



The parish of *St Joseph* *Newport & Spotswood*

5th SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR B

28th April 2024

Parish Office

9 Newcastle Street, Newport
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Mass Time

Tue & Thu – **9.15am, Spotswood**
Wed & Fri – **9.15am, Newport**
Sat - **5.30pm, Spotswood**
Sun - **10.00am, Newport**

Reconciliation

Sat 10.00-10.30am, Newport
5.00-5.20pm, Spotswood

Parish Clergy

Father Binh Le PP

Parish Pastoral Council

Katherine Wong
Chairperson

Secretary & Safeguarding Officer

Ivana Toulmin
Tuesday & Friday: 9am – 4pm

Sacramental Co-Ordinators

Sr Lorraine Robinson
Irene Bongetti
Carmel Crawford
Grace Frazzica
Katherine Wong

Sacristans

Irene Bongetti
Maureen Llewellyn
Michael Nardella
Barbara Payne

Choir

Larissa Cairns
Director

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS Sacred Heart

Principal: Kaylene Carlin
9391 6262
principal@shnewport.catholic.edu.au

St. Margaret Mary's

Principal: Colleen McCambridge
9391 3118
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SAFETY OF YOUNG CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS.

The parish of St Joseph, Newport and Spotswood, holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and all vulnerable people as a central and fundamental responsibility for our community.

REFLECTION BY REV MARK O'BRIEN OP

There are two key images of relationship in this Sunday's readings: the image or metaphor of the vine and branches in the Gospel reading focuses on our relationship with Jesus, the image or metaphor of the household (God as parent, we as children) in the first letter of John focuses more on our relationship with the Father. Each dwells on an important outcome of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

The metaphor of the vine and branches, read within our post-Easter setting, emphasises the intimacy and union between Jesus and ourselves. Even though we do not see the risen Jesus any longer within our world of space and time, the metaphor proclaims that our relationship with him is more intimate than any relationship between two human beings on earth. Once you separate a branch from its vine, it is dead. In terms of Christian life, there is only one vine to which we must be grafted in order to live. While the initiative lies, and must lie, with God, the disciple's response is to commit himself or herself to 'remain in me'. The one who does not so 'remain' has shown that he or she does not want to be part of the life-giving vine and is therefore cut off and thrown away. Nothing escapes the attention of the vinedresser who is wholly devoted to seeing that the vine and branches flourish and bear fruit. The union between vine and branches is intimate and fertile.

The metaphor of the vine/vineyard echoes and develops its Old Testament origins. One of the most famous examples is the song of the vineyard in Isaiah 5:1-7. God expected the vineyard of Israel to yield choice grapes (justice and righteousness) but found wild grapes instead (bloodshed, the cry of distress). According to vv 5-6, God threatens to let the choice vineyard go to wrack and ruin and presumably start a new vineyard. This is a provocative challenge to Israel's status as the chosen people because it implies that God's choice is for a greater purpose – to establish universal justice and righteousness. Thankfully for Israel and for us, God has, according to John's Gospel, provided the perfect Israelite vine (Jesus) that can produce the right fruit.

The metaphor of the vine and branches also emphasises the intimacy of our relationship of faith with the risen Jesus: as the Gospel says in 3:36 'whoever believes in the Son has eternal life'. We are already part of God's household, son and daughters of God. The reading from 1 John takes up the metaphor to explore our relationship with the Father. The reading states that the measure of our love of God is not what we say (or feel) but what we do. Only in this way can we be certain that 'we are the children of the truth (God)'. But there is a potential problem with this certainty: how can we know that what we do is pleasing to the Father, that we have fulfilled his will? We can easily transfer to God an anxiety that often bedevils our human families: the son or daughter always wondering whether they have lived up to Mum and Dad's expectations, suffering anxiety as they attempt to measure themselves against spoken (or even unspoken but perceived) expectations. The author of our letter is determined that members of God's family (those who want to be genuine members) do not suffer from this kind of anxiety. This is not how God runs the divine 'household' and this is assured in two ways.

The first is that God knows everything about us, our strengths and weaknesses. Despite all our flaws, here we are, loved and welcome in in God's household, treasured members of the community of believers. Hence there is no need to be afraid in God's presence. The second is that, as we can have no secrets with God, so God keeps no secrets from us. God has nothing to hide. It has been made clear to us what kind of conduct the Father desires from the children; it is to 'believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and that we love one another'. As long as we do this we will be the delight of our parent's eye and grow, like loved and obedient children do, to become perfect sons and daughters.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Parish of St. Joseph, Newport and Spotswood, acknowledges the Yalukit-willam people of the Bunurong Country who are the traditional owners of the land on which the churches of Sacred Heart and St. Margaret Mary stand.

We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

THE WORD OF GOD

First reading

Acts 9:26-31

When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea, and sent him off from there to Tarsus.

The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 21

*R. I will praise you, Lord,
in the assembly of your people.*

1. My vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.
May their hearts live for ever and ever! **(R.)**

2. All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord,
all the families of the nations worship before him.
They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth;
before him shall bow all who go down to the dust.
(R.)

3. And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him.
They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,
declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn:
'These things the Lord has done.' **(R.)**

2nd Reading

1 John 3:18-24

My children,
our love is not to be just words or mere talk,
but something real and active;
only by this can we be certain
that we are children of the truth
and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence,
whatever accusations it may raise against us,
because God is greater than our conscience and he
knows everything.
My dear people,
if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience,
we need not be afraid in God's presence,
and whatever we ask him,
we shall receive,
because we keep his commandments
and live the kind of life that he wants.
His commandments are these:
that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and
that we love one another
as he told us to.

Whoever keeps his commandments
lives in God and God lives in him.

We know that he lives in us
by the Spirit that he has given us.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord;
my branches bear much fruit.

Alleluia!

Gospel

John 15:1-8

'I am the true vine,
and my Father is the vinedresser.
Every branch in me that bears no fruit
he cuts away,
and every branch that does bear fruit
he prunes to make it bear even more.
You are pruned already,
by means of the word that I have spoken to you.
Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.
As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself,
but must remain part of the vine,
neither can you unless you remain in me.
I am the vine,
you are the branches.
Whoever remains in me, with me in him,
bears fruit in plenty;
for cut off from me you can do nothing.
Anyone who does not remain in me
is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers;
these branches are collected and thrown on the fire,
and they are burnt.
If you remain in me
and my words remain in you,
you may ask what you will
and you shall get it.
It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much
fruit,
and then you will be my disciples.'

SCRIPTURE REFLECTIONS: I AM THE VINE, YOU ARE THE BRANCHES

We're deeply rooted in Christ's love, which is our source of spiritual growth. St. Paul's conversion illustrates how encountering Christ fuelled his zeal to spread the Gospel, despite initial rejection. His awareness of being loved despite past wrongs empowered him. In the Psalm, we see the promise of future generations being filled with God's love.

The Second Reading reassures us that God's love surpasses our failures, freeing us to love others fully. Jesus' metaphor of the vine and branches emphasizes our intimate connection to God and our need to remain close to Him for our identity and purpose.

This week, let's remember that we're all connected by God's love, regardless of our differences. Despite our shortcomings, God's compassion and forgiveness envelop us completely. Like St. Paul, let's pray for the grace to live out this Good News by spreading love and forgiveness to all.



SEE THE COMEDY KID BEFORE HE HITS THE BIG TIME!

World-renowned (not quite yet!) Comedy Kid Alex Southwell will be performing at **St Margaret Mary's Church on Saturday April 27 after 5.30pm mass**. You won't want to miss his unique comedy stylings!

This kid is bound for the big time! So don't miss your chance to see him before he headlines comedy festivals worldwide!

Gold coin donations will be accepted (but notes are better)!

All money raised will go to St Margaret Mary's School as part of the Colour Fun Run fundraiser.



CATHOLIC CARE VICTORIA SUNDAY APPEAL

Next weekend, 4/5 May, is the CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal (previously held during the month of August). As the Catholic Church's mission in action, CatholicCare Victoria delivers programs and services to support families, children, young people and individuals to help everyone reach their full potential. The services include counselling and mental health services, specialised support for children and teens, refugee and asylum seeker help, pastoral care, support for separating families, social housing and homelessness support. Donations from our parish community help CatholicCare Victoria support the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community and empower everyone to live life to the full.



Please donate to the CatholicCare Victoria Sunday Appeal. Your support and generosity will help provide caring and compassionate support for struggling individuals and families in our community.

You can donate using the appeal envelope available in our parish, donate online at www.catholiccarevic.org.au or call (03) 9287 5513.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

There will be **no Children Liturgy** this weekend, 27/28 April. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

COMBINED PARISHES YOUTH GROUP

Who: 13-18 years old

When: Saturday 4th May

Where: St Mary's Parish centre
116 Cecil Street, Williamstown

Time: 7:00-9:00pm (Movie Night)

Please encourage young people to participate.

ROSARY GROUP

The Monday Rosary group will recommence on Monday 6th of May.

THANKSGIVING ENVELOPE

New Thanksgiving Envelopes commencing on the 5th of May are now available for collection at the entrance of each Church.

OUR SICK

Edna Fitzgerald, Jett Guy, Kevin Foley, Kata & Branko Ujelac, Michelle Jenkins, Anne Sheahan-Lee, Michael Conlon, Paul Orfali, Elizabeth Sundatum, Barbara Payne, Kristy Robinson, John, Helen Kelly

ANNIVERSARIES

Marie Duckworth, Douglas Cue,

RECENTLY DECEASED

ST MARGARET MARY'S PARISH SCHOOL

Our Colour Fun Run last Friday was a blast! The kids at SMM had a fantastic time raising funds for our school while getting splashed with colourful chalk.

The highlight? The principal and teachers getting slimed! A big thank you to our FSG fundraising group for their amazing efforts in organizing this event. Can't wait for next time!

SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL



On ANZAC Day, our Sacred Heart School Captains and Vice Captain, proudly and confidently represented our school at the Newport RSL Anzac Day service. Eliza, Oliver and Audrey read stories from local soldiers and laid a wreath in honour of those who have fought for their country in times of war. Yesterday, our Sacred Heart students gathered in prayer as a school community to honour the ANZACS and all who have given so much. Let's not forget.

ANNUAL PARISH MASS COUNT

This year, the four weekends of **4/5, 11/12, 18/19 and 25/26 May** have been selected for the count. This annual count taken in May is important for pastoral planning activities and allows for comparisons to be made across the years.

PARISH CENSUS IN MAY

Throughout the last three weekends of **11/12, 18/19 and 25/25 May**, our parish will undertake a census. Its aim is to accurately record and update parishioners' information for effective pastoral care, strategic planning, and resource distribution. This endeavour seeks to strengthen our parish's vitality, vibrancy and viability for the years ahead.

PARISH DONATIONS



For those of us that do not carry cash, we now have portable smart terminals available at our Mass's for Thanksgiving/Donations. Thank you for your continued generosity and support of our Parish.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

PARISH PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We gather as the parish of Saint Joseph as we
welcome all into our community. We celebrate our
faith, share in the Eucharist and Sacraments and
come together to embrace each other's joys,
sorrows, hopes and dreams.

We pray that we will always be a welcoming
community, embracing our future and the
uniqueness of all who come amongst us.

We are led by the example of Christ, the
cornerstone of all we are and all we do. We are
guided by the Spirit to be the heart of God, as we
find grace in each other. We are inspired by the
charism of Mary MacKillop and the work of the
Sisters of St Joseph.

We pray that we will follow St Margaret Mary's
devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, be with us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Margaret Mary, pray for us.

St Mary of the Cross, pray for us.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible
and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only
Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all
ages. God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father; through him all
things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down
from heaven,

*and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin
Mary, and became man.*

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and
rose again on the third day in accordance with the
Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the
right hand of the Father. He will come again in
glory to judge the living and the dead and his
kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic
Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus,

I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I long for You in
my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.

As though You have already come, I embrace
You and unite myself entirely to You;
never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS

| 1 st Collection Presbytery Offering | 2 nd Collection Thanksgiving Offering |
|--|--|
| To support: • Parish clergy • Sick and retired priests • Priests in needy parishes • Archbishop & auxiliary bishops | To support: • Parish running costs • Parish pastoral initiatives • Diocesan and various services |
| If you would like to join parish thanksgiving programme, please contact the parish office. Thank you. | |

ST MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE

O St Margaret Mary, through you, Jesus pours
out His abundant graces to all mankind. Help us to
put aside personal interests and abandon
ourselves entirely and lovingly to His Adorable
Heart. May our work, like yours, merit His special
care and favour, through Jesus' Holy Name.

Amen.