



PARISHES IN PARTNERSHIP

St. Mary's Maffra [Newry & Dargo]

St. Michael's Heyfield-Cowwarr

Phone: 03 5147 1921 email: Maffra@cdsale.org.au

Office Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs - 9.00am-3.00pm.

For Emergencies: St. Mary's Cathedral, Sale, Phone 5144 4100

Diocesan/parish website: <https://www.cdsale.org.au/maffra/heyfield>



29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A, 18TH OCTOBER, 2020

PARISH PRIEST:

Fr. Siju Xavier

Email: Siju.Xavier@cdsale.org.au

PRIEST EMIRITUS:

Fr. Frank Young

PARISH SECRETARY:

Willie Schoenmaekers

WEEKEND MASSES: Heyfield

Saturday Vigil: -6.00pm

1st & 3rd Sunday Cowwarr: 11.00am

WEEKEND MASSES: Maffra

Sunday: 9.00am

2nd & 4th Sunday - Newry: 11.00am

5th Sunday - Dargo: 12.00pm

WEEKDAY MASSES

HEYFIELD

Tuesday: -9.30am

MAFFRA

Wednesday: 5.00pm

Thursday: -9.30am

Friday: 10.00am

2nd Friday Stretton Park 10.00am

Saturday: 9.30am

RECONCILIATION:

MAFFRA

Saturday: After Mass 10.00am

HEYFIELD:

Saturday: Before Mass 5.20pm

OR any other time by request

EXPOSITION: Maffra

Wednesday: After 5.00pm Mass

BAPTISMS:

During or After the Vigil / Sunday Mass

MARRIAGE:

At least six months' notice requested.

PARISH SCHOOLS

ST. MICHAEL'S HEYFIELD

Principal: Jenny Miller

Davis St. Heyfield - 3858

Phone: 5148 2514

ST. MARY'S MAFFRA

Principal: Jason Slattery

4-12 Duke St. Maffra - 3860

Phone: 5147 1334

Catholic Care: 1800 522 076

Safe Steps: 1800 015 188

Facebook: [facebook/dioceseofsale](https://www.facebook.com/dioceseofsale)

Dear Maffra and Heyfield parishioners,
Greetings to you all.

As Covid-19 pandemic and its restrictions continue to accompany us, there opened a small window of opportunity for religious communities to worship outdoors in meagre numbers with stringent observance of all mandatory regulations on public gatherings. Last weekend, as a trial to begin with, I conducted with great care weekend Mass for both parishes in the Church grounds with very short notice. Thanks to those who helped me organise everything outdoors. We were blessed with good weather for both Masses.

As it stands, we still do not know how long these restrictions will apply to religious communities. At the same time, we cannot neglect our spiritual wellbeing, for it is equally important to our physical and mental wellbeing.

At this stage, with current stipulations of COVID -19 restrictions conditions being met for outdoor weekend Masses, we are limited to a gathering of 10 people, plus the priest. No more than 11 attendees in total at each Mass.

Under these current restrictions I am delighted to celebrate Masses outdoors – weather permitting – in the Parish Church grounds at 6:00pm on Saturday at Heyfield, at 9:00am and at 4:30pm at Maffra. Newry and Cowwarr on their designated Sundays at 11:00am. Bookings for all Masses are essential.

In order for this to happen, I seek, firstly your kind assistance in organising future outdoor Masses. It would assist me greatly if 1-2 parishioners could please come 30 minutes early to the Church grounds to help set up for Mass. If you are able to do so, please advise the Parish Office when making your Mass booking. Please bring your own chair and follow all COVID-19 regulations given us by DHHS.

Again, I request your cooperation in making bookings for the weekend Masses. Due to the attendee numbers being limited, I have come up with the following idea based on the current guidelines: The first 10 Mass bookings received for each weekend Mass will be allocated in line with the caller's request. Then, the subsequent 11th to the 20th bookings received will be placed on a priority list to attend the same Mass time – but on the following weekend. Hence, there will be an opportunity for all who wish to celebrate Mass, though not each weekend, to do so. I ask you for the time being to please make these bookings for your own parish Masses only.

Please continue bookings for Weekend Outdoor Masses
Between 11:00am to 01:00pm on Tuesdays,
Wednesdays 0490 384 454 [For this weekend only, ring on
Thursday and Friday from 9:00am to 1:00pm as well]

Please do not leave any Message on this number for the voicemail is NOT set up on this number.

With every good wish and prayer, Fr. Siju Xavier

Important: All above arrangements are critically subject to WEATHER.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS:-

Care for the Sick: If you know of anyone who is unable to get to Mass and would like the Eucharist brought to them, please advise us on 5147 1921.

We pray for ALL who suffer (at present) in body, mind or spirit:

Gerald Zed Hurley, Belinda Weatherley, Archie Schacht, Coral Justice, Julie Frew, Peter Smyth, Fr. Brian O'Connor, John Phelan, Lyn McLindin, Ann Martin, Lorraine Weatherley, Evelyn Bourke, Gerry Gray, Lee Allman, Father Frank, Maree Welsh, and all those who seek our prayers.

CatholicCare Gippsland: Two Bushfire Recovery Positions

CatholicCare Gippsland is currently seeking **two full time or part time** positions:

Community Development Worker and Family Counsellor to join our Bushfire Response team to support, address and provide paths of assistance to people affected by grief and trauma within the bushfire affected regions in East Gippsland.

These are exciting positions that can include counselling to individuals, couples and families, group facilitation and liaising with key stakeholders.

As part of these two positions the Bushfire Response program will provide an outreach mobile service to the community, with a particular focus on remote townships using a CatholicCare especially fitted out vehicle.

For a detailed position description, go to: <http://www.ccam.org.au/page/58/careers>. Applications close on **COB Wednesday 2 November, 2020** and can be emailed to recruitment@ccam.org.au with the job title in the subject line, a cover letter explaining your experience in-line with the position description, and your resume. Enquiries can be directed to the HR team on (03) 9287 5584.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE DEAD:-

Anniversaries:

Stanislaws Wasalski, Bill Davis, Kim Watson, Tom Fogarty Jnr, Tom Lanigan, Jim Booker, Patricia (Pat) McMahon, Agnes Phelan, Ollie Bravo, Ned Lowrie, Helen Birch, Maria Broda, William (Bill) Jeffrey, Patrick (Patty) Phelan, Dora Coloe, Wladyslaw (Wally) Dyblik, Ron Ronalds, Sheila Mary McCarthy, Marjorie Forder, John Kusiak.

Frs. D. Gordon, J. T. Russell.

"An Act of Spiritual Communion My Jesus,

I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen."

WE ARE A CHILD SAFE PARISH

Any children, young persons and vulnerable adults have a right to feel safe and be safe. If you are concerned about any form of abuse, or believe that someone is at significant risk, you should immediately raise your concerns with one of our Parish

Safeguarding Officers. Contact Via the Parish Office: 03 5147 1921.

[Adapted from Moe parish]

PARISH SAFEGUARDING OFFICERS

ST. MARY'S: Terry Donahoe
ST. MICHAEL'S: Ed O'Brien

❖ What Should I do if I Can't go to Mass?

Catholics are encouraged to make a 'spiritual communion'. St. John Paul II writes that "it is good to *cultivate in our hearts a constant desire for the sacrament of the Eucharist*. This was the origin of the practice of 'spiritual communion', which has happily been established in the Church for centuries and recommended by saints who were masters of the spiritual life. Saint Teresa of Jesus wrote: 'When you do not receive communion and you do not attend Mass, you can make a spiritual communion, which is a most beneficial practice; by it the love of God will be greatly impressed on you.'" (*Ecclesia Eucharistia*, no. 34).

❖ How Do I Make a Spiritual Communion?

Below are recommendations for how to make a 'spiritual communion' when unable to participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The recommendations can be adapted based upon personal and family needs.

Gather with others in your household and begin a time of prayer with the sign of the cross.

Take time to read and reflect upon the readings from Sunday Mass. You can find the readings at usccb.org and a Sunday Gospel reflection on our [YouTube channel](#). Additionally, a weekly televised Sunday Mass is available to watch at adw.org/tvmass.

Share prayer intentions quietly or aloud.

Pray the Lord's Prayer.

Pray one of the following prayers of spiritual communion [see above left]

Close with the sign of the cross

Twenty-Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

For Families and Households During Social Isolation

The Introductory Rites

Gathering

The Lectionary/Roman Missal or a Bible may be placed on a table together with a candle and a cross.

A short hymn might be sung.

Sign of the Cross

Leader:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All:

Amen.

Greeting

Leader:

Blessed be Jesus who makes us one,
and strengthens us by the power of his Spirit.

All:

Blessed be God forever.

Introductory Remarks

Leader (in these or similar words):

Friends in Christ, although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day, we gather in God's name for when two or more come together God is always with us.

We worship in union with the whole Church keeping this day of the Lord holy.

Opening Rite

A

LITANY OF PRAISE

Leader:

Before listening to the Word of God
let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

A brief period of silence follows.

Lord Jesus, you are the King of glory: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you call each of us by name: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, without you we are nothing: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader:

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All:

Amen.

or B

GLORIA

Leader:

With peoples everywhere, let us glorify our God (in joyful song).

All:

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,

we bless you,

we adore you,

we glorify you,

we give you thanks for your great glory,

Lord God, heavenly King,

O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,

Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

you take away the sins of the world,

have mercy on us;

you take away the sins of the world,

receive our prayer;

you are seated at the right hand of the Father,

have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,

you alone are the Lord,

you alone are the Most High,

Jesus Christ,

with the Holy Spirit,

in the glory of God the Father.

Amen.

Opening Prayer

Leader:

Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

God most holy you are the Lord of all. We are made in your likeness and your name is written on our hearts. Guide us in your ways and make our faith strong. We ask this through Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

All:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

[Is 45:1.4-6](#)

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I have taken the hand of Cyrus to subdue nations before his countenance.

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whom he has taken by his right hand to subdue nations before him and strip the loins of kings,

to force gateways before him that their gates be closed no more: It is for the sake of my servant Jacob, of Israel my chosen one, that I have called you by your name, conferring a title though you do not know me. I am the Lord, unrivalled; there is no other God besides me.

Though you do not know me, I arm you that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from me, all is nothing.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 95:1. 3-5. 7-10. R. v.7

(R.) Give the Lord glory and honour.

1. O sing a new song to the Lord, sing to the Lord all the earth. Tell among the nations his glory and his wonders among all the peoples. (R.)

2. The Lord is great and worthy of praise, to be feared above all gods; the gods of the heathens are naught. It was the Lord who made the heavens. (R.)

3. Give the Lord, you families of peoples, give the Lord glory and power, give the Lord the glory of his name. Bring an offering and enter his courts. (R.)

4. Worship the Lord in his temple. O earth, tremble before him. Proclaim to the nations: 'God is king.' He will judge the peoples in fairness. (R.)

Second Reading

1 Thes 1:1-5

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

We are mindful of your faith, hope, and love.

From Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonika which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; wishing you grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all, and constantly remember before God our Father how you have shown your faith in action, worked for love and persevered through hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We know, brothers, that God loves you and that you have been chosen, because when we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words, but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Reader:

From the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mt 22:15-21

Give to Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and to God the things that are God's.

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, 'Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man's rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, 'You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay the tax with.' They handed him a denarius, and he said, 'Whose head is this? Whose name?' 'Caesar's' they replied. He then said to them, 'Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God.'

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All are seated.

Reflection on the Word

A short period of reflection may be observed.

Profession of Faith

Leader:

In union with the whole Church
let us profess our faith.

All:

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;

from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Sisters and brothers, with thankful hearts
let us bring our prayers before God.

Reader: That our Holy Father Pope Francis will
lead the Church to stand against injustice and
suffering in the world.

(pause)

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That leaders of nations will responsibly use
the power entrusted to them.

(pause)

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That societies all over the world will strive
for fairness and equality.

(pause)

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our parish community will be
welcoming of refugees and migrants.

(pause)

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the sick will be shown compassion
and understanding, especially N.

(pause)

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That those who have died will enjoy eternal
life with God, especially N.

(pause)

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, your ways are truth and life.
Hear our prayers and help us to keep our hearts set
on your kingdom that is to come. We ask this
through Christ our Lord.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader:

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

All:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are
yours,
now and forever.
Amen.

The Concluding Rite

Blessing

Leader:

May the Lord be with us and protect us
now and for ever.

All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.

All:

Amen.

Dismissal

Leader:

Let us go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

or

Let us go in peace, glorifying the Lord.

or

Let us go in the peace to love and serve the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God. [\[TAKEN FROM LITURGY HELP\]](#)

NEXT WEEKEND'S READINGS

First Reading: Ex 22:20-26

Second Reading: 1 Thes 1:5-10

Gospel: Mt 22:34-40

REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

Gospel Reflection

The gospel writer presents this episode as a deliberate attempt by the Pharisees to trap Jesus and turn the people against him. Their plan was a good one, with no apparent 'safe' answer: is it permissible (within Jewish tradition) to pay taxes to Caesar or not? If Jesus were to answer that it is not permissible to pay taxes then he would be identified as a rebel and a threat to Roman authority – leaving himself open to severe punishment. If he were to answer that it was permissible to pay the taxes he would have alienated a lot of his audience who resented the taxes imposed by Rome.

Instead of falling into the trap set by the Pharisees, Jesus approaches the question in a completely different way. He asks them to show him the money with which they pay the tax. Immediately, he has turned the tables on them. He doesn't appear to carry any of the coin in question and yet the Pharisees' disciples carry them as a matter of habit. They are asking if it is permissible to pay the tax and yet freely carry the coin with which

the tax is paid. Jesus shows up the hypocrisy of their question by forcing them to reveal their own position in the simple action of producing one of the Roman coins. Jesus then closes the dispute by instructing them to render (give) to Caesar what belongs to Caesar but, more importantly, render to God what belongs to God. In a very simple way Jesus has shown up the Pharisees' disciples as being collaborators with the Roman authority and placing that authority above the authority of God. He reminds the listeners that regardless of earthly authority, the first duty is owed to God.

Historical Context – What's in a face?

The question of coinage was a problematic one for first century Jews. The tradition – grounded in the commandments given to Moses on Mt Sinai – forbade the use of 'graven' or carved images. The people of Israel took this prohibition very seriously and did not portray the human face in artwork of any kind. Roman coins were minted with the face of the emperor on them and it was compulsory that taxes be paid with Roman coin. This helps to explain the role of the Temple money-changers who converted the Roman coin into Temple coin that could be used for religious purposes.

Scriptural context – Jesus and the Pharisees

The gospel of Matthew tends to treat the Pharisees rather harshly. In fact they had more in common with Jesus' style of teaching than other religious groups of the time and some have suggested that Jesus may even have been quite closely associated with the Pharisees. The role of the Pharisees was to interpret the Torah – the Law – for everyday people. They were teachers and preachers who often had a group of disciples who were their followers. The community in which the gospel of Matthew was written regarded the Pharisees harshly because they saw Jesus – not the Pharisees – as the rightful interpreter of the Law.

Different View – A simple question?

This gospel passage is sometimes interpreted as Jesus' endorsement of the Christian responsibility to state authorities. It has been interpreted as affirming the obligation to pay taxes and participate in the processes of government. In fact, Jesus neatly avoided the direct question put to him and never gave a response to the question of paying taxes. Rather, he made the question a much broader one and reminded people that their first obligation was to God, not the state. It is an excellent example of the need for critical interpretation of scripture. A simple, literal reading of this text leads us to drawing simple, literal conclusions about whether or not we should be paying taxes.

Questions for Adolescents

- Q. Why did the Pharisees send their disciples to ask Jesus about paying taxes?
- Q. In what ways were the Pharisees' men 'hypocrites' as Jesus called them?
- Q. What can we interpret from Jesus' words, 'give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God'?
- Q. In today's world, how can we give to God what belongs to God?

Questions for Adults

- Q. The Pharisees deliberately set out to trap Jesus. Why did they fear him?
- Q. How can we apply today Jesus' words, 'give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God'?
- Q. What are some of the 'obligations' of society that 'get in the way' of giving to God what belongs to God?
- Q. In what ways can you better give to God what belongs to God?

Learning moments

- Look up other references to the Pharisees in the gospel of Matthew and look for a pattern in the way in which they are represented. (3:6-8; 5:19-21; 9:10-15; 12:1-3; 12:13-15; 15:1-14; 16:1-12; 19:3-12; 22:34-46; 23:1-36)
- Conduct an online search for ancient Jewish coins and ancient Roman coins. Compare the designs used on the coins of Israel and Rome.
- Make a personal contract about ways to 'give to God what belongs to God'.

**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR WORLD MISSION DAY 2020**

Here am I, send me (Is 6:8)



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I wish to express my gratitude to God for the commitment with which the Church throughout the world carried out the Extraordinary Missionary Month last October. I am convinced that it stimulated missionary conversion in many communities on the path indicated by the theme: "Baptized and Sent: the Church of Christ on Mission in the World".

In this year marked by the suffering and challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic, the missionary journey of the whole Church continues in light of the words found in the account of the calling of the prophet Isaiah: "Here am I, send me" (6:8). This is the ever new response to the Lord's question: "Whom shall I send?" (ibid.). This invitation from God's merciful heart challenges both the Church and humanity as a whole in the current world crisis. "Like the disciples in the Gospel we were caught off guard by an unexpected, turbulent storm. We have realized that we are on the same boat, all of us fragile and disoriented, but at the same time important and needed, all of us called to row together, each of us in need of comforting the other. On this boat... are all of us. Just like those disciples, who spoke anxiously with one voice, saying 'We are perishing' (v. 38), so we too have realized that we cannot go on thinking of ourselves, but only together can we do this" (*Meditation in Saint Peter's Square*, 27 March 2020). We are indeed frightened, disoriented and afraid. Pain and death make us experience our human frailty, but at the same time remind us of our deep desire for life and liberation from evil. In this context, the call to mission, the invitation to step out of ourselves for love of God and neighbour presents itself as an opportunity for sharing, service and intercessory prayer. The mission that God entrusts to each one of us leads us from fear and introspection to a renewed realization that we find ourselves precisely when we give ourselves to others.

In the sacrifice of the cross, where the mission of Jesus is fully accomplished (cf. *Jn* 19:28-30), God shows us that his love is for each and every one of us (cf. *Jn* 19:26-27). He asks us to be personally willing to be sent, because he himself is Love, love that is always "on mission", always reaching out in order to give life. Out of his love for us, God the Father sent his Son Jesus (cf. *Jn* 3:16). Jesus is the Father's Missionary: his life and ministry reveal his total obedience to the Father's will (cf. *Jn* 4:34; 6:38; 8:12-30; *Heb* 10:5-10). Jesus, crucified and risen for us, draws us in turn into his mission of love, and with his Spirit which enlivens the Church, he makes us his disciples and sends us on a mission to the world and to its peoples.

"The mission, the 'Church on the move', is not a programme, an enterprise to be carried out by sheer force of will. It is Christ who makes the Church go out of herself. In the mission of evangelization, you move because the Holy Spirit pushes you, and carries you" (*Senza di Lui non possiamo fare nulla: Essere missionari oggi nel mondo. Una conversazione con Gianni Valente*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana: San Paolo, 2019, 16-17). God always loves us first and with this love comes to us and calls us. Our personal vocation comes from the fact that we are sons and daughters of God in the Church, his family, brothers and sisters in that love that Jesus has shown us. All, however, have a human dignity founded on the divine invitation to be children of God and to become, in the sacrament of Baptism and in the freedom of faith, what they have always been in the heart of God.

Life itself, as a gift freely received, is implicitly an invitation to this gift of self: it is a seed which, in the baptized, will blossom as a response of love in marriage or in virginity for the kingdom of God. Human life is born of the love of God, grows in love and tends towards love. No one is excluded from the love of God, and in the holy sacrifice of Jesus his Son on the cross, God conquered sin and death (cf. *Rom* 8:31-39). For God, evil – even sin – becomes a challenge to respond with even greater love (cf. *Mt* 5:38-48; *Lk* 22:33-34). In the Paschal Mystery, divine mercy heals our wounded humanity and is poured out upon the whole universe. The Church, the universal sacrament of God's love for the world, continues the mission of Jesus in history and sends us everywhere so that, through our witness of faith and the proclamation of the Gospel, God may continue to manifest his love and in this way touch and transform hearts, minds, bodies, societies and cultures in every place and time.

Mission is a free and conscious response to God's call. Yet we discern this call only when we have a personal relationship of love with Jesus present in his Church. Let us ask ourselves: are we prepared to welcome the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, to listen to the call to mission, whether in our life as married couples or as consecrated persons or those called to the ordained ministry, and in all the everyday events of life? Are we willing to be sent forth at any time or place to witness to our faith in God the merciful Father, to proclaim the Gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ, to share the divine life of the Holy Spirit by building up the Church? Are we, like Mary, the Mother of Jesus, ready to be completely at the service of God's will (cf. *Lk 1:38*)? This interior openness is essential if we are to say to God: "Here am I, Lord, send me" (cf. *Is 6:8*). And this, not in the abstract, but in this chapter of the life of the Church and of history.

Understanding what God is saying to us at this time of pandemic also represents a challenge for the Church's mission. Illness, suffering, fear and isolation challenge us. The poverty of those who die alone, the abandoned, those who have lost their jobs and income, the homeless and those who lack food challenge us. Being forced to observe social distancing and to stay at home invites us to rediscover that we need social relationships as well as our communal relationship with God. Far from increasing mistrust and indifference,

This situation should make us even more attentive to our way of relating to others. And prayer, in which God touches and moves our hearts, should make us ever more open to the need of our brothers and sisters for dignity and freedom, as well as our responsibility to care for all creation. The impossibility of gathering as a Church to celebrate the Eucharist has led us to share the experience of the many Christian communities that cannot celebrate Mass every Sunday. In all of this, God's question: "Whom shall I send?" is addressed once more to us and awaits a generous and convincing response: "Here am I, send me!" (*Is 6:8*). God continues to look for those whom he can send forth into the world and to the nations to bear witness to his love, his deliverance from sin and death, his liberation from evil (cf. *Mt 9:35-38; Lk 10:1-12*).

The celebration of World Mission Day is also an occasion for reaffirming how prayer, reflection and the material help of your offerings are so many opportunities to participate actively in the mission of Jesus in his Church. The charity expressed in the collections that take place during the liturgical celebrations of the third Sunday of October is aimed at supporting the missionary work carried out in my name by the Pontifical Mission Societies, in order to meet the spiritual and material needs of peoples and Churches throughout the world, for the salvation of all.

May the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of Evangelization and Comforter of the Afflicted, missionary disciple of her Son Jesus, continue to intercede for us and sustain us.

Franciscus

October – The Month of the Most Holy Rosary

In honour of this month being the Month of the Most Holy Rosary, last Saturday several parishioners and Fr Siju gathered in St Mary's Church grounds to pray the Rosary together imploring Our Blessed Mother's prayers and intercession for our world - in reparation for sins committed against the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary, for the conversion of sinners, for the protection of our families, vocations and peace in our world.

You are warmly invited to join others in praying the Rosary at 11am on the remaining Saturdays in October - **17th, 24th and 31st** October in the Church grounds.

Due to the current COVID restrictions, up to 10 people can gather publicly, plus a Faith Leader. **Bookings are essential** and can be made by contacting Marianne on **0407 353 750** by Friday 3pm each week. Please BYO chair if possible.

