

14 July 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to our latest weekly newsletter.

I am thankful to Susanna Denham, Caroline Coppins and Trisch Lasorsa for the music, flowers, and the intercessions respectively for Mass at the weekend. Thanks also to Lynn Mulley who continues faithfully in her ministry of giving us a Pew Sheet every week. Services at St John's this week will be as follows:

Holy Communion

- Saturday at 6pm – **18 July 2020**
- Sunday at 9am – **19 July 2020** – livestreamed
- Wednesday at 9am – **22 July 2020**
- Morning Prayer – livestreamed daily at 8am – Tuesday to Saturday
- Evening Prayer – livestreamed daily at 5pm – Tuesday to Saturday

With the livestreaming of Morning and Evening Prayer, there is a Mobile Phone app available for download called "Epray". It is free and has the service and readings all in one neat package. If you would like to join us for these services, I encourage you to download this particular app. For i-phones it is from the app store and for android devices, from the Google Play Store.

At 11:30am this Sunday, 19 July, we will have our first baptism since lockdown restrictions were eased – Thomas Laverick. Please pray for Thomas and his family on this special occasion

Under the heading "**Boast About GOD**", I was directed to Psalm 34:2 – "My soul will make its boast in the LORD."

When we feel afraid, we may be prone to pulling the blanket over our heads, hoping whatever "it" is, will go away. Or we nurse our fears. The adversary of our souls loves to get our attention focussed on ourselves and not on the resources of GOD.

What will happen when we praise and worship GOD? Our praise makes GOD big in heart and mind. Soon, our problem falls into perspective. When we worship GOD, sometimes with even tears rolling down our faces, our spirit is renewed as we praise GOD. The problem does not go away, but all of a sudden, we see it in relation to the One who is in charge of everything.

It's interesting what we boast about, isn't it? At the last function we attended – seems so far back in time due to COVID-19 – what did you boast about? Why not put the spotlight on the LORD and focus on Him? When we get together with friends, let's brag about JESUS. So many good things are happening in our lives as individuals, in our families, and in our church that we ought to boast on the LORD all the time.

[David Jeremiah – Morning and Evening Devotions – Thomas Nelson Publishers]

I continue to encourage you to consider a **Gratitude Journal**. I have been using one since the middle of May. All I do each day is to record **THREE** things for which I am thankful. You can always record more but 3 is the suggestion. By doing this exercise each day, we build up within ourselves an "attitude of gratitude". Why not give it a go?

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](mailto:frsteve@bigpond.com)

Heather Buckingham is keeping us updated on Parish Pantry in the Pewsheets. If you have any questions concerning this ministry, please talk to Heather, or Fr Steve.

There are some of our volunteers who are unable to continue for the moment with Parish Pantry. If you have never been a part of the Pantry ministry, would you pray about it and consider it please? It is an important ministry of our parish in its connections with the wider Raymond Terrace community.

Like everything in a "COVID-19 world" there is usually a form to be filled out – partly a cynical response but overall a true statement. This one is called "Anglican Diocese of Newcastle **Health and Medical Declaration Form – Volunteer Role During COVID-19**." It is our responsibility as Church to maintain a safe environment and this is a part of this responsibility.

If you are connected to the internet, I continue to 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.
- Peace within countries where there is unrest and strife
- Children to be brought for baptism and their families
- People who have become unemployed because of COVID-19
- The people of Victoria as they enter another extended period of lockdown
- People who are on our parish 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.

Under the heading of “**Embrace**” the bible in the Song of Songs tells us “A sachet of myrrh is my lover, like a tied-up bundle of myrrh **resting over my heart.**” *Song of Songs 1:13*

Rest in GOD's love today. Embrace the One who loves you with perfect love. Let the knowledge and reality of His holy passion settle deep within our hearts. His love has redeemed us from sin and death. His love is real, tangible, and unmatched by any other.

Fall back into the arms of the One who continually reaches to draw us near. All we need to face the day is found in His presence. Wisdom, peace, joy, faith, and prosperity are gifts waiting to be exchanged for our baggage. As we look upon His face, doubt and fear melt away. He is the kind and generous Shepherd who leads us on our journey – just take His hand and see where He leads. Our future is safe in His hands.

*JESUS, I turn my heart to you. As I rest in your presence and look upon your face, I experience deep peace unlike anything I've ever known. I'm coming closer, LORD – coming with all my burdens and cares, which I lay at your feet. Wrap me in your arms and seal my heart with a holy kiss. Bathes me in the light of your glory, and I will forever be ruined for anything less. 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.

Thank you all for your birthday wishes through the week.

Fr Steve