

28 May 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to our latest weekly newsletter.

I am thankful to Susanna and Marea for the music and flowers respectively for Mass on Sunday. I am still working on the multitude of forms required for us to get back into St John's. As I am writing this the Government has announced that 50 people would be acceptable at a worship service. Our Diocese is still processing this news and determining our response to it. Patience is important in this situation as we don't need to rush back to gathering as a face-to-face physical community again only for the possibility of an outbreak and have to close again. The word "BALANCE" must be the word that is uppermost in our minds. All the essential health protocols must be in place and be followed by all.

I am hoping that during this coming week I can be in touch with those who indicated an interest in forming a Zoom Bible Study group. Zoom is becoming more widely used; and Zoom Bible Study groups have been trialled in other parishes and seem 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 daily 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.

My Current thinking on services – **ONCE WE GET BACK INTO ST JOHN'S** – is as follows:

Morning Prayer – livestreamed daily at 8am – Tuesday to Saturday

Evening Prayer – livestreamed daily at 5pm – Tuesday to Saturday

Holy Communion

- Sunday at 9am
- Saturday at 6pm
- Wednesday at 9am - livestreamed

During the week, we remembered St Augustine of Canterbury – missionary and bishop. John 17:18 says: ¹⁸**As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.** American Roman Catholic author, Amy Welborn, suggests that "The world is a big place and an enormous mission field. But, indeed, the world is where JESUS sends us. Missionary saints such as Augustine of Canterbury, a Benedictine monk who took the gospel to sixth-century England, lived out his calling. But here is where it starts: with our own neighbours, the people we will encounter today in ordinary ways and places. That's where the "world" starts. That's the first place JESUS sends us: out our doors and down our own streets."

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

If you are connected to the internet, I encourage you to visit our parish website and have a look around. The internet address is:

<http://www.stjohnsraymondterrace.org>

Prayer points for this week:

- Our Bishops and Diocesan staff who are working to get information to parishes on how we should structure ourselves as we gradually come out of lockdown
- People who have been diagnosed with COVID-19
- Families physically separated internationally due to this pandemic

- 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 the isolation of having to live in lockdown
- People who are on our parish prayer list and those who mourn
- Children and Teachers as they prepare to return to school full-time

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.

Under the heading of **“Even While You Sleep”** the bible in the Song of Songs tells us **“They are angelic warriors standing ready with swords to defend the king and his fiancée from every terror of the night.”**

Great confidence comes when we believe all that GOD declares to be true. Sweet and protected sleep is one of GOD's promises to us. Our sleep is meant to be peaceful and refreshing, filled with sweet dreams and holy encounters. Angels have been assigned to us, to guard us day and night. Our bedrooms are the very doorways to GOD's presence.

Fill your thoughts with faithfulness and love of GOD as you rest your head upon your pillow each night. Before you fall asleep, take a few moments to thank GOD for His blessings and faithfulness. Even if you have had a rough day, there are always things to be thankful for. Picture your angels standing guard as you carelessly drift off to sleep. Let GOD give you a good-night kiss as He whispers words of hope into your soul.

Father, there's a song in my heart as I drift off to sleep tonight. My mind is filled with thoughts of you; and my spirit meditates upon your love. I will lie down tonight in total peace and sleep soundly – secure in your arms. I expect to dream beautiful dreams, to have sweet and refreshing sleep, and to wake with wisdom for tomorrow. Thank you for hiding me beneath your secret shadow where I'm hidden in your strength. AMEN

[Taken from *The Divine Romance*– 365 Days Meditating on the Song of Songs]

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

Fr Steve