion with you, so any request for the sacraments can be seen as an act of service to God, done for His sake, not your own. Also Pope Francis has given orders — see his special decree for the month of November! If you'd like a home visit, call **0422 342 499**.

PLANNED GIVING

New envelopes are now available for pick up. The churches are open on the days that weekday Mass is scheduled. (See bulletin.)

CDF Pay for Parishes is a new online thanksgiving portal which allows anyone, anywhere, any time, to make electronic payments to the parish or presbytery, as a one off, or on a regular recurring schedule. Users receive an electronic receipt for any payments.

For further information please contact the Parish Office and speak to Louise. Phone **5562 2231** or **0408 681 223**. To see the online portal itself, enter one of these addresses in your web browser:

- bit.ly/CDFpayKoroitParish
- bit.ly/CDFpayPortFairy

SALE OF CHURCHES



St Joseph's Church in Yambuk has been sold for \$333,000 (including GST). Settlement was completed in mid-September. Fittings in the church — pews, statues, altars, etc. — were sold by silent auction, and the majority of goods were obtained by members of the Yambuk Catholic community. All proceeds remain in the parish of Port Fairy.



St John's Church in Orford was sold for \$165,000 (including GST). Settlement was completed in late-August. Church fittings were sold by silent auction, and the majority of goods were obtained by members of the Orford Catholic community. A commemorative plaque fixed to the Orford church is in safekeeping in Port Fairy, and it will be reinstated at an appropriate place. All proceeds remain with the Port Fairy parish.

In consultation with local residents, the Koroit Parish Finance Committee agreed in March to defer the sale of **St Joseph's Church in Hawkesdale**. COVID-19 has since wrought havoc on the proposed timeline. Decisions around St Joseph's will be made in due time, in ongoing consultation with the Hawkesdale community.

KOROIT BUILDING WORKS

The meeting room at Koroit is now finished and furnished. The church tower and roof have been examined and repair work is ongoing. The next step is to treat the rising damp in the church walls and restore the church interior. Infant Jesus also has a new organ, on loan from St Joseph's.

FR MICHAEL LINEHAN'S RETIREMENT AND A NEW 'MINISTRY DISTRICT'

Earlier this year, Bishop Paul Bird accepted Fr Michael Linehan's retirement, effective 1st January 2021. (Fr Michael will retire to a private residence in Warrnambool, because after all, why would anyone want to leave this district, being God's own country?)

Subsequently, the bishop appointed Fr John Fitzgerald and Fr John Corrigan as co-pastors of the parishes of Koroit, Port Fairy, Warrnambool and West Warrnambool, also effective 1st January 2021. Together, these parishes constitute a new ministry district. Each parish retains its identity in a spirit of co-operation with neighbouring parishes. This co-operation has already started. By way of example:

- In preparing the sale of the Orford, Yambuk and Hawkesdale churches.
- In the transference of governance of our parish schools to the Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Ltd (DOBCCEL).
- In our online Sunday Masses on Youtube.
- In the employment of Louise Dryburgh across all four parishes.

Fr Michael's retirement will naturally necessitate some changes. Our challenge is to balance change with stability.

Fr John Corrigan will relocate from a rental property in Port Fairy to the presbytery in West Warrnambool in the very near future.

Having just two priests across the the four parishes requires a revision of the Mass schedule. A few principles will guide this revision:

- (a) It's important that parishioners are involved in the process of change. We may have to proceed with a provisional schedule, which is properly reviewed in a few months time, when parishioners can meet in larger numbers.
- (b) There ought be no pressure on the two retired priests (Fr Bill van de Camp and Fr Michael) to be scheduled on the ordinary weekend Mass roster.
- (c) Alternating Mass schedules is not desirable, so we need fixed times for each parish.
- (d) There is a commitment to celebrate Mass in all four parishes every weekend.

POPE FRANCIS ISSUES SPECIAL DECREE FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

In November the Church commemorates the faithful departed and prays especially for the holy souls in Purgatory. Purgatory purifies the soul from attachment to sin, and liberates the soul from fear and shame.

When we pray or offer sacrifices or obtain indulgences for the holy souls, it's as though we're giving them a big hug. We assure them that they are worthy of love, and that being in God's presence is a cause of joy, not pain and regret. If we are generous in these efforts, we might hope to find Purgatory empty of acquaintances when the time comes to render our own account to God. Instead, we will happily discover that our prayers and sacrifices have assisted every one of our departed family and friends in their passage to Heaven.

In this spirit, and due to the unique circumstances of the global pandemic, Pope Francis has issued a special decree for November:

- The faithful may obtain a plenary indulgence for the holy souls in Purgatory by visiting a cemetery and praying for the dead. Ordinarily, this visit must occur in the first 8 days of the month. This November, the indulgence can be obtained by visiting a cemetery on any day.
- The faithful may obtain a second plenary indulgence for the holy souls by visiting a church or chapel on All Souls Day and reciting the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. This year, the indulgence can be obtained on any day in November, chosen by each member of the faithful.
- The elderly, the sick, and others who cannot leave their home for serious reason (ie: state restrictions), can obtain an indulgence for the holy souls by praying the Lord's Prayer and the Creed at home, before a holy picture.
- Indulgences always presuppose three ordinary conditions: sacramental confession, reception of Holy Communion, and a prayer for the Holy Father's intentions. Pope Francis asks that priests are particularly generous in their availability to hear confessions throughout November, and in their ministry of Holy Communion to the housebound. In addition, all priests are strongly encouraged to offer three Masses on All Souls' Day.

A letter of hope to the people of Ireland and the world

My name is Nancy Stewart and I was born on 16th October 1913. Imagine turning 107 in a world pandemic! This definitely is something very unusual even for me and all I have been through. I live in Clonard in County Meath and have lived in my home for over 83 years.

I lost my husband in a car crash in 1989, and lost my twin daughters — Margaret in 2007 to motor neurone disease, and Anne in 2010 to the utter heartbreak of losing her sister. I've lost all my friends throughout the years which comes with living so long on this earth. I'm very lucky to still have three daughters: Kathleen, Mary and Olive, and one son Finian. I have 84 grandchildren, great grandchildren and great great grandchildren. I have faced many heart-breaking moments and also have seen many hard times in our country witnessing world wars, division in our people and numerous sad times for our nation.

I write to you today to send you my love and to offer you my prayers. We are in a very difficult time at the moment in our country, in our lives and in our world. But I reach out to you in this letter to offer you hope, faith and belief that everything will be okay in the end.

Like everything I've been through since the day I was born in 1913, no matter how bad things have got, I'm living proof that we can survive. In years to come, this will just be a distant memory.

I have a great faith and it has helped me keep positive throughout the struggles I've met. I thank you for keeping your faith, and for keeping your resilience strong through this hard time. Sadly for the moment, we can no longer stretch out to a friend and embrace them, nor can we call to each other's houses.

But I'm here to share my story. I have been in lockdown in my house since March, alongside my granddaughter Louise. Even though it has been a tough time, we have got through it together.

We drink tea. We say prayers. We bake. We laugh. We make phone calls. I can even video call lots of my family and friends and am making new friends everyday that God gives me on this earth.

And that's a very important thing to say. If you are feeling low, try to call someone or even go for a walk. I also ask God to help me if I'm feeling low. This is a hard time for everyone but please make sure you keep yourself well and wear your mask. If you keep healthy, your mind will stay healthy too.

Keep talking to one another. All my life I have always believed in chatting and drinking tea and saying a prayer or a decade of the rosary and it has got me through. This is our moment to keep our faith and to keep believing that everything will turn out okay.

We must try to make sure we leave nobody behind and also that we don't lose sight of each other. This is a moment for humanity to step forward to take care of the other. We must mind ourselves but we must also mind all those around us.

Look up and smile even if you have your mask on. Your eyes will smile and that might be all someone needs to keep going. No good deed ever goes unnoticed so try your best to keep being good. We are not here to live for ourselves but to live for each other.

I can't believe I've made it to this age, I only feel like I'm 50 but now that I'm here, all I can say is please God I'll be here for my next birthday. We must always look forward. I can't believe I'm the oldest person in Ireland living in my own home. I don't feel that old!

When God wants me, He will come take me. But for now I will keep enjoying my life, I'll keep loving my family, and I'll keep saying my prayers day by day. Oh and not to forget — eating lots of good wholesome food is my tip. Good food and lots of tea is my secret to a long life, as well as keeping positive as best I can.

We must always look forward and hope for the best.

Thank you for thinking of me in your prayers and your thoughts and I promise I will think of you in my many rosaries I say everyday.

Thank you so much for reading my letter also and I hope I have, in even a little way, helped you feel less alone in this moment. There is always hope and once we keep talking to one another, no day will seem empty and we can get through this together. It only takes a small candle to take away the dark and in each of us, we can be that light in the world.

This hard time will indeed pass like all the rest and all that matters is that we helped each other through.

Many blessings and much love,

Granny Nancy X

Clonard, Co Meath.

