

## Bellerive - Lindisfarne Catholic Parish

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Fr Richard Ross PP

Dear Parish Family,

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we prepare for public Masses once more. There is a lot of work that goes into preparing a Covid Safe Plan and we are being careful to get the plan right and comply with all aspects prior to re-opening our churches for public Masses. We are focused on providing a safe environment for every one of you to feel confident and comfortable coming to Mass, even after our state borders re-open. We are still awaiting the Premier's decision with regard to Stage Two easing of restrictions and will proceed accordingly. Our churches will not open during Stage One easing of restrictions as the task of complying with health and safety requirements is beyond our resources for the sake of just ten people at a time. A letter from the chair of the Parish Pastoral Council accompanies this newsletter.

Pentecost Sunday is traditionally called the birthday of the church. It marks the beginning of the mission entrusted by Jesus to his disciples. An Episcopalian Bishop in the United States responded to the call of President Trump to open the churches quickly and get back to normal services, despite the high risk to parishioners. In a statement that reminds us very clearly what the mission of the church is, Bishop Deon Johnson said: "The work of the church is essential. The work of caring for the lonely, the marginalized and the oppressed is essential. The work of speaking truth to power and seeking justice is essential. The work of being a loving, liberating and life giving presence in the world is essential. The work of welcoming the stranger, the refugee and the undocumented is essential. The work of reconciliation and healing and caring is essential. The church does not need to "open" because the church never "closed". We who make up the Body of Christ, the church, love God and our neighbour so much that we will stay away from our buildings until it is safe. We are the church."

This week our country also celebrates National Reconciliation Week. The week begins on 27<sup>th</sup> May, the date in 1967 of the referendum to include Aborigines as citizens of Australia, and concludes on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, the date in 1992 of the Mabo decision where the High Court legally recognised that Australia was inhabited prior to European settlement. These dates, while worthy of celebration, reveal an attitude to Indigenous people of this land that is shameful and embarrassing to a modern way of thinking. The indigenous peoples of Australia are the oldest continuous culture on the planet. They hold traditions that span tens of thousands of years and have a relationship to the land characterised by respect and mutuality that exposes our exploitative attitude the earth's finite natural resources. We have so much to learn from our Aboriginal peoples about spirituality and reverence for the timeless work of God, but unfortunately we are so often in too much of a hurry to bother. Perhaps during this Covid shutdown, you have taken time to notice the life of the river, the moods of the mountain and the rhythm of the days and the seasons just a little more.

Wishing you all a happy birthday as members of the church. May the Holy Spirit bring peace, joy and hope to your hearts today and every day.

Fr Richard

Copies of the newsletter, The Standard and some magazines are available on the table in the carport outside the Parish office.

### **VINNIES WINTER APPEAL**

Thank you for supporting the St Vincent de Paul Society's winter appeal. Donations can be made today by visiting [vinnies.org.au](http://vinnies.org.au) or by calling 13 18 12 or by EFT to the St Vincent de Paul Society Bank Account CBA BSB: 067 601 Account Number 10178303

Next week's Readings: Ex 34:4-6, 8-9; 2 Cor 13:11-13; Jn 3:16-18