

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019

## St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta

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# St Patrick's Cathedral Annual Report

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## THE DEAN'S REPORT

This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the manned lunar landing. On July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1969 the Apollo 11 astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Michael Collins and 'Buzz' Aldrin took humanity to new heights. This event was the culmination of years of study, experimentation, testing, hard work and determination, especially in the face of numerous failures which resulted in the deaths of some of the astronauts selected for the Mercury, Gemini and Apollo programs. Without the incredible teamwork, commitment and vision of the army of people, this event would not have been a fruition. With all ventures that are instituted for the good of others, the challenges, difficulties and even failures add to the determination of those involved. What may be perceived as being haphazard efforts, with good will, combined vision and commitment can yield lasting results.

This brings to mind the relevant saying from an unknown author: ***'We may not have it all together, but together we have it all'***. In my five years as Parish Priest and Dean of St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, I never tire to be amazed and edified by the goodwill and communal and personal efforts of so many people and groups who continually provide for the pastoral, social, personal and liturgical needs of so many in our community and beyond. It is people like yourselves that allow our Parish to become a living sign of the Gospel. Our community is a testimony to what Pope Francis calls ***the missionary creativity*** the parish under the guidance of its pastor (***cf The Joy of the Gospel #28***). As we gather for our 2019 Annual General Meeting of the Parish Community we need to give thanks firstly to God for having bestowed on us so many good, faithful, generous and creative people. Secondly, we need to recognise the gifts of each other and the environment that allows those gifts to be wisely utilised.

I would like to conclude with a section from Paul's **Letter to the Ephesians [1:11-14]**. May this quote be used as a prayer for our parish community and mission:

*<sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will,<sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory.<sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit;<sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.*

**Fr Robert Bossini**

Dean and Parish Priest  
July 20<sup>th</sup> 2019



# FINANCIAL REPORT

The recently released Plenary Council 2020 theme includes a call for transparency and accountability in church management .

Accountability is not a new vocabulary for the church as scripture calls us to be liable, responsible, and answerable for our actions in life to God (Rom. 2:16; 14:2; 1 Cor. 3:10-15; 2 Cor. 5:10), as well as to key Christians in our life (John 13:34; Philip. 2:4).

As the Catholic Church in Australia prepares for Plenary Council 2020 by discerning what God is calling us to and listening to the voice of the Spirit, I present this report in the spirit of accountability and transparency and ask you, our parishioners, to discern with the parish leadership team, what God is asking of us as a parish.

## INCOME

St Patrick's Cathedral is a unique Cathedral as it is also a working parish church. Apart from being the Mother Church of the Diocese of Parramatta it is also a parish church for the city suburb of Parramatta. In simplest terms, this means that the Cathedral is not only the spiritual home for the local people of Parramatta but for their brothers and sisters in the Diocese of Parramatta.

While this difference is not a concern for most people, the distinction is important in the way the Cathedral resources are utilised and especially its financial resources. For this reason, the Cathedral parish leadership team have always worked closely with the management team of the Diocese of Parramatta .

We are very grateful to the many parishioners who support their parish through the planned giving program. The main income of the Cathedral parish

comes from the second collection which is taken up every Sunday. The second collection makes up 60% of the total Cathedral parish income. Other Cathedral income includes hall hire, weddings, votive candles, fundraising and donations through bequests.

In comparison with the 2017-2018 financial year, this year saw a big drop in the second collection . There was a 10% decrease in both the envelope planned giving contribution and the non envelope or loose collection. The drop in collection does not reflect a drop in Mass attendance as the Cathedral Masses are well attended on weekends as well as on weekdays. Recently, weekday Masses were moved from the Blessed Sacrament Chapel to the Cathedral due to the increasing number of people that attend Mass daily. The Increase in Mass attendance may have contributed to the 20% increase in votive candle income.

The Cathedral Giftshop was opened in December 2018 and its financial potential is yet to be realised. However, it is attracting customers from around the Diocese and is becoming a popular shop for purchasing religious gifts.

The Cathedral and the Cloister Function Rooms are also a popular venue for weddings and other non liturgical functions. The Cathedral Function Rooms are the current venue for the City of Parramatta Council Meetings and this will be still the case for the 2020 calendar year.

Apart from income raised by the parish, the Diocese of Parramatta gives the Cathedral parish a grant of \$375 000 a year . The grant is allocated by the Diocese to be distributed as follows:

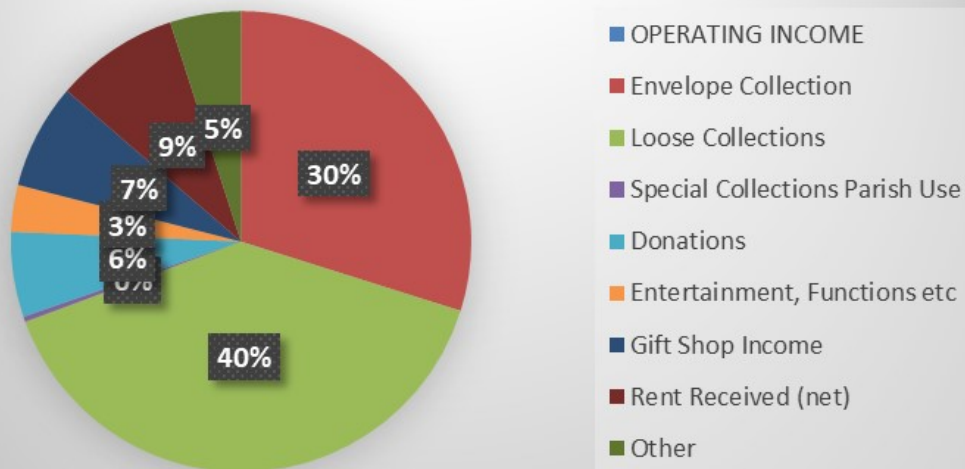
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### Diocese of Parramatta Cathedral Grant Distribution

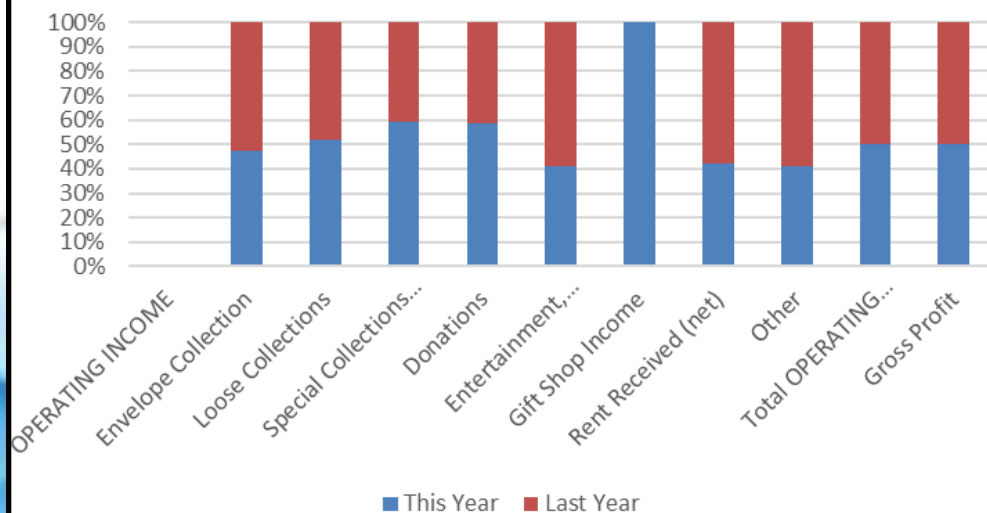
	Year Total
Grant Allocation	
Insurance Grant - Diocese	\$65,000
Repairs & Maintenance Reimbursement - Diocese	\$138,000
Electricity & Gas	\$36,000
Music Ministry Reimbursement	\$136,000
Total of DIOCESAN GRANT	\$375,000

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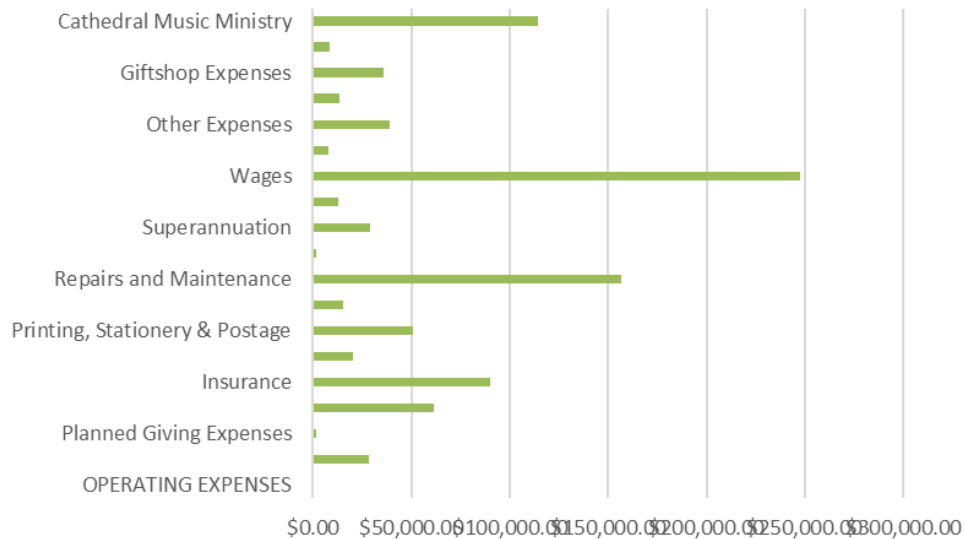
## 2018-2019 FY



## Income Comparison 2018-2019 FY vs 2017-2018 FY



## Expenses 2018-2019 FY



## EXPENSES

The major expenses for the Cathedral parish in the last financial year has been wages. The Cathedral hired a Youth Coordinator as well as a new Liturgy Coordinator in the last year. The Youth Coordinator has been instrumental in growing and sustaining our three youth groups — Junior Credo, TeenCredo and Credo Young Adults. The Liturgy Coordinator looked after the sacristy and preparation for parish as well as Diocesan liturgies.

Given the decrease in parish income, the parish leadership team have restructured the Cathedral Staff and have made four positions redundant to alleviate financial stress on the parish. These positions are Event Coordinator, Youth Coordinator, Liturgy Coordinator and Groundsman. The roles of Youth Coordinator and Liturgy Coordinator are now being performed by the Assistant Priest of the Cathedral while the other two roles are currently being managed by the Finance Administrator.

Apart from the day to day cost of running the Cathedral and day to day service to those who need our help, the Cathedral parish hosted the following events last financial year and supported the following work of the Church:

### Appeals:

- Jesuit Refugee Services Christmas Appeal
- Jesuit Refugee Services Lenten Appeal
- Catholic Mission Annual Appeal
- Project Compassion Lenten Appeal
- Good Friday Appeal for the Holy Land
- Catholic Foundation Diocese of Parramatta
- Father's Day Appeal

### Events:

- Red Mass— Opening of the Law Year
- St Patrick's Day
- Installation of the Indigenous Memorial Plaque
- Installation of stand for Our Lady Help of Christian's
- Christmas Carolling Night
- Thank You Dinner for Volunteers
- Mother's Day Concert
- Dialogue with the Muslim Community
- Support four Pilgrims to WYD 2019
- Light Up St Pat's.



Despite a tight financial budget, the parish has never hesitated to stretch its hands to promote and contribute to Catholic social justice ideals as well as stepping out of the comfort of its parish boundary to advance the mission of the Catholic Church. As Fr Bob quoted, 'We may not have it all together, but together we have it all'. As we look towards 2020 let us listen attentively to what the Spirit is saying so we may hear what God is asking of us as a parish. Let us not focus too much on how little we have but on how we can share our blessings that other may also be blessed.



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## PRINCIPAL

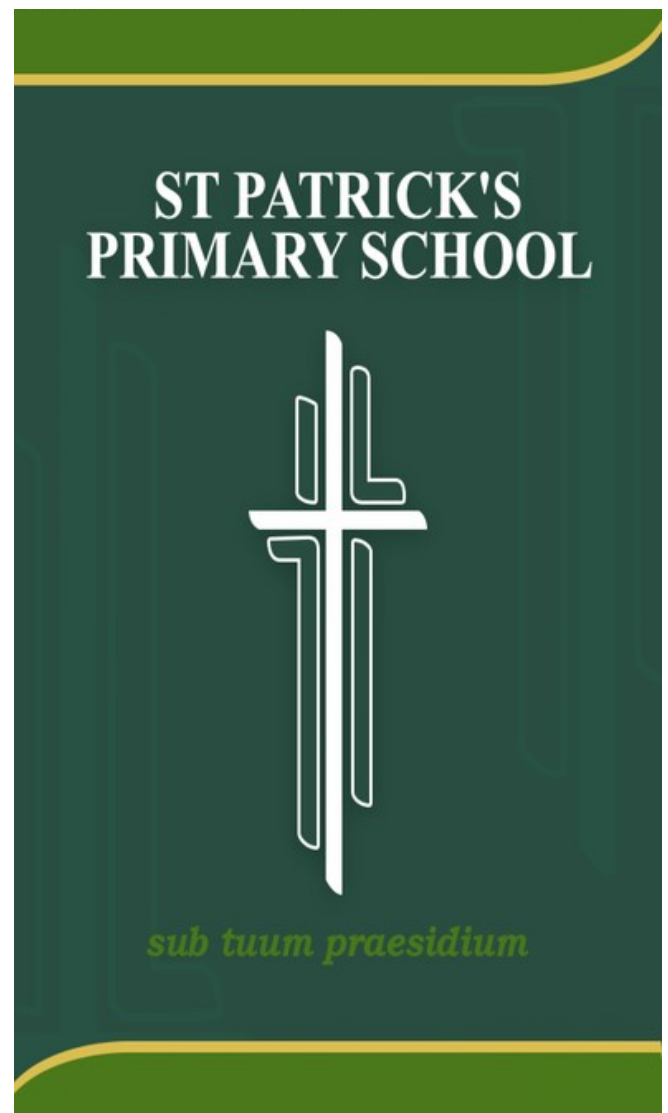
### ST PATRICK'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### Annual General Meeting School Report 2019

My name is Bernadette Fabri and I am the principal of St Patrick's Primary School Parramatta. This is my 6th year in this role and I would like to say that it is an honour to be principal of such a dynamic faith and learning community with wonderfully well behaved and motivated students. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their dedication and care of the children and their commitment to professional learning. St Patrick's Primary School Parramatta is a primary school with enrolment numbers spanning 410 to 418 students, ranging from four and a half years to twelve years of age. Once again the school's current enrolment is very strong with over 90 applications for 62 positions for Kindergarten 2020. Next year's intake will have 35 siblings. The majority of the school's enrolments from Kindergarten to Year 6 come from residents of Parramatta and surrounding local areas. Most families align themselves with St Patrick's Cathedral parish with some families coming from Our Lady of Lebanon Co Cathedral Harris Park and other local parishes. Most of our graduating students progress on to Catholic high schools – Catherine McAuley Westmead, St Patrick's Dundas, Marist Bros Westmead and Our Lady of Mercy College Parramatta. The school values the close association with the parish, and our priests and parish staff are always very welcome at the school. I would like to thank the Dean and Parish Priest of the Cathedral, Rev Father Bob Bossini, for his ongoing support of the staff and for his inspirational leadership of our community. Thank you also to Father Chris del Rosario and the members of the Parish Sacramental Committee for the wonderful work they do at the school and in leading families in the preparation of the sacraments.

Religious Education is a key component in every aspect of St Patrick's and the educational curriculum presented.

Religious Education lessons are taught daily and sacramental, liturgical and prayer experiences are offered





regularly. Catholic Values are embedded in all subject areas. The Religious Education Curriculum is one of our key learning areas and we are currently developing and trialling the new Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) Religious Education Framework. Connection with our Mercy tradition through the study of the work of Catherine McAuley and the history involving the Sisters of Mercy is very important to the school. The Angelus is said every day and there is a special school prayer and a concluding prayer, said at the end of each day. Children lead the community in prayer every morning and children are encouraged to write prayers to be read at this assembly. Our school values are: Respect, Resilience and Compassion and it is our aim that we continue to strengthen these aspects within the culture of the school.

The school community participates in a number of whole school masses and with the primary grades rostered to attend parish masses weekly. Fathers Bob and Chris are rostered to visit the school weekly, where possible, to hear reconciliation and to speak to children in their classes. Mindy Mercado has also been a regular visitor over the past year, in her capacity as Youth Coordinator.

As Principal I am an ex-officio member of the Parish Pastoral Council and attend the meetings regularly where I present a school report. Our Religious Education Coordinator, Mrs Leanda Standing, serves as another link between the school and the parish in their involvement in the Parish Sacramental Programs.

The school's current strategic plans involve: the development and trial of the new Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) Religious Education Curriculum, the continual implementation and refinement of Inquiry Based Learning strategies, the study and use of effective forms of assessment and feedback to inform learning and to empower learners to set, monitor and implement their own learning goals and the continued professional learning in the areas of Literacy and Numeracy. School results in NAPLAN are usually above the national average and we are currently awaiting this year's results to further assist teachers to cater for student needs.

This year the CEDP funded a number of minor works including: the laying of new carpets right throughout the school, new artificial turf and lovely new toilets. I would like to thank the Office for these invaluable additions to our school.

In conclusion, the school continues to recognize the critical role the family plays in the faith development and education of their children and the important role the school plays, in conjunction with the parish, in supporting

families. A question I often ask is, 'what does it mean to be a Catholic School and how are we different?' The answer to this question, I believe, needs to be obvious when you enter the doors or gates of the school. At St Patrick's Parramatta we strive to develop a school community where:

- people are welcomed and treated with dignity and respect,
- there is a spirit of hope and endless possibility,
- there is a spirit of reconciliation,
- communication is honest and empowering,
- every child feels that they are known and understood and loved,
- students come to know an ever loving and ever forgiving God, through the people that they meet on a daily basis,
- students get a sense that learning is not just for themselves but so that they can contribute to our world in many and profound ways and reflective of a Catholic worldview,
- students' association with the school enables them to understand that they also belong to a wider community, a Parish Community, an Australian Catholic Community, a world wide Church, and
- finally where they will always feel a sense of belonging, way beyond their primary school years, so that when they grow up they will say, "I want to send my children to this school." Then we can say we are on the right track.

This is our vision.

For more information about the school, including the Annual School Report, please visit the school's website at <http://www.stpatsparra.catholic.edu.au/>

## **Bernadette Fabri**

*Principal*

*St Patrick's Primary School Parramatta*





## PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Parish Pastoral Council committee consists of the following persons:

- Fr Bob Bossini, Dean and Parish Priest, PPC Formation Leader.
- Fr Chris del Rosario, Assistant Parish Priest, Liturgy and Youth Ministry Representative.
- Ms Bernadette Fabri, Principal St Patrick's Primary School.
- Meg Gale, Parish Sacramental Coordinator.
- Mindy Mercado, Diocesan Youth Initiatives Team (Deanery Ambassador & Youth Council).
- Naomi Mazzitelli, Chairperson.
- Alan D'Souza, Marietta Guillema, Sesilia Loto'aniu, George Manassa, Charlotte Pinto and Marian Polizzi; Council Members.

The committee meets on the first Tuesday of every second month for approximately two hours. We talk about ways in which the Parish can move forward both spiritually and socially. An integral part of our meeting is the discussion on Formation. This year we are focusing on Vatican 11's "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity" and their importance in the growth and evangelization of our faith and Church, especially in these modern and socially challenging times.

We hear from the Liturgy, Sacramental and Youth Teams as well as what's happening at St. Patrick's Primary School and within the Diocese. We are involved in many aspects of the Parish socially including this year's hugely successful Light up St. Pat's Festival; and two of our members, Marian Polizzi and Bob Edgar (now retired) were instrumental in getting the "Welcome to Country" Plaque designed and installed. Sadly, our Secretary Nitesh Lal has had to resign from the committee however he is still a busy and enthusiastic worker at many Parish functions.

The 2018-2019 year has been a busy and rewarding one for the PPC and I'm confident that next year will be equally as fulfilling through the committee's dedication and willingness to be a part of such a wonderful Parish as St Patrick's.

### Naomi Mazzitelli

*Chairperson*







sacrament@stpats



# SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION PROGRAM

## Purpose:

At the outset of this report we would like to take an opportunity to reflect why we, as a Sacramental Team, are here and what our purpose is. In reflecting on this and looking for an answer to this question the *Diocese of Parramatta Policy on Sacraments of Initiation* came to mind. The following words from that document seem to truly capture what the purpose of the sacramental program is, which is: "...to give our children and their families the best possible experience of initiation into God's family and every encouragement to see that initiation through, in a life lived in faith, hope and love." Through the help and guidance of God and Our Blessed Mother, this is what we work for and hope to achieve through the Sacraments of Initiation program here at St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Parramatta.

## Age Requirements:

Eucharist: 7yrs or older

Confirmation: 10yrs or older

## Numbers:

In this past year we have been blessed to be able to continue to nurture and grow our working relationship with St Oliver's, Harris Park and, so, participants from St Oliver's continue to attend the formation sessions held in St Patrick's Cathedral Hall. For their part, St Oliver's Parish has brought a valuable contribution of speakers who have presented at our sessions. Please note that the numbers below reflect the ongoing collaboration of our parishes.

The numbers for August 2018-August 2019 for each sacrament and parish are as follows:

### RECONCILIATION: 71

St Patrick's: 50

St Oliver's: 21



### EUCCHARIST: 69

St Patrick's: 49

St Oliver's: 20



### CONFIRMATION: 38

St Patrick's: 30

St Oliver's: 8



## Team:

Here at St Patrick's Cathedral we are truly blessed with a team dedicated to bringing quality learning to the children participating throughout the sacramental program. Our team includes our two priests, Fr Bob and Fr Chris, as well as representatives of our parish community, our parish youth group, St Patrick's primary school and also St Oliver's Parish at Harris Park. Most of the team members have a background in education or currently work professionally in this field and so the program is greatly enriched through the many skills and vast experience they bring. The support of the RECs from both St Patrick's and St Oliver's primary schools is significant throughout the program and the parish works closely with the schools to nurture the faith in our young parishioners as they prepare for the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.

## Formation and Planning:

Members of the Sacraments of Initiation team regularly attend the training days and coordinator/team meetings held through the Diocesan Office for Worship. These meetings are important for our ongoing commitment to best practice and to ensure our team continues to offer updated teaching methods as well as the latest resources to the children and their parents participating in the program.



Since the start of this year, in addition to the formation offered through OFW, we now have regular team planning meetings. These meetings are held once every school term and have provided the team with the platform needed for reviewing past sessions and engaging in reflective planning for upcoming sessions, two activities which are crucial for ongoing improvement.

### Program:

Here at St Patrick's we use the official Sacraments of Initiation program recommended by the Diocese; we are closely guided by the team from the Office for Worship and utilize the materials which OFW has created specifically for preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation within the Diocese of Parramatta.

Guided by Diocesan policy we, as the Sacraments of Initiation team, "support the home by providing a more systematic catechesis through parish-based, family-centred, school-supported programs of sacramental preparation." (*Diocese of Parramatta Policy on Sacraments of Initiation*). The preparation for each sacrament consists of at least two parent formation evenings followed by two child/parent afternoon sessions. The important role of the parents and the family in preparing their child for the sacrament is reiterated throughout the formation process and attendance is mandatory for all of the preparation sessions.

The sacramental program runs on a yearly rotation and is held to coincide with the school terms. The two main phases in the preparation process are as follows:

#### First Eucharist

Preparation for First Eucharist is held over three terms and starts with preparation for the sacrament of Reconciliation. In Term 4 the children commence their preparation for this sacrament, which is usually held in December before school breaks for the Christmas holidays. This is also usually during the season of Advent and serves as a good way for us to remind the children that this is a time of preparation and repentance as we look forward to welcoming Jesus at Christmas.

After the summer break the program re-commences in Term 1 with a segment called 'Reflecting on Baptism'



which is crucial to help the children who are participating in the Sacraments of Initiation program come to understand this sacrament and its place as the very first sacrament by which they became a member of God's family. In Term 2 the focus is on the Eucharist as the children get ready for First Eucharist which is usually held on the feast of Corpus Christi.

#### Confirmation

The next phase of the Sacraments of Initiation program commences in school Term 3 with preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Sometimes referred to as "the sacrament of Christian maturity" (CCC 1308) this final sacrament for the full initiation of children into the faith gives us all – children, parents and team, alike – a chance to reflect and remember how as Catholics we are called to witness to Christ in every moment of our lives.

In conclusion, the team would like to thank the parish community for their support throughout this past year and their ongoing prayers for our ministry and the children participating in The Sacraments of Initiation program.

### Meg Gale

Coordinator : Sacraments of Initiation



## BAPTISM

*Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (vitae spiritualis ianua), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments.*

*(Catechism of the Catholic Church)*

As the Cathedral Parish of the Diocese of Parramatta, we are often inundated with requests for the sacrament of baptism. For the year ending 2018, **94 Baptisms** were held at St Patrick's Cathedral. Of these, 6 were baptised as adults who were part of our RCIA (Rite to Christian Initiation of Adults) program.

A large proportion of parents who request baptism for their child/children have had an affiliation with St Patrick's over the years; either attending St Pat's Primary, married at the Cathedral or children or grandchildren of parishioners.

Baptisms are celebrated on Sundays in the Cathedral and there are usually a maximum of four children per Sunday. Parents are encouraged to book at least two to three months ahead for their child's baptism to ensure the date they prefer. The criteria for Baptism is:

- parents must attend the Baptism Preparation Seminar, held on the third Saturday of the month;
- one parent must be Catholic; and
- one Godparent must have received the Sacrament of Confirmation and provide a copy of their certificate.

**Patricia Preca**

*Parish Secretary*





## MARRIAGE

In the last year, 18 marriages have taken place at St Patrick's. This number is down 25% from the previous year.

The couples go through a process starting with an interview and gathering of information with an office staff member. They then make arrangements to attend a Pre-Marriage Preparation program, run by Marriage, Education Support and Enrichment. This course will be made available on-line to cater for those who cannot attend in person. An interview with the priest either before or after the preparation program is required.

The Blessed Sacrament Chapel is most popular amongst couples especially if the guests number less than 100.

*“Love that leads to marriage is a gift from God and a great act of faith toward other human beings.”*

*(St John Paull II)*

**Patricia Preca**

*Parish Secretary*



## SPECIAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

For our Special Religious Educators (SREs) sharing our faith and love of God with the children attending the State Schools in our care is less than a task but more of a passion where children are encouraged to see themselves as inherently good, full of potential and capable of being a force for good in our world.

At the end of 2018 we had a very successful recruitment campaign and now have four provisional SREs studying the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) Level 1 Training Course. In addition to these new SREs several others are undertaking Level 1 or 2 as Refresher Courses.

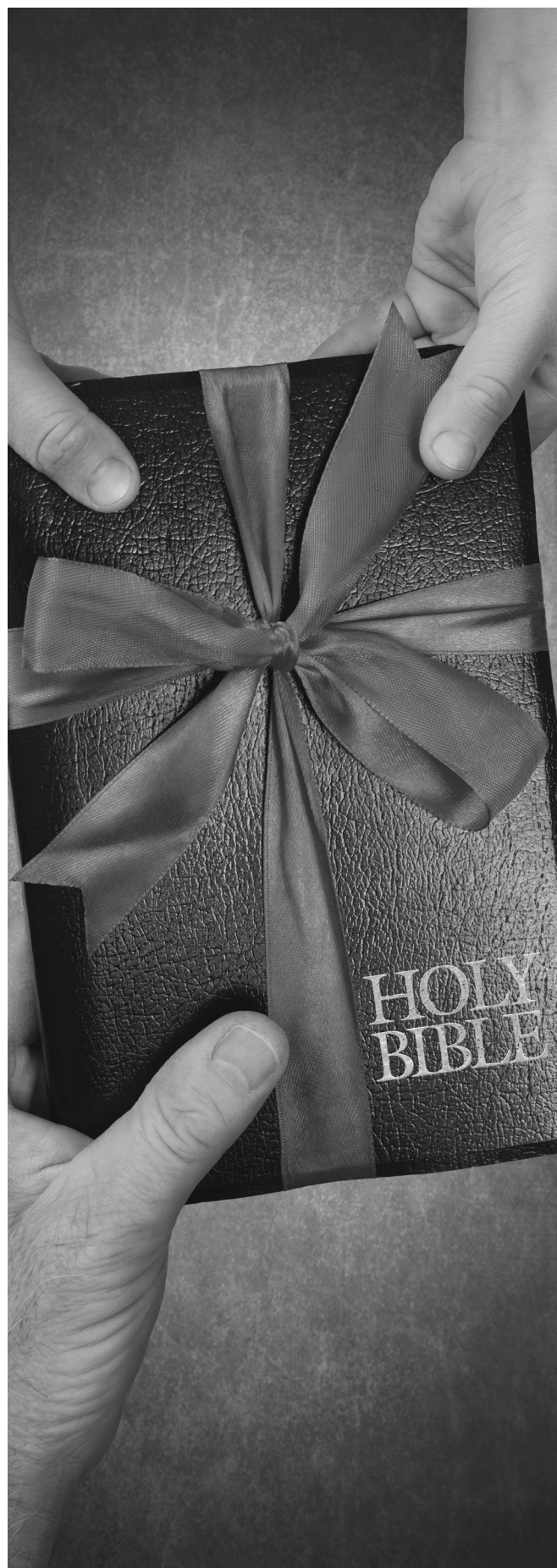
Regretfully we have also farewelled several SREs who have found it necessary to leave the Ministry. We thank them for all they have given to the children throughout a long and fruitful Ministry. May God bless them always.

At the moment we have twenty three class teachers and two others who can fill in when the need arises. It may seem a lot but we still have several SREs taking more than one class each week. With the separation of Parramatta P.S. and O'Connell St P.S. next year there will be more demands on our time.

We have attended both our Regional and Diocesan Masses during the year. This year we were fortunate to have our Regional Mass here at St Patrick's. Thank you Father Bob. At this Mass several of our SREs received Award Certificates for five or ten years of service, or completion of the CCD Level 1 or 2 Training Course.

We greatly appreciate the support we receive from Father Bob and the Parish Team and thank them for all the assistance they have given us throughout the year.

As well as Training Courses CCD offers a series of Reflections and Workshops. These help us along our faith journey as well as giving more practical aspects of ways to enthusiastically impart 'the Good News of Jesus' to the children in our care.



We have four meetings a year, at the beginning of each term. A new innovation this year is to have an evening meeting as well as the morning meeting which has been our usual norm. This has proved beneficial as it means that our SREs who work during the day are able to come and network with their peers.

We always have a 'Positions Vacant' sign out and pray that more parishioners will volunteer to become an SRE. It is a very rewarding Ministry. For more details about this Ministry, how it works, and how you could become involved please contact the Parish Office.

#### **Thank you to all our wonderful SREs**

Please pray for us and the children we teach that we continue to be blessed as we help them to a greater and more faith-filled understanding of the teaching of Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

**Pamela Bain**

*Parish Special Religious Education Coordinator*









# CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Children's Liturgy allows the children of the parish to be involved in their own special group in a smaller and more inclusive environment and to have the Gospel explained to them in a simplified form. They are made aware of Christian values and encouraged to follow these in their daily life.

We are always looking at Children's Liturgy from different perspectives – from the children, the leaders, the parents and the priests.

## From a Parent's Perspective

"Mass can be boring ----for a 4-5 year old. My son Aaron was quite placid as a child but that used to change drastically a few minutes into the celebration. Suddenly I had a restless kid wanting to get out.

The Children's Liturgy was firstly an escape to him and a relief to my wife and me. Then slowly I began to see so much value in this approach. I've witnessed how the interactive and often fun sessions helped present the gospel message to young minds. The glee on his face when he returned from these sessions sometimes with a piece of paper with a drawing on it was just great. He treasured his reward long after Mass was over. The whole idea of the kids walking in procession and getting blessed by the celebrant sends a message to the children. You are special and in turn the gospel message is special.

I like to think the Children's Liturgy was a defining factor in Aaron wanting to take an active part in the celebration of the Eucharist . He is now 12 years of age and often serves at Mass.

The valuable work being put in by the teacher volunteers at the Children's Liturgy cannot be underestimated. Thank you to all involved. You are demystifying the Gospel and that goes a long way in helping the church and us Parents teach our kids life's biggest lesson. Jesus comes first.

Keep up the evangelism.

Happy Parent

Brian Neroy







### From a Dean's Perspective

***Catechesis is a proclamation of the word and is always centred on that word, yet it also demands a suitable environment and an attractive presentation, the use of eloquent symbols, insertion into a broader growth process and the integration of every dimension of the person within a communal journey of hearing and response.*** Pope Francis speaks these words in his Apostolic Exhortation: *Evangelii Gaudium* [The Joy of the Gospel] #166. His statement that catechesis is a 'proclamation of the word...that demands a suitable environment' highlights the importance of the ministry of Children's Liturgy. In our Parish community a dedicated group of parishioners enable this 'suitable environment' to be part of the formation of our children. At each 9.30am Mass during the Sundays within the school term, our children are allowed the opportunity to break open the Scriptures and to be formed by these words. Our children pray, listen and participate in activities based on the Sunday readings. They are sent forth at the beginning of the Sunday Mass with their catechists and return during the presentation of the gifts. This is a

valuable ministry within our Parish, one that can often go unnoticed, but which is essential for the formation of our children in the faith. It is part of the 'communal journey of hearing and responding to the faith that makes up the pastoral ministries within our Parish community. I ask that you keep our children and their catechists in your prayers as they involve themselves in this important ministry.

**Fr Bob Bossini**  
**Dean & Parish Priest**

*Thanks so much to Brian and Father Bob for their input. Thanks also to our valuable leaders who give up their time willingly to help make the Gospel message more meaningful to the children. We are an ever changing group and would love to welcome new members. Just come along to any 9:30 mass during school terms to see if Children's Liturgy is something you would like to be involved in.*

*Please contact the Parish office if you would like any information on how you can participate in this valuable ministry.*



## MUSIC MINISTRY

Sacred music has always played an important part in the life of the Catholic Church and its worship since apostolic times when St. Paul exhorted the early Christians to *"Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord"* (Ephesians 5: 18, 19), and again, *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly [...] as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."* (Colossians 3: 16)

This theme has been reiterated over and over throughout the ages, including during the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) which stated that:

*"The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as a combination of sacred music and words, it forms a necessary or integral part of solemn liturgy"* (Sacrosanctum Concilium, no. 112).

The Catechism of the Catholic Church elaborates further, teaching us that:

*Song and music fulfil their function as signs in a manner all the more significant when they are "more closely connected . . . with the liturgical action," according to three principal*

*criteria: [i] beauty expressive of prayer, [ii] the unanimous participation of the assembly at the designated moments, and [iii] the solemn character of the celebration. In this way they participate in the purpose of the liturgical words and actions: the glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful. (CCC para 1157)*

Such statements certainly place a significant responsibility on the musicians in our churches, let alone in the cathedral church of the diocese, which as the bishop's church has an obligation to ensure we live up to the expectations of the council's vision of serving the people of God with beautiful music which enables them to give glory to God and be made holy by the action of the sacred liturgy.

At St. Patrick's we strive to fulfil this obligation of musical service and are blessed to have a strong and vibrant music tradition today, building on the hard work of the musical pioneers dating as far back as the 1820s. Delving into the history of the parish is revealing. Records from 1841 even report prisoners singing at the first High Mass, accompanied by a small pipe organ and "fine lady singers". The arrival of the Sisters of Mercy in 1881 ensured further developments with instrumental ensembles being added to the music at the Missa Cantata or High Mass which was a weekly



feature of parish life well into the 1950s. In the 1980s the tradition of the choral Mass was re-established under Mr Robert Beazley and continues to flourish today at the 11am Solemn Mass each week, accompanied by the cathedral's magnificent 1898 pipe organ.

As the Cathedral parish has grown, and the number of liturgies with it, music is now provided at Sunday Masses at 6.00pm Vigil, 9.30am, 11.00am Solemn Sung Mass and 6.00pm evening. Music is also provided for Solemnities of the Lord celebrated during the year at 12.30pm weekday Mass and the evening Solemn Masses for Ash Wednesday, Assumption of Blessed Virgin Mary and the Commemoration of All Souls. Cathedral musicians also provide music for weddings, funerals and other occasional liturgical events, in particular the celebration of the Divine Office, (Liturgy of the Hours), which forms the basis of special liturgies such as the Office of Tenebrae (during Holy Week), and Solemn Vespers (sung Evening Prayer of the Church) on certain Diocesan days of celebration.

Currently the team of musicians at St. Patrick's includes myself as Director of Music, assisted by a growing number of assistant organists, namely Michael Taylor, Timothy Coorey, Alexander Stevens, and Eric Grella. This year our Junior Organ Scholar, Patrick Newman (Year 12 Parramatta Marist) commenced playing the organ in his own right at 9.30am Masses. A team of dedicated cantors lead the singing at the 6.00pm Vigil, 9.00am, 6.00pm and other liturgies and include Danny Dingle, Jessica Kelly, Eleanor Taig, Belinda Bugo, Mili Lee, Martin Hartley, Ezra Kuhn, Johanne Perera, Krishmalie Perera and Ivy Wallace. Long time cantors Leonia Kim and John Paul Turner have since retired from duty, and are thanked for their loyal and talented service over many years.

St. Patrick's Cathedral Choir continues to perform strongly with a mix of approximately 36 male & female voices – 12 choral positions are provided by the Diocese and private benefactors, supporting and providing opportunities for young catholic musicians to learn the skills needed for liturgical music ministry. Membership enquiries for the choir have continued to remain strong especially among older youth and young adults, even with the obligatory attendance at weekly choir rehearsal each Wednesday and attendance at the Solemn Mass each Sunday and as scheduled. A number of talented young choristers joined the ranks of the choir including Detine Moyi (Year 8, Ryde Sec.), Rhiannon Athaide (Year 10, OLMC), Cameron McAuley (1<sup>st</sup> Yr, Macquarie Uni),





Guada Tamayo (2<sup>nd</sup> Yr UNSW), Lucy Smith (3<sup>rd</sup> Yr Campion College). I also acknowledge the excellent work of Bianca Thio in supporting the choir in the demanding role of choir librarian.

**Liturgical Music Repertoire:** At most of the cathedral liturgies, the core repertoire is drawn mainly from traditional styles of sacred music, ranging from Gregorian chant and choral polyphony from the “treasury of sacred music” across the ages, to more contemporary compositions. In this day and age where our churches are inundated with unlimited “pop” music options, care is taken to ensure that selections are made that are faithful to Catholic theology and belief, and are congruous with our ritual and sacramental traditions. Congregational participation in the singing of the assembly chants, hymns and responses is strongly encouraged, and supported by the cantors and choir and accompanists. The choir has the additional task of embellishing the assembly singing, as well as adding its own repertoire of choral renditions in keeping with traditional catholic practice. Hymns are primarily selected from the Catholic Worship Book II, which is the official music resource for the Catholic Church in Australia. Music is principally sung in English, however, the custom of singing occasional chants and songs in the Latin language is retained in the cathedral church, and is fitting given that it is (still) the universal language and mother tongue of the Roman liturgy, and sits well in the context of a very multi-lingual parish and diocese.

A number of other groups within the parish also make musical contributions. These include the Credo Youth who perform on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Music group co-ordinated by Genevieve Lee and Mindy Mercado. Collaboration with the RCIA team and St. Patrick’s Primary School continues to see the participation of the primary school choir and musicians at the parish First Holy Communion Masses and Confirmations. St. Patrick’s Cathedral also has an active inter-action with the Diocesan Performing Arts Unit – “Captivate” - collaborating with young musicians from around the diocese to integrate liturgical music with the instrumental and performance skills they are developing through this unique CEO educational program. The Tongan Choir, led by Sefo Apikotoa continues their long standing and ongoing commitment to the 9.30am Mass on the 4th Sunday of each month, and is most appreciated by cathedral parishioners for their unique cultural contribution.

2019 saw the arrival of two newly ordained clergy, Fr. Christopher Del Rosario, newly ordained in 2018, and Permanent Deacon Rod Pirotta. As a former student,

whom I taught in the Seminary of the Holy Spirit, Fr. Chris has excelled in implementing his newly learnt liturgical musical skills in the cathedral liturgies. It’s quite something when the youngest newly ordained priest in the country steps forward and takes the part of Jesus in the Chanting of the Passion on Good Friday. Deacon Rod has also made excellent progress in learning the chants proper to the Diaconate, and has already mastered chanting the gospel on solemn feasts. In welcoming Deacon Rod, I also acknowledge the departure of Deacon Willy Limjap, whose presence will be missed.

Amongst the many musical activities which took place, highlights for 2018-2019 include:

#### **Some Highlights of the last year include:**

Holy Week Liturgies – especially “Tenebrae” – psalm singing, scripture reflection and polyphonic responsories were sung magnificently by the Cathedral choral scholars; and Good Friday Solemn Commemoration – especially the enthusiastic and fervent congregational chanting of the Passional according to John;

July: Light Up St. Pat’s: Organ recitals showcasing the cathedral Grand Organ for visitors to this annual open-venue event.

Nov 2, 2018 – All Souls Day: The annual Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated by the Dean, Fr. Bob Bossini and SPC choir, with families of the deceased buried from the cathedral during that year attending.

November 30<sup>th</sup> 2018 (St. Andrew’s Day): Ordination to the Priesthood of Frs. Galbert Albino, Jesse Balorio Jack Green and Christopher Del Rosario. Music included the inaugural performance by the cathedral choir of a beautiful Mass setting by Malcolm Archer, “Missa Omnes Sancti”.

February 2019 - Inaugural “Red Mass” with members of the legal fraternity, judges and lawyers, to mark the opening of the Legal Year.

May 29, 2019 – Month of Mary, Concert in honour of Our Lady, presented by SPC Choir members and instrumentalists, co-ordinated by Ivy Wallace. Music featured cathedral singers and friends presenting female vocal group, male vocal group and combined voices, with violins, cello, keyboard and organ. Mothers were given a special blessing by Fr. Chris.

June – music presentation by a number of cathedral singers (Bernard, Bianca, Ivy, Sam) at the IFTA dinner to mark the end of Ramadan. This event is hosted by the Bishop of Parramatta and was an opportunity to showcase and share some of our catholic music tradition amidst and inter-faith context.

### **Concert Highlights:**

The public profile of St. Patrick's as a venue for fine concert performances continues to grow and attract strong audiences. This year, a newcomer to the cathedral concerts was the Bach Society which presented a number of Bach Cantatas with a splendid choir and orchestra.

Other annual performances include the *Noél! Noél!* Christmas concert by the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra, and performances by Sydney Philharmonia Choirs. Such performances make a significant financial contribution to the cathedral for the use of our facilities.

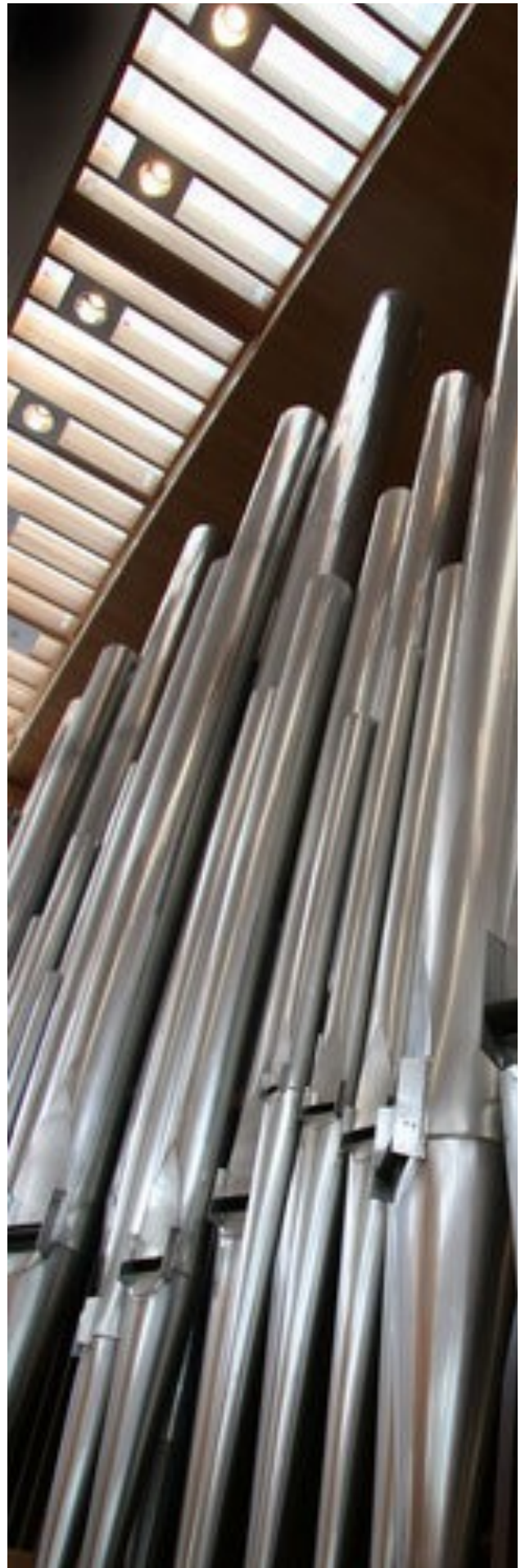
### **Conclusion:**

As Music Director, I extend my thanks to all who assist in the music ministry at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta, as mentioned above. My thanks also go to Bishop Vincent Long van Nguyen, Dean Robert Bossini and clergy of the parish for the continuing support they provide in presiding at liturgy. Grateful thanks to Benefactors and sponsors who assist with financial support, and finally, a very special thanks goes to all parishioners of the cathedral who so warmly embrace our music ministers and who enthusiastically participate in the assembly's music, as we all give glory to God, who blesses us so that we may sing his continuing praises and endless mercies.



*Yours in service,  
Bernard Kirkpatrick,  
Director of Music.*

*25 July, Feast of St. James the Apostle*





# CREDO YOUTH MINISTRIES

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Credo Youth Ministries is the body of youth groups of St. Patrick's Cathedral – Junior Credo – for primary aged children, Teen Credo – for high school aged youth and Credo Young Adults – for young adults 18 – 35 years.

Credo, meaning, *I believe*, aims to bring young people closer to their Catholic faith through community, fun and friendship. Each group is facilitated by youth and young adult volunteers under the guidance of Catholic Youth Parramatta (Parramatta Diocese), the parish priest and the parish youth coordinator.

Over the past year, the group has been involved in continual formation in their faith as well as building community and relationships through social events. This coming October, Credo will be approaching its 6<sup>th</sup> year.

## Junior Credo

Junior Credo, for primary school aged students, meet fortnightly on Fridays during the school term. This group has been led by young adult and primary school teacher, Melissa and Teen Credo youth, Olana and Rachel. The program over the past year has been based on the Lifeteen 'Edge' program and events and occasions in the liturgical year.

Some of the topics the children have explored over the past year have included: The Holy Spirit – its meaning and significance, The saints and how their lives are examples of how to live a faith filled life, Advent and notion of "waiting", Saint Patrick, The Season of Lent, The Season of Easter, Mary the Mother of Jesus and our Heavenly Mother, The Rosary, Faith filled Friendships, the Creed. Over the past year, the relationships between the children and their families have grown and have developed in a greater involvement in the parish community through leading the singing in the parish Carols evening, assisting in the Christmas Children's Liturgy, leading this year's Stations of the Cross and assisting in the monthly youth mass.

## Teen Credo and Credo Young Adults

Towards the second half of 2018, the regularity of Teen Credo meetings had moved into attending and participating in Diocesan youth events. Since the beginning of this year, Teen Credo and Credo Young Adults have merged into one large group.

The groups meet every 1<sup>st</sup> Friday of the month beginning with leading Adoration followed by a talk or exploration of a topic. These have included: The Rosary by Tony Mattar, attending the





Institute for Mission's Faith Feed, Lenten reflections, Mariology Origins by Steven Buhagiar, Called to Serve by Brother Emmanuel Noel, Kingdom People – Fitting into the Kingdom of God with our Gifts and Talents by Julian Seiber.

## **Credo Retreat**

The Credo retreat was held at the Benedict XVI Retreat Centre, Gross Vale from March 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>. 22 youth and young adults from the parish attended the formation retreat which was organised by Mindy, Matt, Melissa and Jann under the guidance of Fr. Chris and Fr. Bob. This was the first time a parish based retreat had been organised since Credo began. The aim of the retreat was to provide an opportunity for the youth to encounter Christ and to empower them to reflect on their calling in the community. Over the three days, the youth were involved in prayer, workshops, testimonials, reflection and discussion. The pinnacle of the retreat was the extended adoration on the Saturday evening where the youth were offered the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The retreat concluded with Mass on Sunday morning.

## **Credo Trivia Fundraiser**

The Credo Trivia Night was held on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2018. The aim was to raise the much needed funds to support our Credo World Youth Day pilgrims. Credo youth and young adults worked together in planning and hosting the evening's event. Over 80 youth and parishioners attended the evening and just under \$2000 was raised. This was the first time the youth had organised a major fundraiser and are thankful for the support of the parish community for such a successful event.

## **World Youth Day 2019**

The aim of World Youth Day is for young people to gather and encounter Christ through the universality of the Church. It is celebrated internationally every 2 – 3 years and was hosted by Panama City in January this year.

The pilgrimage began in Mexico, where the pilgrims were engaged in mission work. These included assisting in the local schools and orphanages. They also visited various shrines including Our Lady of Guadalupe where the pilgrims brought the parish prayer book – a collection of prayers from our parishioners. The pilgrimage then continued to Panama City where the various events of World Youth Day week began. The





spiritual experience concluded in Houston, Texas where the pilgrims engaged in a retreat to reflect on their experiences.

Six Credo youth and young adults attended the pilgrimage with another 165 pilgrims from across the Diocese. Melissa and Jerick were selected by the Diocese as leaders, Rachel was supported by her school and Dylan, Genevieve and Olana were supported by our parish.

We thank the parish community for their generous support in allowing these youth to attend the pilgrimage.

## Credo Achievements and Involvements

### Credo in the Diocese

Working alongside Catholic Youth Parramatta, Credo have been actively involved in a variety of events:

- Lifted Live in the Forecourt – organised and coordinated one of the food stalls, assisted in the bump in and bump out of the event.
- Lifted Sports Day – participated in the event.
- World Youth Day Diocesan Commissioning Mass – assisted in the hospitality in welcoming youth and their families from across the Diocese.
- World Youth Day In-Sync Event – organised and coordinated event alongside other youth from the Diocese.
- Palm Sunday Youth Mass – assisted in the liturgy as readers and musicians.

- Good Friday Night Walk – hosted the Diocese in planning, coordinating and animating the final reflections and the welcome breakfast.
- Australian Catholic Youth Ministry Convention – Young Adults participated in workshops.
- Youth Ministry Masterclass – Youth Coordinator, Mindy presented the workshop on, “Building a Relationship with Your Parish Priest”.
- Membership - Diocesan Youth Council, Diocesan Pastoral Council and Deanery Youth Ambassador for the Eastern Deanery of the Diocese of Parramatta - Mindy.

### Parish Events

- Youth Mass every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month – as readers, servers and musicians.
- Credo Youth Band – Junior Credo, Teen and Young Adults led by Genevieve.
- First Friday Devotions – organised and led by youth.
- Sacramental Program – Dwayne, Sandra and Stacie assisted through running a children’s program during parent sessions.
- HSC Youth Mass – organised Youth led Mass and hospitality.
- Stations of the Cross – organised and led during Lent and on Good Friday .
- Light Up St. Pat’s – assisted in the organisation and running of the event as volunteer coordinators, welcomers and evangelisers.





## ST PATRICK'S HOSPITALITY GROUP

This Ministry Outreach has now notched up 24 years of service to members of the parish community and visitors i.e. we've been providing hospitality on Sundays since 1995, pre the disastrous 1996 fire in the Cathedral.

Over that time our venues have included the old parish hall (pre fire), the Grotto Café operating out of the old Marist School block during the Pro-Cathedral "era", then offsite at **St Pat's in the Field** in the grounds of Cumberland Hospital, Fleet Street during rebuilding of our spiritual home and finally the return, in November 2003, to the new Cathedral and a brand new hall with much-appreciated modern facilities. (Anyone interested in a fuller history of the café's travels can look up the 2018 AGM report).

Over all that time, members of St Patrick's Hospitality Team have continued to let hospitality be their boast, ever mindful of our group's motto:

*Great occasions for serving God  
come seldom*

*Little ones surround us daily.*

This saying always heads the three-monthly roster as a perennial reminder of what our endeavour is all about.

### ABOUT US:

The team currently comprises 36 members (down 4 from 2018 report):

- ◆ Two married couples left the parish, and two women "resigned" due to illness and family commitments.
- ◆ We have two new recruits: a man and a woman.

So, the breakdown of current personnel, is as follows:

Two married couples

One mother and daughter

26 women and 6 men





### Our Team's service during the past year:

- Served morning tea in the Cloister Café on most Sundays after 9:30am and 11am Sunday Masses. (except when special functions necessitated it being cancelled).
- Had a special morning Tea on Gaudete Sunday in December to farewell Fr Michael Gitau moving to Springwood.
- Liaised with the RCIA Team in organizing the Celebratory Supper in the Cloister Function Room after the Easter Vigil. This was the opportunity to congratulate and welcome the Neophytes to the parish community.
- Assisted at various parish functions when asked: e.g.
  - the Good Friday Breakfast for Diocesan Youth, Credo Youth BBQ fundraisers for WYD Panama ongoing ministry programmes.
- The Donations Basket: This initiative continues to be regularly filled with morning tea supplies by generous parishioners supportive and appreciative of our pastoral outreach.

### In the year ahead the Hospitality Team will:

- continue our current *modus operandi*;
- continue recruiting new members by approaching people personally during Morning Tea and beyond and through advertising in the Sunday Bulletin;
- assist whenever needed at parish functions; and

**Cora Mercado**, one of our longest serving members recalls her coming on board. (*This is an extract from the article she was asked to write for St Pat's Matters.*)

Unlike St. Paul's conversion where God called him through a *blinding* encounter, God used *boredom* to draw me to joining St Pat's Hospitality Group.

*Back in 2001, just before the parish was relocated at St Pat's in the Field* offsite at Cumberland Hospital Grounds, having moved out of Plumpton Parish, my family and I were looking for a similar parish church to join where you'd feel your faith energised after coming to Mass. At St. Patrick's we found a welcoming church. Whenever we came to morning tea or special parish events, I found the elder ladies' demeanor so sweet while they were serving. Around 2002, my youngest daughter became an altar server. And when Deacon Warren Edwards, who trained the altar servers, was ordained a priest I volunteered to assist at the reception afterwards. That was when I first met Marian, and it was either during or after that event, she invited me to join the Hospitality Group. — By then the church was already in the Cumberland Hospital grounds and I found it boring just waiting in the car for my daughter to finish her post-Mass duties. — I asked Marian what was involved, turned up one Sunday morning and have been on the team ever since.

I've always wanted to give back one way or another in thanksgiving for all the blessings God has generously given my family and this was at the back of my mind when I first joined. In my early days, I asked Marian how to chat with other parishioners (as part of this ministry) since I was afraid to start a conversation with people I didn't know. She gave me a few tips, like simply, but sincerely, asking people how they're doing. Eventually God led me to realise that while serving morning tea, I could provide a listening ear -- enabling another to share life's concerns, to offer prayers, to share our faith and love of God, and to share the good news that God is with us, always. I also found that service with a genuine smile can be contagious; our parishioners tend to smile back and carry on with that smile.

I hope and pray that more parishioners heed God's call to serve in this important ministry.

# ST PAT'S MATTERS MAGAZINE

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Now in its 22nd year of publication,  
Issues 96-99 have been distributed since last AGM.

The purpose of *St Pat's Matters*:

- to build a sense of our identity as a parish community;
- to report on the various liturgical, sacramental and social events that take place at the Cathedral; e.g the Sacramental Programme, RCIA, Easter Vigil, St Patrick's Day;
- to encourage people to write about their involvement in ministry —as Acolytes, Altar Servers, Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Choristers, Special Religious Educators, Children's Liturgy, Hospitality, Visitation to the Sick;
- to highlight the good works of individuals in and beyond the Cathedral, and of parish groups such as Live Christ

Share Christ, Credo Youth, Legion of Mary; and

- to revisit parish history —priests, people and events — along with present day happenings.

Sourcing Content:

Notices are published in the Sunday Bulletin with requests for submissions, but the most effective method of garnering articles has proven to be directly approaching people to share their stories.

Even looking back now to any of the earlier issues shows how parish life has developed and changed.

May those of future generations in perusing issues of St Pat's Matters in the parish archives gain an appreciation of our era and how we strived to live as true disciples of Jesus.





# ST VINCENT DE PAUL

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The St Vincent de Paul Parramatta Conference has been busy throughout the year.

Our core function is in providing much needed support to disadvantaged people in the local community.

Whether the clients need help with food, power bills, emergency household goods, or clothing, or referral to the many support services available in the community.

We work co-operatively with the recently established Vinnies Harris Park Hub to provide the best outcomes that we can for the clients. Vinnies is doing 'Good Works' in Parramatta.

The highlight of the year was definitely the Christmas Hamper program. With the donated goods very generously provided by the community at St Patricks Primary School, we were able to deliver some great hampers to client families in the local community, as well as provide a useful donation of food items and household grocery items to the Harris Park Hub for distribution from there. Just a really fantastic result for everyone.

On the social justice front the most exciting development is to see the Amelie Housing Project at Merrylands taking shape. This new housing development by

St Vincent de Paul when completed will provide over 50 housing units available for the most needy clients.

Additionally St Vincent de Paul will be focusing in the year ahead on lobbying for improved circumstances for the many people in severe housing stress. Vinnies acknowledges that unaffordable high housing costs are significantly affecting the poorer members of our community and adding greatly to the financial stress for many of these people. St Vincent de Paul will be seeking to work with all levels of government and other community organisations to find real and sustainable solutions.

Again Vinnies doing 'Good Works'.

As always we would always welcome (and we really do need) your support. There are several ways to give Vinnies your financial support, including using the new card reader in the Narthex, sending a donation to the Parish Office, or of course donating online through the Vinnies website. You can be assured that Vinnies will put these donations to great advantage in our community.



# LIVE CHRIST SHARE CHRIST

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We thank the Lord for St Patrick's Cathedral parish for its continued support of the Live Christ Share Christ (LCSC) movement, which is now on its fourth year of providing regular monthly formation teachings.

In the last quarter of last year, our formation session started in September with a talk presented by Fr. George Azhakath on the topic "Growing in Faith." Fr. John Rizzo presented in October a Marian theme formation on "Mary Mother of Church." That year then ended with a beautiful series of Lectio Divina sessions as part of the Advent program.

This year, our first formation session started in February with an introduction and overview of the Gospel of Luke by Fr. Bob Bossini. The succeeding six weeks were Lenten Lectio Divina Reflection Sessions conducted extensively by Fr. Bob, Fr. Chris and our very own Matt Bretania.

Last April, we had the great privilege to have our Live Christ Share Christ Moderator, Mr. Frank Padilla, who presented a talk crucial to our Church today entitled "Called to the New Evangelisation." Elements and new ways of evangelisation were extensively discussed during the talk.

During the month of May, in honour of our Blessed Virgin Mary, Fr. Bob presented a talk "Mary, a model for our Spirituality." In June, we had our yearly Pentecost Retreat session consisting of a Liturgical Bible Study by a devoted parishioner Annette Hartman in the morning and a teaching on the Holy Spirit by Fr. Bob in the afternoon.

In the coming three months we will continue the Foundation on Christian Living series talks on the topics "Knowing God's Will", "Overcoming the World" and "Overcoming the Flesh." In November, we will have Fr. John Rizzo present the topic "Dangers of the Occult." We will end the year with a series of Advent Lectio Divina Reflection sessions.

Our vision for next year is to continue our monthly formation teachings with new inspiring topics to deepen the faith, nurture parishioners and to spread the good news to others and other Parishes.

God bless.

Michael and Marietta Guillema





# NOVENA TO MARY FULL OF GRACE

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The Novena, in its current form has been running since 2014. The Novena is usually held the **last** Thursday of the month (unless otherwise stated) and is held in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel at 7.00PM. Since its establishment, the number of attendees has fluctuated from as low as 10 to as high as 30 and settling to a steady number of 20 regulars per month, sometimes joined by one- time visitors to the parish and casual attendees.

The Novena Prayer is in four parts and follows the liturgical seasons in its structure. The **“body”** of the prayer is the recitation of the Rosary, followed by meditation and concluding prayers. It lasts about one hour.

The four parts of the prayer are:

1. **Introduction:** Hymn, Sign of the Cross and prayers to Mary.
2. **Recitation of the Rosary:** each month following the pattern of the Mysteries of Joy, Light, Sorrow and Glory and, on any given month, as the case may be, the prayers reflect particular feasts and observances during the liturgical year such as the Lenten Season and Advent, Corpus Christi, feast of the Assumption and so on.
3. **Meditation:** Prayer intentions, musical interlude & Litany.
4. **Divine Praises and conclusion.**

Each Year the Novena begins in January (Mary, Mother of God) and concludes in November (Christ the King).

To aid our prayer life we have a small statue of Our Lady of Fatima on display and the Book of the Gospels (the Word of God) occupies a place of honour on the altar with the cross right behind. From the very beginning, at the conclusion of the prayer, any member of the group is free to take and care for the statue in their home returning it for the next month’s prayer gathering. This practice has proved popular with a number of our members who, regularly, take turns to have Our Lady visit their homes. This particular statue of Mary has been gifted to the Cathedral Parish during the time when Sr Susan Ward was our Pastoral Associate, and it was Sister Susan who put out the call to set up a Rosary Group to promote this devotion. The call was answered and the



“Novena to Mary Full of Grace” was born. Though we have a group of dedicated devotees we welcome new members to join us in prayer and discover the spiritual dimension the Rosary can bring to each of our lives. Anyone wishing to join in the devotion look out for the notices in the Bulletin and just turn up at the appointed time. Alternatively, anyone wishing to join our mailing list and be notified of the upcoming Novenas, requests may be forwarded by e-mail to Silvana Rechichi ([srechich@bigpond.net.au](mailto:srechich@bigpond.net.au)) or Marian Polizzi ([balmap5@bigpond.com](mailto:balmap5@bigpond.com)).

*“Happy are you, holy Virgin Mary,  
Queen of Mercy and Mother of Grace;  
from you arose our Mediator and Saviour,  
Christ the Lord.  
Blessed are you among women.”*

**Silvana Rechichi**  
Coordinator









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