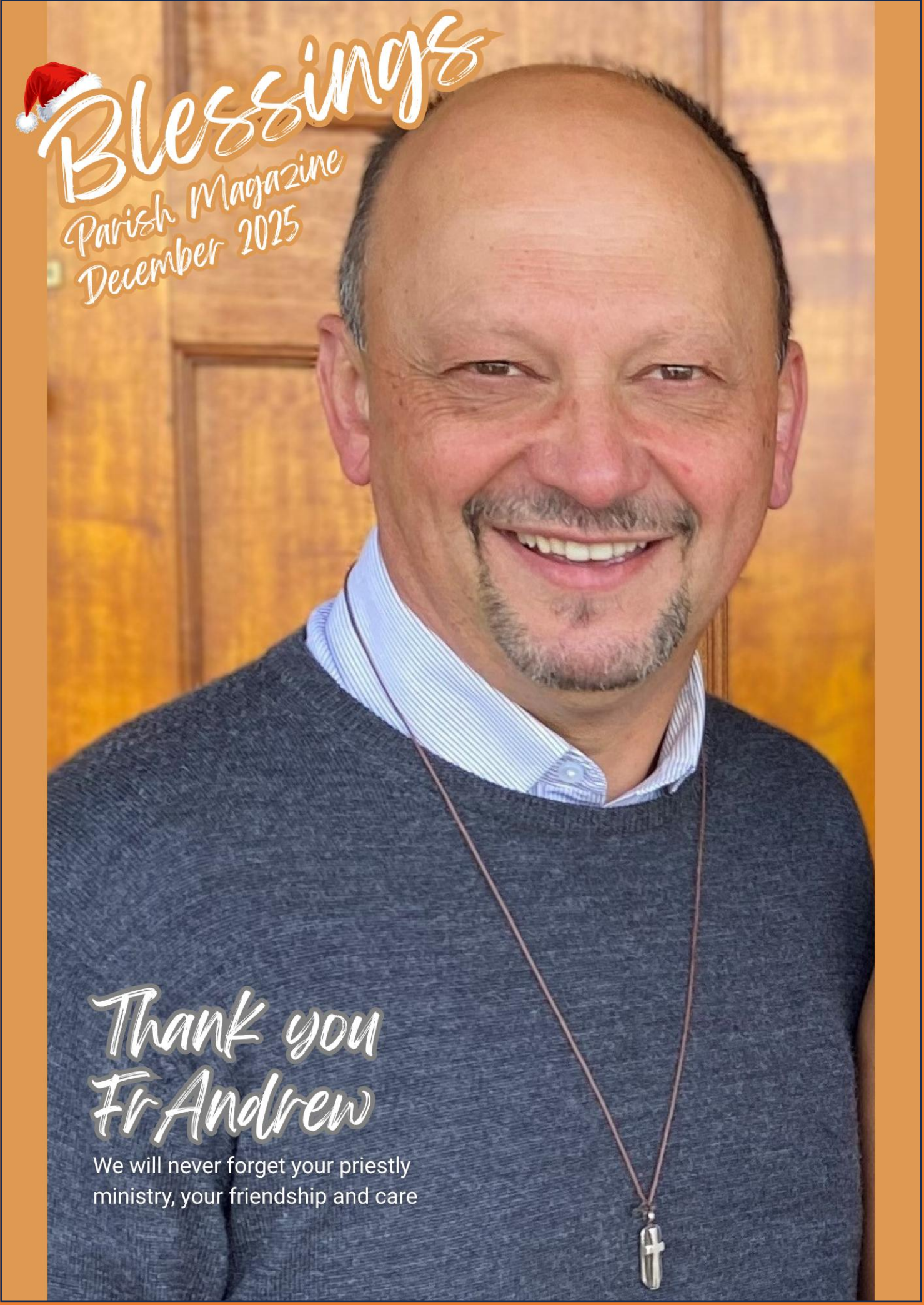




Blessings

Parish Magazine
December 2025

Thank you
Fr Andrew

We will never forget your priestly
ministry, your friendship and care

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Farewell and thank you
Fr Andrew and Fr Huy

and much more!

From the editor

From the Editor

Hello, as 2025 draws to a close, I am reflective as to what a blessed year our parish has enjoyed. There is a palpable sense that our intention to be a mission-focused parish is bearing fruit.

With many new parishioners, a strong endorsement in our parishioner survey and the many events and activities as evidenced in these pages, there is much energy and optimism. Thanks to all who joyously serve our parish and our God. The work is not complete, there is much more to be done, to bring Jesus' messages to the communities of Mordialloc and Aspendale and beyond.

Like so many of you, I am saddened that we are losing Fr Andrew as our shepherd and leader. He has created an incredible legacy. I want to thank him for his support and endorsement, his friendship and counsel. It has been an honour to work alongside him.

I wish both Andrew and Huy every blessing as they take up their new roles. I am certain their new parishioners will be delighted and will love them both as much as we have.

Wishing all a happy and blessed Christmas.

Peace,

Berna Wake



Blessings

Our quarterly parish magazine is where we share stories about the wonderful people and activities in our parish, as we journey together in our mission to Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples. If you have a story about our people and parish, please do contact me at berna.wake@cam.org.au

Fr Andrew's Word



It has been a series of "lasts" for me during December. Once it was announced that I will be moving from this beautiful parish to Flemington/Kensington parish, I have been very conscious of my limited time here and making the most of my location and the community that I am part of. Coming closer to Christmas, has also included many farewells and goodbyes in particular with St. Louis' school and St. Brigid school. Two wonderful schools lead by great principals and staff. Most of the children I have baptised and seen grow into fine young people. I hope that our paths will cross in the future.

But it is this community of St. Mary of the Cross that I will be most sad to leave. You have all loved me into my priesthood, into my role as Eucharistic leader and friend. I am grateful for you allowing me into your lives and I feel privileged to have been part of your journey. I pray that my sacramental leadership has brought you closer to our Lord as it has been an honour to lead this way. I feel very blessed to have had 15 years with you all.

I feel that the parish will continue to be strong because there are signs of a faith filled community who know that you are all part of building up the Kingdom of God. Our baptism calls us forth to do so and that this will allow Fr. Michael Kong to transition into his role as PP to be a gentle one.

Fr. Michael will require much support as he continues to build this parish community his way. Your sharing of the parish story with him will be very helpful.

I would like to thank in particular Fr. Huy for his support of me. I know that he has also made a lasting imprint on you all in the 15 months residency that he had. To Deacon George whose friendship and support I value. George - your energy to support all people especially those on the margins is inspirational. To Ann Fitzgerald who has been a constant smiling presence in the office, thank you for making and running an efficient office utilizing the many volunteers that help out. To Trish Angliss who I have totally enjoyed working with on PLT. Trish, you are a gem, an amazing parishioner, accomplished music director and a good friend. To Berna Wake – Berna you have an incredible passion for our parish mission. With your corporate skills, business acumen, pastoral friendliness and faith filled focus, you have certainly energized me and supported me in my role. I am truly grateful.

To you all, I say thank you. Thank you for being part of my life and welcoming me into your hearts. May God bless you abundantly.

Have a blessed Christmas and a blessed new year.

Shalom,

Fr. Andrew



Fr. Andrew Jekot

Parish Priest

**St Mary of the Cross Parish,
Mordialloc & Aspendale**

What a year!

In 2025 our parish has again thrived, and we have been blessed to offer many opportunities for our growing parish family to further our mission to Love God, Love Others and Make Disciples. We give thanks for so many who step forward to give generously of their gifts to serve and honour God. Here are just a few of the ways our parish has flourished this year.



January

- ✚ The Gospel of Luke – 3 sessions presented by Patrick Jurd



February

- ✚ Men's Retreat
- ✚ Parish Forum on Family Violence



March/April

- ✚ Lenten Retreat led by Kristian Tangso
- ✚ Lenten Small Groups
- ✚ Celebration at our Easter Vigil of eight new initiated and participating members



May/June

- ✚ High Tea fundraiser for our refugee family – the Arnaout's
- ✚ Pentecost celebrating the birth of the Church



July

- ✚ Parish Workshop "Invitation Changes Everything: Build a parish that reaches out" with Michael Harvey
- ✚ NAIDOC Week "Sea of Hands"



August

- ✚ "Laudato Si – 2000 years in the making" presented by Patrick Jurd
- ✚ New sacramental program for catechesis – children and parents journeying together

September

- ✚ Season of Creation



October

- ✚ "Be Your Best Now" Wellbeing Workshops presented by Mark Carrazzo
- ✚ Blessing of Pets



November

- ✚ Parish Pilgrimage for the Jubilee Year of Hope
- ✚ Serve Ministers Thank You Luncheon
- ✚ Advent Small groups



A Pilgrim's Journey

by Marylene Douglas



In August I was fortunate enough to take 10 weeks of leave of which I spent mostly in Spain, six of them walking the Camino de Santiago. This was one of the most amazing experiences of my life. Walking over 800kms, much of it in solitude, surrounded by God's incredible creation.

I spent much time meditating, contemplating, praying and of course listening to music, podcasts and audio books.

Many people have asked me, "What was the highlight of your trip Marylene?" and in all honesty, the highlight for me was not a place or a building or a landmark, but rather the feeling of complete inner peace and joy that I experienced whilst walking with God as my sole companion for much of the journey.

It made me realize how immense God is, both in time and space, and how so much of what we have and want is superficial. My backpack contained the bare necessities, water, food, a change of clothes and lots of band aids, and that is all I really needed for the journey!

For me, the meaning of life is 'Relationships'. Connecting with God and with others- sharing our time, love, peace, gratitude and abundance! Meeting people along the way was also a spiritual experience as we shared our stories and spent time connecting with each other.

Each day of the Camino I would walk 20km-30kms and would start off with a prayer of gratitude for the new day ahead then pray my intentions for family members, friends, colleagues, our St Louis' school and parish families and more global concerns. I reflected on the importance of simplifying my life, detaching from unnecessary possessions and truly living in the present moment because we do not know what tomorrow brings. But we do know that God is with us every step of the way, in good times and in bad, He will never leave our side.

I also reflected on the fact that every morning is the start of a new day, so no matter what our problems, concerns or misdemeanours may be, we are constantly given the opportunity to renew our spirit and start again.

As Patrick Gray, author of "I'll Push You" stated; "On the Camino de Santiago, the many pilgrims meeting each other, sitting, sharing bread and enjoying wine together remind me of what the church is supposed to mean, what it is supposed to represent. We are a community- or at least we should be- where all are welcome, all are loved and the unexpected challenges of life are faced with others at our side"

I am eternally grateful for the experience I had and for returning safely to continue my mission to bring the love of God to all our St Louis' families.

Remembering May Warrener

by Trish Angliss

29 April 1938 ~ 5 September 2025

I first met May when I moved to Aspendale in 1987 and she immediately welcomed me into the choir. Over the years I helped May with the St Louis children's choir, Confirmation, Easter and Christmas combined choirs. And of course, our regular 9.30am Sunday mass at St Louis, where May was an institution.

When Barry Simms led the combined choir with Giulie Waddell playing the organ, May and I were the resident alto singers. I remember those rehearsals with great fondness, the two of us whispering and giggling together. May was a whiz at picking the right note and keeping me in tune!

May was part of the Aspendale community for over 50 years and was so loyal to her family, church and school.

May was a much-valued mentor and dearly loved friend who will be greatly missed by myself and the community.

OUR COMMUNITY



Food For Friends

by Helen Rocks

We are now able to offer this wonderful service from two freezers. Meals prepared with care for people in need.

If you would like to help it will be much appreciated, donations of meals or money as we know food is very expensive. Cash donations go

towards running costs of food and single use containers.

If you need any information Ann Brennan (the chief) can answer your questions.

If you need or know of a parishioner who needs some meals, please call Ann in the office or reach out to Ann Brennan or Dianne Wain.

Thank you to all the fabulous cooks in 2025.



Let's Do Lunch - Christmas Celebrations



Vinnies "Let's Do Christmas" was a wonderful occasion. All appreciated the delicious meal and the magnificent singers in the St Louis' School Choir. The generous donations will help cover the cost of our Christmas hampers.

From Deacon George

by Rev Deacon George Piech-Meat

Dear faithful parishioners, prayerful greetings to you all.

I would like to take this opportunity to share with you a bit about my ministry here in the parish and in my current role as the Youth Justice Chaplain working with the Department of Justice and Community Safety under CatholicCare Victoria.

Introduction

I am a Permanent Deacon (Married Deacon) ordained in 2012, and I am married to my wife Tabisa for over 36 years. God has blessed us with 6 beautiful children Sarah 32, Anna 28, Daniel 24, Matthew 21, Bakhita 18, and our last-born son Joshua 14. God has also blessed us with 3 grandchildren Amira 8, Alexander 4, and little Adam 2 years old.

I am originally from South Sudan the newest nation in the world. We immigrated here in 2004 with our 3 children and our other 3 were born here. We settled around the Noble Park/Keysborough area until we moved to our permanent family home in Carrum Downs in 2014.

Before my ordination in 2012, I was sent to this wonderful parish for my pastoral placement where I was introduced to the parish community, and Fr Andrew and the entire parish community welcomed me with open hearts.



From there the parish social justice and the entire parish and school community were moved by my stories of struggles and the suffering of my community back home, and they responded positively by sending a shipping container full of school materials and other items to my hometown parish in Bentiu South Sudan.

Before the departure of the container, Fr Andrew travelled to my hometown and was well received by the parish Priest Fr Samuel who visited the parish in 2012. The main idea was to establish a partnership parish and primary school with my home parish who have now been elevated to a new diocese in 2024 with the appointment of the first Bishop, Italian Missionary Christian Carlassare.

So, when I was appointed as the parish Deacon in April last year, it was like coming back home to the people who have welcomed me twelve years ago. I was coming not as a stranger, but as the one who has been sent to share God's love with His holy people, and I have really enjoyed the little ministry I do during the weekend. I am sad like all of you that Fr Andrew and Fr Huy are leaving us, and our prayer is that our Good Lord will send us a new shepherd who will come to continue the great work of Fr Andrew for so many years.

My current role as the Youth Justice Chaplain

In April 2024 I was appointed by the Archbishop to a full-time ministry as Youth Justice Chaplain. A very challenging role and rewarding at the same time. My ministry is to work with young people aged 13-21 in Youth Justice detention centres in Parkville and Cherry Creek in Little River.

I have started my ministry by working directly with all young people, and I have introduced a cultural program to the young people from African backgrounds which has now been extended to all young people in these two centres.

This program has helped so many young people in their integration back to the community and their families. Some young people who have benefited from the program are now doing well in the community and have changed their life.

The program now has been one of the most popular programs in both centres, and the department have now asked me to develop a similar program in three correction centres with the majority of the African young people aged 18-24 years old.

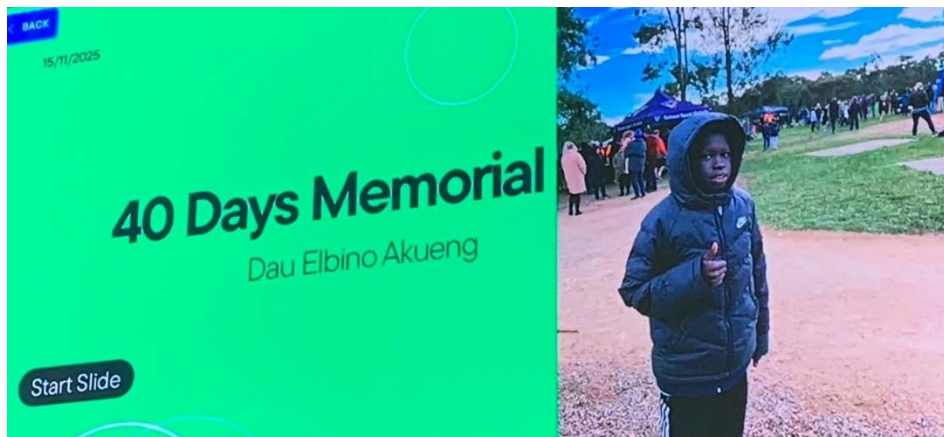
It has been a blessed ministry as I was awarded this year in the Victorian Multicultural Awards for Excellence as the winner of the Victorian Multicultural Honour Roll for my humble ministry to the young people. Please continue to pray for me, my family and my ministry.

Have a blessed New Year full of hope, joy, love and peace.



40 Days Prayer Memorial

by Berna Wake



On Saturday 15 November at the invitation of Deacon George, Barbara Cronin and I attended the 40 Days Prayer Memorial for the young boy Dau Akeung who was tragically killed along with his friend Chol Achiek. The innocent boys were allegedly ambushed and killed by a group of boys associated with a youth gang while they were walking home from basketball at about 8pm on 6 September in Cobblebank.

Representing our Parish Justice Action Group, we attended the event at St Francis Catholic College Melton. It was a day of remembrance, healing and togetherness for Dau and Chol's family and friends. We were able to express our sympathy to the families and to ensure them of our prayers. JAG also gave a donation to each family.

Advent Retreat - Encountering Jesus on the road to Emmaus



“

“On December 6th, almost forty of us gathered at St Brigid’s and led by Mark Walsh, we reflected on where we have encountered Jesus on our personal experience along the Road to Emmaus in our lives? As a community, the story of the two disciples on the Road to Emmaus was so particularly relevant. We were still experiencing the uncertainty of expecting we were heading in a particular direction and then discover that we needed to pivot as we are challenged and called away from the Road to Emmaus towards the Road to Jerusalem. You might say we had just lost our leader, but maybe we need to place our sights in our true Leader.

We thank Mark and our parish for this opportunity to spend time together in prayer and as we reflected upon our lives find Jesus’ call to “Come Follow Me” calling us forth and into action and into His Service.

May I find it easier to choose the “Road to Jerusalem” rather than my more comfortable “Road to Emmaus”. May I have the courage to step forth and come and follow Jesus in my life.” John Field



“

“The advent retreat brought home to me that we are both on an inner and outward journey in our faith. Spending time listening to the inner voice gives us strength to continue the way of life we follow and the opportunities to recognise Jesus in those we meet along the way. A perfect opportunity to prepare for Christmas.” Ann Brennan

“

“The retreat offered time and space to get away from the distractions of daily life and become more attentive to the presence of God within and around us. As pilgrims here on earth, it made me aware of our everyday inner pilgrimage and reflection on our role as companions to others. Mark Walsh drawing on his personal lived experience is an excellent facilitator.” Vanessa Fernandes

Surveys help measure for mission

by Berna Wake

Our recently completed parishioner survey helps the parish to better serve our people and ensure we are on track to achieve our parish mission goals. Thank you to the 98 people who recently completed the survey. Here is a summary of the topline findings.



- ✚ 99% of people rate the weekend mass as either excellent or good
- ✚ 85% of people rate parish events/activities as either excellent or good
- ✚ 68% of people rate faith formation opportunities as either excellent or good (for 29% this question was not applicable)
- ✚ 95% of people rate the homily as either excellent or good
- ✚ 89% of people rate the music ministry as either excellent or good
- ✚ 98% of people rate parish communications (bulletin, magazine, website) as being either excellent or good
- ✚ 97% of people say they feel welcomed and included in our parish

What do you appreciate most about the parish?

- ✚ Most frequent mentions - "community", "welcoming", "friendly" and "inclusive."
- ✚ The frequent mention of "Fr Andrew", "priests", suggests that the clergy, plays a significant and appreciated role in the parish.
- ✚ The word "faith" also appears frequently, highlighting the spiritual aspect is a key appreciation.

What areas do you feel need improvement?

- ✚ The most common themes suggest that while many parishioners are content, there are opportunities to enhance the musical experience, improve online engagement, encourage greater participation from parishioners, and potentially expand offerings related to prayer and school.
- ✚ Programs (e.g., Alpha) lack follow-through into ongoing community or formation.
- ✚ Phrases like "parishioners step up/participation" suggest a desire for increased involvement from parishioners in various activities beyond regular masses.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?

- ✚ Expedite Small Groups and intentionally expand hospitality beyond greeting. E.g. Connection to school community, New Parishioners, Gathering the acolytes post Easter, Connection opportunities for baptismal families, similarly for families involved in other Sacraments of Initiation. Healing Prayer Ministry.
- ✚ Get together or meetings on the topic of "how to pray" God's mercy, confession/repentance/ how to think about God and be more like Jesus in everyday life.
- ✚ The youth are the missing link. Can the Catholic Secondary schools be involved somehow?
- ✚ Years ago, we used to hire a 40-seater bus and do a day trip, always well supported.

THANK YOU

Farewell and thank you Fr Andrew

It is with heavy hearts but enormous gratitude that we say farewell to our beloved Parish Priest Fr Andrew Jekot. Fr Andrew will take up his new appointment at the Catholic Parish of Flemington and Kensington on 12 January 2026. We will have the opportunity to thank Fr Andrew and Fr Huy at a celebratory afternoon tea on Saturday 10 January 2026 from 2.00 to 4.00pm at St Brigid's Primary School Hall (enter and park via Barkly Street).



"Thanks, Andrew. What you've brought to our community — and into our hearts — has changed us for the better." Mark Carrazzo

"Fr Andrew we have been blessed to have you as our parish priest for these past 15 years. I thank you for your pastoral care during that time and your willingness to allow us to grow in our faith and relationship with the Lord.

May God continue to bless you in your new parish." Ann Brennan



"Fr Andrew made my wish come true., helping in our church, who could join in with a Beatles song or a country oldie. A close friend whom I will miss a lot." Glenice Laughlin

*"Dear Father Andrew,
Thank you for bringing light into our lives. Your ability to share God's word with warmth, laughter and joy adds so much to our worship experience and I thank God for the gift of you."
Vanessa Fernandes*

*"Blessings, these are what I count when I ponder Andrew and his time with us. His invitation to join, embrace, and respond it has been uplifting with the holy and the mundane."
Helen Rocks*



"Our Shepherd, steadfast friend, who gently walked with us, guiding us, our "rock" in faith and life.

*With sincere heartfelt gratitude,
Michelle, Marc, Liam, Zaine & Josh Campbell. X Mish"*



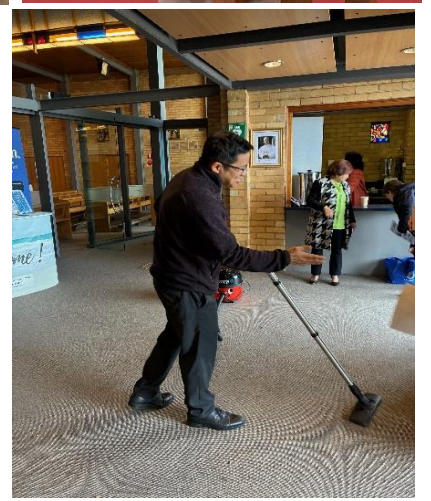
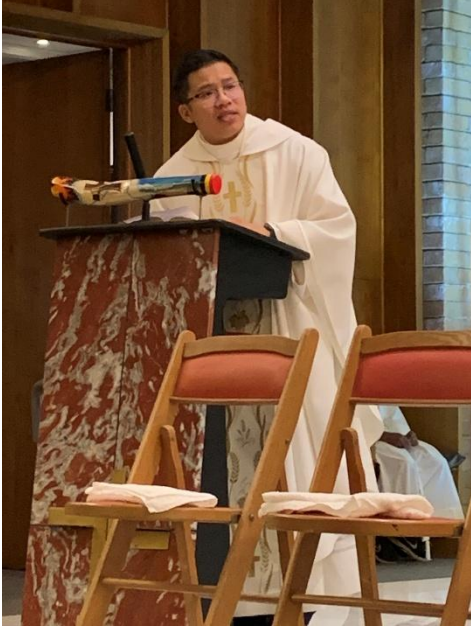
*"Fr Andrew, wonderful priest, amazing homilies, inclusive of everyone. Looks at the big picture, understands family. Loves a vanilla slice & coffee. Great sense of humour. Only fault - barracks for The Blues! Listener, Confidante & Friend."
Deb Poynton*



THANK YOU

Farewell and thank you Fr Huy

We give thanks for the priestly ministry and friendship of Fr Huy Nguyen who has been our Assistant Priest for the past 15 months. Fr Huy will be leaving our parish on 12 January 2026 to take up his new appointment at St Joseph's Church Springvale. May God continue to bless Fr Huy abundantly.



Be Your Best Now

Grounded in the modern science of human flourishing and thriving, these sessions offered practical tools you can put into practice straight away to strengthen your wellbeing and live with greater happiness, balance and positivity.

Over two consecutive Tuesday nights in October, Mark Carrazzo who is a parishioner and qualified in the area, shared the key elements that science shows are vital for us to truly thrive—while also uncovering the subtle barriers that can quietly undermine our happiness.

Mark's knowledge, understanding and passion resonated strongly with attendees who turned out in great numbers. 100% of those who completed the feedback survey agreed the workshops had a positive impact on wellbeing and happiness.

Here are some of the survey comments:



“

I am more aware of my contentment, choices that bring joy to my day.

I really liked how he spoke encouragingly and from a scientific perspective.

Affirming a lot of my current thoughts around being present and finding joy in simple things.

It made me aware more of myself and of my daily life, I enjoyed how in-depth things were.

“

Encouraged me to think of the generators of happiness and ways to encourage more wellbeing in my life.

Reminder to slow down, reflect, be grateful, share love with those around you.

What did you like most about the workshops?

*The supportive and encouraging nature of the presenter.
Mark's delivery and engagement with the audience.
The relaxed and friendly atmosphere and input from the group.
To hear from different people.
The gentle way the ideas were presented.*

“

*Group discussions and motivation to be positive.
Opportunity to hear helpful new perspectives.
The whole being workshop as well as the 5 things that made you happy.
Listening to everyone's perspectives.
Makes me look at life a little differently now.*

Based on the positive feedback and the fact that 100% of survey participants would definitely ((86%) or maybe (14%) attend further well being workshops if offered by the parish, as well as participants suggestions on what they would like to see in future sessions, we will look to run more sessions in 2026.

Family Violence: what can we do?

by Judy Lamb



In the second half of the year, the Justice Action Group has continued its focus on responding to family violence, with both practical actions and awareness-raising activities.

The Team developed a Parish Strategy Family Violence to guide our decision-making and provide direction for the future. A copy is posted on the notice board in each church and a pamphlet is available. In August, we conducted a very successful nappy drive with thousands of nappies going to families experiencing violence or other disadvantage. In October, two parishioners attended the Men Alive conference and victims of family violence were remembered in the Parish Healing Mass. Through our Facebook page, we have joined the international 16 Days of Prayer and Action to advocate against violence towards women.

Following our successful Parish Forum in March, we conducted a Bystander Training Workshop on 15 October at St Louis. It aimed to develop our understanding and skills in recognising and responding to family violence. The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne provided our trainer, Mandy, whose presentation was both engaging and informative. In the words of one participant:

“She gave us a great understanding of how small things can make a difference. We need to listen and take notice and be respectful of the affected person, giving support without shaming the person and following up by directing them towards professional help if required. Speaking up is important.”

Another participant reflected: “The workshop was incredibly valuable ... It offered practical tools and strategies to help us choose respectful and appropriate responses when we witness or suspect harmful behaviour. One particular image and quote from the presentation really stayed with me. It reminded me of how easy it can be, in the moment, to sit back and say nothing. The quote was: “In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends” (Martin Luther King Jr.) It captured the heart of why speaking up matters, even when it's uncomfortable.”

The response of another participant was:

“Everyone was made welcome. I realised it is knowledge and training we all need to have in every walk of life. Whether it's in work situations, family life or social activities we need to feel we can show compassion, respect and support in many different ways. It doesn't need to be big steps, but we can at least try.... what's that song, "From little things, big things grow."?

Following the workshop, participants enjoyed an excellent afternoon tea and a chat. We are very grateful to those on the Family Violence Team who were so committed and hard-working in implementing this initiative throughout the year.



Welcome to our baptised children and families

*May God grant you always a sunbeam to warm you, a moonbeam to charm you,
a sheltering angel, so nothing can harm you. Laughter to cheer you.
Faithful friends near you, and whenever you pray, Heaven to hear you.*

Charlie David Cusolito – Son of Luke & Hayley

Charli Winter & Cooper Jay Dullard – Children of Jarrad & Amy

Freddie Jay McClymont – Son of Ian & Melinda

Liam Phillip & Lucas Edward Jansons – Sons of Paul & Nadia

Ted Harry Mushins – Son of Quentin & Laura

Effie Adele Martin – Daughter of Michael & Madeline

Aidan David Ottobre – Son of David & Katherine

Lachlan Thomas & Michelle Indigo O'Connell –
Children of Terry & Barbara

Alexander Charles Buttigieg – Son of Matthew & Jane

Addison Rose & Parker John Conley – Children of Luke & Zoe

Sophie Kate Dayton – Daughter of Vaughn & Aleisha

Dakota Hugh Mills – Son of Jessica Mills

Spencer John Hewett – Son of Benjamin & Monica

Romy Sage Walmsley – Daughter of Lucas & Jordan

Myla Rose Doherty – Daughter of Kieran & Juliana

Miles Paul Robertson – Son of Taylor & Nina

Jack Matthew Wilson -Son of Matthew & Kimberley

Delilah Rae & Indie Belle Hasselby – Daughters of Marcus & Megan

Austin James & Stacia Lee Shone – Children of Chris & Rebekah

Millie Anne & Zach Anthony – Children of Matthew & Charlotte

Maisie Marie McCleary – Daughter of Joshua & Samantha

Sophia Nicole Madafferi – Daughter of Roger & Gabrielle

Maxwell James Starkey – Son of Timothy & Lizzie

Joshua James Bliesner – Son of James & Roxanne

Patrick Lucas Pozzebon – Son of Chris & Jinky

Isabelle Grace Cripps – Daughter of Damian & Emily

Josephine Fiona Melda Drummond – Daughter of Declan & Cailiosa

Ayvah Maree Everleigh Drummond – Daughter of Declan & Sarah

Gianna Marie Miller – Daughter of Daniel & Kathryn

Giselle Ruby Di Giovine – Daughter of Matthew & Alixis



Pozzebon Family



Buttigieg Family



Walmsley Family



McClymont Family

PARISH CELEBRATIONS



Happy 70th Birthday Tony Allday



Happy 80th Birthday Frances North



Happy 75th Birthday John Field



Happy 80th Birthday Rosemary Grace



Happy 80th Birthday Gail Bell



*Glenice and Donald Laughlin
50th Wedding Anniversary*



Deacon George 36th Wedding Anniversary



Happy 80th Birthday Marie Seddon



*Clare and Michael Cartwright
50th Wedding Anniversary*

PARISH CELEBRATIONS



New Parishioners Morning Tea



Parish Pilgrimage for Jubilee Year of Hope



Serve Ministers Thank You luncheon



Blessing of Pets – Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi



Parish Pastoral Council Christmas Dinner

St Brigid's Primary School Term 4 News

by Jodie Marziano

What a busy Semester 2 we have had at St Brigid's Primary school with so many fun, engaging and cooperative activities.

Term 3 concluded with our St Brigid's Production, 'School of Rock', led by the dance group Stomp. Well-renowned iconic band 'KISS' were on the hunt for a new supporting act on their Australian tour. School students from St Brigid's Primary School see the audition poster and decide that they have what it takes. Guest artists Sia and Shannon Noll made an appearance, with John Farnham and Daryl Braithwaite performing their iconic songs 'Horses' and 'You're the Voice' with the audience. The students in Year 5/6 auditioned and were chosen for roles, giving up their time to practice throughout the term. Each class performed a song, and the staff even made an appearance! St Brigid's really rocked around the clock!

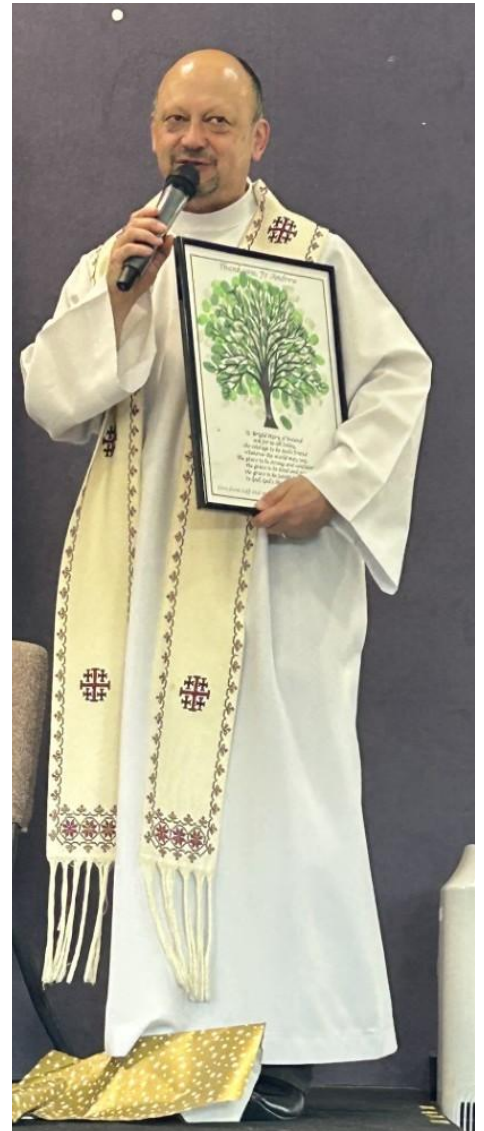


Our Year 3 students celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time in Term 4. They participated reverently, showing their understanding of the importance of giving and receiving forgiveness. We also celebrated Remembrance Day, with our Year 5's leading a beautiful liturgy. Our Year 6, Liturgy and Community group led a fundraising Coin Trail during Mission Month, with the funds supporting a local Melbourne charity C.O.T.S (Christmas on the Streets).

Another highlight during the term was our annual Colour Run. Much fun was had by all as children (and staff) were sprayed with coloured powder and slimed!

As we now prepare for Advent, we are celebrating in many ways. We have been learning about the gifts of Advent-hope, peace, joy and love. We held our annual Christmas Food Drive for St Vincent de Paul and celebrated our annual Christmas Carols on Wednesday, 3rd December, with a guest appearance by Santa Claus. We decorated a Christmas tree and the school foyer with snowflakes. We gave thanks at our End of Year Thanksgiving Mass on Friday 12th where we farewelled Fr Andrew and Father Huy and said goodbye to our Year Six students at Graduation on Thursday 11th.

We here at St Brigid's would love to take this opportunity to wish you all a fabulous Christmas. May the light of Christ bring you hope, joy, peace and love surrounded by loved ones.



St Louis' Primary School Term 4 News

by Carmel Stutterd

This term has been very rewarding and fulfilling.

Reconciliation Year 3

Thank you to Father Andrew, Father Huy and Father Peter for supporting our students.



School choir

Our school choir sang at TLC, Bayside and Mordialloc Grove Age Care facilities and they were well received by all three communities. The choir also entertained the parishioners at the Parish's Christmas luncheon. The choir will sing again on Christmas Eve at the 6pm mass. A huge thank you to Mrs Stefanec for training the choir.



State finals for Yr 6 baseball team

Our Year 6 baseball team made the State finals and finished 3rd in the State.



Yr 4 camp

The Year 4 students went to Mill Valley in Tynong for camp and all had a fabulous time. They went canoeing, flew on the giant swing and enjoyed some horse riding.

Colour Run

At the end of October, we had a colour run and raised \$21,000, allowing us to put a school sign out the front of the school and upgrade some of our playground facilities.

Yr 6 Graduation

This year we have farewelled 106 Year 6 students. The Graduation ceremony last Thursday was a wonderful way to complete their 7 years at St Louis.



Farewell to Staff

We wish Mrs Emma Davies (19 years at St Louis) and Mrs Sarah Talbot (20 years at St Louis) all the very best as they move on to the next stage in their careers. Emma is heading off to be Deputy Principal at St Therese in Cranbourne and Sarah is Learning Diversity Leader (Years 7-9) at Toorak Ladies College Mt Eliza. Farewell to Ms Lena Perriman who is returning to Hobart to be with family. Lena will be missed especially by the preps.

Congratulations

I am pleased to announce Mr Thomson Wood has been appointed Deputy Principal and will join Mrs Stefanec and I on the senior leadership team.

Preps for 2026

We welcome 96 preps for next year and are looking forward to bringing them into our school community.

I wish you all a very Happy and Holy Christmas and a wonderful New Year.

Pilgrims of hope liturgy conference

Transformed through Sacrament and song

by Trish Angliss and Paul Toohey

The conference opened each day with prayer and song. It was wonderful to hear a room full of people fully engaged in singing. International speaker, Dr Ricky Manolo delivered the first keynote address. He explored the significance of ritual in Liturgical Music. He emphasised that when music becomes prayer, it is part of our community ritual. He explained the history of music in the liturgy and how Vatican II was a turning point, as it encouraged the full participation of the congregation. Rita Ferrone delivered her keynote on 'Can Liturgy Change the World?' Our challenge today is that the mass reflects society and that we need to be a community walking together and responding to social challenges.



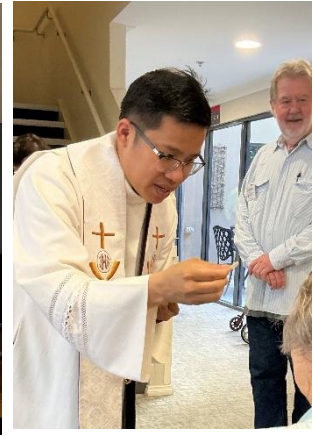
Other workshops offered rich variety. Paul Mason explored how power, beauty and music can invite prayer and joy and invite community celebration. Fiona Dyball's workshop focused on the partnership of liturgy and music. A song is a thing of joy and love and helps to shape our image of God. It also helps us to feel united as a community. In another workshop, Michael Mangan addressed the importance of welcoming and hospitality. He emphasised that we may only get one chance to make a positive impression on newcomers, so make it count!

The musical highlights were a Praise and Worship night where Australian composers such as Gen Bryant and Beth Doherty showcased their work. Then our conference mass at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral, where a church full of singers and musicians provided an amazing and prayerful experience.

We heard from inspiring speakers who shared many insights and practical ideas. We hope we can use the information to help enhance our Parish experience of Liturgy and Music.

Treasuring our seniors

Another wonderful year reaching out in love and care for our aged care volunteers. Thank you to all who give of their time and gifts to bring God's love to those in our local residential care homes.



The Road by Felice Cortese

As I stepped on to the road I saw and heard
 Straight and true are your ways oh Lord secure and safe is your road.
 Straight and narrow is the course you have prepared, straight and clear is its path, solid and well-built are the walls that run its length.
 Adversity cannot pull these walls down, no on this road nothing is left to chance all is there for a reason and for those who take the time to look the signs will say.
 All who stop to take rest along this road will be made strong and grow in truth.
 All who walk on this road will grow old with hardship but be full of wisdom.
 All who walk on this road will know fullness of happiness and peace.
 All who walk on this road will increase in the knowledge of love.

All who lean on the Lord will not fall to the ground defeated.
 All who take time to rest in the Lord will be nourished like beautiful willows growing alongside the banks of an ancient river, pristine and pure and gentle in its flow, its waters like soft music soothe and refresh all who stop to enjoy its inviting coolness in the heat of the day.
 All those who walk will engage life with the purpose of Gods plan of salvation shared for all with great joy, according to his will and great love.
 This is your road oh Lord where steps are light, where compassion and mercy are like a mother's hands who never let's go of the child she holds and loves, for your eyes are always upon them night and day, your will and purpose ever unfolding for them in every way.
 Laughter and tears are all part of your plan for which you gave all of yourself for all of mankind.
 In Jesus name I give thanks.

Volunteering at the Frankston Winter Shelter

by Vanessa Fernandes



On Wednesday nights during the winter months (June - August) I volunteered along with three others. Once again, it has been a rewarding experience helping in the kitchen, serving and joining the guests for dinner and hearing their stories. This year, 170 volunteers came together to operate the shelter. The majority of these were returning volunteers. Volunteers combine across a range of churches and community groups, creating a diverse and passionate team across both venues - Peninsula City Church and Holy Family Hall (St Anne's Catholic Church) set up, cooking, driving, evening, night and morning shifts, washed laundry, and gathered food donations.

A day and multiple evenings of training was provided for all volunteers before the commencement of the program. Multiple tailored training sessions in Conflict Management and Mental Health were provided by Council as well as Mental Health and Wellbeing Frankston.

This year, there were First year Occupational Therapy students from Monash University who completed their placements as part of their studies. Students assisted on a range of shifts and provided great support for other volunteers and guests. There were also Year 11 and 12 students from Bayside Christian College who came each week to set up all the beds on Mondays and then pack up the Shelter on Thursdays. This provided well needed help in the physical set up of the shelter.

Guests arrive at 6pm and stay until 8.30am the next morning.

A warm meal, shower, activities and bed are provided with breakfast the next morning. A bus collects guests from Young St car park. Guests are also provided with essential clothing items, toiletries, reading material and a welcoming community environment. 33 different guests stayed at the shelter. The maximum on any given night was 12, an increase from 10 this year due to demand. Unsafe rooming, increasing rental costs, lack of affordable housing, family or relationship breakdown, job loss, mental health issues, domestic violence and costs of living were cited by guests as the main reasons for homelessness. Referrals of guests were from Frankston Community Support, Bolton Clark Homeless Persons Program, Salvo Care, Launch Housing, St. Vincent de Paul and Community Connectors.

It was lovely to hear guests talk about how this has been like a family to them and how they have been able to reach some goals and make decisions during their time at Winter Shelter and how welcomed and cared for they feel by everyone. They feel valued and part of the community. Guests enjoyed having home cooked meals.

During their time at shelter, 1 person gained employment, 12 are known to have found accommodation, 3 expressed the desire to continue to live in their current conditions after shelter, 1 planned to travel in a van, 2 were reconnecting with family and 3 expressed the desire to volunteer next year.

Personally, for me, it has been a joy and privilege to be able to help with meals, sit at the table and share meals with our guests, hearing their stories, laughter and tears. I gain courage from their strength. I find strength in their resilience.

Accompanying children and families in sacrament preparation

by Berna Wake

One of the challenges facing many parishes today is the retention of children and their families post making their sacraments. In fact, it is often said “confirmation often means graduation from the Church.”

With this in mind a 12-month study was undertaken by the Parish Leadership Team and Parish Pastoral Council to evaluate a new approach for our catechesis children and families, i.e. baptised children from non- Catholic schools looking to receive the sacraments. Our current catechesis team were welcomed and invited to be part of the new approach. Learnings from parishes both locally and overseas revealed a shift from a transactional “drop-off” model where parents are not involved in their child’s preparation to an accompaniment model involving children and parents. Many parents feel under-prepared to answer their child’s questions about faith as their own faith formation most likely stopped when they finished school.

With valuable assistance and content provided by our friends at St Benedict’s Burwood, the pilot program began in August with our reconciliation students and parents. Feedback has overwhelmingly positive and we will now rollout the full program for all sacraments – Reconciliation, First Eucharist and Confirmation commencing February 2026.

If you have family and friends who may be interested, in the sacraments for their children from non-Catholic schools, click on the link below to register interest for the 2026 program:

<https://forms.gle/yJuqKFVWorgVeT7TA>

Parent’s Feedback

“ The introductory dinner was special and lovely to meet the facilitators and other parents in a pleasant atmosphere.

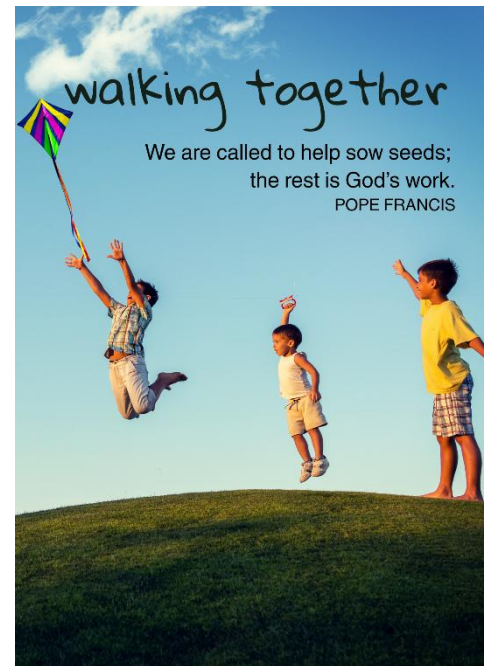
It was a nice change to the programs experienced as a child myself.

I felt it all went very smoothly, and I liked the fact that we celebrated just us, the families in a small intimate setting.

My son really loved. It was evident how much effort all the volunteers put into it.

My son often openly discussed the sessions after.

I thought it was an excellent program that was the right length of time to maintain our son’s attention.





In Memoriam

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Margaret Russell
9.2.1935 - 6.8.2025.

Margaret's funeral was held at Renowden Chapel, Springvale Cemetery on 15.8.2025.



Frank Barber

24.10.1938 - 7.8.2025.

Frank's funeral was held at St Brigid's Church on 19.8.2025.



Alojz Rep 15.6.1946 - 26.8.2025.

Alojz's funeral was held at Bunurong Memorial Park on 3.9.2025.



May Warrenner

29.4.1938 - 5.9.2025.

May's funeral was held at St Louis' Church on 12.9.2025.



Mario Turone

10.6.1933 - 16.9.2025.

Mario's funeral was held at St Brigid's Church' on 24.9.2025.



Joseph Anthony (Tony) McMahon

19.6.1929 - 3.10.2025.

Tony's funeral was held at St Brigid's on 14.10.2025.



Damian Peter Eley

17.1.1964 - 19.10.2025.

Damian's funeral was held at Bunurong Memorial Park on 7.11.2025.



Carolina Torcasio

26.4.1940 - 26.10.2025.

Carolina's funeral was held at St Brigid's Church' on 11.11.2025.



Giovanni (John) Giarratana
28.6.1954 - 19.9.2025

Giovanni's funeral was held at St Brigid's Church' on 3.10.2025.



Maria Victoria Alvarez (Isabel)
27.2.1931 - 10.11.2025.

Maria's funeral was held at Bunurong Memorial Park on 19.11.2025.



John William Poynton
21.3.1950 - 13.11.2025.

John's funeral was held at St Louis' Church on 21.11.2025.



Grazia Maria Prochilo
14.2. 1939 - 26.11.2025.

Grazia's funeral was held at St Brigid's Church' on 3.12.2025.



John Revel Nicholson
7.11.1936 - 7.12.2025

John's funeral was held at St Brigid's Church' on 16.12.2025.



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SUNDAY MASS

Saturday Vigil 6pm St Louis'
Sunday 8am St Brigid's
Sunday 9.30am St Louis'
Sunday 11am St Brigid's

WEEKDAY MASS

Mon 9.15am St Louis' (Communion Service)
Tues, Thurs 9.15am St Louis'
Wed 10am St Brigid's
Friday 11.30am St Brigid's

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St Louis de Montfort Church & Parish Office:
37 Dolphin Street, Aspendale I

mordiallocaspendale@cam.org.au

WELCOME!

If you are new to the parish or would like to be more connected, we would love to meet you. Please reach out to one of our Welcomers at our weekend masses or get in touch at the email address above.

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Our parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing, and human dignity of children, young people and adults.

Our Parish acknowledges that we gather, pray and live on the land of the Bunurong People of the Kulin nation, and pay our respects to Elders, past, present and emerging. We recognise their continued connection to Country, and we thank them for their role in caring for, and maintaining Country and waterways, over thousands of generations.

Merry Christmas

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Luke 1:26-38

