

05 May 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to another weekly newsletter.

I am thankful to Susanna and Marea for the music and flowers respectively for Mass on Sunday. It is good to be able to sing praises to GOD when we can. We may not be able to sing because of possible health regulations when we return to St John's.

Our Parish Council had a Zoom meeting during the week to discuss what we need to consider when restrictions on our movements and gatherings start to be eased. There is much to be considered and we'll keep you updated when our plans become more settled.

There is still no definitive word on when we may be able to meet together again at St John's. As you probably all know, visiting restrictions have been eased – where Home Communion with the bread only is now possible – but care must still be taken with physical distancing rules still in place. We are also required to keep extensive records concerning each visit

I continue to be thankful to Lynn for producing, and Marea and Axel who help her deliver, the Pew Sheet each week to those who are not on email. If any of you are able to view our daily transmissions of Morning and Evening Prayer or Mass on Sunday mornings and can share these with those who don't have computers or internet access, could I encourage you to do so please. It is a great way of sharing community. Following last weeks Eucharist, our live-stream service was shared onto a Facebook page in Malaysia called Christian Community – as was the service from All Saints Nelson Bay. What an amazing GOD we have!

For those who may be interested, I would like to investigate the possibility of starting up some Zoom Bible Study Groups. I have interest shown by a small group of people and we should be able to get at least one started in the next couple of weeks. Zoom is becoming more widely used, Zoom Bible Study groups have been trialled in other parishes and seems to be working well. A connection to the NBN is important and I can see that the use of such technology as part of the ministries we offer going forward will become necessary. When current restrictions are either eased or removed, I can see live-streaming of Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer and at least 1 Holy Communion Service through the week still making up our "suite" of services being offered.

I am studying a Daily Devotional called "*The Divine Romance – 365 Days Meditating on the Song of Songs*". Recently, under the subject of "Unselfish Love", the authors highlighted a portion of chapter 2:16 – ***We delight ourselves in each other.*** True love delights in giving. It is unselfish and sacrificial – just like JESUS. Sometimes, in the comfort of love, it's easy to forget that JESUS has called us to freely give from the overflow of our hearts. As much as we would like to simply enjoy Him and rest in His arms, it isn't His perfect plan. It's time to discover the delights of mature love. GOD wants to remove a worldly mind-set of love that is selfish, comfortable, and easy. Divine love draws us deeper into the place of unconditional, unselfish, sacrificial love. This means we're no longer content with only receiving; we're determined to find ways to honour and bless the LORD in return. Knowing that He's called us to co-labour with Him, we rise, dedicate ourselves to Him fully, and declare, "We are yours, LORD!" *LORD, we so enjoy your love and glorious presence; but we know you've called us for more. You've called us to climb the mountains with you and declare your goodness. We repent of any selfishness that has ruled our hearts. We want to honour and bless you in all we do and say. Amen*

If you would like to explore what's available in studying the bible more or praying more, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or by text message – 0401 061 789, Facebook Messenger, or email – frsteve@bigpond.com

Prayer points for this week:

- People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- People who are working on the front-line such as doctors, hospital and aged-care staff, nurses, pharmacists, police, fire fighters, emergency service personnel, grocery store employees, retail workers and truck drivers
- People who have become unemployed because of COVID-19
- People who are struggling because of having to live in lockdown
- People who are on our prayer list and those who mourn

Thank you for continuing to support our parish financially. It is important that we all continue to support the Church through our giving. If you have internet access, you might like to consider making a direct deposit into our parish account. Thank you to those who already use this method. The parish account details are as follows:

BSB 705-077 and the Account Number is 00041040 – and our account is with the Anglican Savings and Development Fund. If you don't have internet access or prefer not to give electronically, give our Treasurer Edith a call and she can work with you on the best way to do this.

If you would prefer to make a **DONATION**, it may be done as follows:

At the top of the webpage there are 7 headings – the first of which is Church. If you click on Church, another menu appears. The 7th topic on this menu is DONATE. If you click on that, there are some steps to follow on that page in order to donate.

May GOD richly bless you as you journey with Him this week.

Fr Steve