



Archbishop's Message
Archbishop Christopher Prowse

Jesus, I trust in you

We are celebrating Easter with an uninvited guest: the coronavirus. Don't we all know it!

Jesus is with us in all this mess.

He too knew of a crown ("corona") of thorns. The Passion Readings of scripture tell us it was literally forced into his skull.

But Easter brings THE transformation of everything.

It is suggested in St Paul's letter to the Colossians. He says: "But when Christ is revealed – and he is your life – you too will be revealed in all your glory with him."

There is a key Easter word here: GLORY.

Easter brings the transformation from a crown of thorns to a crown of glory! Here is the life-changing moment for all humanity: at the very moment we felt all was lost, all is found! Thorns become glory!

We see this so clearly in the Easter Gospel from St John 20.

The crown of thorns are felt in Mary Magdalen's words of terrible lament: "*They have taken the Lord out of the tomb and we don't know where they have put him.*"

These are our words in this pandemic. All seems lost. But this is not the case. The pandemic will pass. Hope is present.

In this gospel passage from St John, it is the young disciple John, the one Jesus loved, who encounters this.

Peter and John run to the empty tomb. John, being younger, arrives first. He gives way to Peter, the first Pope, as the symbol of apostolic authority. Peter goes into the empty tomb first. He examines the scene in almost a forensic manner. John is different. He enters later. The scripture is clear: "*He saw and he believed.*"

Love recognises love. Heart speaks to heart. Easter love ignites in the heart enlarged with hope and anticipation for love's initiative of grace.

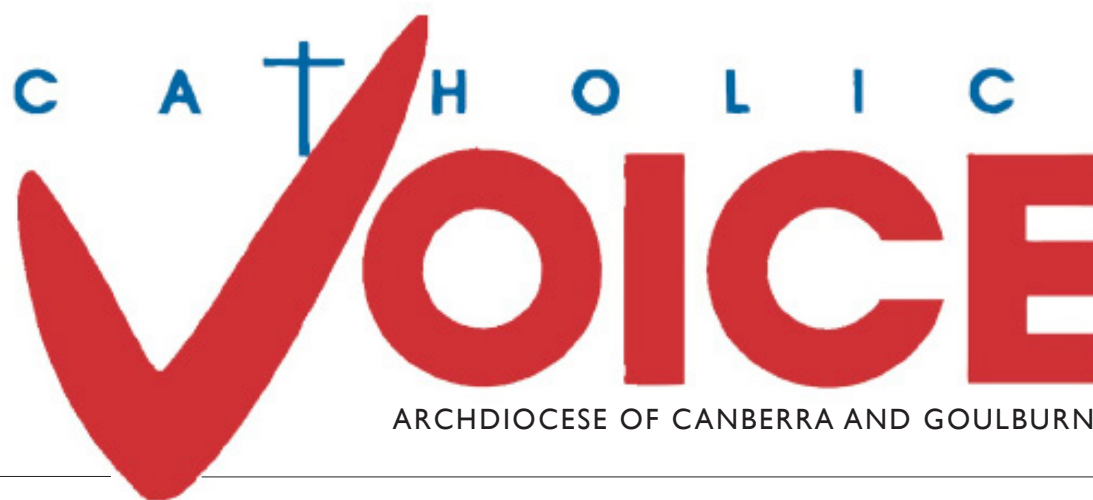
Even St Peter eventually experiences this Easter encounter. We all love St Peter and his bumbling life journey. He is like us all.

For St Peter, Easter faith took some time to bloom. It takes us time in this pandemic to come to a similar reaffirmation that this time of thorns is a time of glory – an Easter time.

Jesus is far more patient with us than we are with ourselves and each other. Let us be patient with each other. We are not to lose hope.

As the Divine Mercy Sunday approaches (2nd Sunday of Easter), let us respond to the Risen Lord and say "*Jesus, I trust in you*".

Alleluia!



ARCHDIOCESE OF CANBERRA AND GOULBURN



and know your story.

EDITOR: Felicity de Fombelle
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How has life changed for you and your family since the pandemic? For better or worse? I would love to hear from you

Plugged in and Pastoral

BY FELICITY DE FOMBELLE

COMMUNITY is what Catholics cherish and priests and parishioners are doing their best to stick together at a time of distancing.

Technology is the key and across the Archdiocese people are fumbling their way through – moving parish book clubs online, setting up clergy audio messages and Zoom prayer meetings and live-streaming Mass.

For many older people not digitally charged, phone calls and letter writing are back in vogue, as the new pen-pal parishioner scheme at South Belconnen proves.

Meanwhile clergy have adjusted to saying Mass alone and having nothing in the diary.

"I have to imagine I have a congregation otherwise I find it

too difficult to say Mass," Fr Simon Falk said.

Fr John Woods said his days at Curtin "are a strange mix of pastoral and other work, a retreat and sabbatical of sorts, a run or a walk and domestic routine.

"Having a wedding skyped to Canada and a funeral with only two mourners made the pandemic very real," Fr John said.

At Bega, Fr Luke Verrell said he was grateful to be live-streaming Mass as it kept him busy with his usual routine of preparing homilies.

"Being isolated is not that difficult for me because priests live solitary lives," Fr Luke said. "We are used to being on our own and have an inner life that you really need in times of isolation, that spiritual life."

The parishes of St Matthew's

at Page and St Vincent's at Aranda have embraced new ways to connect with Fr Simon saying local links are the most important.

"Although there is a lot available from the broader church, people want to keep connected to their parish and diocese and keep that identity," he said.

With no wifi in the church, the parish office was reconfigured as an altar so Easter Masses could be streamed.

"It is challenging us to learn more and get across everything in a better way, which is often amusing too," Fr Simon said.

While acknowledging "the gift of technology" allowed him to watch Holy Week Masses and connect for online meetings, Fr John said being connected online was a poor substitute for being together.

"I have a renewed appreciation of 'the Church' as 'the gathering'," Fr John said.

He said the separation had made him value relationships, places and activities.

Isolated older people have been a focus for the South Belconnen community who have set up a pen-pal system with parishioners writing weekly messages that are delivered to four local aged care homes.

"At the Calvary Village you might have a married couple with one person in a villa and the spouse in the nursing home and they cannot see one another," Fr Simon said.

"How painful that is. I'm also conscious of some of our more quieter parishioners and concerned how they are going. It's a challenge to keep connected but we're doing our best."

The couple, the priest plus two



L-R: Fr Trenton Van Reesch with newlyweds Tom Kenyon and Emily Tighe; Joseph McDonald and Mystique Nelis

Canapes on the terrace at the Commonwealth Club in Yarralumla with dinner to follow, a six-piece band and three-tiered cake.

Not to mention the 167 guests.

Stockbroker Tom Kenyon and lawyer Emily Tighe had everything planned for their April 4 wedding at St Christopher's Cathedral.

Until the coronavirus.

Despite some sadness and a few tears, the couple went ahead and are delighted they did.

"In some ways it's been nice to have everything pared back," Emily, 29, said.

"You spend so much time imagining what the day will be like but it's been a good change in perspective."

"I come from a devout Catholic family in Parkes and it has focused us on being married, which is all

that really matters."

It was the same thinking for Joseph McDonald and Mystique Nelis who married a week earlier.

"The sacrament is so important to us and our nuptial mass was something we had been planning and looking forward to for a long time," Joseph, 27, said.

"We love each other and felt called to go ahead."

Tom and Emily joked they did not have to be picky about guests.

"Scott Morrison did the choosing for us," Tom, 34, laughed.

They had their mothers in the church while Joseph and Mystique each had a sibling.

Tom is an Anglican and not overly religious.

"Having a cathedral wedding is a sign of respect to Emily and her family and their faith," he said.

"I'm converting him," Emily chuckled. "It's my recruitment drive."

Joseph and Mystique, 26, grew up in Catholic families and attend St Christopher's Cathedral.

"I moved to Australia from the Netherlands 16 years ago and in Dutch we talk about 'levenswandel' which translates to walking the path of life," Mystique said.

"Through the sacrament, we have started a new chapter on this journey."

Both couples met at work – Joseph and Mystique are public servants who met at a training course while Tom and Emily worked in the same building. They kept meeting in the lift and coffee shop and eventually Tom asked Emily out.

Emily's parents drove from Parkes for the wedding and joined the

newlyweds afterwards for cake and sandwiches at their Hackett home, with some of Tom's family.

"We almost put crosses on the floor to mark where people could stand," Tom joked.

LIVE

STREAM ▶

Mass

from
St Christopher's Cathedral

Monday - Friday: 12.15pm
Saturday: 9am
Sunday: 11am

Looking for Shanahan's

Parish-ioners at St Mary's Bungendore are restoring the stained glass window and trying to locate descendants of the Shanahan's.



In 1874, *The Queanbeyan Age* said the stained glass window was the gift of Mrs Thomas Shanahan Junior of the Briars, Molonglo.

There were two Thomas Shanahans living at the Briars at the time.

The first was Thomas senior (1790-1874) buried in Bungendore cemetery and married to Catherine (1785-1882) buried at The Briars.

The second is Thomas Shanahan Junior (1816-1884), married to Mary Mulcahy Shanahan who died on November 11, 1911 in Goulburn. Mary is buried at Bungendore Cemetery in an unmarked grave.

The parish believes the Mrs Thomas Shanahan Junr named in the dedication panel of the window was Mary. The panel was installed most likely in the 1960s.

Thomas' headstone says he was a Magistrate of the Territory of New South Wales who died on April 16, 1884, aged 68.

It would be nice to find the location of Mary's grave and mark it with a headstone.

If anyone knows of any descendants of Thomas and Mary Shanahan, could they contact Chair of the Parish Pastoral Committee David Webster at d.webster45@bigpond.com or 0417 235 492.

Saying 'I do'

WEDDINGS can continue and the Archdiocese is keen to help couples prepare. That is the message from the manager of Marriage, Family & Relationships programs Lara Kirk.

Couples can go ahead with a valid sacramental marriage now and delay the celebration until distancing regulations are lifted.

"They can even include a church renewal of vows in that later celebration if they wish," Lara said.

"We are keen to make contact with couples planning a Catholic wedding to encourage and support them while they decide whether to delay or downsize."

About 130 couples marry in the Archdiocese each year. And there are many marriages in Canberra's Indian Catholic parish which has 20 couples in its marriage program and 25 couples expected for November.

• **Marriage, Family & Relationships office 0429 192 869 or MFR.AdminSupport@cgo.org.au**

Acolyte shares a slice of Italy

BY FELICITY DE FOMBELLE

HAVING to shoo customers out the door when you have just opened a new café is not good for business.

But café owner John-Paul Romano is also a volunteer firefighter and so, just days after opening his Manuka fine foods store on December 31 last year, he had to shut the doors, get to the station and join the firefighting crew.

Once the fires had passed, the hailstorm arrived and flooded his café, and then the coronavirus struck.

"It's been one disaster after another," John-Paul said.

"But I like to stay optimistic. I think my upbringing and faith have helped with that.

"January wasn't the greatest month. I'd get a message to go to a fire so had to ask people if they could finish their coffees so I could lock up.

"Then I was doing night shifts so couldn't come in until midday, but that's the nature of firefighting. I thought it would pick up but unfortunately there's been more crises."

While only 20, the chef and St Christopher's Cathedral acolyte is a savvy businessman.

With the pandemic putting a stop to John-Paul serving Italian sandwiches and antipasto, he



Cafe owner John-Paul Romano outside Italian Brothers in Manuka

changed tack to offer bulk flour, pasta, sugar and rice.

"It's not what I envisioned but the business had to change," he said.

"The first two principles of business are diversify and supply and demand. I used my contacts overseas to stock up on pallets of hand sanitizer and soap and bulk bags of pasta and rice and flour."

The switch has paid off and John-Paul is confident he can ride the coronavirus storm.

The ex-St Edmund's student still hankers for the Italian deli he envisaged as a schoolboy. That

is where the name of the shop, 'Italian Brothers', was born.

"I don't have any brothers," John-Paul laughed.

"I was in a Year 10 commerce class with a couple of Italian mates thinking about business concepts. We came up with the name 'Italian Brothers' and liked the sound of it. We looked it up and it was available."

While at St Edmund's John-Paul made fresh pasta at home to sell to restaurants.

After leaving school he would visit the Sydney fruit and vegetable markets twice a week to fill orders

for Canberra restaurants.

He also spent eight months in Italy, living with his grandfather Domenico in his small village in Calabria.

"Every Italian village has a little shop that does everything," John-Paul explained. "It's the bar where people go to play cards and talk. It sells deli products and grocery items and serves coffee. There's no psychologist in the village; only the local priest and barman."

"I like to say that every few hours my shop changes. In the morning it's a place to get a coffee and a little Italian cake, the traditional Italian breakfast.

"At lunch you have a nice Italian sandwich with fresh bread and some salami, prosciutto and mozzarella.

"Then in the evening you come for an antipasto and glass of wine."

The dream to deliver an authentic Italian experience will be revived. And John-Paul has other ideas too.

Infused with a strong work ethic and energized by his family's humble peasant background, the young entrepreneur talks about opening a restaurant serving traditional food like his grandfather cooked.

"I don't want to stagnate," John-Paul said. "If things don't work out, you pick yourself up and start again. And you work hard. That's what my grandparents did."

A power shift to kids

BY GARRETH WIGG

AS Term Two approaches, concerns abound about how remote learning could impact student's academic achievement, particularly for those in their last year of school.

Parents are also concerned about their new role at home facilitating the learning process.

A lot of the discussion in the school staffroom and decisions are driven not just by students' needs but the question "what about parents?"

Here are a few insights based on my own school experience and conversations with friends and family.

Education has changed

Your children will be so much more adept at using remote learning tools and learning programs than you, and that's okay.

This paradigm shift in knowledge and understanding is something that good teachers accept and work with.

Be okay with your children knowing more than you and be willing to have them show you a thing or two.

It is extremely rewarding for children to demonstrate these things to adults.

There is a beauty in this power-shift that might shock parents, whose experiences as a student years ago could not have been further from this new reality.

Connect with friends and family

Your biggest lifeline may well be friends with their own kids at home.

Talk to them - share what's worked well and what hasn't.

Vent your frustrations with someone who can empathise.

Regular texts, photos and FaceTime conversations is a good way to stay sane.

Sharing your own failures and successes with those you trust leads to developing some truly creative ways to manage the new expectations.

Reach out and be gentle

Teachers and schools are ready to help parents.

Regardless of how learning schedules factor in teacher-student check-ins, video conferencing, etc, keep in mind that staff will be contactable.

Find out how and when your school can be contacted.

There will be a lot of trouble-shooting and 'working it out' in early Term Two, so be patient when waiting for a reply.

Change is the name of the game

Regardless of the prescribed work, do not be afraid to mix things up and try different approaches to your child's learning.

Some conventional wisdom deserves re-examination and to be turned on its head if it means creating a calmer environment that not only works for your child but your household.



Goulburn Assistant Principal Garreth Wigg with wife Kate and daughter Ruby, 5

Larger families need to juggle resources and space, so do whatever works for you in regards to routines and giving your children what they need.

Often in cases of crisis or disaster, young people are the most vulnerable and have the most trouble expressing their concerns and making sense of the situation.

The most important thing is to make sure your children are loved and not being hard on yourself.

You are doing an amazing job and are probably judging yourself too harshly. Keep things simple. Go easy on your children and especially yourselves.

• **Garreth Wigg is Assistant Principal at Ss Peter and Paul's Primary School, Goulburn**

Fee help for families

PARENTS who cannot afford school fees due to financial pressures from the pandemic should not be shy about asking for help.

Catholic schools understand that with job losses and other cuts many families will not be able to pay school fees.

That is a huge worry that families should not have to carry.

"We are looking at expanding the substantial fee relief arrangements already in place," said Jacinta Collins from the National Catholic Education Commission.

"We urge families affected by job losses, business closures or other impacts of COVID-19 pandemic to speak to their school as quickly as possible.

"We appreciate how difficult it is for parents to come forward with financial concerns but our schools will ensure each case is handled with care and discretion. We understand many families are under great pressure and strain and do not want them further burdened by school fees."

Families eligible for government COVID-19 payments can access fee concessions.

This is in line with Catholic schools' enrolment policies that no child will be denied Catholic schooling because their parents/guardians cannot afford school fees.