

Voice from the Vicarage 25th March 2024

Dear All,

I have a real affection for the Fourth Sunday in Lent, otherwise known as **Mothering Sunday**. It sends me way back to St George's Sunday School, Mont Albert. In those days, when there was most definitely nothing else to do on Sunday morning, Sunday Schools were better attended, and sending the kids along was something a percentage of people in the eastern suburbs thought they ought to do. Revisiting as an adult, the hall was much smaller than it had seemed as a child, but it was full on Sundays. There was a 'superintendent' and the kindly, yet redoubtable Mrs Brimsmead and Mrs Edgar. In those unsophisticated days, stickers for attendance were much prized, more interesting than footy cards (at least in my view!). Simnel cake on Mothering Sunday intended for our mother rarely made the 500 yards from church to home..



Well, here we are not too far off 60 years later, and simnel cake will be on offer this Sunday, offering respite for those keeping a rigorous Lent, and for those who perhaps couldn't quite describe Lent so far as 'rigorous'. I am in that category, even if life is busy.

Unlike Mothers' Day, on Mothering Sunday three mothers are gathered up in our thanksgiving. Our own mothers of course, and then our mother the Church, who feeds and sustains us with Word and Sacrament. In earlier days, folk would make a pilgrimage on this day to the church of their baptism. Included also is Mary, the mother of Christ, who is sometimes referred to as 'Mother of the Church' which is his Body.

Anyway, if you can, try to be here, or at some church or another..

Talking of Lenten discipline.....

I had hoped to spend yesterday, (Thursday) morning, when I am not barista-ing in 'The Lamb', doing a little spiritual reading. The best laid plans...

Morning prayer was uninterrupted. Even Sydney Road is pretty quiet at 6.30. So afterwards I settled down with my coffee and book, only to find a message that the workman coming to do some repairs at the café arrived more than an hour early and was champing at the bit outside the door. Then I was alerted to rubbish strewn over the footpath outside the church, including a lot of soiled medical refuse from the dentist, as well as some of ours. Not vandals I think, but careless rubbish collectors. A mess. Forty minutes on the phone trying to get though to the relevant Council department. They are masters at the measured response, and eventually sent a message saying it would be attended to over the next 24 hours. Not good enough. So with a little help from members of the Thursday lunch team 'our' rubbish was bundled into our bin, but understandably we did not touch the medical refuse. More messages to the Council.



The mayor of the City happened to be outside the town hall, and I was tempted to haul him over... but I have a soft spot for him. He is a good man, and only on Wednesday when he was patronising The Lamb for his lunch, a delectable toasted sandwich got stone cold as he was berated

by a local resident about something or another..

The mayor, Mark Riley, was across the road for a protest about the lack of amenities for the disabled on Victorian public transport system. And so I found myself with the crowd stopping a tram and calling on Dan

Andrews to develop a bit of urgency about the problem.

It was all a bit vocal! I quite enjoyed it, though I could tell that some of the protesters were somewhat surprised, even disconcerted, to find a dog collar in their midst... not least when the mayor greeted me like a long lost friend!



Then back to the Lamb to deal with the workman who hadn't quite done the job properly.

Quite a morning one way or another! But hey, the rubbish was cleared by lunchtime. Result! Well, all but our own was safely gathered in...

But all of that is not much to worry about given all that's going on in the world. Today, the Feast of the Annunciation, the Holy Father will consecrate Russia and Ukraine to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. How the prayers of heaven and earth need to be united in the cause of peace!



In the 'office' but still under the shadow of Christ Church.....

I'm writing this Voice from my 'office' in 'The Lamb'. It's quiet. A bit of French café music in the background. I like it when it's busy, but the quiet times give me a chance to catch up and spend time having decent chats with customers. Actually a bit of quiet

is welcome. We've had some pretty manic times with all hands on deck.

Last Sunday afternoon a marvellous Italian event on the land. It was cappuccinos all round, and then a quick turn around before **The Lamb 'B & B'**.

For those who haven't caught up with it, B & B stands for Bible and Beer....Each Sunday @ 6 we meet for a bit of praise (great to have Mick Pope on the guitar joining Deacon Jack on the piano), then there is some teaching, at the moment on St Paul and his letter to Philippi. And then, a beer or a coffee or wine or juice and some bread and cheese. Lovely atmosphere, both relaxed and intentional.

And finally. How nice when folk give thanks. We send \$500 each month to some charitable cause.... +L

