

Voice from the Vicarage 2nd June 2022

Dear All,

I'm so excited to be celebrating the **Feast of Pentecost on Sunday**. Where would we be without the Spirit? No creation, no prophets, no incarnation, no resurrection, no Church... and you would be so diminished as a person without the Holy Spirit given to you at your baptism. What a decisive day that was in your life!

And what a decisive day it will be in the life of both Nick Harman and Thando Khajonga on Sunday as they approach the font from which flows the gift of the same Spirit that descended on the first ones in the Upper Room. That gift is treasure indeed. May it not become buried treasure in any of our lives.

So we will make our prayer, "Come Holy Spirit!", "Holy Spirit, fall afresh on us," and "Holy Spirit within us, come forth!"

Called to be midwives!

One of the great vocations of the Church is to be like a midwife, a word used regardless of gender! A Church midwife is not responsible for prompting the hearts of men and women into the life of faith, any more than a midwife is responsible for the pregnancy. It is the Lord himself who does that. But to care, nurture, and encourage the seed that has been planted in the person, and to be *with* them as they emerge into the world. (The 'mid' of midwife comes from the old English word for *with*). What a joy and privilege it is when our Christian community at Christ Church, frail as we are, is made use of by the Lord in this way as people are 'reborn' into the new life of the Christian.

After his baptism, Nick will proceed immediately to receive the laying on of hands in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Pray for Nick and Thando as they make the procession to the font on Sunday morning at the 10am Mass. And be present if you can.

Before going on with other things, did you know that one of the first male midwives in the 18th century advised other men who felt called to that work to wear dresses to reduce controversy over having a man present at a birth. I'll keep wearing my cassock, and encourage other clergy to do the same!!

And talking of clergy...

There I was minding my own business making a long macchiato in The Lamb last Saturday (I'm known for them in Brunswick) when our Archbishop, Philip, and his wife, Joy, walked in bold as brass passing all other cafes between East Melbourne and Brunswick to sample a coffee and a toastie. I think I can say they were impressed..

We seem to be attracting a few religious types. A group from the Baptist Church, led by Pastor Mark Payne, had an animated conflagration at the common table during the week, and Ian from Brunswick Uniting describes The Lamb as his go to place for interviews...

As well as their toasties, Joy and Philip devoured The Age and The Australian... we provide both of these daily on the 'common table'



Sunday @ 5

There will be an opportunity to meet both these worthy ministers on Sunday when, at

5pm, brothers and sisters from the various congregations nearby will gather at Christ Church for the annual **Pentecost Ecumenical service**. Since the Holy Spirit is described in Scripture as the Spirit of Unity, it is a very good feast on which for us to gather, as we do so wonderfully each year on Palm Sunday.

Ever met a Maronite?

The preacher at the service will be Monsignor Joe Takchi from the Maronite Catholic Church of Our Lady of Lebanon in Thornbury.

The Maronites are in full Communion with the Roman Catholic Church, but are self governed and have their own Eastern Syriac liturgies. By all accounts he's an interesting and lively speaker. There will be light refreshments afterwards in 'The Lamb'.

A great gathering....

What a great gathering last Sunday evening for Evensong and the Philip Harris Memorial Lecture. We had had to delay Rowan Callick's contribution because of COVID, but it was certainly worth the wait. What an encouragement to hear from him of all the Lord is doing in Asia and the Pacific, and what an interesting life he has had so far! Traditional Evensong was also a joy, helped very much by cantors who gave us Tallis and Elgar. I particularly enjoyed the Elgar 'O Salutaris' before Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. (Elgar at his religious best in my view). Benediction was offered at the High Altar, which speaks so much of the transcendent, while our Nave Altar speaks of the closeness of the Mystery.

And finally, can I ask you to spare a thought for our dear Neicia Shaw, among other things a member of our serving team. From her arrival at CCB, Neicia has almost always been accompanied by dearly loved little Jack Russell, Annie. Annie had her own little place in our church and almost always found her way to the front

pew where I reckon she could smell a rat, or something under the floor boards. Sadly, Annie developed a large cancer, and so they have had to say goodbye. Pets become so much part of us. Our love goes out to our Neicia. +Lindsay



Come Holy Spirit!

Gift of Pentecost

