

*Dear Parishioners at The Oaks and Camden*

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**RE: WEEKLY MESSAGE FOR WEEKEND 24/25 OCTOBER**

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### **Weekend Masses**

Really good news with an easing of restrictions for places of worship. From today, we're permitted to have 136 people in church. This makes a huge difference and everyone who wanted to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion will be able to be accommodated at one of the nine Masses available at Camden.

Notwithstanding the easing of restrictions, there will be no change at The Oaks and Oakdale because the "one-in-four square metre" rule continues to apply.

Thanks to all who assist in the sanitising of the seats at the end of Mass. Feel welcome to BYO your own cloth and sanitiser so long as it's timber friendly.

In terms of music, there are some tentative plans to reintroduce sacred music and singing by a soloist only at some of the Masses from the first day of the Church's new year which, of course, is the First Sunday of Advent on 28/29 November. But we'll complete the Confirmation and FHC programmes before reporting more details of this new initiative.



### **Spiritual Insight**

This week's spiritual is taken from the book: "**The Universal Christ**" by Father Richard Rohr OFM

As Pope Francis insists, The Eucharistic bread and wine are not a prize for the perfect or a reward for good behaviour. Rather they are food for the human journey and medicine for the sick. We come forward not because we are worthy but because we are all wounded and somehow "unworthy". "I did not come for the healthy, but for the sick". Jesus said (Mk 2:17)

In giving great emphasis to Holy Mass and the reception of Holy Communion, Father Rohr continues with the following commentary:

The other momentous phrase that Jesus repeated at the Last Supper is the phrase "*for you*"..... Jesus says, my body "*given for you*", "*broken for you*" and my blood "*poured out for you*".

Anyone who has ever enjoyed lovemaking knows that the thrill comes not just from the physical sensation but from the other person's desire to be specifically with *you*, to be naked *for you*, to delight *in you*, to pleasure *you*. You always want to say, "But why me?" And you hope the other says, "*Because I love you!*"

In the same way, mutual desiring is the intended impact of the Eucharist (pages 134-136).

## **Confirmation Programme**

The two rehearsals so far have proceeded extra well. Big day tomorrow with another four rehearsals. And with the support of our personnel from the parish office, our parishioners and some of our outstanding teachers from St Clare's and St Paul's, the ceremonies are expected to be a wonderful experience for the young candidates and their families.

BTW, it's ok for families to now have a grouping of six for Confirmation instead of five because of the easing of restrictions. But it is necessary to email the parish office with the new name and contact number.



## **First Holy Communion Programme**

Developments over the past week bring to light the considerable difficulties sometimes encountered by clergy and parish staff in administering sacramental programmes.

About a month ago, leading into the present FHC programme, parents with children who had completed the Penance Programme earlier this year were advised by email of the weekend of the first week for registration into the programme. In this email, to all parishioners on the parish distribution list, it was further explained that because of COVID-19 restrictions, and the delay in the Confirmation programme, the FHC programme would need to be condensed. This would necessarily add some burden to families enrolling in the programme. As there is little within our control we can manipulate with regards to restrictions, etc, it was explained that it may be more convenient, and manageable, for some families to enrol next year or afterwards. This would be entirely understandable and supported.

A large number of families were wonderfully responsive, and it was apparent that many had made sacrifices to register so as to ensure the smooth operation of the program. Sincere thanks are again extended to these families. The parish on its part had also been flexible with regards to those who had some problems attending Mass in the first week of the programme. It was a good example of the Parish Office and parents working together.

Unfortunately on a parent organised Facebook page associated with one of the parish schools, comments were made to the effect that some parents had not attended any Masses, and did not intend to do so, and instead had asked other parents to collect and return forms for them. Disparaging comments had also been made regarding the Parish Office. This is certainly a sad circumstance, as such actions are not those of fairness and equity towards those families that organised their schedules so as to be able to attend Mass. Nor are they reflective of the hard work provided by the Parish Office staff, both employed and volunteer, to assist people as best they can within the limits that we find ourselves in during this pandemic.

If you have concerns as to the Parish's sacramental programme and its organisation, I am more than happy to hear from you, and if possible, change what we can, when we can, within the external constraints we have upon us.

By the end of this week, 24/25<sup>th</sup>, the candidates should have completed the first two workshops, and completed the whole booklet by the end of next week. It will be necessary for the books to be handed in at Mass for review on the weekend of 31/1 November. If needing assistance, please feel most welcome to ring the parish office. Thanks.



## Celebrants for Weekend Masses

		<b>24/25 October</b>	<b>31/1 November</b>
<b>Saturday</b>			
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Anthony	Father Joseph
Oakdale	5:00 PM	Father Anthony	Father Joseph
Camden	4:30 PM	Father Michael	Father Anthony
Camden	6:00 PM	Father Michael	Father Anthony

Please note that Confirmation Ceremonies are on at 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM

### **Sunday**

The Oaks	9:00 AM	Father Anthony	Father Michael
Camden	7:30 AM	Father Anthony	Father Joseph
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Michael	Father Anthony
Camden	10:30 AM	Father Joseph	Father Joseph
Camden	12:00 noon	Father Joseph	Father Michael (Confirmations)
Camden	1:30 PM		
Camden	3:00 PM		
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Joseph	Father Anthony

Please note that Confirmation Masses are on at 12:00 Noon and 2:00 PM

Kind Regards

Father Michael Williams PP