

# Voice from the Vicarage June 3rd 2021

Dear All,

So, we are in lockdown for a while longer...

I've recently been reading the second volume of Cardinal Pell's prison journal for a review I've been asked to write. Whatever you make of him (and you might make something different if you read it) his mention of the lockdown that he, and everyone else in the prison system, high or low, appropriately incarcerated or wrongly so, experiences every day rebuked my over grumpiness given the comparative freedoms of our own. So today I made myself acknowledge the joys of going to Aldi and for a walk in the park, and sought to unite myself with all those for whom lockdowns brings genuine anxieties of whatever kind.

## The Feeding.....

But lockdown or not, the feeding goes on! Today, as just about every Thursday we welcomed and fed any who made their way to the doors of the Bardin Centre. And it seemed a happy time..for those who prepare and serve, and for those who enjoy the fare. Margaret's slice today was especially delicious...



This Sunday, in a tradition that goes back to 1264, the Church sets aside a 'Day of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Jesus Christ the Lord', or '**Corpus Christi**' for short, to give thanks for the gift entrusted to the first disciples in the Upper Room. Abolished in the Church of England in 1548 it has made something of a comeback in Anglican circles and is observed once again, for which I for one, rejoice.

Of course without that feeding to sustain us, the Church wouldn't exist to undertake the feeding that happens here every Thursday. Without the altar, the table you can see in the photo above would simply not have been laid. Thank God for our altars at Christ Church and those who raised them over 160 years ago!

I love the words of C.S.Lewis that speak of these two feedings in a marvellous book of his called 'The Weight of Glory':

*'Next the Blessed Sacrament itself, your neighbour is the holiest object presented to your senses...'*

Lewis gives the greater holiness to the Blessed Sacrament, but he can't imagine one without the other. Though I suppose most of our guests won't know, just a few yards away in the next building the Blessed Sacrament, consecrated at our masses has it's 'home' in the tabernacle, 24/7. Hasn't it been such a lovely thing that just a few of our guests have found their way from the lunch table to the holy table?



*The tabernacle on the Lady chapel altar houses the consecrated bread of Communion, guarded by angels and with a white light burning 24/7*

Recently I had to answer some questions for the Melbourne Anglican (you may have seen it) about what I had learned from the Covid experience. I said this : *That without the Eucharist the Church begins to shrivel...we cannot live without it.*

*P.S. You might remember that a couple of weeks ago I mentioned that a few of us were going to cheer server, our Alec Cross on in his school musical production. It was very entertaining and I have to say he was very confident and impressive in both his singing and his acting. And I could tell how very very proud he was to have his parish priest in the audience along with his parents and grandparents , though of course he was too shy to admit it.....*

That I am unable to go to the altar with the people the Lord has drawn to Christ Church is a loss I feel keenly, and the sight of you coming forward to receive is a joy I do not enjoy living without. I know to the world it may seem a trivial deprivation.

I hope you are missing it too...

**Sunday Mass for Corpus Christi** will be online @ 10 a.m. *If you wish to collect the reserved Sacrament, you can do so from the vicarage between 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. on Saturday.* Of course the service will include a



*These two (Cecilia and Ruth) look like the cat that got the cream, when all they'd been doing is sharing in last Sunday's mass online. It brings joy.....*

prayer for making a spiritual communion when we pray that the graces we would otherwise receive had we been able to be together at the altar will be yours.

Talking of online, thank you to Deacon Russell for a very thought provoking sermon on the Trinity last Sunday. I

hear on the grapevine that he had an impressive review from our own Fr Chris, a former lecturer in systematic theology and a bit of a 'Trinity' buff....praise indeed! Dn Russell quoted Welsh poet Henry Vaughan who speaks of '*the deep and dazzling darkness which is God*' and also reflects on St Bernard reflections on a kiss...if you haven't had a chance, it still up online and really worth a listen.

\* \* \*

On an entirely different matter I walked into the vicarage kitchen last night and heard the familiar voice of Anita Levy (baptised on Easter day) giving a radio interview about her most recent song composition called 'Thief'. It's a song subtly about God, about what's left when everything else gets taken away from you. Congrats to Anita. If you know what Spotify is, you can find it there...



*You must remember this! Anita on Easter day....*

**And finally,** as most of you will know building refurbishment generally takes longer than you think however well organised you are. Old buildings reveal their secrets as you go, and 264 is certainly doing that, but we'll get there! And little by little the work on the walls of 260 is on it's way. You can now get a sense of what a difference the opening and the gates into the churchyard will make. The Council rang to warn me that the remaining wall will need a little shoring up on their side to keep it steady. They looked a little blank when I replied that in the Church we have a long, long history of flying buttresses....

Hope to 'see' you online.....with love, **+Lindsay**