

The Monica June 2019



St. Monica's Parish Moonee Ponds

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From the Editorial Team

Hello Winter!

We welcome this season of warm casseroles, woolly scarves and the excitement of a trip to the snow. While we continue to worship at Mass, there are other forms of rapture, such as celebrating our favourite AFL team in full flight and saying many heartfelt prayers when said team prepares to punt a left-footer 50 metres from goal.

Yes, there's a lot to love about this time of year.

Turning our minds to our wonderful Parish, there have been a number of firsts. For our students; First Reconciliation and the celebration of Confirmation, and for Parishioners; the inaugural Pilgrimage to the Holy Lands and the opening of the Charismatic Prayer Group's monthly, 'Hope Café'.

We introduce you to our Assistant Priest, the wonderful Fr. Thomas, and meet Parish stalwart, Mrs. Sheila Cotter. There is also homage to the feasts of Our Lady Help of Christians and the Ascension of the Lord.

So pour yourself a hot cuppa, curl up on the sofa and enjoy our Winter edition of the Monica.

Jo Barrett and Paula Theocharides,
The Monica Co-Editors



A Pastoral Letter

I've returned from the Holy Land with wonderful memories and a heart filled with hope, but unfortunately, I've also returned with illness. While in recovery, I have reflected on the role of our Church in this era of rapid and progressive social change, and offer you the following reflection:



Holy Week 2019 will always be remembered as the week that saw the destruction by fire of the famous Parisian Cathedral, Notre Dame – named in honour of Our Lady. The people of France, and the whole world, have been moved by the destruction of this beautiful neo-Gothic monument that has stood at the heart of Paris for 850 years. Some of its beautiful art and other items were saved, but many of the important items in the Cathedral have been lost forever. Millions of people have admired the beauty of this building, as it inspired them and led them closer to God.

The response by people, both inside and outside of Paris, has been swift and generous. The President of France has said that the Cathedral will be rebuilt, and that the international community would be asked to help with this project. The Cathedral can never be rebuilt to the way it was – raw materials used in its original construction are no longer available and tradespeople these days would struggle with some of the demands of the rebuild if it were expected to be the same as the old one. The architects and others associated with the rebuild will need to work out what is useful from what is left behind after the fire and work out new and contemporary ways to create the same aura that the old Cathedral was able to inspire in its worshippers and Pilgrims.

The Catholic Church too has had a fire burning through it in recent years. The sexual abuse of children and others in the Church – which was criminal and covered up – has ignited a fire that has been burning for years. Just when you think – surely there can be no more – there is yet another case of abuse that comes to light. The structure of our old Catholic Church has burnt down. It is the task of all of us to work out what is worth holding onto and what needs to be put aside. Then and only then, can we as a Church, move on. Like Notre Dame, we must sift through what remains and hold onto only what is important from the past. We must then work out how to restructure the Church to bring people closer to God using a different praxis. There is much work to be done.

The death of Jesus on Good Friday must have seemed to that early group of disciples to be something akin to a destructive fire. They had high hopes for where their leader would lead them, but he finished up on a cross. The disciples would have felt like the people of Paris. They would have felt like the members of the Catholic Church at this time of turmoil. But the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday gave those men and women the inspiration they needed to overcome this difficult and sad situation. Christians are, if nothing else, people of hope. We must be the people of hope, like those who immediately called for Notre Dame to be rebuilt. The Church has Jesus Christ at its centre and heart and we need to proclaim that.

For our Church, the old ways are going, and a new era is being ushered in. No matter how challenging that might be for many to accept, it is a powerful example of the circle of life.

God's blessings to all of you,
Fr. Tony Feeney

St. Monica's Parish Profile: **Father Thomas**

Written by: **Carmen Richardson**

In this edition, we would like to introduce Father Thomas.

As many of you know, early this year, Father Daryl left St. Monica's Parish and Father Thomas has joined us as Assistant Priest to Father Tony. Welcome Father Thomas!

Father Thomas was born in Kerala, South India. Kerala is famous for its beautiful beaches, palm trees and coconuts. It is not surprising that Father Thomas' favourite dish is a Tapioca and Beef Coconut Curry, as the local cuisine is heavily influenced by coconuts. He is one of seven children and his parents are farmers. They grow vegetables, such as ginger and turmeric, as well as peppercorn and coconuts. They also have some cows and chickens.

Father Thomas went to school in Kerala. School life there was quite different to St. Monica's Primary School in Moonee Ponds. In preschool, the children didn't have any desks – they sat on the ground and learnt the alphabet & numbers by writing on sand. At Father Thomas' Primary School, they used slate and stone pencils for writing.

When growing up, Father Thomas enjoyed running, in particular, the 100m and 200m sprint and made it to district level. He had plenty of opportunity to practice, as his parents' farm was 8km away from his school. He was also an altar boy and went to church every day. The return trip from the farm to school and Church was about 20km, which he walked every day.

Father Thomas' desire to become a Priest started to blossom when he was in Grade 6. A friend gave him the address of a Seminary and Father Thomas started to write to them in hope for better opportunities for his future. After Grade 10, when he was 16 years old, he joined a Seminary. He also studied Philosophy & Theology and was ordained in 2005.

In 2014, Father Thomas moved to Australia, and after spending some time in Laverton and Clayton, we are excited to welcome him to our Parish. So, if you have not had the opportunity to meet Father Thomas, keep an eye out for him. Thank you Father Thomas – it was a pleasure to meet you!



Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: 6th — 22nd May Written by: Abygaile Cukavac

The reality of going on a Pilgrimage...

“So, how was it?” “How do you feel?” “Do you feel holy?” “Did you feel safe?” “Your photos looked fabulous!”

These were some of the questions/comments that greeted me upon my return from the trip of a lifetime. As I listened, still so jet lagged, I couldn't quite understand why it was so hard to answer them. How was it? It was good! Just good? No, it was great actually. But... There's a 'but'? Yes, but not that kind of 'but'! It was really exhausting. Hot. The days were long. There was so much information, I haven't quite sorted it in my head. I don't think anyone could have prepared us for how it was going to be. You know, Fr. Tony was in hospital with pneumonia. He got really sick. But he didn't stop. He kept going...

Do you feel Holy? 'Holy?' What does that even mean? I feel really grateful for this opportunity. Never in my wildest dreams would I have thought a trip to the Holy Land is something I would be doing at this stage of my life. But the opportunity came up, hubby said he'll take time off to be with the kids and I should go. So off I went, along with 29 others and Fr. Tony, for more than 2 weeks of adventure. It was 20 sleeps away from my family (yes, I did count!). Fr. Tony asked if I could help him out during the trip. The brief – be a Mum! It was somewhat ironic, as I was the youngest in the group. I was leaving my own children and hoping to rediscover myself from back before I became a Mum!



Our upside down dish – Maqluba

The trip started in Amman, Jordan where we were greeted by our very proud Jordanian guide – Rami. We were taken to the town of Madaba to enjoy the traditional cuisine; an 'upside down' dish called, Maqluba. What a great way to be welcomed to a new place. We then journeyed to Mt Nebo, where Moses looked upon the Promised Land. It hit me at this moment that I too am now looking upon the Promised Land. Wow! Can you believe it?! This would be a phrase I would be blurting out for the many days we were away. Here, we attended our first Mass thanking God for our safe flight to Jordan.



Our first Mass in Mt Nebo, Jordan

What followed were days of learning and discovering. The long days really tested our patience and coping mechanisms. Our bodies ached and the heat was draining. Our spirits, though I can't speak for the rest, were uplifted. To be visiting places where Jesus was born, walked, taught, prayed, performed His miracles and died was a real 'out of body' experience for me. How amazing! How so very lucky I felt to be there.

We spent the bulk of our trip in Israel. Our guide, Jane, is one of Fr. Tony's oldest friends. Jane's knowledge of the history of the place was amazing. Her passion and love for Israel and its people was unquestionable. Fr. Tony celebrated the 45th Anniversary of his Ordination while we were away. It was a wonderful occasion. Together, Jane and Fr. Tony shared their knowledge, experience and spiritual guidance with us.

Before the trip, the Bible for me was one book full of unconnected stories. Participating in this trip has brought the Bible to life for me. I can't wait to start reading it from front to back (though one of our Pilgrims suggested I start with Mark in the New Testament).

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: 6th — 22nd May Written by: Abygaile Cukavac

I've been home for nearly 3 weeks now. Back to the reality of family and work life. As I see and meet people in the normal course of my daily life, I'm asked about the trip. My favourite place was Magdala. It was a beautiful spot; no question about that. But what I loved about the place is that there, I was reminded of the power of prayer; the importance of having a personal chat with Jesus. I was also reminded of the fact that no prayer is wasted. I wish to impart this message to my boys and kindle enthusiasm in their faith.

Recently, I've been feeling restless. I miss our 29 other Pilgrims. I miss our guides, even our driver, Eli. They were all part of this journey of learning more about my faith. I am feeling as though the trip of a lifetime is becoming a distant memory. I need to be able to add to it; breathe life into it. You can help. Ask me how my trip was. Ask me what my favourite part was. Ask me to show you my photos. Ask me what I learnt. Ask me anything...



Floating in the Dead Sea



Sunrise over the Sea of Galilee

Pilgrims under Pope John Paul II
Arch Church at Bethany,
beyond the Jordan River, Jordan



Fr. Tony and Abygaile at the
Jordan River, on the Jordan side.
The Israel side of the Jordan River
is behind

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: 6th — 22nd May Written by: Abygaile Cukavac



Trekking Hezekiah's tunnel in the dark and with water up to our shins, it was a welcomed relief from the heat!

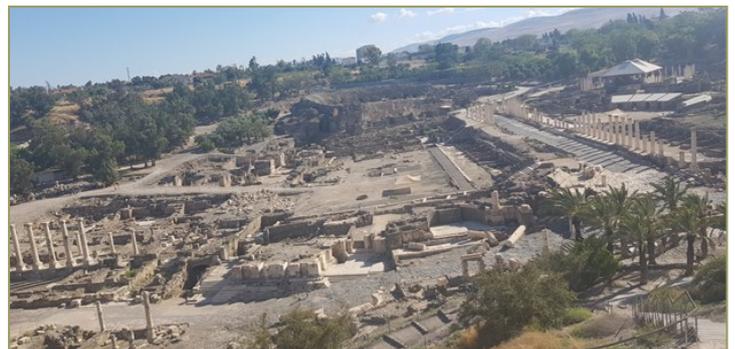


The Western (Wailing) Wall

Tree of Jericho — the tree thought to be where Zacchaeus climbed to see Jesus as he entered the city of Jericho



At Tel Dan Reserve



An old Roman City in Beit Shean



Church in Cana, where Jesus turned water to wine

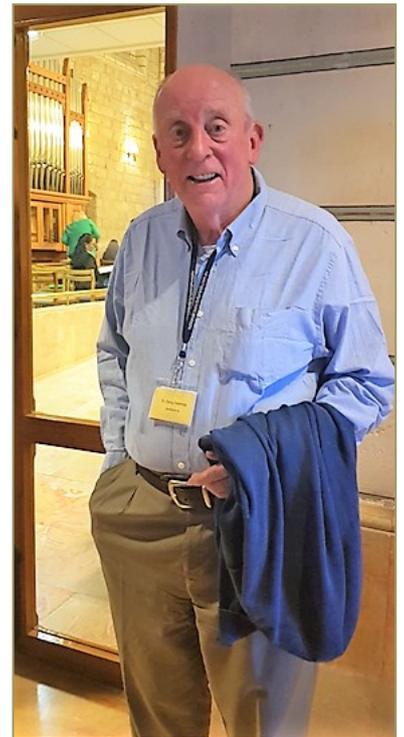


Boat Chapel in Magdala was a favourite

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land: 6th — 22nd May Written by: Abygaile Cukavac



Church of Transfiguration in Mt Tabor



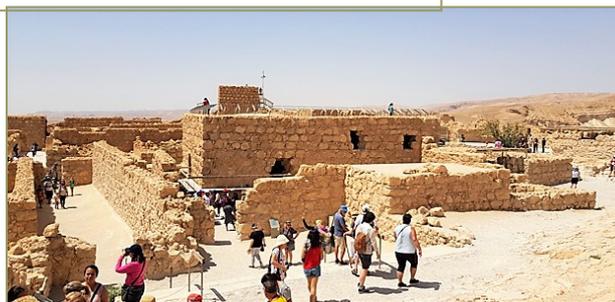
Father Tony's 45th Anniversary of Ordination



The Jesus Boat is an ancient fishing boat from the 1st century AD, discovered in 1986 on the north-west shore of the Sea of Galilee, Israel



Notre Dame, Jerusalem



Masada



Mass in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre



Pilgrims after Mass on the shore of the Sea of Galilee

Feast of Our Lady Help of Christians: 24th May

Written by: Lisa Mammola

The Blessed Mary, Mother of God, is a central figure of our faith. It is not surprising that there are many feasts in the Christian calendar celebrated in her honour. The Feast of Our Lady, Help of Christians, celebrated on May 24, dates back to a tumultuous period of history in Europe during the early 1800s.

Following the death of Pius VI, Pope Pius VII was elected to the Papacy. This raised the ire of the French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, who jailed the newly-elected pontiff. Outraged, Christians throughout the world are said to have united in prayer. The Rosary became a symbol of hope; hope that with Our Lady's assistance, God would prevail over this anti-Christian foe. Upon hearing this, the incarcerated Pope vowed that if he were saved and returned to Rome, he would institute a special feast in honour of Mary.

The military eventually forced Bonaparte to release the Pope and on 24 May 1814, Pius VII returned in triumph to Rome. He attributed his freedom to the intercession of Mary, Help of Christians and decreed that this would be the day of her feast.

Australia has always had a special affinity with Mary. No priests were sent to our colony in its very early days and so, with the absence of Mass, it was largely the Rosary that kept the Christian faith alive. In 1844, Mary, under the title of Mary, Help of Christians, was declared Patroness of Australia.

There are many prayers devoted to Mary, Help of Christians, seeking her motherly love, guidance and protection. I particularly like these words of 'The Opening Prayer of Our Lady, Help of Christians':

"Almighty God, deepen in our hearts
our love of Mary, Help of Christians.
Through her prayers and under her protection,
may the light of Christ shine over our land.
May Australia be granted harmony, justice and peace..."

This feast marks a day for us to remember and celebrate Our Mary's intercession in the fight against sin and injustice. It is an opportunity for we Australians to thank God for the many blessings we enjoy. And, to continue to work with Mary, against trends that continue to hurt or marginalise sections of our community.

Mary, Help of Christians, pray for us!



Our Lady Help of Christians
Artist: Alan Pomeroy

Confirmation: 31st May

Written by: Joanne Barrett

On Friday 31 May, Year 6 students from St Monica's Primary School, together with other young Parishioners, gathered at two special Masses to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation from Bishop Terry Curtin.

Although the night was cold and dark, our vast Church was filled to overflowing with family, friends, teaching staff and Parishioners. Bishop Terry was ably assisted by Father Thomas and returning, much to the delight of all gathered, Father Daryl. The only sad note was the news that Father Tony was too unwell to attend.

There was a palpable sense of God's presence on this most reverent occasion and the mood was joyful as we witnessed the youngest fully-initiated members of the Catholic Church embarking on a spiritual journey of their own undertaking. As each student knelt before Bishop Terry with their Sponsor, they were named as their chosen Saint. Each name representing a significant and Holy person whose life will be referenced as a source of inspiration to that young person throughout their life.

To my mind, no other Sacrament is as synonymous with the 'Rite of Passage' as Confirmation. We are so fortunate in our Catholic community that this milestone, coinciding with a student's final year of Primary School, and symbolically, the threshold between childhood and adolescence, is formally recognised and lovingly celebrated. The Mass was an opportunity to reflect on our own spirituality, and the choices we have made throughout our own lives since we made our own Confirmation.

For my son, Charles, when choosing a Sponsor, it was an occasion to single out an adult in his life to guide him independently of mum and dad. We were proud that he chose a friend who will always be there for him and has his best interests at heart. Our family, like most others, gathered after Mass to celebrate with a meal and in our case, a HUGE Confirmation cake! It was a memorable, spirit-filled evening and a reminder that St. Monica's Parish is a wonderful community to be a part of.

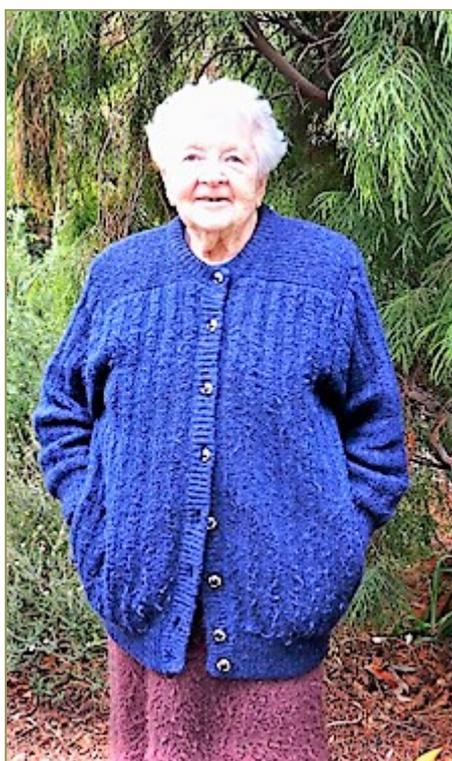


Meet Our Community: Mrs. Sheila Cotter Written by: Eakcawin & Yvonne Manopsakulpon

Our encounter began when Sheila Cotter sent a poem written by her father to the Parish Office to request that it be published in *The Monica*.

We met with Sheila one wintry Saturday afternoon and discovered a lovely, warm and welcoming grandma anyone would like to have. Her smile and the sincerity in her eyes immediately put us at ease.

While talking about this beautiful poem as we were tasked to do, we soon discovered the amazing story of her life. It began with Sheila's idyllic childhood in Swift Creek, Gippsland, with her father, William Ruth, who was a teacher and passionate environmentalist. William's love of nature had a profound influence on how Sheila lived her life. After moving from town to town, the family settled down in Melbourne. Mrs Cotter, a nature-lover like her dad, joined a bush walking club where she met her husband. After their marriage, Sheila and her husband settled in St Monica's Parish in 1956 and she remains in the same family home in Essendon today.



Sheila is a community-minded spirit, who loves where she lives. Six of her eight children attended St. Monica's Primary School. At the same time, Sheila worked at St. Monica's Presbytery during the time of Father John Lanigan, while her husband assisted at St. Monica's Primary School as an accountant. If that is not enough dedication to the community, she also took in two foster children to care for, bringing the total number of children in her house to ten at one stage! When asked how she could possibly do all that, Sheila answered, "I simply put my trust in God and I am never one to worry about anything."

We have never met anyone with such calmness, serenity and faith in God like this before. Together we read Matthew 6: 31-34; 'God told us not to worry and let tomorrow worry about itself'. In living proof of the Word, Sheila shows us how it can be done.

Our original assignment; to discuss the award-winning poem, written in 1935 by William Ruth, warning of humanity's effect on the environment (published opposite) was only the first piece of the puzzle that led us to discover a true gem, Mrs Sheila Cotter. Her love for the natural world as God's gift is her guiding principle and a testament to her beloved father. Sheila's devotion to family, our Parish and the wider community is to be celebrated, so we all can try to follow her lead.

Meet Our Community: **Mrs. Sheila Cotter** Written by: Eakcawin & Yvonne
Manopsakulpon

The Song of the River: A Centenary Reflection

By William Ruth

(Winner of Geelong Competition, 1935)

1835

I am the river that sings glad songs
To the leaves of the listening trees;
I am the river that gaily runs
To be merged in the southern seas.
From the generous hearts of a thousand hills
My feeders hurry amain
Joyous tribute from caverns deep
Pregnant with winter rain.

Trees of the forests are thronging the hills
Up to the ultimate heights-
Loyal and stalwart sentinels
Guarding m sovereign rights.
Shrubs crowd thick on my lawny banks
In riot of verdure drest;
Clusters of gold sway dreaming low
Caressing my sun-kissed breast.

Through summer swelter and winter's rage
On with an even flow,
Link of love 'twixt embracing banks
Down to the sea I go.
Gurgling gaily by tree fern groves,
That troop to the water's edge,
Tossing my kisses to maidenhair,
That peeps from the rocky ledge.

The wild duck silent on yonder nest
Dreams through the livelong day
Of halcyon hours when her downy brood
With flutter in festive play.
Hark to the thud of the kangaroos
Seeking their feeding-ground;
Platypus lurk in my shaded deeps,
Lyre-birds play on the mound.

Giant kingfishers with rollicksome mirth,
Give hail to the glimmering dawn;
Joining the magpie and butcher bird
With songs from their gladness drawn,
- Centuries old yet for ever young -
I glide 'neath the sun-drenched trees
Singing my melodies mingled with theirs
To the wings of the passing breeze,

1935

I am the slowly-dying steam –
Drifting through sunburnt lands,
Shunning my widely-sundered banks,
Winding 'mid desolate sands
Aliens came with their dreams of gold,
They toiled with the axe and spade,
Wreaking destruction on tree and shrub
Aborning the peaceful glade.

Gone are the children of yesteryear –
Gone are the happy band

That roamed carefree through the sylvan dells
Of this once enchanted land.
Gone are the giants that garbed my realm
Up to the line of the sky;
Bleak and bare 'neath the burning sun
Foothills and mountains lie.

Invaders from lands beyond the sea
The men with flocks and herds –
Ravaged with fire my towering trees
The haven of singing birds.
And ever upwards as goes the axe,
(Alas for the white man's dream)
Follows the scourge of the ravening gorge
Where rippled the murmuring stream.

Torrents are lashing the sun-baked heights
And desolate mountain peaks;
Slopes are swept of their virgin soil
To sully the swollen creeks,
Which scurry like routed stricken troops
In wild dis-ordered ranks –
Till I rise and grapple with raging flood
Athwart my crumbling banks.

Choked with flotsam and rank with silt,
Swollen with ghastly pride,
Scourging my borders with venomous swirl,
I rush with a bursting tide.
Thundering out of my mountain gorge
I leap my banks in wrath,
Vomiting vengeance on homes of man
That lie in my surging path.

Onward ever O'er vale and plain,
I sweep to the gurgling shore,
And hurl my burden of dreadful slime
Over the ocean floor.
But the hills are drained... from my banks I sli
To an ever-narrowing span;
And sullenly slink the murky sand
Wrecked by the folly of man.

There was once a poet loved to dream
On those moss-grown banks of mine
And longed to capture m beauty rare
To fashion a song divine ...
Let me joy at least in my fallen state
That his great soul ceased to long
Ere he visioned me plundered of all my charm
And crooning my funeral song.

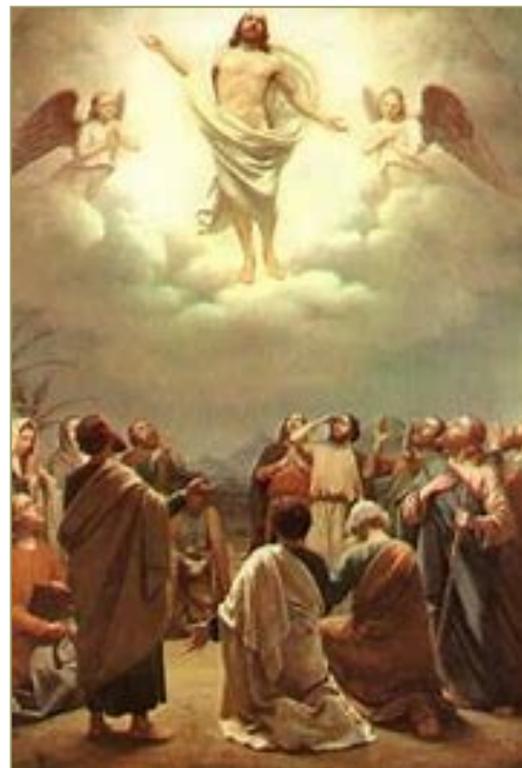
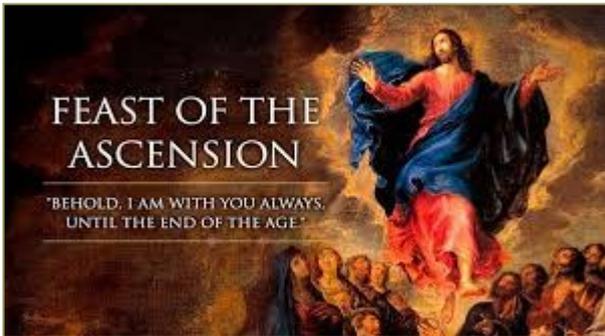
The Ascension of the Lord: 2nd June

Written by: Melanie Watt

Ascension Day on 2 June this year, marks Jesus Christ's ascension to Heaven, where He sat at the right hand of God, the Father.

Upon Jesus' return to His Father in Heaven, He met several times with His disciples during the 40 days after His resurrection, to instruct them on how to carry out His teachings. It is believed that on the 40th day, He took them to the Mount of Olives, where they watched as He ascended to Heaven.

The meaning of Ascension Day is a sense of hope that the glorious and triumphant return of Christ is near. It is a reminder of the Kingdom of God within our hearts, and of the Spirit of God watching over and protecting us.



Hope Café Grand Opening: 6th June

Written by: Adrian Commadeur

The St. Monica's Charismatic Prayer Group hosted their inaugural Hope Café dinner at the Symon's Centre on Thursday 6 June. The evening was well attended with all 24 places taken by guests and volunteers.

Attendees were provided with a BBQ meal of a very high standard. Everyone was happy with the atmosphere of welcome & warmth and it was gratifying that there were five Parishioners who volunteered to assist. Thank you to the Manicolo family who did much of the food preparation and to everyone else who assisted.

All in all, it was a great beginning with the hope that the 'good news' will spread and there will be even more guests at our next Hope Café on the first Thursday of July.

If you would like to offer your support to the Hope Café in a practical way as a cook, cleaner, server, etc. we would love to have you on our team! Please call us on 0438 829 647 to volunteer.



First Reconciliation Reflections: 4th — 6th June Complied by: Paula Theocharides



Jacob Jreige, 3M
Before my First Reconciliation, I felt excited because I was one step closer to doing my First Communion. After my First Reconciliation, I felt happy because I could eat my mud cheesecake.

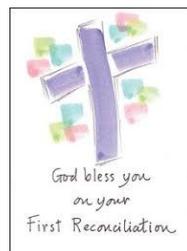


Evie Campbell, 3K
A special moment was when I received my stole and when I put it on.



Max Theocharides, 3K
A special moment was that both my mum and dad came to see me receive my First Reconciliation.

Kaylee Cobb, 3K
A special moment was all of it because it was all very special.



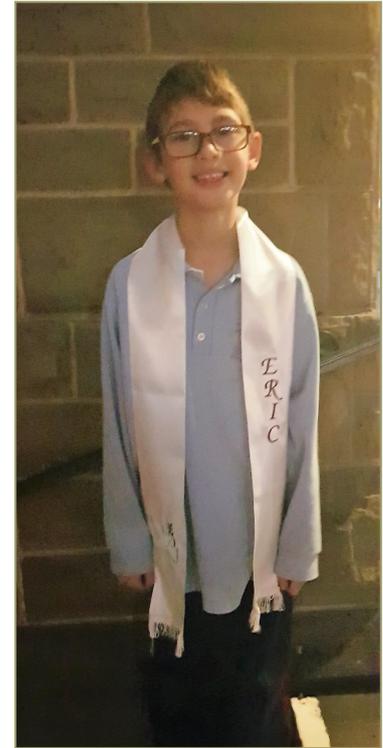
Lola Palmer, 3B
A special moment was when I received my stole and a little cross.

Samuel Sheldrick, 3K
A special moment was when I was talking with Father Tony.



First Reconciliation: 4th — 6th June

Compiled by: Paula Theocharides



Aiden Connors, 3K
 A special moment was when the Priest said, "You are forgiven".

Charlotte Thaus, 3K
 After my First Reconciliation, I felt happy because I had no more sins. A special moment was receiving the certificate and necklace.

Eric Giaquinta, 3K
 Before my First Reconciliation, I felt nervous because I didn't know what to expect. After my First Reconciliation, I felt good because my sins were forgiven.



Golden Oldies: 1st May

Written by: Margaret Mogg

Our Parish has a Special Mass on the 1st Wednesday of the month, at 11am in the Symons Centre, we call it the 'Golden Oldies', though all are welcome. We bring a 'taste' of our home creations to share.

On 1st May, Father Thomas lead the Mass, Feast of St. Joseph, the Worker. Father Thomas included us all, as we are all workers in one form or another. He welcomed all and mentioned how great it was to be so close in a special way to the Parishioners in the Centre.

Gina organises the arrangements with flair, the ladies happily face the dishes. All enjoy the companionship and the meal with Father Thomas and Father Tony.

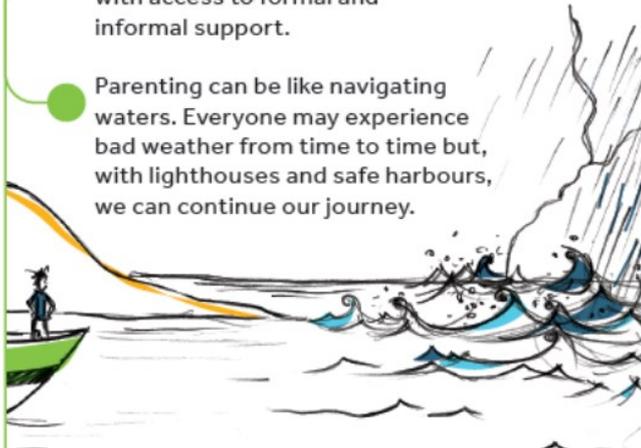




CHILDREN NEED STRONG COMMUNITIES

WHAT WE KNOW:

- Children thrive when their families get the support they need.
- Families do best when they are part of connected communities with access to formal and informal support.
- Parenting can be like navigating waters. Everyone may experience bad weather from time to time but, with lighthouses and safe harbours, we can continue our journey.



We can all help to be part of the lighthouses and safe harbours that families need.



For more information about how you can play your part or to get involved in

National Child Protection Week
(starting first Sunday September)
visit: www.napcan.org.au

NAPCAN PREVENT CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT



HOW YOU CAN BE A SAFE HARBOUR FOR FAMILIES:

- Smile and say hi to the people in your local neighbourhood. Children feel safer when they know the people in their community.
- Be a good listener. Sometimes people just want to talk and feel listened to.
- Be kind and supportive to parents rather than judging or being competitive. Encourage people to seek support if they need it.
- If you see a family that is facing challenges, it is important that they get help as soon as possible before the problem gets bigger. You may need to ask advice from an expert about what to do, especially if you suspect that the children are at risk of harm.
- Swap phone numbers with other families and let them know if you are doing something they could join in with e.g. going to the park to play.
- Offer help and accept offers of help. (People don't offer help unless they mean it, so it's ok to say 'yes!').
- Take a moment to think about children in your school or community who might need extra support and how you might be able to help. Being kind and respectful, being a good role model, and offering practical help such as lifts or meals, are a great start.
- You may not always feel like it, but connecting with your community is good for everyone. Joining playgroups, parenting groups or sports clubs will help you and your children to have fun and meet people.
- Check in with your friends from time to time if you know they are busy looking after children. Sometimes a friendly message can be a huge help to a family.



For more information about how to get involved with National Families Week (15-21 May) and how to help build stronger families, visit www.nfw.org.au

St. Vincent de Paul: 100 Years of Service

Written by: David McLean

St. Monica's Conference of St. Vincent de Paul celebrated a magnificent milestone at a festival Mass on Wednesday 12 June - 100 years of service!

Concelebrating with Father Tony were Monsignor Peter Kenny, Father Frank Buhaghier and Father Anil Mascarenas.

Special guests included St. Vincent de Paul State Secretary, Kevin McMahon, together with his wife and Western Central Council President, Arthur Donovan. The well attended event included a number of State Office employees, many representatives from Vinnies stores and the mobile conferences, notably the Footscray Soup Van. During Mass, six new conference Presidents and a number of new conference members were commissioned.

Monsignor Kenny presented a brief history of the St. Monica's Conference, exhorting all Presidents to uphold the Vincentian ethos of love and service.

Following Mass, an appreciative congregation enjoyed a light supper in the Symon's Centre.



**R to L: Fr Anil Mascarena, Sue Rivette,
Les Butler, Tony Haag, Les Rivette David McLean**

Vale Russell Mogg

Dedicated and long-serving Parishioner, Russell Mogg, sadly passed away on 7 June. The St. Monica's Parish and Tennis Club played a large part in Russell's life from the mid-1950s through to the present.

Over the years, Russell was involved in coaching junior football teams, organising Parish fetes, picnics, dances, trivia nights, the St. Monica's Centenary Committee, prayer group and serving as reader and Communion Minister.

In 2018, the Parish and the Tennis Club named Court #1 in honour of Russell and wife Margaret in recognition of decades of service on the Committee. It was a gesture that Russell was honoured and humbled to receive.

Russell was a regular at Mass each morning – a ritual which gave him great encouragement in life. During his illness, Russell continued his commitments to the Parish, even vacuuming the Church after morning Mass. Russell made many life-long friends through the Parish and would wish to thank each of you for your support of him and Margaret.

The St. Monica's Parishioners wish to convey their sincerest condolences to Margaret and the Mogg family; we are thankful for his years of service to our community. May he rest in peace.



