



Dearest Holy Spirit Parishioners.

I am writing to you from my home where I am sure the majority of you are at the moment, staying home and staying safe.

This is a challenging time for all of us, but a time when we are able to slow down, spend more time with our family and in prayer and thank God for all the blessings he has bestowed upon us despite this time of uncertainty.

Since my last update earlier this year, we have been busy in the Parish. Fundraising, recommencing our activities and welcoming returning parishioners as well as new parishioners to our wonderful parish.

In **February 2021** the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) reconvened for our first meeting of the year where we officially welcomed Stephen Middleton and Vince Cachia as the new members of the PPC. We also had the nominations and elections of the Pastoral Council officers which resulted in myself being re-elected as the Chairperson, Paula Dicenso elected as Vice Chairperson and our wonderful Bernadette Stevens re-elected as Secretary. As always we thank all the members of the PPC for their dedication to the Council.

This month we launched the "Who's Who in The Parish" initiative, which has been a welcomed addition in our weekly bulletin. Every week we get to meet a Parishioner from our parish and learn a little more about them. Our hope is that we can eventually include everyone from our parish so please send through your picture and blurb to the office so we can add it to our weekly bulletin.

This year we celebrated Ash Wednesday on 17th February, and we followed the Vatican's recommendation of a modified method for distributing ashes: sprinkling them on top of people's heads rather

than using them to make a cross on people's foreheads.

In **March 2021** we were well into our Lenten season with many parishioners taking part in our Project Compassion donation collections as well as our Food Drive to provide food and other items to asylum seekers and refugees. During Lent parishioners also had the opportunity to visit the Church and make the Stations of the Cross with their family and friends.

During this month we also launched our 'Welcome Newsletter' which was received very well. A big thank you to Carol Vella and Joanne Staunton for their valuable contribution in making this newsletter possible.

April 2021 began with our Easter Triduum, and we celebrated the most joyous and important time of the year for us Christians. We had so many parishioners volunteering including our Readers, Ministers at the Altar, PowerPoint Ministers, Eucharistic Ministers, Welcomers, Altar Servers, Devotional Stall Holders and Carpark Attendants. Also, our volunteer Choirs: Couples for Christ, Victor Brangwin, Peter Mercia and company, Victor's Choir and, Manuel's and Luchie's Choir groups. And of course the Banner Ladies, Flower Ministry & Cleaners who worked tirelessly for our beautiful Liturgical Space. And of course our Easter Triduum would not have been possible without the continued hard work of Fr Myk, who tirelessly offered the beautiful masses and spent endless hours preparing the liturgies and ensured everything went off without a hitch.

This month we commenced the offering a Votive Mass of St Joseph every Wednesday morning to commemorate the Year of St Joseph "*With a Father's Heart*". The Men's Ministry (Men's Business) also formed a Men's Choir – St Joseph's Men's Choir, who will sing every 5th Sunday of the month at 9.30am Mass.

A special thank you to the Fundraising Committee who

launched our major fundraising raffle as part of our 40th Year Foundation Anniversary celebrations. The aim of this fundraising activity is to help our parish cover the operating cost shortfall. We had many parishioners, along with Emmaus Catholic College and Trinity Primary donating money, items and offering to sell tickets. A very heartfelt thank you to all of you.

During our April PPC meeting we welcomed Victor Brangwin, who presented the Music Ministry Report which was very insightful. Since then Victor has chosen to step down as coordinator and we wholeheartedly thank Victor for his many years of service to the Music Ministry.

May 2021 was a busy month with lots of activities happening around our Parish, it almost felt like everything was returning to normal. Wedding Anniversary Mass retuned with morning tea afterwards, we even lit up the BBQ once again for our famous sausage sizzle.

Children's liturgy commenced this month which was so well received by all the beautiful children in our parish and we started seeing some of our treasured Altar Servers coming back to serve at the altar of God. The Sacramental team, led by Germaine Gil, did a wonderful job in preparing the children for their First Reconciliation and it was such a delight to see so many children and their families attending the Parish during this special time.

And let's not forget Pentecost Sunday, this year we were not able to celebrate our Parish feast day as previous years however, it was still a very special time and we invited Fr Tony Banks, OSA, the Assistant General of the Augustinians to talk about "BEING A STEWARDSHIP PARISH".

During this month, thanks to the Community and Cultural Commission, we had the return of our night with family and friends at Bingo! It was a great turn out and so much fun.

At our monthly PPC meeting, Eleanor Stuart presented the Basic Gift Ministry Report which was very insightful. Getting the youth to return to attend Basic Gift Sunday nights has proven to be challenging for the Basic Gift team since the Covid restrictions.

Finally, at the end of May, the PPC members attended a retreat at the Edmond Rice Retreat and Conference Centre in Mulgoa. The day was run by Fr Tony Banks and was a such wonderful experience for all the PPC members. We discussed ways in which we, as a Parish Council, can do better to serve our Parish.

June 2021 came around very quickly and in our PPC meeting, Stephen Middleton presented the Parish App concept and provided an overview of the various stages of developing an App which was very insightful. The first step is asking parishioners to complete the survey which has been promoted in our weekly notices and bulletins.

Our weekend Masses were getting fuller and fuller with so many Parishioners coming back to Mass and Covid was seeming more like a thing of the past. We even started seeing the basket collection going around the

Church once again. The PPC along with the Finance Committee discussed and agreed with the one collection model of having a 70% to the parish and 30% to the clergy split after a study by the Finance committee on past collections saw that the share was almost 70-30. This is a great initiative and will be a lot simpler going forward.

By the end of June, we had the announcement from the Government that restrictions were being re-introduced due to the increasing number of Covid cases being reported in the community, and by June 26 Public Masses were no longer allowed. Thanks to our newly installed technology in our Parish we began live streaming our weekday and weekend masses and Fr Myk even organised to have a nightly Rosary livestreamed. This has been a wonderful blessing to all the parishioners who can still come together online to celebrate mass and still feel part of our wonderful community which is so important during this time of uncertainty.

My hope and prayer is that each and every one of you is doing well and staying safe during this difficult time. I am confident that you are finding strength and hope in our Lord Jesus Christ and please know that your Parish Pastoral Council members are with you all in Spirit and we will continue to pray for you. If any of you beloved Parishioners require anything, please do not hesitate to reach out.

As I end my update I will leave you with this beautiful prayer from St Augustine: "*God of our life, there are days when the burdens we carry chafe our shoulders and weigh us down; when the road seems dreary and endless, the skies gray and threatening; when our lives have no music in them, and our hearts are lonely, and our souls have lost their courage. Flood the path with light, run our eyes to where the skies are full of promise; tune our hearts to brave music; give us the sense of comradeship with heroes and saints of every age; and so quicken our spirits that we may be able to encourage the souls of all who journey with us on the road of life, to your honor and glory.*"

God Bless you all.

Ana Gregoriou

***Chairperson, written on behalf of the
Holy Spirit Parish Pastoral Council***



YOUR PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEMBERS

From Left front row: Paola Dicenso, Bernadette Stevens , Ana Gregoriou, Vince Cachia, Vince Cachia, Fr Peter Tangey • Back row: Gus Morgan, Stephen Middleton, , Eleanor Stuart, Michael Paulo, Jamie Dowsett, Fr Michael Belonio • Not in Picture: Sarah Canete Damole, John Zhang, Dominic Dimech