

06 August 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to our latest weekly newsletter.

I am thankful to Susanna Denham, Helen Farley and Ken Hoy 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 – **8 August 2020**
- Sunday at 9am – **9 August 2020** – livestreamed
- Wednesday at 9am – **12 August 2020**
- Morning Prayer – livestreamed daily at 8am – Tuesday to Saturday
- Evening Prayer – livestreamed daily at 5pm – Tuesday to Saturday

Friday 31 July saw us resume Scripture at Raymond Terrace Public School following a lengthy break due to coronavirus.

Last Saturday evening at 6pm, I admitted 3 children to Holy Communion – Zac Denham, and Nina and Elia Giacometti – who are grandchildren of Don and Susanna Denham. Unfortunately, the internet had technical issues and the quality of the livestream was not as good as it could have been – but for family and friends who were present, an enjoyable occasion was had by all

The main news this week centres around the use of masks. Bishop Peter has strongly recommended that masks be worn at Church. There will be signs at all the entrance points explaining this:

“Our concern is for the health and well-being of all people who come to our Church. Together we can help make our community and our church COVID-19 safe. **“The Bishop of Newcastle joins with the NSW Government in strongly encouraging all people attending places of worship to wear face masks.”** Thank you for your understanding as we implement COVID-Safe worship practices.”

For those who attend our Church site, please look on the notice board and read our Evacuation Policy.

On Sunday 23 August, Bishop Sonia will be visiting us. She will meet with Parish Council after the service for a short time.

This coming week we have:

- a funeral at 11:00am on Monday.
- Our usual services on Wednesday
- SRE at Raymond Terrace Public School

Under the heading **“Trials Versus Temptations”**, I was directed to 1 Corinthians 10:13 – *“No temptation has overtaken you except such is common to man; but GOD is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.”*

A consumer protection group will test a car to find its flaws – while the car manufacturer tests a car to find its strengths. In the same way, Satan tempts us to bring out the bad (James 1:13-18), while GOD tests us to bring out the good (James 1:1-12). Nothing tests the integrity of our faith like our response to temptation. When we hear of people falling prey to temptation, we are not surprised. But when we face temptation ourselves, we are often shocked. We shouldn't be surprised, for temptation is inevitable. The more we grow toward the LORD, the more we are tempted.

Unless we acknowledge the reality of temptation, we have set ourselves up to fail. Paul agrees with James that temptation should not be considered unusual in the life of a Christian but common to every believer.

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

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

Thank you to Heather Buckingham who keeps us updated on our Parish Pantry Ministry. Please refer to the Pew Sheet for all the details.

Prayer points for this week:

- A reduction in the spread of the coronavirus
- May all people obey the directions of the health department and use caution in all our dealings
- Peace in our world and increasing respect for and between people

- Children to be brought for baptism and their families
- **Those GOD is calling to the ministry of SRE teaching to come forward**
- For politicians and their advisors, be guided to get the appropriate balance between Public Health needs and the needs of the economy
- The people of Victoria and those in hot spots and clusters in other states as we seek to control the spread of coronavirus.
- A reduction in the incidences of cyber-crime
- People who are on our parish prayer list and those who mourn

Under the heading of “**Who is He?**” the bible in the Song of Songs tells us “The Shulamite **My beloved is to me** the most fragrant apple tree – he stands above the sons of men” *Song of Songs 2:3*

Who is JESUS to us? When we think about Him, how does it stir our hearts? Apart from what our church, friends, family, or leaders think about Him. We must know how WE feel about Him. This is probably the most important aspect of the Christian life – discovering who JESUS is to us.

Revival isn't revival unless individual hearts encounter the LORD on a personal level. As we grow, He will uncover wrong beliefs – in us – that don't reflect who He really is. These aren't times to hide in shame. GOD wants us to know Him. He wants us to dive in and discover more about Him. He wants to shine on areas of our thinking that have been tainted and clouded over. We need to be honest about how we feel and ask Him to shine the light of His truth upon our hearts.

LORD, I know that you're powerful, beautiful, and magnificent. Shine upon my soul – I want every part of me to experience the truth of who you are. If I hold any beliefs about you that are wrong, show me. I want everything I believe about you to be in line with what is true. I open my heart to you – search me 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