

A LETTER FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR

Dear parishioners,

Firstly, let me introduce myself; my name is Charles Staa and currently I serve as the Chairman of the Parish Pastoral Council of the Parish of South Yarra for the period of 2020-2021. The current PPC members for this year are Tony Grant (Co-Chairman), Susie Rodeghiero (Secretary), Daniel Dorall, Annie Shi and Mary Greene. Committee representatives are Paul Mulqueen (Finance), Di Brebner (Liturgy), Marc Lim (YAM), Janet Maher (SJOS and Haven Liaison).

2020 has been challenging for all of us in South Yarra.

We began the year learning about the unknown virus that had infected many people in Wuhan, China. Who would have thought that this infection would affect people's lives throughout the world? In our Parish, sombre feelings started when it was announced on 1st March that there should be no Communion from the Chalice at Mass. Then, Masses were cancelled, our churches were closed. Our AGM was cancelled; and Fr Luca had to leave the parish for some treatment in Sydney and then in South Korea. We were left with the feelings of despair and sadness as we could not visit the House of God.

Thankfully, with the blessing of Jesus Christ, Mother Mary, and the Holy Spirit, we were able to livestream the Mass via Zoom and Facebook. These virtual Masses would not be possible without the help of Rob Huggins and Terence Thambi who have volunteered enormous time and effort to allow us to gather together to celebrate the Eucharist. I personally thank Rob and Terence for their invaluable contributions.

As time went by, we received much feedback from our parishioners about the need to gather to keep our parish alive outside the virtual Masses. We were able to Zoom nine evening talks with guest speakers. We thank them for their invaluable contribution to the parish.

Finally, I am profoundly grateful to all parishioners who have joined the Masses and the evening talk sessions through Zoom and Facebook. We as parishioners have shown that we are resilient in our faith and would persevere to continue to practice our Christian beliefs in these trying times.

Thank you and may God bless us all with rivers of His holy love and peace in Jesus' name, Amen. (Charles Staa)