

St Thomas the Apostle

Catholic Parish, Clyde North

Phone: 03 5998 0947

0407 085 532

E-mail: denisobryan13@gmail.com

Parish Office: 50 Heather Grove, Cranbourne East.

PO Box 6089, Clyde, Vic, 3978



25th September 2020

Dear Parishioners,

Greetings, and God's peace and blessing be with all of you. I hope these past weeks of severe restrictions during the lockdown have not caused you too much difficulty or distress.

As we continue to live our faith and parish life in circumstances that we have never experienced here before, I am writing to address some special circumstances for our parish.

During October I invite you to participate in a Rosary Crusade. October is in a particular way the "Month of the Rosary". **There are two ways in which to participate. You are invited to participate in the twice daily gathering of up to five people outdoors with a faith leader to pray the Rosary.** A number of our parish volunteers are to be commissioned as Faith Leaders for the Rosary Crusade. If you wish to participate please book through the Try Booking arrangements which can be accessed through both our Parish Web Page and Parish Facebook Page. It is the same process that we used to do the booking for Masses. **The other way in which to participate is to pray the Rosary at home.** As we have said during this pandemic, our church buildings may be closed but the Domestic Church, our family home, is not. Now is a time to remember the words of Jesus, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them" (Matthew 18:20)

Our parish is receiving an unprecedented number of calls for practical assistance as families experience difficulties during the pandemic. Some are desperately in need of the most basic necessities, such as food for their families. Our parish is assisting families as best we can, and we are also connecting families to other agencies such as the St Vincent de Paul Society where necessary. **We need the generous financial support of our parishioners to meet the demand for these corporal works of mercy. The need is urgent.** If you are willing to assist financially please contact Christine at the Parish Office.

This has been a difficult year for the celebration of the Sacraments. We are all aware of the restrictions placed upon our Sunday and weekday Masses. We have and will continue to live stream Mass every day and the Holy Hour every Friday evening on our Parish Facebook Page. We look forward to the time when we can once again welcome parishioners to our Masses.

I ask parishioners to pray particularly for those who are preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation, and for the Sacraments of Vocation. Two of our RCIA Catechumens are still awaiting the Sacraments of Initiation. Our parish children are also affected. We will not be able to celebrate First Communion this year, but we do hope to celebrate First Reconciliation and Confirmation before the end of the year, if possible. Our Bishop Elect Greg Bennet is still waiting for his Episcopal Ordination, and three Deacons in our Diocese are awaiting the opportunity for their Ordinations to the Priesthood. Young people in our parish have had to postpone their Wedding Days. However, priests are now able to visit people for the Sacrament of Anointing and Viaticum where people are critically ill. If you wish to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation please contact me through the parish office.

The Diocese of Sale requested a report from all the parishes as to the level of their parish income for the month of August. In August, our parish Stewardship income was \$13 484.99 compared to \$20 309.50 which we would have expected prior to the pandemic. The Presbytery collection raised \$685.00 for the month compared to the expected \$2 495.00 prior to the pandemic. We are very close to the stage where we desire to proceed to going to tender for the construction of our church and parish offices, but because of the level of borrowing that will be required we are unable to do so at this current level of Stewardship income. I urge those who are able to resume and maintain their Stewardship commitment to the parish. If your circumstances have changed and you need assistance, please contact the parish office. I thank those parishioners who have changed their giving to direct debit, and I especially express the gratitude of our parish to all who have been able to maintain their financial support for the parish at this time.

I wish to express my personal gratitude for the many prayers, messages, calls and generous support for me over these past six months. It has been a testing time for all of us and I am grateful for your kindness and encouragement.

May God bless you all and keep you safe. St Thomas the Apostle, Our Lady Help of Christians and St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, pray for us.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Denis O'Bryan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a heart symbol integrated into the middle of the name.

Fr Denis O'Bryan (Parish Priest)