

24 September 2020

Dear Friends

Welcome to our latest weekly newsletter.

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

Holy Communion

- Saturday at 6pm – **26 September 2020**
- Sunday at 9am – **27 September 2020** – livestreamed
- Wednesday at 9am – **30 September 2020**
- Morning Prayer – livestreamed daily at 8am – Tuesday to Saturday
- Evening Prayer – livestreamed daily at 5pm – Tuesday to Saturday

This week has been a fairly uneventful week with little news to share apart from what's in the Pew Sheet. Masks are still encouraged, we can't sing together as a community, and we can't hang around after services for a cuppa and a chat on-site.

Our Seasons of Creation celebrations continue with Week 4 – **The Gift of Water** – being the theme for this coming Sunday.

The fifth and final Sunday is usually a Blessing of the Animals service. This year, I invite you to take a photo of your pet/s and email it to me at [frsteve@bigpond.com](mailto:frsteve@bigpond.com) so that we can pray a virtual blessing on them on Sunday 4 October. I ask your permission to display these photographs on the Parish Website, Facebook, and Instagram pages. Please let me know when you send your photos in, please.

This coming week we have our usual services on Wednesday and SRE at Raymond Terrace Public School

Under the heading "**Everybody Submits to Somebody**", I was directed to Romans 13:1 – "*Let every soul be subject to governing authorities. For there is no authority except from GOD, and the authorities that exist are appointed by GOD.*"

A Scottish reformer, Samuel Rutherford, published LEX, REX – or The Law and the Prince, in 1644. In this book, he challenged the prevailing notion of the divine right of kings – that whatever the king says is law. Rutherford reminded rulers that they are not authorities unto themselves, but they are all under GOD's authority. GOD is the ultimate source of all authority in this world. [Queen Elizabeth II has reminded us on many occasions that she is subject to the GOD of the Universe.]

No matter how much authority we think we have in any setting, we quickly discover there is someone with more. But no one's authority is ultimate, for all authorities are ultimately subject to GOD. From parents to potentates, the apostle Paul reminds us that GOD establishes all authorities on earth. Unless an authority requires us to break a law of GOD, we should make submission and honour a part of our lives (Acts 5:29).

Who are the authorities in our lives? If there are some we find it difficult to submit to, we should make it a practice to pray diligently for them. It's hard to resist someone we're praying for. Submission to authorities shows we understand the nature of authority

[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](mailto:frsteve@bigpond.com)

**Prayer points for this week:**

- A continued and sustained reduction in the spread of the coronavirus around our nation.
- May we all continue to diligently obey the directions of the health department and use caution in all our dealings
- Peace between and within countries in our world and increasing respect for and between people
- Children to be brought for baptism and their families
- For politicians and their advisors, be guided to get the appropriate balance between Public Health needs and the needs of the economy
- Those who travel on our roads during the School holidays
- A reduction in the incidences of cyber-crime
- **People who are on our parish prayer list and those who mourn**

Under the heading: **There's Always More**, I was directed to Song of Songs 5:3 – *“The Sleeping Bride – I have already laid aside my own garments for you. How could I take them up again since I've yielded my righteousness to yours?”*

Never be satisfied with your current experience with the LORD. Eagerly seek to grow in wisdom and understanding, never settling for the level of maturity that you have. Maintain an open heart that seeks deeper revelation. Continually lean into His presence, believing that there is a greater depth of encounter to be experienced. The LORD's ways are a treasure that will take eternity to fully understand.

When we're willing to lay aside our ways for His, freedom fills our lives in unexpected ways. We become satisfied and content in the deepest part of our souls, regardless of our circumstances. Peace surpasses understanding. Confidence in His love trumps any fear. Wisdom and faith settle every question.

*LORD, You paid an extravagant price to give us a life filled with glorious revelation and power. We want to live with an attitude of expectancy and humility before You. We never want to hold anything back. We want to continually seek to be more like you, never believing we've reached a level of maturity that gives us the right to be less zealous or committed. Have your way in us.*

The Divine Romance – 365 Days meditating on the Song of Songs – Brian Simmons and Gretchen Rodriguez

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

Fr Steve