



April - July 2017  
Pastoral Care Newsletter

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Hello! I hope this newsletter finds you well.

## MASS DATES

### Aged Care/Nursing Home Masses

**Ferndale Gardens:** 33 Jersey Ave, Mortdale

**Shangri-la:** 107 Carrington Ave, Hurstville

**Fairlea:** 11 Hawk St, Penhurst

**Gannon Gardens:** 53 Gloucester Rd, Hurstville

May & August (Mass begins at 10.30am)

- Tuesday, 9 May - Ferndale Gardens
- Tuesday, 16 May - Shangri-La
- Wednesday, 17 May - Fairlea
- Tuesday, 23 May - Gannon Gardens
- Tuesday, 8 August - Ferndale Gardens
- Tuesday, 15 August - Shangri-La
- Wednesday, 16 August - Fairlea
- Tuesday, 22 August - Gannon Gardens

**Nunyara:** 8 - 12 Neilson Avenue, Peakhurst

- First Tuesday of the month at 11am in the chapel

Visitors *MUST* sign in/out when visiting a care facility.

### Anointing Mass

- Saturday, 2 September at 10.30am. Followed by morning tea.

To experience, as community, the healing power of faith, prayer and the sacrament of 'Anointing of the Sick'.

## REFLECTION MORNING

- Saturday, 5 August, 10am to 12pm; in the Church. Includes morning tea.

This is an opportunity to experience some 'time-out' and catch up over a cuppa. Invitation is open to all.



## DECLAN CRAFT

**Something social & creative for those in their 40s & up...**

Stayed tuned for activities and sessions; these will be advertised in

the bulletin, website and around the church *after Easter*. Thanks for your continuous interest, involvement and support. Further information will be in the parish bulletin, on the parish website and advertising around the church.

## REFLECTIONS

### The Mystery of Giving and Receiving Spirit

There are different ways to be present or absent to each other.

For example, when Jesus is saying farewell to his



*Shine our light throughout the darkness...*

*May sadness bring laughter...*

*May loneliness bring hope & renewed friendships...*

*May tiredness bring meditation & rest...*

*May restlessness bring reflection, faith & creativity...*

*May discontent bring service, self-giving & direction...*

*We pray that the Spirit continues to breathe new life into our hearts and that, through our frailties, we bring strength and hope for others.*

*Amen.*

disciples he tries to explain to them some of the deep paradoxes inside the mystery of presence and absence.

He tells them that it is better for them that he goes away because, unless he does, he will be unable to send them his spirit. He assures them too that the heaviness and grief they will feel at his leaving is really the pain of giving birth and that this heartache will eventually turn warm and nurturing and bring them a joy that no one can ever take from them.

That is the language of Ascension and Pentecost, not just as it pertains to Jesus leaving this earth and sending his spirit, but it is also as it pertains to the mystery of giving and receiving spirit in all our goodbyes.

Among other things, it points to that perplexing experience we have where we can only fully understand and appreciate others after they go away, just as others can only fully understand us and let themselves be fully blessed by us after we go away. Like Jesus, we can only really send our spirits after we go away.

We experience this everywhere in life: A grown child has to leave home before their parents can fully understand and appreciate them for who they really are. There comes a day in a young person's life when they stand before their parents and, in whatever way, says the words: "It is better for you that I go away! Unless I go you will never really know who I am. You will have some heartache now, but that pain will eventually become warm because I will come back to you in a deeper way." Parents say the same thing to their children when they are dying.

We only really grasp the essence of another after he or she has gone away. When someone leaves us physically, we are given the chance to receive his or her presence in a deeper way.

And the pain and heartache we feel in the farewell are birth-pangs, the stretching that comes with giving new birth. When someone we love has to leave us (to go on a trip, to begin a new life, or to depart from us through death) initially that will feel painful, sometimes excruciatingly so. But when that leaving is necessitated by duty or by life itself then, no matter how hard it is, even if it is death itself that takes away our loved one, eventually he or she will come back to us in a deeper way, in a presence that is warm, nurturing, and immune to the fragility of normal relationships.

Many of us, I suspect, have experienced this in the death of someone whom we loved deeply. For me, this happened at the death of my parents. My mother and father died three months apart, when I was twenty-three years old. They were young, too young to die in my view, but death took them anyway, against my will and against theirs. Initially, their death was experienced as very painful, as bitter. My siblings and I wanted their presence in the same way as we had always had it, physical, tangible, bodily, real.

Eventually the pain of their leaving left us and we sensed that our parents were still with us, with all that was best in them, our mum and dad still, except that now their presence was deeper and less fragile than it had been when they were physically with us. They were with us now, real and nurturing, in a way that nobody and nothing can ever take away.

Our presence to each other physically, in touch, sight, and speech is no doubt the deepest wonder of in all of life, sometimes the only thing we can appreciate as real. But wonderful as that is, it is always limited and fragile. It depends upon being physically connected in some way and it is fragile in that separation (physical or emotional) can easily take someone away from us. With everyone we love and who loves us (parents, spouse, children, friends, acquaintances, colleagues), we are always just one trip, misunderstanding, accident, or heart attack away from losing their physical presence.

This was the exact heartache and fear that the disciples felt as Jesus was saying goodbye to them and that is the heartache and fear we all feel in our relationships. We can easily lose each other.

But there is a presence that cannot be taken away, that does not suffer from this fragility, that is, the spirit that comes back to us whenever, because of the some inner dictates of love and life, our loved ones have to leave us or we have to leave our loved ones. A spirit returns and it is deep and permanent and leaves a warm, joyous, and real presence that nobody can ever take from us.

**Ron Rolheiser OMI, 4 May 2008**

Visit Ron's website on [www.ronrolheiser.com/index.php](http://www.ronrolheiser.com/index.php)

## Share With Me...

"Delight in My Love. Try to live in the rapture of the Kingdom.

Claim big things. Claim great things. Claim joy and peace and freedom from care. Joy in Me.

I am your Lord, your Creator, Remember, too, that I am the same yesterday, today and for ever... Joy in Me, Trust in Me, share all Life with Me, see Me in Everything, Rejoice in Me.

Share all with Me as a child shares its cuts and pains and grief and new found treasures and joys ... with its Mother. And give me the joy of sharing all with you."

**God Calling - A Daily Devotional by Two Listeners;  
Edited by AJ Russell ©1953**

## PASTORAL CARE RECORDS & SUPPORT Visitation ministers & bereavement group...

Please contact me if there are changes within your ministry, if your visit situation has changed and if you require information and support.

Pastoral Care Records must be current and therefore continually updated.

The parish is here to support you in your ministry. We thank you for your continued care and participation.

## PRAYER

### Good Shepherd

Most loving God,  
in Jesus, who gave his life for the sheep,  
you have opened up to us  
the way of limitless life.

Help us to know Jesus, our good shepherd,  
that we may be able to recognise his voice  
among the many voices that call to us,  
and, knowing his voice,  
may we have the courage  
to follow wherever he leads us,  
that our lives may be opened  
to the limitless life  
which you offer to all your children.

This we pray in the name of our good shepherd.  
Christ Jesus our brother and Lord.

Amen.

**Australian Prayers by Bruce D Prewer**

Thank you for all your involvement and support in the pastoral life of St Declan's Parish.

Wishing you God's continuous blessings.

Yours faithfully,

Paulineke

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**Pastoral Care... responding to the needs of St Declan's Parish**

**Pastoral Care aims to provide spiritual nourishment, social interaction  
and support to parishioners who are bereaved, lonely, aged, infirmed, sick, disabled and  
are unable to take part in parish Eucharistic celebrations by:**

- involving parishioners to minister to others & share their faith
- creating a community of care
- developing a strong parish network.