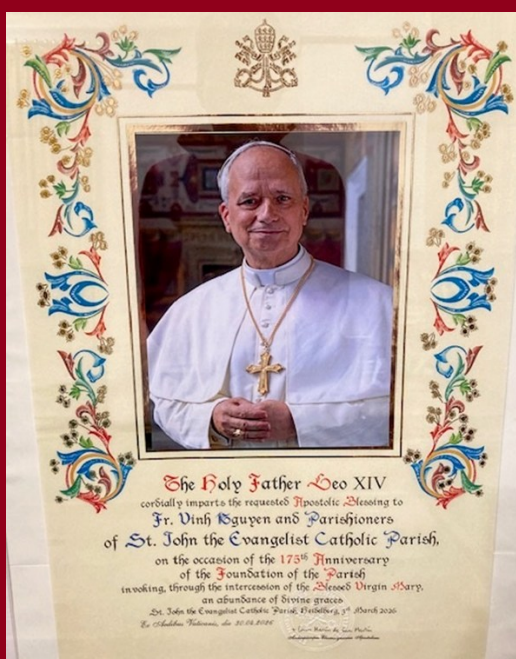


The Eyrie

St John The Evangelist Catholic Parish Heidelberg



PAPAL BLESSING FOR OUR 175TH



On the occasion of 175 th Anniversary since the initiation of the Heidelberg Mission we have received a treasured Papal Blessing from Pope Leo.

Through some friends in Rome Fr Geo assisted in making sure our 175th was recognised and put forward the request for recognition of this 175th year anniversary special event.

The Papal Blessing arrived and in it The Holy Father gives his blessing to **Fr Vinh and all of us as parishioners of St. John the Evangelist Catholic Parish.** The Blessing will be on display during the month of September.

RENEWAL

Over the past year or so, I have felt a shift for the better within the wider Church, especially here in Australia. This has given me a renewed sense of hope and a desire to deepen my personal relationship with God.

Our three children are now six, ten and twelve years old, and both Wendy and I are beginning to find a little more space in our lives as they grow in independence. Our primary focus has always been and will continue to be, providing for them, not only materially but more importantly by passing on the gift of our faith.

For me, renewal can be found in simple things like going for a bike ride with the kids, camping, having a BBQ or sitting around a backyard campfire creating memories with them. These moments fill me with a deep sense of gratitude and love. They inspire me to keep growing as a husband and a father, and to lead by example in faith and service.

This renewal has encouraged me to step up and become more involved in parish life. As fathers, we share many of the same joys, challenges and responsibilities, but we don't always have opportunities to connect with each other or to talk about our faith. With this in mind, I am hoping to establish a young fathers' group within the parish: a place where dads can support each other, build friendships, and discover simple ways of finding God in the everyday moments of family life.

Renewal may take many shapes and forms, but for me it begins with the simple joys that bring me closer to my family and to God, inspiring a deeper desire to serve both.

Leo Hernandez

HOLIDAYS & RENEWAL

'A change is as good as a holiday' is a common proverbial phrase whose veracity depends on the interpretation of the words 'change' and 'holiday'. Both can range from horrific to superb with supporters and detractors ready to wager their experiences as the best or the worst of all time!

One doesn't embark on a holiday knowing it to be disastrous though some might observe it as 'a disaster in the making'.

So why do we really want a change?

By implication we want a break from routine, from the drudgery of the everyday same-same, from winter, from summer, from the rat race, from

We crave the adrenaline hit of a holiday to inject our lives with a renewed zest for life, a prism bringing colour to our white light, a 'newness' to our everyday, an expansion of our shrinking horizons.

In practical terms it is in the planning, the decision-making, the sharing of the prospective plans, the to-do lists, the last-minute reminders, the phone, the passports.....

Soon these fade as images of the palm-fringed sun-drenched beach take hold.....

And just as quickly you are where you planned to be, the part of the world you sought, trying to adapt to the challenge of a new way of living, of seeing, of thinking and believing.

Just when you think you have a handle on the challenge, the thoughts of home surface and like Odysseus in Homer's 'Odyssey' they become more pervasive as the time comes to return.

This homecoming is sometimes bittersweet for the impossible wanting of both worlds. However, the excitement of return, the sharing of photos and travel tales, the plans for the seeds of change all have a Use By date so how has the holiday adrenaline kicked in?

In Lent 2025 we were exhorted to seek Metanoia (change of heart) through a series of reflections. Here is its application.

Here is that adrenaline hit.

Here is where a more lasting, fruitful renewal can be found:

In the need of the patience of Job when dealing with the protocol of airports (or similar), the endurance to the tedium of bureaucracy, the spirit of charity when accommodating queue-jumpers, the understanding of parents dealing with cantankerous children, the resilience in holding on in the knowledge that this too will pass.

We need to find ways to turn negatives to positives, shades of doubt to hope, wonderment and restoration which comes from a heartfelt reflection that desires that change to touch the everyday.

We must also remember that Rome wasn't built in a day and in like manner be kind to oneself in not attempting to do what is beyond one's capability.

Tread softly.

And just as importantly, celebrate your renewal!

Vernon Curtis

TO THE PARISHIONERS OF St John's Heidelberg, St Martin of Tours Rosanna/Macleod And St Pius X Heidelberg West

An invitation to journey together

We welcome the invitation to journey more purposefully together with our neighbouring parishes. We are not the first parishes to be invited on this journey. To our south, the three Ivanhoe parishes were partnered under one parish priest more than 20 years ago and Greensborough to our north was partnered with Greensborough North and Diamond Creek more than 10 years ago. These parishes have more recently embraced a formal process of parish amalgamation. Preston East and Kingsbury to our west are partnered and, earlier this year, Bulleen to our east was partnered with Doncaster and Templestowe. While nothing will change for our three parishes in the short term, it is helpful to know that our parishes will be partnered within two years as this gives us time to discern and plan and walk together. When Fr Tony shared the news with the parish pastoral councils on Tuesday evening, we agreed each council would nominate three representatives to form a transition team. We will have more to say when the team is formed. However, in the meantime, if you have any questions, please speak with a member of your pastoral council.

Yours in Christ, Fr Michael, Fr Vinh and Fr Wayne



The Melbourne Synod is an invitation to our local Church to listen attentively to the Holy Spirit and to discern how we are called to proclaim the Gospel more faithfully in our time and place.

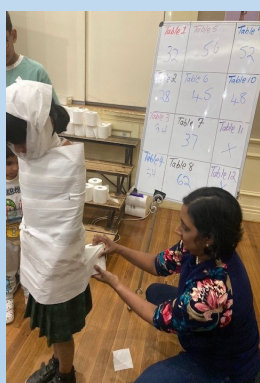
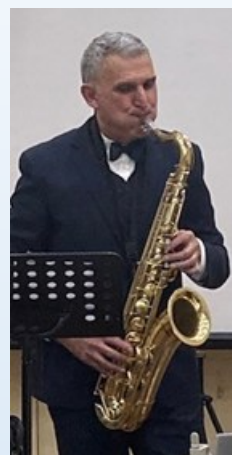
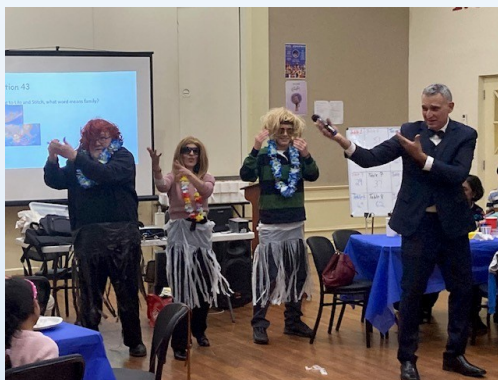
It is hoped that this synod will help shape our evangelical and missionary priorities for the years ahead.

Along with representatives from other parishes in our Region I had the privilege of attending the Eastern Regions Synod Meeting in August. Most Rev Peter Comensoli was there to listen to our views and ideas on the three topics: **Young Discipleship, Missionary Leadership and Formation and Participation.**

During the afternoon discussion and listening priorities emerged raising thoughtful questions and suggestions, some of these were— Are we communicating well? Are we being authentic? Are we a truly intergenerational church? Are we using the gifts of our Baptism? Our Unique gifts? How can we be creative and be the hands of the Lord? How can we move from being a participant to an active contributor in service of our community? The importance of listening, respecting diversity and spiritual formation grounded in prayer, the sacraments and discernment.

The Melbourne Synod has had many regional meetings, the final synod will take place in December. It aims to foster a spirit of hope and imagination—trusting that as we walk together God is calling us into a future marked by faithfulness, renewal and deep reflection on Missionary Leadership and Participation within our parish community. *Michelle Penson (Chair St. John's Parish Pastoral Council).*

TRIVIA & GAMES NIGHT



July 25th Parish Trivia Night—certainly was a hoot.

Paul Sapiano our host, compare, musician extraordinaire kept us all entertained with tricky questions, games like the “mummy run” and even hula dancing for extra points!

Around 80 people joined in the night and there was a palpable feeling of parish family together having fun. Lots of energy, brain teasing, laughter, happy banter, singing and really getting into the spirit of fun together. Even a round of Catechism questions to end the night!

A tidy sum of \$1000 was made and all pitched in to help with the tidy up at the end of the night. Thank you to all who attended and those who donated prizes.

Who knows it could be a regular yearly event!

FAREWELL, THANK YOU & BLESSINGS—FR GEO



Fr Geo may have only been with us for a short while but he left some big messages with us in our hearts. His smile resonated with us all and his homilies always had a special message you could take away for the week ahead and use in your daily life. Fr Geo has been appointed as an assistant priest at St Francis' of Assisi Parish, Mill Park and although he will be missed in Heidelberg he does have some good friends out Mill Park way. We say a big THANK YOU to Fr Geo for all he gave to our parish family and wish him many blessings in his onward journey with his new parish family in Mill Park.

A BEAUTIFUL STORY



Paul and Doris

Paul Sapiano made some special homemade Maltese biscuits, slices and pudina tal hobz (bread pudding) for Fr Geo's morning tea and all were delighted to taste them including Doris.....
.....she asked who made themso I introduced her to Paul and well, she then asked his surname. Sapiano! It came to light that Doris knew Paul's father well (some 75 years ago) as he was the baker in her hometown village. She always bought her bread from Paul's dad Charlie Sapiano in Rahal Gdid in Malta. The meeting was an amazing coincidence. Paul and Doris enjoyed chatting about their shared village in Malta.

As Paul said:

"Jesus finds his way into the simplest acts of kindness."

Term 3



Our 175th

Anniversary theme, Renew, has encouraged our students to reflect on our rich history while looking towards the future with fresh eyes, new ideas and a sense of possibility.

Through our school performance, *Painting Outside the Lines*, students explored the Heidelberg artists, including : **Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, Frederick McCubbin and Walter Withers.** They discovered how these artists stepped beyond traditional boundaries, took risks and found new ways to express their creativity.

We were incredibly proud of our students. Their confidence, enthusiasm and hard work shone through on stage, and it was wonderful to see them perform for our community.

Our Year 5 students are celebrating our school's 175-year history by exploring the rich artistic heritage of Heidelberg. As part of this special project, students are learning about the renowned Australian artist Tom Roberts and discovering how he captured the beauty of the Australian landscape.

Inspired by the work of these early Australian Heidelberg artists, our students created their own paintings of our beautiful church, using similar techniques and the same medium of oil paint used by Tom Roberts. Through their artwork, students are bringing a new perspective to a much-loved part of our school's history.

This project beautifully reflects our 175th Anniversary theme, **Renew** — honouring our rich past while looking towards the future with creativity, hope and new possibilities.

Our students are renewing the story of St John's by taking inspiration from those who came before them and creating something that is uniquely their own.



Term 3

CONFIRMATION

We congratulate our Year 6 students who recently received the **Gifts of the Holy Spirit through the Sacrament of Confirmation.**

Confirmation marks an important moment in our students' faith journey as they renew and strengthen their commitment to living out their faith. Through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit — wisdom, understanding, right judgement, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe — our students are empowered to grow in their relationship with God and share His love with others.



We thank **Fr Vinh and Bishop Thinh Nguyen** for leading a wonderful Confirmation service and for helping make this such a special occasion for our students, their families and our school community.

We ask that the Parish prays that the Holy Spirit continues to guide, inspire and strengthen our students as they begin this new chapter of their faith journey.



FAITH IN ACTION

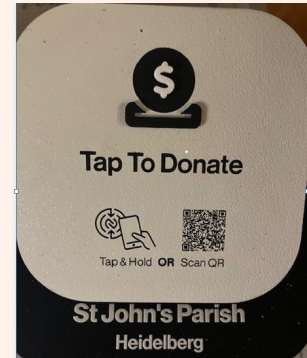
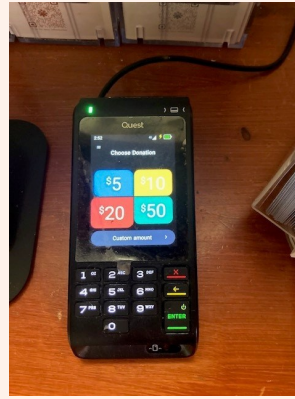
Our students also put their faith into action by holding a market stall to raise funds for OLMC and their Exodus community support program. This was a wonderful example of true service, as our students used their time, creativity and talents to support people in our wider community.



The experience reminded our students that service is about recognising the needs of others and responding with **generosity, compassion and action**. By working together to plan and run the market stall, they demonstrated our Catholic values and showed that everyone has the ability to make a positive difference.

RENEW & RESTORATION

TAP TO GIVE—MAKE IT REGULAR



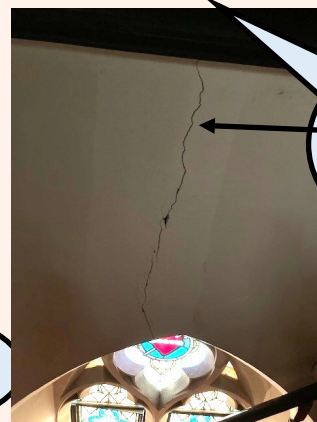
Many people these days do not carry cash. Our new giving opportunities have made it much easier for many to contribute financially to our parish. Some parishioners we know are doing it tough in these times but still manage to give generously on a weekly basis.

Others could possible **RENEW & RETHINK**Are you giving enough, can you give more, a more realistic amount, or even a small increase? This would enable our parish to restore our beautiful church and care for our historic buildings. The best way to help us budget is of course to arrange a direct debit so that a set amount comes out of your bank to the parish bank account on a regular weekly or monthly timetable, its easy to set up and helps us to plan going forward.

IT IS TIME TO FULLY RENEW OUR CHURCH AND WE NEED YOUR FINANCIAL HELP & PRAYERS



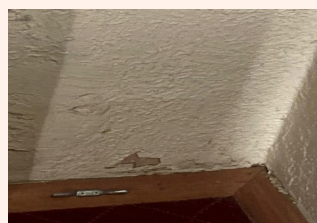
Altar step
fraying carpet



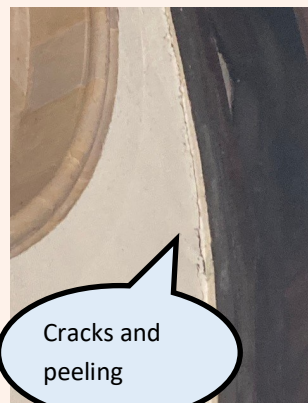
Choir loft
cracking and
peeling



Window ledge
paint peeling



Cracks and
peeling



WELCOME FR DOMINIC

A Message from Fr Dominic.

G'day everyone!

My name is Fr Dominic Hoang, and I come from Karratha Parish in Western Australia. It is a great joy and privilege for me to spend some time here in Melbourne to continue my theological studies.

For those who may not know Karratha, it's way up in the Pilbara, about 2,000 kilometres north of Perth. It's a proper mining town, with plenty of iron ore, gas, salt and other resources coming out of the ground. It's a place where you'll see big mining trucks, red dirt, plenty of sunshine and, if you're lucky, some fantastic sunsets.



But Karratha isn't all about mining. We've also got some beautiful coastline and some cracking fishing spots. I enjoy getting out for a fish whenever I get the chance. Of course, there's one small problem: finding the fish is sometimes easier than catching them!

Coming down to Melbourne is quite a change for me. In Karratha, we can have temperatures well over 40 degrees, while here I sometimes feel like I need three jackets just to walk outside! I'm still getting used to the Melbourne weather. One day it's sunny, the next day it's cold, windy and raining. You Melbourne people certainly know how to keep a bloke guessing!

It is a great joy for me to have this opportunity to study in Melbourne. At the same time, I'm very thankful for the warm welcome I've received from the St John's parish community. It is a privilege to reside in the parish during my studies and have the opportunity to meet, pray, and celebrate the Eucharist with you. Although I come from the other side of the country, you have made me feel very much at home.

Of course, as someone from Western Australia.....

I cannot finish this message without mentioning the Fremantle Dockers! **Freeooooo!** It has been wonderful to see the team playing well this year. They have faced plenty of challenges, but I am still hoping and perhaps praying that they will make it all the way to the Grand Final in Melbourne. If the Dockers make the Grand Final, I reckon Melbourne might suddenly feel a whole lot warmer to me and make my time here even more exciting!

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into your parish community. I'm very grateful for your friendship, prayers and hospitality. I look forward to getting to know many of you during my time here and sharing in the life and faith of the parish.

With every blessing,

Fr Dominic Hoang

We respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri People and their Elders past and present, the traditional custodians of this land on which our church and school stand. The St John's Community joins together in solidarity with our Indigenous brothers and sisters, working for justice and reconciliation.

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Cheese and wine in the hall after recital

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FR VINH NGUYEN—ST. JOHN’S PARISH PRIEST

RENEW

As we enter September, the beginning of spring, we see signs of new life all around us. The days become longer, the weather begins to warm, trees put out new leaves, and flowers begin to blossom. After the quietness of winter, creation seems to awaken again. Spring reminds us that life is always capable of renewal.

This is a fitting image for us as a parish community this year, as we celebrate the 175th anniversary of the establishment of St John the Evangelist Catholic Parish, Heidelberg.

Our anniversary theme, “Remember; Rejoice and Renew,” has invited us to look back with gratitude, to celebrate with joy, and now to look forward with hope. For 175 years, generations of people have gathered here to worship God, celebrate the Sacraments, listen to the Word, serve others and hand on the faith. We are grateful for all those who have gone before us and helped make our parish what it is today.

But an anniversary is not only about looking backwards. It is also an invitation to ask: What kind of parish is God calling us to become?

Like a tree in spring, a parish must continue to grow and bear new fruit. Renewal does not mean forgetting our history or abandoning our traditions. Rather, it means allowing the Holy Spirit to bring new life to what we have received, so that the Gospel can be lived and shared in the circumstances of our own time.

This was also one of the important themes of the Melbourne Clergy Conference 2026, held in August, where we welcomed Bishop Etienne, Auxiliary Bishop of Reims in France. The theme, “Becoming a Catechumenal Church,” challenged us to think afresh about how we accompany people in their journey of faith.

A catechumenal Church is a Church that helps people encounter Christ, discover the beauty of the Gospel, grow in faith and become missionary disciples. It reminds us that faith is not simply something we inherit; it is something that needs to be nurtured, lived and continually renewed.

As we celebrate 175 years, may our parish experience its own springtime of faith. May new life blossom in our families, among our children and young people, in our ministries and in our whole parish community.

May God renew our hearts, deepen our faith and give us courage to welcome the future.

We remember with gratitude. We rejoice with joy. And we renew with hope.

May the next 175 years of St John’s be filled with the new life, growth and fruitfulness that God desires for our parish.

Fr Vinh Nguyen-Parish Priest



The Eyrie

OUR TEAM

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Elizabeth Williamson

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The views, thoughts and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and should not be interpreted as theology or moral and ethical teaching.

**YOUR FEEDBACK and
ARTICLES MOST WELCOME**

heidelberg@cam.org.au

52 Yarra Street, Heidelberg 3084

*Please contact the parish
secretary 03 9457 1066*

Sunday 13th September
THANKSGIVING MASS FOR THE
SISTERS OF MERCY
10.30am Mass & Morning Tea

Thursday 15th October
First Reconciliation

SUNDAY 18TH OCTOBER
2.30PM

DR ANTHONY HALIDAY
ORGAN RECITAL

Friday 30th October
St. John's School celebrates
The Feast Day of St. John

Sunday 1st November
All Saints Day
Monday 2nd November
All Souls Day

Saturday 21st November
St. John's School Reunion
& Heritage Display
Sunday 22nd November
HIGH TEA & HERITAGE DISPLAY

SUNDAY 29TH November
First Sunday of Advent

Thursday 10th December
Year 6 Graduation Mass

Tuesday 15th December
End of School Year Mass