



## St Michael's Catholic Parish Traralgon

**St Michael's Vision Statement:** Inspired by Jesus Christ, we are a welcoming Catholic Community seeking to enrich lives. Come and join us!

**St Michael's Mission Statement:**

To provide opportunities for parishioners –

- to grow in holiness
- to discover and live out their personal and community call to mission to live as Catholics who effectively transform society.

www.smpt.org.au

email: sec@smpt.org.au

**Statement of Commitment to the safety of children and vulnerable adults:** Central to the mission of St Michael's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children, young people and vulnerable adults and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. Please contact our Safeguarding Officers, Chris DiCorleto and Shane Reid on 0417 572 546 if you have any concerns.

### St Michael's Parish Information

**Fr Francis Otobo** Parish Priest

**Fr Ajin Albarnas IVD** Assistant Priest

Parish Centre 5174 2060

Priests' Residence: 5174 6765

**Deacon Tony Aspinall**

Phone 5174 8167

Em: deacontony8@gmail.com

**Sr Doreen Dagge RSJ** 5174 9997

**Monsignor John Allman**

O'Mara House 5174 9674

**St Michael's Parish Office** 5174 2060

35 Kay Street, Traralgon

PO Box 103, Traralgon 3844

Office hours –

Tues to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm

Parish Secretary: Bev O'Brien

Email: sec@smpt.org.au

Sacraments / Youth Jenifer Hanratty

Email: sacraments@smpt.org.au

**After office hours** - in case of an emergency please call 0448 529 712 and leave a message. All non-urgent calls should be made during office hours.

**Baptisms:** currently in abeyance

**Weddings:** currently in abeyance

**Parish Pastoral Council:** Greg Imhagwe Chairperson, Fr Francis, Sr Doreen, Lia Di Corleto, Watson Gomez, Jenifer Hanratty, Steve Kimani, Judi McLaughlin, Thomas Mathew, Amanda Reid, Kevin Taylor, Jodie Ware, Ros Joyner, Doug Doherty and Bev O'Brien.

**Our Schools:**

**St Gabriel's School** 5174 5515

Principal: Mrs Roslyn Joyner

**St Michael's School** 5174 3295

Principal: Mrs Jodie Ware

**Lavalla Catholic College** 5174 5272

Principal: Mr John Freeman

Kildare Campus 5174 8111

St Paul's Campus 5174 7355

### When we return to our parishes

*by Fr Noel Connolly RIP, Plenary Council Facilitation Team*

#### **Fr Noel Connolly wrote this article soon before his death on June 6.**

Parish life in a post-COVID world by Fr Noel Connolly SSC, Plenary Council Facilitation Team.

What will we do when we finally get back to our parishes? I don't think anyone really knows, but I suspect it will not be business as usual. For many it will be a joy to return to the Masses they have missed so much; for others it may be a little more complicated. Our lives have been turned upside down and we will have had months to think with only streamed Masses to accompany us. There is much to rethink and rebuild. There will be questions that we will only slowly come to appreciate.

That is why I believe that it is fortunate that the assemblies of the Plenary Council have been delayed. We will need time to come to grips with our new reality. Two issues which we will need to consider are the role of priests and the practice of liturgy. One thing this period of isolation has taught us is that historically we have been a too priest-centred Church and this has left us unprepared for our present reality. Even our solutions are priestcentred. We stream Masses. These can be beautiful, encouraging and nourishing, but they highlight a number of weaknesses in our Catholic practice.

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our Christian lives but, for many, it is their only way to encounter God. We have no second or third strings to our bows and lay people feel a little lost. They were not trained to lead worship either in their parishes or at home with their families. In a Church where, for most people, liturgy is not really liturgy unless they receive the Eucharist, it will require a lot of patience and catechesis to train people to share the Scriptures, to appreciate the Divine Office, to practice lectio divina and to develop family celebrations of the Word of God that will sustain them in times like these. Perhaps even today, besides streaming Masses we should also trust our people's *sensus fidei* – their instinct for God – and encourage them to find creative ways to pray. One problem with streamed Masses is that it reduces us to spectators, whereas liturgy is essentially a community event and participation is critical. Watching Mass has brought back many nourishing memories, but I wonder if when we return to our parishes we will not want to participate more.

The first two stages of the Plenary Council process have already raised significant questions about the role of priests and the involvement of laity in ministry and leadership. The coronavirus crisis should give these questions special urgency and poignancy.

*Fr Noel's letter is continued on page 3)*

<b>Sunday Mass Times</b>	
<b>Saturday</b>	4:00pm      5:30pm
<b>Sunday</b>	9:00am      10:30am
	4:00pm      5:30pm
<b>Weekday Mass Times</b>	
<b>Tuesday to Friday</b>	9:30am
<b>Attendance at Mass is limited to 20 parishioners. ATTENDANCE AT ALL MASSES MUST BE BOOKED AT THE PARISH OFFICE.</b>	

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:** We remember those who have died recently including Luz Goicoa and Barbara Durea and those whose anniversaries occur at this time including Fr John Allen, Fr Matt White, John Besselink, Joseph Zahra, Bambina Damiano, Angelo Bau, Michael Kennedy, Ken Manson and Elizabeth Jacob.

**Lord, let your perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace. Amen.**

**WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK** including Maria Alessandrini, Lee Allman, Lulu Aragon, Cath Boers, Fr Bernard Buckley, Conceicao Carvalho, Peter Dal Pra, Ann-Maree Daly, Anthony Derham, Gary Donchi, Bill Edgar, Bernadette Formaran, Fr Frank Freeman, Marj Gilbert, Carolyn Gleeson, Robert Hazelman, Imogen Hillier, Marie Howard, Joan Lamont, Peter Lont, Joyce Martin, Ivy May, Deborah McKerchar, Ben Melenhorst, Joan Quigley, Joan Riggall, Kath Ryan, Ray Smith, Jerry Templer, Julie Vaz, Brian Vivian, Celie Smith, George Walkan, and Fr Frank Young, and all those we hold dear in our hearts.



**PARISH OFFICE CLOSED:** The office will be unattended on Wednesday July 15. The office remains closed due to the pandemic restrictions. All contact needs to be made by phone (5174 2060) or email (sec@smpt.org.au). Thank you.

**TAKING COMMUNION DURING THIS PANDEMIC:** Parishioners are again reminded that we are instructed that **Communion may only be taken in the hand (not on the tongue) during this time of pandemic.** Your support and care of each other in this manner is a caring and loving response to our current situation.

**AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**  
The simple and loving act of Spiritual Communion (written by St. Alphonsus Liguori) can be made when we are unable to attend Mass and receive the Eucharist.  
Pray these words:

*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.*

## **I Don't Believe In Life After Death**

If he had lived, my father-in-law would be 101 years old this year. He was a man of extraordinary talent as well as being quietly humble with a practical wisdom born of his ability to squeeze meaning and purpose from his daily interactions and experiences. Courting his daughter was more about proving my worth as a moral being than convincing him of my love for her. There were lots of discussions about religion and purpose, the Bible and authority, right living and commitment. Pretty intimidating for a young bloke barely out of secondary school, who quickly realised he had a lot to learn about life.

During one of those heading discussions he said to me, "I don't believe in the afterlife, I **know**." Prior to the second world war he had been operated on for a brain tumour. This was done under a local anaesthetic because the surgeon needed him to respond to various probes and commands. It was delicate and difficult surgery. So difficult, in fact, that he technically died at least once on the operating table. The medical staff 'brought him back', so to speak... and he claimed with absolute surety that he no longer **believed** in life after death because he knew for a fact that such a state exists because he had one foot on the other side of death and **knew** that death was not the end. A very powerful witness to a truth we Christians all proclaim.

We are living in difficult times: bushfires, pandemics, massive unemployment, lockdowns... the list seems to go on. When the life we have known seems to be spiralling out of control and we feel so powerless, where can we turn for surety? Are my efforts and my life not important in the scheme of things? Where is God in all of this?

I once went on a men's weekend retreat right here in Gippsland. It rained all weekend but the house where we stayed was warm and cosy. One of the sessions required each of us to find a quiet spot, sit quietly and read a favourite parable putting ourselves into the story. I chose the story of The Prodigal Son. And in the warmth of a glowing wood fire I had a startling experience of the love that God has for me. Sitting in silence and thinking about the meeting of the son and the loving father, I suddenly was the son and felt the arms of Jesus embrace me and smelt the crisp freshness of his woven gown. It was only a fleeting moment of awareness but it is a time I can go back to knowing that I am loved and valued as a child of God. I no longer have to **believe** that God loves me... I **know** God loves and cares for me.

When things go pear shaped in my life, when I lose faith in people or organisations, when spiritual practices leave me hollow, when familiar symbols seem to lose their meaning... this is the very time I can recall and be open to, and gain strength from, the startling mystery of God's intimate love.

*So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. 1 John 4:16  
(with grateful thanks to one of our wonderful parishioners).*

**Fr Noel Connolly's letter** (continued from page 1)

For years now, we have experienced a shortage of priests that we have tried to solve in all kinds of ways **except** training our lay people to take more responsibility for worship and leadership. I know of no diocese where there is a concerted plan to train lay leaders and ministers to take over despite it being obvious that in around 10 years it will be the only solution.

Despite the suffering and tragedy of the COVID-19 crisis, it may still be a graced moment for us in the Australian Church. It has highlighted some important issues we do need to discern. Our isolation and the closure of our churches have given these issues special urgency. The Plenary Council provides us with the process and tools to discern and discuss and the delay in the first session gives us the time to make sense of what is presently happening to us. May the Holy Spirit be with us.



**Prayer for Bishop-elect Greg Bennet**

*Eternal God, our Shepherd and Guide*

*We bless and thank you for the appointment of your servant, Greg Bennet, as the tenth Bishop of Sale.*

*May your Holy Spirit grace him with the gifts of wisdom and strength, gentleness and compassion, as he prepares to take up his role as our pastor and teacher.*

*May he be a shepherd after your own heart, who will walk in your ways and, with loving care, watch over your people.*

*May he be a leader of vision and a teacher of your truth.*

*As Bishop-elect Bennet prepares to make his home among us, may we welcome him joyfully into our Diocesan community, now entrusted to his care and leadership.*

*May we, as the Body of Christ in the Diocese of Sale, through our work and prayer together bear witness to Christ and the building up of your kingdom.*

*We ask this through your Son Jesus Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God, for ever and ever. Amen,*

*Our Lady of Perpetual Help*                      *pray for us*  
*St Mary of the Cross MacKillop*            *pray for us.*

*Amen*

**Isolation Prayer Life, Access to Masses online/TV/:**

Keep up to date with the latest prayer resources for your communities <https://www.cdsale.org.au/news/prayer-resources-in-time-of-need>

Livestreamed Masses

<https://www.cdsale.org.au/coronavirus>

**Music and prayer for 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time.**

You are invited to pray at home with the Sunday readings with free access to the following online music and video resources

**Psalms and chants from Marist Music for this Sunday**  
[www.maristmusic.org.au/](http://www.maristmusic.org.au/) available as sheet music and audio.

**Sunday Readings and Family Prayer** – download and pray the Scriptures of the Sunday Mass and/or use the Family Prayer sheets with children. From Liturgy Brisbane <https://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/prepare/sunday-readings-and-family-prayer/> (updated weekly).

**Seeking Stillness** – 8 minute video of beautiful psalm music and Gospel meditations for 15th Sunday Ordinary Time from Gen Bryant Seeking Stillness - Playlist

**Goodness of God**

Spend some time in prayer with this beautiful song praising God's goodness.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-f4MUUMWMV4>

**Spirituality offerings**

*MelbournePrays* is an online community that brings young people together for daily prayer opportunities via YouTube and Facebook. Each day, people are invited to join in prayer with others for their own needs and the needs of the world at this time. <https://www.facebook.com/MelbournePrays>

**FINANCE MATTERS:**

*"The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word but then the cares of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit." (Matthew 13:22)*

Does the lure of riches and material goods choke God out of your life? Are you so caught up in earthly activities that you have no time for God? Gratitude and generosity are virtues that we should strive to do on a daily basis. Every decision we make either takes us one step closer to God or one step further away. What we receive at Mass every Sunday should be shared with others all the other days of the week as well.

**Rosters for Saturday July 18 & Sunday July 19, 2020**

Mass	Lector	Commentator	Usher
Sat 4:00pm	Richard Webber	Dorothy Smith	
Sat 5:30pm	Bev O'Brien	Anne Taylor	
Sun 9:00am	Cathy McLure	Carolyn McCabe	
Sun 10:30am	Theresa Denny	Lien Van der Velden	
Sun 4:00pm	Susan Grout	Margaret Noone	Judi McLaughlin
Sun 5:30pm	Belinda Purcell	Susan Luscombe	



**Entrance Antiphon** cf Ps 16:15

*As for me, in justice I shall behold your face;  
I shall be filled with the vision of your glory.*

**First Reading** Isaiah 55:10-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

*The rain makes the earth give growth.*

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

**Responsorial Psalm** Ps 64:10-14 R Lk 8:8

**(R.)** *The seed that falls on good ground  
will yield a fruitful harvest.*

1. You care for the earth, give it water,  
you fill it with riches.  
Your river in heaven brims over  
to provide its grain. **(R.)**
2. And thus you provide for the earth;  
you drench its furrows,  
you level it, soften it with showers,  
you bless its growth. **(R.)**
3. You crown the year with your goodness.  
Abundance flows in your steps,  
in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. **(R.)**
4. The hills are girded with joy,  
the meadows covered with flocks,  
the valleys are decked with wheat.  
They shout for joy, yes, they sing. **(R.)**

**Second Reading** Rom 8:18-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

*All creation is waiting for the revelation of the children of God.*

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

**Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*The seed is the word of God, Christ is the sower;  
All who come to him will live for ever.*

*Alleluia!*

**Gospel** Matthew 13:1-23

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew  
*A sower went out to sow.*

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables.

He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?' 'Because' he replied 'the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven are revealed to you, but they are not revealed to them. For anyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding. So in their case this prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled:

You will listen and listen again, but not understand, see and see again, but not perceive.

For the heart of this nation has grown coarse, their ears are dull of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, for fear they should see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their heart, and be converted and be healed by me.

'But happy are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear! I tell you solemnly, many prophets and holy men longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

'You, therefore, are to hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the evil one comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the man who received the seed on the edge of the path. The one who received it on patches of rock is the man who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy. But he has no root in him, he does not last; let some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, and he falls away at once. The one who received the seed in thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this world and the lure of riches choke the word and so he produces nothing. And the one who received the seed in rich soil is the man who hears the word and understands it; he is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'

Next week's Readings

1<sup>st</sup> Reading Wisdom 12:13 16-19

2<sup>nd</sup> reading Romasns 8:26-27

Gospel: Matthew 13:24-43