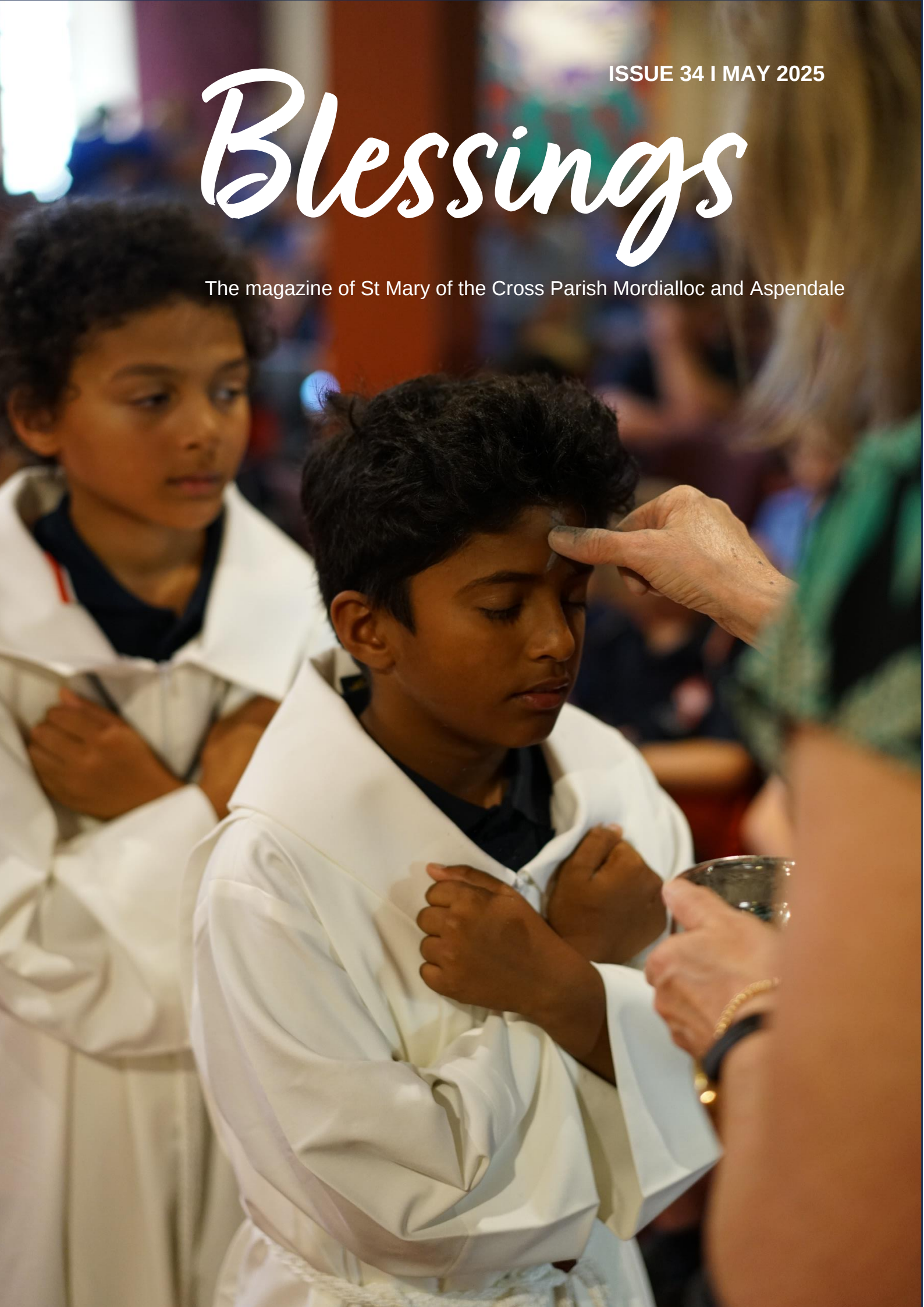


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Blessings

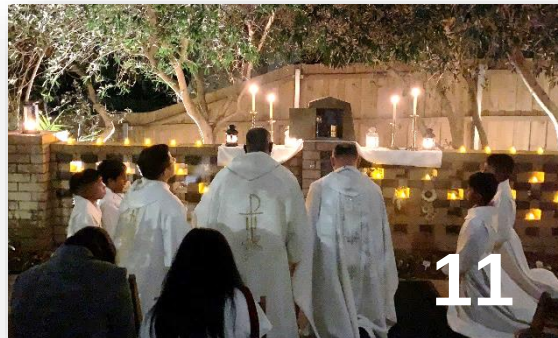
The magazine of St Mary of the Cross Parish Mordialloc and Aspendale



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From the Editor



Hello, this is a late first edition of Blessings for 2025, on account of a late Easter. It's a big issue, so I hope you will take some time, to relax with a cuppa and enjoy reading about the many wonderful people and events in our parish. It is my privilege to try and capture it. From the beautiful Easter Triduum liturgies – scripture readings, homilies, adult initiations into the church baptisms, ceremonies steeped in tradition and joy, our brilliant choir and much more, how blessed are we to experience the highs and lows as we followed Jesus' death and resurrection.

The passing of Pope Francis seems to have brought much of the world together in mourning and in celebration and awe at his remarkable life. As we turn our attention to the conclave in Rome, we pray for a successor to Saint Peter who will lead our Church with courage, conviction, love and mercy.

If you have a story or news about our parish and people, please do reach out to me.

Peace and blessings,

Berna Wake

Front cover: Ash Wednesday School Mass with altar servers Nicholas Paattam and Ben Bailey.

Photo credit: Thomson Wood (St Louis' School)

Father Andrew's Word

*Happy Easter everyone –
Christ is Risen. He has Risen indeed!*



I am writing these words in these early days after Pope Francis' funeral. It is with mixed emotions that I write these words as I am sad about Pope Francis' death but equally filled with joy that he has achieved so much for our church, and it is his turn to return to the Father in heaven. May we all remember and honour Pope Francis for his tireless work as our Pontiff and friend. We now pray for the conclave to choose our new pope.

I felt joy on the Palm Sunday weekend and leading into Holy Week. I knew that the liturgies would be sacred and profound as a lot of work had been invested by the Parish Leadership Team (PLT) and Liturgy teams. To have such amazing weather was like the bonus that one doesn't acknowledge until it happens. Our attendance was great in number compared to other years and the "vibe" was electric. I am grateful to so many for making the week so special.

Our Neophytes (new lights) are such a witness to us all. Their courageous decision to join our parish meant committing to a process that was lead by instruction, sharing and teaching and their own personal time for reflection and prayer. Their instruction continues until Pentecost knowing that this parish will support them in prayer, and they integrate their prayer life with the parish. Read more about them in this edition of Blessings.

Progress on the painting of St. Louis' church will allow a freshness and new look for the church. You can see some photos of how the church will look as you turn these pages. Hopefully this will be complete by mid-year.

Our PPC has new members who have injected some new energy and perspective into the key initiatives that are currently underway. All I can say is "watch this space"!

God Bless,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew".

Fr. Andrew Jekot
Parish Priest
St Mary of the Cross Parish,
Mordialloc & Aspendale

Sharing and strengthening faith

"The word of the Lord is alive and active" - *Heb 4:12*



By John Morrison

The SMOTC Men's retreat held at St. Louis' on Saturday Feb 22nd was a resounding success with 25 men from our parish coming together to share and strengthen their faith.

Key elements of the day were listening to themed presentations and contemporary hymns intertwined with sharing scripture, heartfelt discussions, prayer and private reflections guided by the holy spirit.

The retreat, which was skilfully designed and facilitated by Jon Searle, was broken into three sections: Man's Role as Husband and Father; Leading Through Surrender and Self-Sacrifice; and Proclaiming Love Proclaiming God.



Insightful presentations from some of our senior parishioners which tied in with the above key themes were greatly appreciated.

- Patrick Jurd on the importance of being present with our partners/families supported by mindful communication.

- Martin Newington spoke with scriptural authority on men's purpose to BEING in loving relationships.
- Graham Harrison (who unfortunately couldn't attend) provided an insightful presentation which was read out by other participants on Humility being Christ's defining characteristic.
- Danny Carey on the importance of prayer and meditation.
- And Felice who gave heartfelt closing remarks.

Thank you to Ann Furlong who did all audio visuals, handouts and music selections, Berna who did the promotions and Helen for the most fantastic cakes and scones for afternoon tea!

Also, special shout out to Wence Rodrigues and Niko Tovia for doing the readings and to our speakers on their excellent presentations. And thanks to all the guys who helped prepare the lunch and John Bainbridge who served as usher. And thank you to Fr Huy, who said grace over lunch and provided reconciliation toward the end of the retreat which was greatly appreciated.

Men - do you feel it's hard to find opportunities to talk about faith without being ridiculed or judged—whether it's by your friends, families or at work? You are welcome to come to our Men's Group on the 3rd Thursday of the month from 7.30- 8.30pm at St Louis'.

A freshen up for St Louis' Church

This year we will be freshening up St Louis' church with an exterior paint job, painting the inside foyer and the white cross on the roof will be painted and flood lit. The trees at the front of the carpark – the Dolphin Street footpath, will be cut down to give an unobstructed view of the church. This work will complement the beautiful garden landscaping that has taken place recently, for which we give thanks to Sandy and Kevin Lindfield, Jenny Ferguson, Helen Rocks, Julie Buick, Trish Angliss, John Brasacchio and Patrick Ensil.



Parish Forum on Domestic and Family Violence: What Can We Do?



Karina Chaves



Nadine Gadd



Jocelyn Bignold



Judy Lamb

By Judy Lamb

Concern about the growing prevalence of domestic and family violence prompted the parish Justice Action Group to focus on raising awareness of the issue and to consider the question "What can we do?" We realised that communities and individuals have a responsibility to develop our understanding of this very complex issue and investigate ways to respond and help prevent domestic and family violence.

From October 2024, a series of notices was published in the parish bulletin, including promotion of the Catholic Social Services Victoria (CSSV) pamphlet 'Let's Build Respectful Communities' and faith leaders' statements on domestic and family violence. During the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence in 2024 (25 November-10 December), daily prayers were published on the parish website and Facebook, and a hard copy was distributed.

On 22 February 2025, 25 parishioners attended a men's retreat which focused on Jesus and Joseph as role models for fathers, husbands, friends and members of the community. (see story on page 4).

This series of activities led to our Parish Forum on Saturday 15 March 2025 when over 50 people gathered at St Brigid's Primary School Hall, in Mordialloc. A panel of experts and local service providers engaged in a conversation-style presentation. Panel members included: Jocelyn Bignold (CEO, McAuley), Nadine Gadd (Program Lead, Family Violence Program, Better Health Network), Candice Weir (Family Practice and Program Development Specialist, Family Life), Karina Chaves (Paediatrician) and Fr Andrew Jekot (Parish priest).

The panel was ably facilitated by Kit McMahon (CEO, Women's Health in the South East) who drew on the particular expertise of each of the panellists.

A key discussion point of the panel was addressing how services and communities can respond to domestic and family violence. Several of the panellists focused on the importance of providing care and support in a considered and kind way.

Jocelyn advised *that "the first contact with victim survivors is really important – they need to be believed and what they share needs to be kept in confidence, particularly in a parish community environment when knowing both parties can be difficult. It is always important to treat people with dignity and respect. Get advice yourself about how to best reach out"*.

(Continued next page)

...the need to call out violence and not hide behind faith in justifying violent actions.

Jocelyn suggested 1800RESPECT (24/7 phone line – 1800 737 732) is a good resource both for those experiencing violence but also for those seeking guidance of how to support someone else – “Know how to refer and where to get assistance.” Similarly, Nadine emphasised the importance of creating an opportunity for a person to share – ‘Listen without judgement. Don’t assume anything. Ask: what can I do? How can I assist? Talk about the behaviour, not the person. Know referral pathways.’

As the conversation progressed, the importance of supporting all members of a family where violence is experienced became a focus of the discussion. New programs are being developed which work with adults using violence as well as working with the whole family unit. Nadine explained: “Unless you work with people who perpetrate violence, nothing will change... Men might have had a lifetime of using violence, but they want to be better dads and partners... I know people can change, that’s why I do this work”.

Fr Andrew highlighted the importance of dispelling myths, particularly in Catholic communities, and ensuring we are focused on gospel values and having a true understanding of love and respect. He emphasised the need to call out violence and not hide behind faith in justifying violent actions.

Following the panel session, there was an opportunity to speak with the panel members, gather information from tables around the hall and enjoy a cuppa and a conversation with other participants. Feedback was sought to provide suggestions to help JAG to continue this action to address the question “What can we do?”

If this is an area that you are interested to know more about and to get involved in meaningful action, come along to our monthly parish Justice Action Group, which is held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from 7.30-8.30pm at St Louis’ Aspendale.



The speakers (L-R) Karina Chaves, Candice Weir, Judy Lamb, Nadine Gadd, Kit McMahon, Jocelyn Bignold, Fr Andrew Jekot.

Grow Deeper

“Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said: *I am thirsty.*” Jn 19:28

Lenten Retreat

Our annual Lenten retreat took place on Saturday 1 March at St Brigid's led beautifully by Kristian Tangso. In song, guided meditations, quiet reflection, prayer and creative time, Kristian gently guided us to prepare ourselves for the season of Lent with a greater awareness and eagerness to receive and respond to Jesus' personal love and thirst for each one of us. Thank you, Kristian.



Stepping towards Christ

Grow Wider and Deeper

On Sunday 9 March, our eight parish catechumens, Dee, Jason, Yan, Brian, Caity, Amy, Giselle and Jade were welcomed by Archbishop Peter as they joined over 200 others taking the next step in their journey of Christian initiation at the Rite of Election at St Patrick's Cathedral. The Rite of Election for the catechumens (unbaptised adults) takes place on the first Sunday of Lent. As a pledge of fidelity, the candidates inscribe their names in the book that lists those who have been chosen for initiation" (RCIA, n. 119). By the look of the faces and the glow of sun streaming into the cathedral it was a joyous celebration.



Palm Sunday- 13 April

“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord.
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest.” Some of the
Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your
disciples." He said in reply, "I tell you, if they keep silent,
the stones will cry out!" ” Luke 19:38–40



Triduum Liturgies – Holy Thursday 17 April

We remember the Last Supper, where Jesus instituted the Eucharist and demonstrated servant leadership by washing His disciples' feet. Following the Mass, at the Altar of Repose in the Memorial Garden at St Brigid's, all were invited to spend a quiet moment in prayerful Adoration, commemorating Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane before His arrest.



“ It was before the festival of the Passover, and Jesus knew that the hour had come to pass from this world to the Father. He had always loved those who were in his world, but now he showed how perfect his love was. ” Jn 13:1



Triduum Liturgies – Good Friday 18 April

On this solemn day, we reflect on Jesus' passion and crucifixion—His arrest, trial, suffering, and death. It is a day of mourning, silence, and reverence, but also deep hope.



Inter-Faith 'Way of the Cross' Beeson Reserve Edithvale

“ So Pilate said to him, “Then you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say I am a king. For this I was born and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.” Jn 18:37

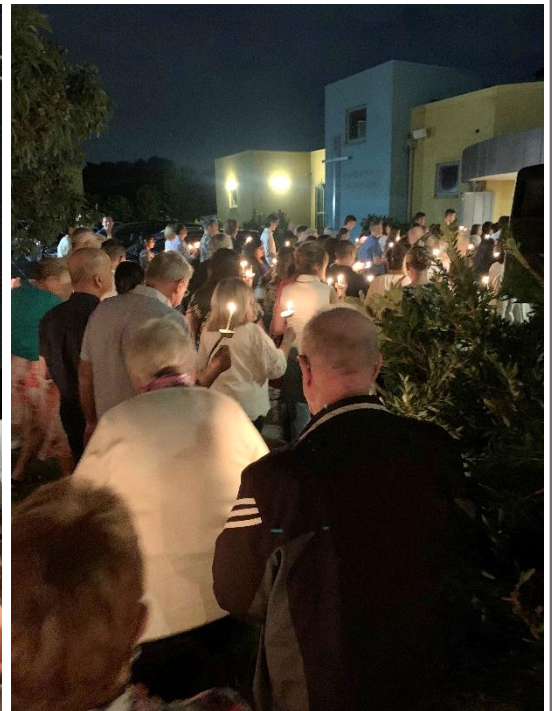


“To carry the cross of Christ is never in vain, it is the most tangible way for us to share in his redemptive love.’

Pope Francis Palm Sunday Homily St Peter's Square April 13, 2025

Triduum Liturgies – Easter Vigil Saturday 19 April

The Easter Vigil is the first celebration of the Resurrection. We begin outside around the open fire, then the light of the Paschal candle is shared with the congregation—symbolizing the light of Christ shining in the world. We proceed into the darkened church to experience the beautiful, powerful liturgy. It is the highlight of the Church year and includes readings and baptisms of our RCIA catechumens who are received into the faith. A joyful proclamation of the Risen Christ.



Holy Saturday Easter Vigil

“The light quietly shines forth, even though we are in darkness, the promise of new life and a world finally set free awaits us; and a new beginning, however impossible it might seem, can take us by surprise, for Christ has triumphed over death.”

Pope Francis Easter Vigil Homily St Peter's Basilica 19 April 2025



Congratulations to our newest church members

We welcome and continue to pray for Dee, Jason, Brian, Giselle, Caity, Yan, Jade and Amy, as they begin living a new life as fully initiated and participating members of the Catholic Church.



Getting to know our neophytes 'new lights'



Dee Carino

My name is Deidre Carino (Dee). My husband is Stephen, and we have two boys Paul who is 8 and Luke who is 7. Paul and Luke attend St Louis. We have two Maltese Shih Tzu dogs called Bowie and Smarty. We have lived in Aspendale since 2017 and prior in Mordialloc. Before marrying Stephen, I lived in Rosebud. Stephen and I got married in 2016 at St Louis' by Father Andrew and both boys were also baptised by Father Andrew at St Louis' when they were babies. I barrack for Essendon and the boys all barrack for St Kilda. This RCIA journey has been truly incredible, and I feel extremely honoured to be on this journey. I would also like to say thank you to all you wonderful people for allowing me on this journey and praying for me. A huge thank you to Father Andrew, Father Huy and to Carmel, Bernie, Judy, Vikki, Josie and Tony for being so kind, caring, supportive and

helpful to allow this journey to be such an amazing and rewarding journey. I am extremely proud and happy to be part of this wonderful parish and community. I look forward to seeing you all at church in the future. Take care, my prayers are with you all.

My name is **Jason Stanbury**. My wife Charlotte and I have been married for six years, and we live in Aspendale Gardens with our two beautiful children, Arlo and Lyla. Sharing this journey with them has made it all the more special, and I look forward to growing in faith together as a family. I'm a physio by training, now working in the orthopaedic medical device industry, and have always had a strong passion for sport — especially supporting the mighty Hawthorn Hawks!

The RCIA journey has been a truly meaningful chapter in my life. It gave me the space to reflect, ask questions, and take a step I'd long felt drawn toward. What began as quiet curiosity has grown into something steady and meaningful in my life. The warmth and support of the RCIA team and parish community made the experience both welcoming and enriching.



Jason Stanbury



Yan Zhang

My name is **Hongyan (Yan) Zhang**. I have been living in the Mordialloc community for the last 10-ish years. I have two beautiful sons Andy and Aaron and a beloved partner Davide. I am running a little home business, AnnaYan Skincare, to always be closer to my family. I have embarked on the RCIA journey last year as my partner introduced me to this eye-opening Faith. I have to say, I have enjoyed every single minute of it. The catechists, the people I have met there, they have all been wonderful companions to me and I cannot thank them enough to have shared their journey with me. I know now this is a personal life journey and I am just at the beginning, but the RCIA have opened my heart to Jesus, and I never feel alone now. A special thanks to all the people that have prayed for me.

My name is **Amy Dullard**. I moved to Chelsea with my husband Jarrad 8 years ago. My daughter Charli is 2 years old, and my son Cooper is 7 months old. I feel very lucky to have gone through the RCIA process with St Mary of the Cross Catholic Parish. By responding to God's call, I was taken on a beautiful journey that allowed me to deepen my faith and relationship with God and become a part of the parish community. The retreat day was a wholesome day that allowed me to reflect on the journey I am on and reminded me of why I chose to become Catholic and the person that I want to be. A big thank you to each member of the wonderful RCIA team for your support, guidance and prayer. I now look forward to baptising my children in the coming months at St Louis'.



Amy Dullard

Getting to know our neophytes 'new lights'



My name is **Caity Purvis**, I'm a 32-year-old nurse from Mordialloc and a mother of two. I began the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) in 2024 to strengthen my relationship with God. Through this journey, I've deepened my understanding of faith, the sacraments, and the teachings of the Church. RCIA gave me space to reflect on my beliefs and values and helped me explore what it means to live a faith-filled life. It's allowed me to see how my faith can guide me moving forward. I've also felt a strong sense of connection to the parish community, whose kindness and support have meant so much. I'm especially grateful to the RCIA team, whose encouragement made the transition into the Catholic Church feel welcoming and steady. This experience has been a truly meaningful step in my spiritual life.

Caity Purvis

We will share reflections from our other 3 neophytes Giselle, Jade and Brian in our next edition of Blessings.



Blessed Carlo Acutis

By Teresa Basile

I would like to share the story of blessed Carlo Acutis who found Jesus in the Eucharist and Our Blessed Mother in the Rosary and how God gifted him with being able to use the internet at a young age, and document all the Eucharistic miracles around the world which have given witness to the Great Gift of Jesus in the Eucharist.

Blessed Carlo Acutis was born in 1991 and died in 2006. He was to be canonised on Divine Mercy Sunday (27.2.2025) but with the passing of Pope Francis this has been put on hold.

Blessed Carlo Acutis, like St Francis of Assisi was awestruck and energised by the Eucharist. Carlo's life proclaims that each time we receive the Eucharist and whenever we pause in adoration before the Blessed Sacrament we do have before us not a mere symbol of Jesus, rather it is Jesus Himself who is present, and we can meet

him as Carlo liked to point out as if we were with Him on the streets of Jerusalem. He said to become a Saint you need to desire it, and said we need to love. We need to come to love God above all things, and our neighbour as ourselves. Carlo loved. Everything passes away, the only thing that will make us truly beautiful in God's eyes is the way that we have loved Him, and our brothers and sisters. Every person was important for Carlo his mother says. In each one, he saw the face of Jesus, so he would befriend everyone. He told everyone about the love of Christ, this was especially the case for the marginalised, rejected and weakest. With savings from his pocket money, he bought sleeping bags for the homeless. He brought hot drinks for beggars. He raised funds for the Missions. He volunteered time at a soup kitchen. He gave his savings to enable 2,500 meals to be given to the poor. He not only offered material goods, but he also gave his very self in establishing relationships with the rejects of society. The testimonies where Carlo attended daily Mass are especially moving.

This young man who died at 15 years understood what God was calling him to do, and he did it. He died of leukemia and offered his sufferings for Pope Benedict who was Pope at that time. Carlo's body lies incorrupt in Assisi near the Saint he loved (St Francis). Both he and St Francis were born into rich families and because they let go of their riches and let God take charge of their lives, God was able to work through their generosity of giving all to Jesus. Let us let go and let God work through us. For Jesus says, "your reward will be Great in Heaven".



Carlo Acutis - YouTube screenshot

Our 2025 Paschal Candle



The beautiful smile says it all, thank you Mish.

By Michelle Cambell

I am so grateful to have been entrusted to design, decorate and paint your 2025 Paschal candles. It is a deeply humbling experience as the Paschal candle symbolises Christ's light overcoming darkness and represents the Resurrection.

He opens and listens to our hearts and illuminates our prayers.

Christ our light, guiding us through life. Christ is the Alpha and the Omega.

The Paschal candle is lit in our churches throughout Easter, our special sacraments and when we are received into our eternal home. The 2025 design is the risen Christ, who conquered death, so we can have eternal life. Jesus is smiling lovingly, gently inviting us into a deeper relationship with him.

"May all who are present in our churches be touched by Christ's enduring love and be a light for others."

World Day of Prayer 2025 – *Kia Orana*

World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who invite all to come together for prayer and action for peace and justice. Each year a different country is chosen and stories from that country are shared in the liturgy. This year's event took place on March 7th at St Augustine's Anglican Church Mentone, and the host country this year was the Cook Islands. It was a beautiful morning and many of our parishioners attended.



Kia Orana, a Cook Islands greeting means – *May you live long and may you live well.*

Our parish treasure – Joan Pobjoy

If you have attended a Mass at St Louis', most likely on a Saturday night, you are blessed if you have encountered Joan. Her sparkling eyes and 'warm your heart' smile would greet you. She often had a joke to share too. Joan has now moved into residential care at Mercy Aged Care in Mentone. At Mass before Joan moved to residential care, our parish celebrated a remarkable, faith-filled and gorgeous lady.



Joan and her children

Beautiful Joan

Joan has been in the parish for 63 years, since St Louis' was established. Joan and Harry had 5 children – Adrian (dec.), Katrina, Dion (Thomas), Libby and Greg. All of Joan's children attended St Louis' and then Kilbreda and St Bede's.

Joan and her husband Harry were instrumental in establishing and running charismatic prayer groups and marriage encounter across Melbourne.

Joan prayed for everyone she crossed paths with.

She would talk to everyone. If she was on the train, she would talk to others and encourage them to do the same. In her younger years Joan would visit new parishioners on her bicycle and bring a chocolate cake. Joan said, "When I walk through the doors (St Louis') I'm at home, I just feel so loved here." *(With thanks to Jeanette Youl & Louise Breslin)*



Term One School News

St Brigid's Primary School

By Jodie Marziano

St Brigid's deputy Principal and RE Leader

What a busy term it has been at St Brigid's. Look at all the activities we have participated in these last 10 weeks!

- ♣ Beginning of Year Mass and Feast of St Brigid
- ♣ Getting to Know You sessions
- ♣ Shrove Tuesday
- ♣ Ash Wednesday Mass and liturgies
- ♣ Welcome Afternoon
- ♣ Project Compassion
- ♣ NED's Resilience Ride Incursion
- ♣ Foundation Mass at St Louis Hall
- ♣ Year 5/6 Adventure Camp
- ♣ House Cross Country
- ♣ Naplan
- ♣ Eucharist Family Activity Night and Commitment Mass
- ♣ Swimming Training and Carnival
- ♣ Catholic Education Week
- ♣ Harmony Day
- ♣ Our first Touch Football Competition
- ♣ Holy Week Liturgies
- ♣ Easter Bonnet Parade and Raffle - just to name a few!



The Olsen Family – all four children are at St Brigid's

Our Year 6 Liturgy and Community Leaders attended St Patrick's Day Mass. In their reflection of the day, they commented on how big and beautiful the Cathedral is and were astonished at how many schools attended. They enjoyed touring the Cathedral, exploring the numerous smaller altars and learning about St Patrick and his family through Archbishop Peter's homily.

Next term will begin with a bang- a 3-day week including a Resurrection liturgy and a prayer service for ANZAC Day, followed by swimming for our Foundation to Year 4 students in Week 2.



The D'Ali Family

Term One School News

St Louis' Primary School

By Carmel Stutterd St Louis' School Principal

We began the new school year with 90 prep students, 106 Year 6 students and a total of 590 students. We welcomed 7 new teachers and 2 new Learning Support Officers (LSO).

2025 is St Louis' 60 Year anniversary. We will be celebrating all year with little events to mark this milestone.

Swimming Sports

We started the year with twice a week swimming training sessions before school. We had on average 40 students attend each session. We competed in the District Swimming Carnival and all our training paid off.



Prep Welcome Mass

We joined with St Brigid's and celebrated with the prep families from both schools a welcome mass. Father Andrew was very welcoming, and the preps were fantastic.

Holy Week Liturgy

We commemorated Holy Week in the last week of Term 1. The whole school gathered together to listen and to join in song in retelling the Holy Week events. It was a meaningful way for the students to prepare for Easter.



Easter Bonnet parade

The prep – 2 students participated in the Easter bonnet parade. This is an annual event that both the students and parents love. Each year the bonnets get more impressive.



PFA Easter Egg Raffle

The PFA held an Easter egg raffle, and this is always a great way to finish the term. They raised \$3000 for the school. *We had a wonderful and busy start to 2025.*

*We welcome into our parish family,
children recently baptised and their families*

Joshua Charlie Wood son of Thomson & Katherine

Arlo Lenny Hoy son of Matthew & Alannah

Eliana Mari Edwards daughter of Paul & Lisa

Florence Jane Garrubba daughter of Marcus & Megan

Luke Phakin McAleer son of Sean & Nong Luk

Isla Rose McDonald daughter of Geoff & Rochelle

Albie Carlo Ravesi son of Calum & Costanza

Christian Jai Rawat son of Vineet & Shaina

Rook Michael & Ever Frances Scafidi children of Peter & Jacqui

Eva Victoria Graham daughter of Lucas & Chantel

Klara Anne Moore daughter of Philip & Jessica

Roman Kenneth Trabolssi son of Fady & Alicia

Sophie Elizabeth Clausen daughter of Jeremy & Emma

Xavier Ignac Bohan son of Michael & Renae

Ada Monica Readfern daughter of Scott & Michelle

Christian George Johnstone son of Andrew & Jenny

Lyla Jill & Arlo Jack Stanbury children of Jason & Charlotte

Mackenzie Willow Barca daughter of Shannon & Amy

Isaac Nicholas Zonneveldt son of James & Johanna



In Memoriam

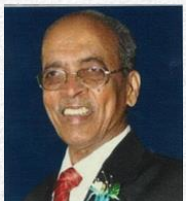
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.



Antonietta Laria
6.9.1958 - 2.1.2025.
Antonietta's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
9.1.2025.



Brian Reginald Dowling.
20.11.1933 - 1.3.2025.
Brian's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
12.3.2025.



Savio Mengle
6.9.1937 - 9.1.2025.
Savio's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
16.1.2025.



John Richard Bryant (Jock).
8.4.1931 - 5.3.2025.
Jock's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
25.3.2025.



**Treyden Owen Haar-Lewis
(Trey)**
15.2.2000 - 17.1.2025.
Trey's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
7.2.2025.



Michael Alesci.
16.8.1938 - 5.4.2025.
Michael's funeral
was held at Le Pine Funerals on
16.4.2025.



Bruce Lionel Reid.
5.2.1943 - 10.2.2025.
Bruce's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
28.2.2025.



Ronald (Ron) James Dalton.
4.5.1937 - 23.1.2025.
Ron's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
4.2.2025.



Donna Cardamone.
12.9.1961 - 19.2.2025.
Donna's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
26.2.2025.



Maria Giuseppina Morris.
28.8.1956 - 20.4.2025.
Maria's funeral
was held St Brigid's on
2.5.2025.



Gaetano (Tom) Mollica.
14.6.1934 - 21.2.2025.
Tom's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
5.3.2025.



Barry Francis Wheeler.
14.1.1934 - 26.4.2025.
Barry's funeral
was held at St Brigid's on
2.5.2025.



May Comas.
29.4.1932 -
22.2.2025.
May's funeral
was held at
St Brigid's on
4.3.2025.



Joseph Oliveri.
7.12.1958 - 19.4.2025.
Joseph's funeral
was held at
St Brigid's on
30.4.2025.



Our Parish Community



Happy 100th Birthday Breda Cooney with Fr Andrew & Vo Johnson



Mark & Monique Bruce 25th Wedding Anniversary with Fr Andrew



Ron & Marie Schneider-Loos 53rd Wedding Anniversary with Fr Andrew



John & Anne Field Renewal of Marriage Vows with Deacon George & Fr Huy



Happy 80th Birthday Margaretha Westerbeek



JAG members making palm crosses

Strengthening our missionary journey

By Berna Wake

Church of the Nativity in the USA Archdiocese of Baltimore and the associated Rebuilt Ministry have been a lighthouse of hope and inspiration on our parish journey of parish renewal. Our “Opening the Door’s” parish presentations in May 2021 drew heavily on the experiences of Nativity and Rebuilt. We have adopted many of their tools and processes. It was therefore an absolute delight to learn that our own parishioners Anne and John Field planned a trip to Church of the Nativity as part of their US travel plans in April. Prior to that trip, Phil and Trish Thiel from Nativity Parish visited Melbourne to attend the Australian Open in January and we met this lovely couple when they attended our Saturday Vigil Mass, and we enjoyed a dinner together. Over to Anne and John Field to continue...

By Anne and John Field

Our visit to the Nativity parish in Baltimore came about through an enquiry we made to their parish website, prior to a planned visit to the USA. We knew that the model of renewal and evangelisation at Nativity had influenced SMOTC and we were keen to immerse ourselves into the full parish experience, and bring our learnings back. Upon our arrival at Nativity, we were warmly welcomed into the parish community, celebrated beautiful liturgies and had a chance to be a part of the leadership meetings. As a token of appreciation, we took a gift of the exquisite painting “One Family” by our very own Kristian Tangso. We presented this gift to Father Michael (PP of Nativity), who was visibly touched and moved by the inspiration behind Kristian’s work. We read Kristian’s letter describing her painting:

“One family” is an expression of the immense love and joy that overflows from my heart and soul, especially during Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of our Saviour. As we gaze upon Baby Jesus cradled in the tender embrace and protection of Mary and Joseph, we are reminded that we are created in His image as beloved children of God, and that we too are part of the Holy Family, united in Christ with the gift of the Holy Spirit. It was a profound and emotional moment for all present, as this gift symbolised the deep and everlasting connection that Saint Mary of the Cross and the Nativity Church now share. We were once again blessed by an experience of the universal Body of Christ, and the promise that we will all be welcomed into our Father’s house with a Love beyond all imagining.



Phil and Trish Thiel visit St Louis'



Anne & John Field presenting Fr Michael White with Kristian's artwork

The gift of Pope Francis

By Berna Wake

I cannot complete this edition of Blessings without expressing my thoughts on Pope Francis. Like many readers I am sure you felt deeply saddened by his recent passing. Despite his near-death time in hospital in February-March, his appearance on Easter Sunday at St Peter's Square to be with the people and give a blessing seemed to suggest he was getting better, but we now know he was determined to touch lives even to his last breath.

A surprise appointment

At the age of 76 at the time of the election of the new pope on March 13, 2013, Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio was felt to be too old. Coupled with the fact he was a Jesuit and from Latin America, many, including himself, were surprised with his appointment. As Archbishop Mark Coleridge who was present at Pope Francis' first appearance on St Peter's Square balcony recounted, his first words were "Good evening", he then bowed his head and humbly asked for the people's blessing before he gave his own. He wore a simple white cassock, eschewing the red cape with white fur trimming, and his own brown shoes instead of the red slippers usually worn.



Final blessing at St Peter's Square, Easter Sunday 2025



In Christ's image he taught us to live the values of the Gospel

I believe this was a man who sounded and acted like Jesus. Visiting prisons to wash feet, speaking up against draconian migration laws and policies, fighting tirelessly for peace in the world, imploring us to care for the earth, to care for our elders. His call was for a poorer, humbler church for everybody. His famous description of the church was as a 'field hospital' where wounds could be healed, and hearts could be warmed. The image on the left impacts me more than any other, his piercing eyes that look into your soul. This is Archbishop Bergoglio on the subway on his way to visit the slums and shanty towns of Buenos Aires.

Insistence on mercy

Pope Francis certainly faced opposition from some clergy and laity who viewed many issues in particular morality, in black and white terms. His pastoral heart, reached out with tenderness and fierce compassion to those marginalised and judged. He illustrated the pastoral example of Jesus, who turned away no one.

Authentic presence

There are countless examples of Pope Francis' graceful leadership and presence, but I would like to share this one. Just days before he passed, inside St Peter's Basilica two art restorers were at work putting the final touches on a months-long restoration of the tomb of Pope Urban VIII, who in 1626 consecrated St. Peter's Basilica. Into the hush, rolled the wheels of a simple chair. It was Pope Francis with a blanket on his knees. No entourage, no ceremony, just humble presence. He thanked them for their work and asked if he could take one's hand because his were cold.

Pope Francis and St Mary of the Cross Parish

For those who attended our parish renewal presentations "Opening the Door's to Christ's Love" in 2021, you may recall that Fr Andrew and I referenced Pope Francis consistently, quoting his vision for a missionary church. Prior to the presentations I wrote to Pope Francis, thanking him for his work that had inspired our parish renewal plans and explaining our parish journey. I was delighted to receive a personal reply where he gave his blessing and assured me of his prayers. We are indeed blessed. Rest in peace Pope Francis, you lead with love and served with grace, and the world is all the better for it.



St Mary of the Cross Catholic Parish

EMBODYING CHRIST'S LOVE

These are our parish Mass times. Join via livestream our 6pm Saturday and 8am Sunday Mass [here](#).

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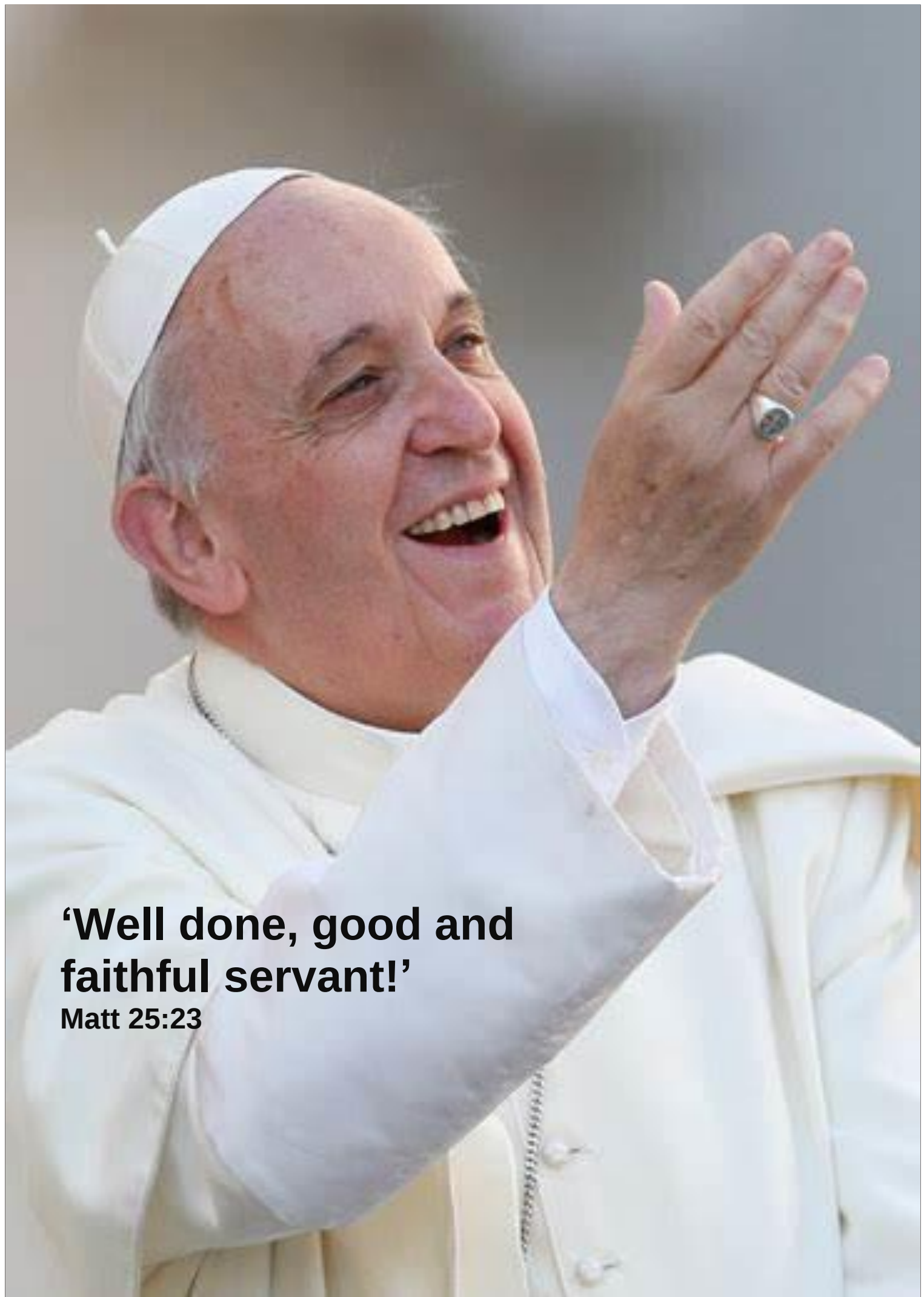
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Our parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing, and human dignity of children, young people and adults.

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.



**‘Well done, good and
faithful servant!’**

Matt 25:23