

Voice from the Vicarage February 2nd 2023

Dear All,

So today is the feast of Candlemas, so called because at the heart of the celebration is light, or rather the Light. As I mentioned in a sermon recently, I like those paintings of the crib scene which have no other light save for that which emanates from the Christ Child. He sheds light on the very nature of God, and reveals God's loving purpose for the world. In the Gospel Jesus speaks of himself as the Light, but he also tells the first disciples that they are called to be the light to the world. It's our vocation. More of that on Sunday by the way.



From crib to the cross...

Meanwhile, at the 6.30 pm mass today we shall end with a simple, little ritual with candles around the crib, which concludes with the words...'**We turn from the crib to the cross**'. And so we will. The season of Lent beckons...

With a voice of singing...

I suppose every mass is lovely and is certainly full of the life and vitality of the risen Lord, but I reckon last Sunday's mass was a cracker! Of course it always helps when the congregation is dotted with several 'new' faces—new to us rather than to the Lord of course. It is our way to imagine, and in this case our imagination is accurate, that they are a gift to us from the Lord to be welcomed and cherished. What joy such folk bring to us!

And how good was the singing, or was it just my imagination? I don't think so. We are so well led by Stephen and our cantors, but the great thing is when musicians gather us *all* up in the praise of the Lord. The cantor introit as we prepare for worship and the solo at communion time help to turn our hearts and minds toward our Saviour and the great purpose of our gathering, but in the hymns and congregational settings for the mass we are also well drawn to adoration. Such a drawing means there is some hope that I will be lifted from the heavy weight of self regard to God centredness. It's not an easy lift off...but by God's grace...

By the way some folk in the congregation receive the music 'file' for the 10 am mass a few days before the celebration. I reckon this really helps us all. It's like having a bit of a choir in the pews! And I imagine that for those who receive it, it's a lovely preparation for the mass. If you'd like to receive the music before Sunday, let Stephen know, and he'll make sure it gets sent to you (**baldwinse@hotmail.com**) He'd be happy to hear from you!



The weekly music file

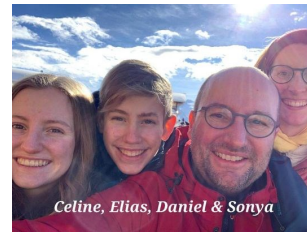
Our Christ Church Community includes folk all over the world, and although he has his own congregation and parish to worry about, over the past seven years of visits (with a Covid break!) Father Patrick has become a much loved temporary resident! He returns to Sweden on Monday. It has been good to have him here, and to welcome him as a concelebrant at the altar each

Sunday. It's a good tradition for priests to share in the offering of the Eucharist by expressing the gift of priesthood entrusted to them in this way. We shall miss him. Of course he is an avid reader of The Voice so he'll know what we are up to!



Talking of our diaspora, I received this photo of the **Frank family**, who were so much a part of

Fr Patrick's hand during his usual lunch time ritual as he has a daily wander around the streets of Melbourne. It's thirsty work!



our lives during their sojourn in Melbourne. They will be back around Easter time for a holiday, looking a little older. (Just the children I mean!) It will be great to see them.

Meanwhile, parishioner and Lamb volunteer Jack Pope is on a little adventure with mates in Japan. His mother sent me this photo of him sightseeing...what can I say? Young people today have their own strategies!



This week the Community School



opened its door to pupils in their new home. With parents and

pupils they walked in procession from their old site to Glenlyon Road. On Tuesday the new sign went up. Look up as you walk past next time! I had a tour of the whole site with Irene the Head on Wednesday. It's marvelous! Already we've been greeting staff and parents in The Lamb.

And finally, respect for the dead is one of the signs of a respectful society. In our tradition, even as we give thanks for the good they have done, with realism we ask the Lord to forgive them their sins and have mercy, whoever they may be.

On Sunday the mortal remains of Mary and Henry Hillman will be buried together in our memorial garden. It's a gentle, simple and honouring ritual and the final thing that can be done for their physical selves even as we continue to pray for their souls. Rest in peace.

Hope to see you soon. Much love, +Lindsay