

Founders Day Mass 2024 - Monica and Shane

Good morning everyone,

I am Asher and this is Alby and Henry, and we are the School Captains of 2024 at St James Primary School. Today we have the privilege of honouring Monica and Shane Breadhower - two significant people in the St John's and St James community. Monica and Shane have two boys, Adam and Nick, who both attended St James.

Monica and Shane arrived in the parish in 1988. They had heard wonderful things about the St John's community and St James primary school. While they waited a few years before they began leading events, they said that they felt welcome from the very beginning. They have appreciated working with and the support of Father Dillon, Father Mark and Father Dispin. They acknowledge the many people who have played such a big part in the community and understand that they have a responsibility to continue this great work.

As the years went on, Monica and Shane became heavily involved in Parish life. Their main involvement began with attending and helping out at Sunday Mass and over the years flourished into being involved in virtually everything.

Monica and Shane are extremely proud of their involvement in youth groups. This was a chance to assist young people in many ways. They would have game nights, football clinics and some highly competitive, almost dangerous indoor cricket matches. While these events were very popular, it was providing an opportunity for students to talk, that was so important to them. This speaks of their giving nature. After talking to Shane we think this may have been his 2nd biggest achievement. He seemed most proud of his goal umpiring on the MCG. When some of the local auskickers were specially chosen to play they needed a goal umpire and Shane was always very quick to volunteer. Auskick was one of the many activities these two were involved in. They organised social events, fundraising and numerous parent association events.

Monica and Shane have enjoyed watching St James school and the parish change over time. They have shown great interest in watching some of the grounds transform from a mud pit (which is something many of the boys did have fond memories of) to a terrific play area for children. Through the work of countless working bees and hours of hours of time, they have seen St James go from strength to strength. Without people like Monica and Shane this doesn't happen. They remember previous school fetes that were an extravaganza. They went over many days and it was all hands on deck. Many of us here today have memories of visiting the pre-loved clothes stall or the mini golf. If you do, you know that Monica and Shane were never far away. If you have been to a BBQ, or brought a raffle ticket or purchased a card then once again, Monica and Shane were probably the organisers or cooks. Monica and Shane were always willing to lead initiatives. If

WhatsApp or Facebook were around back then, they would have been the group creators!

When leading initiatives Monica and Shane were always thinking of other people. While they did many things to help St James or the St John's community it was their willingness to go beyond the community that is significant. Monica and Shane's involvement in the St Vincent De Paul community made them realise how much they could support others during the tough and hard times. They have shown a big sense of connection to the people struggling in their lives. Monica and Shane say that everyone in the community is prepared to help others, and that Father Dispin inspired everyone to be involved. During covid they assisted communities in need. During tough times overseas they contributed to helping refugees in Ukraine. A couple of years ago, Monica spoke to a group of Year 5/6 students at St James about helping families in the Ukraine being able to move to a safe location. After her compelling story, the students were eager to assist and wanted the Mini Mission Fete profits to help as well.

St John's Parish is very special to Monica and Shane. They say that St James/St John's is an amazing community, and they acknowledge everyone's generosity of spirit. After mass they cherish the chance to socialise and enjoy a cup of coffee or tea. In 2020, when COVID -19 hit, this gathering wasn't possible. Recently they were reminded of how important this was because everyone missed the opportunity to socialise with others in the community. Thankfully this is back up and running.

Monica and Shane love that the St John's Parish two well equipped, high quality primary schools with many terrific facilities, compared to the early days of St James. We thank Monica and Shane for their countless contributions. This community would not be the same without you. We have a small token of appreciation for you.