



"We must stay spiritually close to one another. People cannot come to church, so let the church go to people; online, in prayer,

phone calls and practical love and support."

Archbishop Christopher Prowse

CATHOLIC VOICE

ARCHDIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN



"Let's care for one another and stay connected. While we have temporarily suspended the Catholic Voice newspaper

we will produce a weekly Voice. And do use the Catholic Voice website to keep informed."

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A church rising to the coronavirus challenge

BY FELICITY DE FOMBELLE

"WE need each other now more than ever," Archbishop Christopher declared as the church responds in new and creative ways to the challenges of the coronavirus.

"It is with a heavy heart that I have had to close our churches. But we must have spiritual closeness and look out for one another."

Outdoor masses were well attended across the Archdiocese last weekend. But following the government's clampdown on gatherings, the Archdiocese closed churches on Wednesday.

Funerals will be limited to 10 people and weddings to five.

The news has shocked and dismayed Catholics in the lead up to Lent but clergy and parishioners are responding by setting up phone trees, organizing bulk mail-outs and taking Holy Communion to people's homes.

"It's a challenge we can rise to," said Fr Richard Thompson from

South Woden.

"For many of us it means having to learn how to change the time on the microwave rather than asking our five year old niece or nephew. We've got to get with the program and we can."

Fr Thompson is setting up a phone tree where parishioners will be given the phone numbers of five people and asked to contact them regularly.

That idea appeals to Goulburn Mission parish secretary Sharon Cashman who said it was a great way to keep in touch with older parishioners.

"Having daily Mass online has been a saving grace for us," Sharon said.

"I've had older parishioners come in with their iPads asking for help to connect to online Mass and a lot are helping each other.

"Many people cannot believe there won't be any more public Mass."

At Cooma, Fr Mick MacAndrew had just returned from buying 300 envelopes for a Holy Week mail-out.

"The older people are worried so I need to let them know I am thinking of them and to help them wor-

"Let us keep our eyes on the Lord and see this as a time to allow the caress of the Lord." Archbishop Christopher

ship the Lord and recall his Passion and Resurrection," Fr Mick said.

The Archdiocese's 56 schools plan to stay open until the holidays begin on April 9 but are preparing "remote learning" from Term Two which starts on April 28.

Archbishop Christopher echoed Pope Francis' words about the need for Catholics to feel "the caress of God".

"Let us keep our eyes on the Lord and see this as a time to allow

the caress of the Lord, which is a beautiful expression used by Pope Francis," the Archbishop said.

He met with local faith leaders on Tuesday and released a 'message of encouragement' urging people to support one another with prayers, phone calls and practical help.

Referring to Pope Francis' image of the church as a field hospital after battle, the Archbishop said the coronavirus had become a new battleground for everyone.

"The church is very much a field hospital so let us rise up in faith and meet this new challenge," he implored.

"People cannot come to church, so let the church go to our people online and in other ways."

A recent note to parents from St Bede's Primary at Braidwood reflects the challenges.

"This is new territory for all of us. Braidwood stands strong together, but with a little more room in between!"

How our parishes are responding.



"The online daily Mass from the Archdiocese has been a saving grace for us. It's a great comfort to so many people. I've had parishioners in with their iPads asking me how to connect to it and people are helping each other which is lovely."

Sharon Cashman, parish secretary, Goulburn Mission.

"We are using bulk emails to get information out and are setting up a phone tree. A team of parishioners will have the phone numbers of five people to contact and those five people will be given the details of five more people to call and so on. Our main focus is the elderly."

Fr Richard Thompson, South Woden

I've just bought 300 envelopes for a mail-out to parishioners for Holy Week, just to let them know I am thinking of them and so they can worship the Lord and recall his Passion and Resurrection."

Fr Mick MacAndrew, Cooma

"A lot of people are wondering how long this will go on for. I think people will be so thankful for the Mass once we get it back. If something is taken away you realise how much you like it and need it."

Fr Dominic Byrne, West Wyalong

A proud house captain and stickler for the rules

ALL schools have extra special students.

Tim Garrity is one of them. And his Year 12 peers at St Francis Xavier College know it.

They recently elected Tim a house captain of Dullugal House, making him part of the school's leadership team.

Tim, 18, has Down Syndrome and fellow house captain Amy Briggs described him as "someone who breaks down barriers".

"Tim sees everyone as his friend which is a great way to live your life," Amy said. "Tim knows everyone and everyone knows Tim."

It is uplifting to spend time with Tim. He is happy as he talks about his loves of music, dancing and school.

Queen is Tim's favorite band; "Don't Stop Me Now" his favorite song.

He shares his love of music with Year 12 coordinator Anthony Telford who has known him for six



years. They are great mates.

"Tim nominated to be house captain and gave a speech to the Year 12 students," Mr Telford said.

"Tim's a real stickler for the rules so he spoke about encouraging students to follow the rules and participate. Tim's great because no one can say no to him."

A confident Tim stepped into

Mr Telford's role when the SFX veteran took long-service leave.

"Tim took over as year coordinator," Mr Telford explained. "He had his own office and invited people in for a chat. He also had a notepad. I'm not sure what it was for but he had one."

One of Tim's favorite pastimes is karaoke in Mr Telford's office.

"The Year 11 and 12 students finish at midday on Fridays so last year Tim had to wait for his younger brother Josh," Mr Telford said.

"We did karaoke in my office. We sang *Movin' Out* by Billy Joel. And *My Song*. Tim's a slightly better singer than I am."

School has been a positive experience for Tim and SFX a part of the Garrity family. Tim's older sister Ashlyn finished in 2018 and Josh is in Year 11.

Tim is also in the workforce. Last year he started an IT position in the public service where he clocks on each Wednesday morning. He will increase his work hours this year and into 2021.

A beaming Tim said his friends made him happy.

"And singing and dancing and maths and I love Telford," he added. "Plus I love food, particularly salami wraps, chocolate and coke."

• Turn over to read Comment by Tim's Dad.

St Rocco, patron of contagious diseases

Born about 1340 AD into a noble French family, St Rocco was orphaned as a boy leaving his Uncle, the Duke of Montpellier, to care for him. At birth Rocco had a red cross-shaped birthmark on his chest.

He took a vow of poverty as a young man and set

off for Rome, stopping at a plague-stricken town named Aquapendente where he cured victims.

Rocco contracted the plague and had an open sore on his leg. Banished from the city, he sought refuge in a cave where a dog brought him bread.

A nobleman found Rocco and took him to his castle where he was cured.

But returning to France, people did not recognise the sick man and he was thrown into jail as a spy. Rocco was imprisoned for five years.

In 1378, a guard found Rocco

near death, a blue light radiating from his body. The Governor demanded to know Rocco's identity and he replied, "I am your nephew Rocco."

There was one way to prove it. Rocco disrobed and there was the red cross-like mark on his chest. **St Rocco, pray for us.**



A school and a boy – how both have thrived



Ian and Karen Garrity with daughter Ashlyn and sons Josh and Tim

BY IAN GARRITY

When our son Tim started high school we had the same worries as every parent; how he would find his way around and if he would make friends.

Then, the week before school started, Tim broke his knee.

After surgery, three pins in his knee and five days in the Melbourne Children's Hospital, we were a little concerned about how Tim and his school would cope with him being in a wheelchair for the first eight weeks.

We needn't have worried.

Tim's classes were moved downstairs and he had numerous mates to push his wheelchair! This care, forethought and flexibility was indicative of what followed over the next six years.

SFX has provided Tim with an education where his abilities have been celebrated and supported. SFX staff willingly made changes to ensure Tim was engaged in his education and most importantly that he belonged.

We have been blessed to work with teachers who thought outside the box to ensure Tim's full participation in his education. They played to his strengths and interests to ensure Tim was engaged, successful and happy.

Tim's friends have always genuinely cared for him and ensured he was included. We've heard many funny stories such as Tim playing soccer in his wheelchair by holding the ball in his lap while friends pushed him through the goals.

Recently we celebrated Tim's 18th Birthday and were so moved by the number of friends who attended his party.

Tim has been blessed to be taught by many wonderful SFX teachers particularly Anthony Telford. Tim and Anthony share a special bond and sense of humor. Their relationship has been the key to Tim's success.

This year Tim applied for and was elected House Captain which has given him a stronger sense of pride and confidence. His co-captains Amy and Harry are wonderful friends.

Last year Tim started an IT job in the public service where he works every Wednesday morning. He is supported at work by a former SFX student Eoin Garten.

Tim enjoys work and has built great relationships with colleagues who have been welcoming and supportive. We hope he can increase his hours during 2020 and next year once he finishes school.

We are so proud to see Tim grow into a compassionate, positive young man. He works hard to ensure others are valued and to make them feel welcome. We hope that Tim has also left his mark on those around him.

John Swinton writes *"To be included is to be present, to belong is to be missed"*. This truly reflects the community of SFX.

• Ian Garrity is deputy principal at St Edmund's College and wife Karen teaches at Mother Teresa School in Harrison.

Parish street stall a success

THE street stall is a great fundraiser for St Joseph's at Grenfell so parishioners were delighted they got in before the coronavirus shut them down.

Selling cakes, jams, scones and books, the stall raised \$1547 last Friday and Saturday morning.

"The raffle went well too," said parishioner Deidre Carroll. "The prize was \$100 to spend at a store of your choice in town or a load of wood. A young fellow won from the Lions Club."



Terry and Deidre Carroll

Street stalls outside the IGA supermarket are popular in Grenfell and groups have to apply for

permits each year.

"I'm glad I got in when I did," Deidre, 77, said. "A couple of parishioners didn't think it would be on and told me their cooking was still in the freezer."

Deidre described the coronavirus as woeful.

"Terry and I are fine but our four children are worried for us and keep asking if we are washing our hands and not mixing with people," she said.

"It's different in the country. It's a bit hard to understand because it's not like in the city where people are breathing on each other all the time."

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Jack's 100th bash cancelled

IT has shut schools and pubs and now the coronavirus has put an end to Jack Grant's 100th birthday bash.

The Grenfell father-of-eight turns 100 on March 31 and the party was planned at his home for Saturday March 28.

It's now off.

"Jack's son James in Adelaide can't cross the border, his grandchildren in Dubai can't get out and family in Queensland can't make it either," close friend Deidre Carroll said.

"His daughter has asked me to put a note in the *Grenfell Record* asking people to pop in to say Happy Birthday to Jack on his birthday.

"The parish council had planned a morning tea after Mass on Sunday but that won't happen either because there's no Mass now."

Jack's wife Meg died in October 2017, aged 93, and he lives alone in town. He keeps in good health, perhaps due to his love of wine and his famous Irish cream, and recently renewed his drivers licence.

"Jack passed his test the other day," Deidre said. "He still drives around town and goes to the chemist and paper shop. He can drive a radius of 20 kilometres.

"Jack's a bit deaf but he talks and reads and knows everything. He still comes to Mass every Sunday. Jack was the oldest acolyte



Jack Grant and wife Meg being chauffeured to an Anzac Day service in 2016

in the Archdiocese until he gave it away about 18 months ago.

"Jack had his St Patrick's golf day recently with his son. They do it every year. Jack makes his own Irish cream and takes it for everyone to enjoy. It's Jack famous Irish cream."

A former farmer, Jack and Meg retired to Grenfell in 1994.

Two of their children have died and son Paul is a priest in Sydney. His daughter Felicity Suckling lives in Wagga Wagga and her mother in law is the sister of Archbishop Francis Carroll.

One of five children, two of Jack's brothers were priests. Leo

was a Monsignor and has a street named after him in Kelso, a suburb of Bathurst.

Brother Noel was in Portland which is about 40 kms from Bathurst. They have both died.

Fr Leo and Fr Noel officiated at Jack's wedding to Meg Rue on June 22, 1951.

A wedding telegram read, *"I'll Grant you'll never Rue the day, we wish you health, happiness and success."*

The parish council thought of arranging a papal blessing for Jack's 100 birthday but he received one in 2017.

"He doesn't want two of them," Deidre said. "We'll get him wine."

CLERGY NEWS

Steak and mash for lunch

Energetic priest Fr Adrian Chan is on the move again. This Saturday he'll be moving from South Woden to join Fr Mick MacAndrew in Cooma.

Today Fr Mick will host Fr Adrian for lunch, with steak and mashed potato on the menu.

"Plus vegetables," Fr Mick added. "I'm off the grog for Lent but I'll offer a glass of wine to Fr Adrian if he'd like it.

"Fr James Onoja left Cooma six months ago for Young and it will be good to have two priests again. And it's good company for me."

Ordained at St Christopher's Cathedral in 2018, Singapore-born Fr Adrian, 44, has been in parishes in Bega, Amaro, Kambah and Pearce.

His favorite saint is St Teresa of Avila, the foundress of the Carmelite nuns, for her sense of humor. A good saint to pray to now!



"A real blessing to watch the Mass online today while in isolation in Sydney with my 93 year old Mum. We lit tea lights and had a crucifix with its holy water font placed near the computer.

Thank you Fr James Antony for a beautiful and reverent celebration of this wonderful Feast of the Annunciation."
Jenny

"Thank you for the daily mass online. It helps with getting close to God in these times of crisis."

Candy

"Thank you. It was wonderful to find your Mass on Sunday."

Simon

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