

Voice from the Vicarage 4th May 2023

Dear All,

I love Brunswick and this parish but there are times when, after 39 years living there, I secretly hanker after Britain. This is one of those weeks. I make no criticism of what seems to be the general lukewarmness here towards the Coronation. I suppose it just reflects the changing face of Australia and in part the ambiguous feeling, even guilt, about our British heritage that seems so much a feature of the national conversation these days. But who of us hasn't things to be sorry for in our personal histories? Which peoples and nations? And who hasn't things to be thankful for? Christians who live a balanced life of penitence and praise understand that one of these realities does not cancel the other.

Of anthems and other matters..

I was about thirteen when, as part of a massed choir in the Sydney Myer Music bowl I sang 'God bless Australia' to the tune of Waltzing Mathilda. Written by Jack O'Hagan of 'Road to Gundagai' fame, it was proposed as a potential new anthem reaching its short lived height in the late 60's when a broadcast version for Australia Day in 1968 hit the TV channels. Never adopted, it was eventually in 1984 that the Governor General proclaimed 'Advance Australia Fair' to be our anthem, replacing God save the Queen which yet remains as the 'Royal' anthem. We shall sing that anthem on Sunday as we pray God's blessing on the King and Commonwealth, as the role and place of both continue to evolve.

I've found myself wondering what happened in the time between the 60's, when it was still considered appropriate to include mention of God in our anthem, even ask his blessing on our land, and 1984 when we adopted an anthem, which as you know, makes no mention of God in either thanksgiving or supplication. I'd be so interested to read the discussions that took place about the merits of the various candidates for our national song.

One slightly ironic merit of 'God save the King' its levelling out of us all, at its repeated acknowledgement that like the rest of us, his so called 'subjects', the King needs saving. His crown will, at his end, be of no use and he will be judged just like the rest of us. That he is King is no guarantee that his name will be found in 'The Lamb's Book of Life'. Those of you who watched the late Queen's funeral might remember she included a hymn that compared the 'passing away' empires of this world to the Kingdom that stands forever, and another hymn that spoke of casting our earthly crowns before the Lord. Mmm. Food for thought.

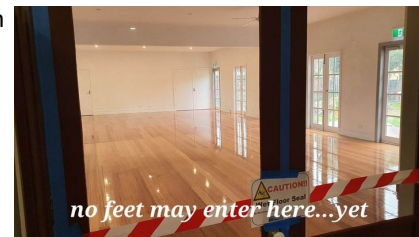
The Shepherd King...

I was so happy when last Sunday we immersed ourselves in the reality of the Good Shepherd, Jesus our Shepherd King. My own Christian life, however frail it might be, would not be as it is without my belonging to the Oratory of the Good Shepherd. In our Rule it says that the aim of our life is 'The Adoration of God in the service of the Jesus Christ and the imitation of his most holy life'. Life in the Oratory is helping me to train myself to know the voice of my Shepherd with the desire that I might indeed imitate his life. Pray God this will save me from the banging of my head against brick walls, a feature of the sheep I mentioned in my homily; sheep who have not yet learned the distinctive voice of their shepherd. We need to help each other recognise that most Blessed Voice!



Meanwhile, the vicarage is somewhat over-

whelmed at the moment by the smell of whatever it is they are coating the floor with in the new extended room at the back of what will soon be the parish house.



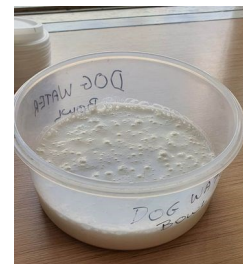
Smells awful

but looks lovely! You can now get a real sense of what a blessing that space will be. On Thursday I gave Emily from the Rogues choir, who had their home in the Bardin Centre for quite a while, a sneaky peek. They can't wait to get back in there!

The guys doing the work are masters at their trade and have kept up their energies for the task with bacon butties and chicken schnitzels at The Lamb!

Babies and puppies!

And talking of the Lamb, a couple of weeks ago I prepared my first 'puppyccino', surely a turning point in the life of any barista...



Certainly I never imagined that such an opportunity for service would come my way. It's taken nigh on 43 years of ordained ministry to reach what I'm not sure is the peak or the trough of my ecclesiastical career...Life is such a learning curve. A year ago I didn't even know what a *babyccino* was....And the difference between a baby and a puppy in the ccino world? Nothing more or less than a marshmallow....

THIS SUNDAY Masses @ 8 & 10 as usual.

THERE WILL BE NO 6 pm B & B but you are invited to a **Service of Thanksgiving for the Coronation** at **ALL SAINTS' CHURCH EAST ST KILDA @ 5 p.m.**

Music from past coronations and Canon Robert Derrenbacher, Dean of Trinity Theological School is the preacher.

Some of us from here will be going, so if you want to form a posse let me know!

And finally, as well as the Royal Anthem on Sunday we shall continue our Easter tradition of ending the 10 am Mass with the Eastertide ANTHEM of OUR LADY, Queen of Heaven. Only earthly monarchs come and go...

Much love

+Lindsay