

### Churches reopened

As you are aware the federal government's 3-step framework released on the 8 May 2020 states that every religious gathering is limited to a maximum of 10 people.

As a result we have established a roster system enabling us to reach as many parishioners possible to either attend a weekday or weekend mass.

At this stage we have been personally contacting parishioners that we have on our parish records and allocating them to mass.

If you would like to attend mass or know somebody who would like to attend, we ask you to call the parish office and leave your name and telephone contact and we will allocate you to a mass.

We do understand the frustration of not being able to attend mass as usual, however, we ask you to be patient and abide by the current restrictions.

We will keep you updated on changes as they progress.

Also we have set up our own parish website: [stmelscampsie.org.au](http://stmelscampsie.org.au) and you will be able to register for mass via a link. This website is a work in progress so again we appreciate your patience.

Catholics across the country have also been asked to register their attendance at their local parish via [www.massregister.com.au](http://www.massregister.com.au) in line with the Federal Government's 3-step framework for the easing of COVID-19 restrictions.

If a confirmed case of COVID-19 occurs in a parish, every person who has registered as an attendee of the parish will receive an email notifying them of the diagnosis and the date and time the infected person attended the church. No other details will be provided.

### Project Compassion Boxes

If you would like to return your Project Compassion boxes please drop them off at the Parish Office during the week either on a Tuesday / Wednesday or Friday.

### CatholicCare

#### outreach to the lonely and isolated

CatholicCare and the Parishes of the Sydney Archdiocese are here to support vulnerable people in our local communities during lockdown. We can connect local volunteers to people who need help with their shopping and errands or even just for a regular friendly chat over the phone. If you, or someone you know, could use a little help during this time, CCareline 13 18 19 can connect you with a local volunteer from your community. CCareline 13 18 19 is a free and confidential helpline for counselling, relationships, parenting, ageing, disabilities, addictions and mental health. CCareline is here to help. **Call 13 18 19 Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm.**

### Prayer Resources during time of Pandemic

The Archdiocese of Sydney has a dedicated webpage with prayers and scriptural reflections to help nurture your faith during these difficult times. Please visit:

<https://www.sydneycatholic.org/coronavirus-updates/prayer-resources-for-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>



## St Mel's Parish Est 1915

7 Evaline Street Campsie NSW 2194  
Ph. 9787 1582

Email: [stmelscampsie@bigpond.com](mailto:stmelscampsie@bigpond.com)

Parish Priest: Fr. Anthony Mifsud

Parish Secretary: Diane Daher

Parish Office Opening hours: 9.30am-3pm on  
Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.  
Monday & Wednesday office is closed.

St Mel's Catholic Primary School:  
9789 3800

### PARISH MASS TIMES

Saturday Vigil: 5pm  
Sunday: 8.30am & 10am  
Weekdays: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday at 9am  
Wednesday: 7pm followed by adoration.

### SACRAMENTS:

Reconciliation: Saturday 10am to 10.30am & 4pm to 4.30pm.  
Baptismal Preparation: First Tuesday of The Month. Call Parish Office to register.  
Baptisms: 11am Sundays  
Weddings: By arrangement with six months notice  
Care for the Sick: Please call the presbytery.

### DEVOTIONS:

Rosary: After weekday masses  
Adoration: 9.30am Saturday & first Friday of the month  
Italian Prayer Group: Tuesday. 10am - Lower Parish Hall.

### SAINTS and FEAST DAYS THIS WEEK

MONDAY 25th May: Our Lady Help Of Christians  
TUESDAY 26th May: St Philip Neri (priest)

**FIRST READING** Acts 1:1-11***A reading from the Acts of the Apostles***

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.' **WORD OF THE LORD.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Ps 46:2-3. 6-9. R. v.6

**(R.)** *God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:  
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.*

All peoples clap your hands,  
cry to God with shouts of joy!  
For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear,  
great king over all the earth. **(R.)**

God goes up with shouts of joy;  
the Lord goes up with trumpet blast.  
Sing praise for God, sing praise,  
sing praise to our king, sing praise. **(R.)**

God is king of all the earth.  
Sing praise with all your skill.  
God is king over the nations;  
God reigns on his holy throne. **(R.)**

**SECOND READING** Eph 1:17-23***A reading from letter of the St Paul to the Ephesians***

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

**WORD OF THE LORD.****GOSPEL ACCLAMATION** Mt 28:19. 20

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

Go and teach all people my gospel.  
I am with you always, until the end of the world.  
**Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL** 'Mt 28:16-20***A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew***

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'

**GOSPEL OF THE LORD****Where is the Body?**

When one thinks about it, our Risen Lord Jesus Christ could have continued to appear to groups of disciples, generation after generation, century after century – until now!

But, he didn't.

After *appearing* to 500-600 disciples after his death, Our Lord *dis-appeared*. Why? Basically, because our Lord's Resurrection isn't all about us!

The disciples had to be weaned of his Risen-mode of appearance among them lest they think that the victory over Death and its warriors – chaos, decay, entropy, exhaustion – is meant for human beings alone.

But, as St Paul says, the Risen Lord is the One who 'fills *all* creation'. Elsewhere (in Romans) St Paul portrays the whole of creation as groaning in eager expectation that it may share in the transfiguring power of Our Lord's resurrection.

The *whole* universe is now filled with His Resurrected presence and the power radiating out from his Risen Humanity.

But dis-appearance is not the same as absence. We believe that Our Risen Lord is present – in our little fraction of time – the early 21st century, in our little fraction of space – here on the banks of the Derwent. The Risen Lord is present. How? In many ways, but here are two.

Of course, in the Heavenly Bread and Spiritual Drink of Holy Communion.

We Catholics are pretty familiar with that as we see Holy Communion with the eyes of faith.

But, Our Lord Jesus Christ is present in another way – more challenging, more disturbing.

St Paul says '... the *Church is His Body*'. What does that mean... 'The *Church is His Body*'?

We are one of the ways in which Jesus, the Risen Lord of the *whole* universe, has chosen to be present on earth, in *our* little part of the universe.

Why did the figures in white rebuke the disciples: 'Why do you stand looking into Heaven?'

Because the disciples had to ready themselves for an earthly role – to be the Spirit filled body of Jesus Christ in their own time and place – first century Jerusalem in the first instance and then into other parts of the Roman empire. In the same way, we have to ready ourselves to be the Spirit-filled embodiment of Jesus Christ in our own time and place.

That is what is disturbing and challenging, about this feast day. Our Lord still has hands and arms to embrace those needing comfort or love, to uphold, to work, to play, to create a new world.

*Your hands, my hands, your arms, my arms.*

Our Lord still has a tongue to speak the healing/consoling word, to sing a song that transforms a situation, to tell the truth under pressure.

*Your tongue, my tongue.*

Our Lord still has eyes that gaze on others, a way of looking at others which only wants the best for him or her, rather than the condemning glare which wounds.

*Your eyes, my eyes.*

During this phase of the history of planet earth Jesus wants no other hands, no other tongues, no other eyes than our hands and tongues and eyes. Here on this planet, in our time, we who are baptised are His body to continue his saving work for the earth and human history.

We can only be so, if, like the disciples on this feast day, we stop staring into Heaven as though mourning an absence. Instead we need to ready ourselves to receive the Holy Spirit.

Then, we will be able to really fulfil St Paul's description of us: 'The Church which *is His Body*'.

© Fr Michael Tate; [mtate@bigpond.com](mailto:mtate@bigpond.com)

Rev Prof Michael Tate graduated in Law from the University of Tasmania in 1968, and in Theology from Oxford University in 1971. He lectured at the University of Tasmania from 1972-78, being Dean of the Faculty of Law in 1977-78. He was a Senator for Tasmania from 1978-93, being Federal Minister for Justice from 1987-93. He served as Ambassador to The Hague and the Holy See from 1993-96. He then returned to Australia and was ordained in May 2000 and has been a parish priest in the Archdiocese of Hobart since then. He is currently Vicar General in the Archdiocese and is an Honorary Professor of Law at the University of Tasmania where he lectures in International Humanitarian Law.