



OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL PARISH
BULLA CLARKEFIELD DIGGERS REST SUNBURY WILDWOOD
ON WURUNDJERI COUNTRY



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Newsletters are available on the parish website
olmcSunbury.com

Our parish is committed to the Safety, Wellbeing and Dignity of all, including children and vulnerable adults.

LITURGY TIMES: AT ST ANNE'S CHURCH

Saturday 5.30pm - Sunday Mass
Sunday 8.30am
Sunday 10.30am
11.45am - Baptism
Wednesday 9.30am - Mass
Thursday 9.30am - Mass
Friday 9.30am - Mass

RECONCILIATION

Saturday 10am - 10.30am St Anne's Church

Parish Priest: Rev Denis Stanley
Assistant Priest: Rev Jossy
Kizhakkethalackal
Deacon: Rev Stephen Fernandes
Pastoral Assoc: Sr Jose Noy RSJ
Safeguarding Officer: Elena Rodrigues
St Anne's School: 8746 6800
Principal: Noelene Hussey
Our Lady of Mount Carmel School: 9740 7344
Principal: Julie Freeman
Holy Trinity School: 8746 6464
Principal: Krystine Hocking

17 March 2024

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

First Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34
Psalm Response: Ps: 50:3-4, 1-15
Second Reading: Hebrews 5:7-9
Gospel Acclamation: John 12:26

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ
If you serve me, follow me, says the Lord;
and where I am, my servant will also be.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ

Gospel: John 12:20-23

LET US PRAY FOR

Sick: Kerry BAILEY, Jalila DAWOOD,
Cesar GABALES, Val HALLIFAX,
Joshua LEE, Diana MASTRAMICO,
Sue MAYBANK, John MCGOVERN,
Matthew PALSER, Liz POSTLE,

Recently Deceased: Rico DAVID,
David SIMPSON

Anniversaries: Marie MAHONY,
Pauline MCCALLUM

Parish Vision: Christlike relationships of friendship and faith, valuing one another and sharing our gifts for the good of all.

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER: A TIME OF WITNESS, INVITATION, WELCOME

Holy Week and Easter are near. What do they mean to us? Will we gather in sincerity and numbers at the liturgies which celebrate the foundation of our faith, without which, we would have no faith? As St Paul to the Corinthians wrote bluntly, "*If Christ has not been raised, then your faith has nothing to it.*"

Whatever personally draws us to the Holy Week and Easter Liturgies, will our presence together say anything to the Sunbury community in which we live? Will our carefully planned Liturgies have a value to anybody except ourselves? Does that even matter?

Because the reality is that compared to those who state that they have No Religion, Catholics in Sunbury are now a minority. The statistics gathered by the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference from the last National Census in 2021 reveal and confirm what we sense.

- Catholics in Sunbury **12,812**.
- Catholics 28 percent of the Sunbury population.
- Other Christians 9,126
- Non-Christians 2,331
- No Religion **18,878**

If we add up the Catholics and the other Christians together, that makes 21,938, then all Christians just outnumber the No Religion group. However, if we add those who did not state what religion they were (2,592) to the No Religion group then that adds up to 21,470. This makes Christians in Sunbury according to the 2021 census, the largest group but just by a whisker. Certainly, the No Religion group is now the largest single group.

How does that make you feel or think?

It makes me think of how crucial the Holy Week and Easter Liturgies are because participating in these says something much more important than a tick on the Census form. Why? Because these Holy Days now become a time to witness, invitation and welcome. They cannot remain simply a private choice.

The fact that we gather to celebrate the passing over of the Lord from death to life and how we believe this to be the non-negotiable foundation of what it means to live life and give us purpose and hope, is bearing witness to this to the wider community. Without ourselves and the other Christians of Sunbury gathering to worship, the story of Jesus would go untold.

So here is a moment to invite and welcome others to join us, especially those who are part of the 12, 812 Catholics in Sunbury but do not gather for the Sunday Assembly each week, and not to grumble about them. Let the joy and sincerity of our prayer be our witness and our welcome.

Remember, that in gathering together we also strengthen each other, something we do not always think about. My presence at worship supports everyone – a grace we silently offer to each other.

How do you feel about officially being a minority?

Fr Denis Stanley PP

Palms for Palm Sunday

When we gather on Palm Sunday everyone is welcome to bring a sprig or branch of greenery from home to be blessed. If you have some to share, please bring it along for others. Did you know that the greenery that remains is kept, dried and burnt to provide the ashes for Ash Wednesday? A particular request is that if you have large palm fronds (see illustration) at home to decorate the Church they would be much appreciated. Many thanks Fr Denis Stanley



The Parish Pastoral Co-ordinating Team (PPCT) has recently received some questions about Parish life via the Continuous Improvement forms. The responses, prepared by Fr Denis, have been reviewed by the PPCT and as requested, printed in the Bulletin.

Why do we have a Deacon?

Deacons have been part of the life of the Church from the days of the Acts of the Apostles. However, for various reasons in the Western Catholic church of which we are part in Sunbury, Deacons disappeared from parish life. Being ordained to the Diaconate was considered simply as a stepping stone to the priesthood. Deacons were swiftly ordained priests without any time working in parish life. After the Second Vatican Council the Diaconate was restored to a distinctive and visible ministry in the church. Deacons preparing for priesthood spend much time in a parish and Permanent Deacons, of which there are slowly growing numbers in Melbourne, are appointed to work in parishes, such as Deacon Stephen has been to our parish. This is an appointment of three years.

By contrast, in the Eastern Churches the Diaconate maintained its distinctive and public profile and an Eastern parish without a Deacon is considered lacking something.

Apart from Deacon Stephen's ministry at the Sunday Eucharist, proclaiming the Gospel, distributing Communion and preaching the Homily, he also assists in celebrating Baptisms (of which in Sunbury there are many) and leading Funeral Liturgies. Sooner or later, he will also celebrate his first wedding liturgy. He also forms part of the ministry team with the Office Staff, Sr Jose and Fr Jossy.

Communion Under Both Kinds.

The Sunday gathering for liturgy was badly affected during the recent time of Covid restrictions. Do you remember? Over time all restrictions on the liturgy were removed. The one remaining restriction, Communion from the Chalice, the Archbishop has also now officially removed. COVID update issued (#62. 26 Nov 2022) the Archbishop indicated that:

"Holy Communion may be distributed to the faithful under both species".

However, there has been great hesitancy across the parishes of the Archdiocese to restore Communion under both kinds. Drinking from the Common Cup still seems a step too far and remember that Covid has not gone away. I, the celebrant of the Mass, do not drink directly from the chalice when the Deacon is present. Only he drinks from the chalice. Apart from sanitizing, that is the last cautious remnant of the Covid restrictions.

The broader question is, are we ready to restore the common cup, offering it, as we did before Covid, at least to everyone even if they do not "take and drink"? While aware of people's caution over this, I personally believe that the cup should be offered to all, each Sunday in obedience to the Lord's word, "take and drink."

A restoration of the common cup would require a strong consensus of the Sunday Assembly.

We joyfully welcome the following child who will be baptised in our parish this weekend:

Dylan BIDES



Children's Liturgy

Please note the **last 2 weekends** for children's liturgy are 16/17 March and 23/24 March, Saturday 5.30pm Mass and Sunday 10.30am Mass.

Evergreens

Evergreens Social afternoon on Tuesday 26th March at 12.00 pm in St Anne Hall. All welcome to bring a friend, bring a plate or lunch, a cuppa provided, a chat and share a smile. Everybody is Welcome. inquiries Joe on 0477 677 248.

For those who remember **Sunbury Music Festival** 50 years ago. The Library is showing the movie on **Thursday 18 April**. **Tickets are FREE** but booking is required as soon as possible. For booking and inquiries Joe on 0477 677 248.

From Your Parish Coordinating Team (PCT)

Defibrillator and First Aid Training will be held in **May**. Details to follow.

Jill Gibbs Neighbourhood Garden

Has two vacant plots available. Each plot measures 3mx10m or 30sqm. The annual rental is \$42 and you must have a WWCC. Come join the Garden Party. Call Jo Wiegerink on 0410 834 272 for more information.

Parish Bingo

Has commenced for another year. Eyes down at 7.30pm at the Sunbury Bowling Club. For enquiries contact Gary on 0419301760

Project Compassion Sunday - 11 February 2024

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **for all future generations**. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413

HOLY WEEK TIMETABLE - 2024

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Sunbury

PALM SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday March 23rd, 5.30pm

Sunday March 24th, 8.30am & 10.30am

HOLY THURSDAY

Mass of the Lord's Supper

Thursday March 28th, 7.00pm

GOOD FRIDAY

Friday 29th March

9.00am - Way of the Cross

OLMC Church grounds

10.00am - Ecumenical Good Friday Service

St Anne's Catholic Church

3.00pm - Passion of the Lord

St Anne's Church

EASTER VIGIL

Saturday March 30th, 7.30pm

EASTER SUNDAY MASSES

Sunday March 31st, 8.30am

Sunday March 31st, 10.30am