

ZOOMING IN ON PARISH LIFE Fr Brian Buckley OSA



The past eight months have challenged faith communities in many ways. Pastoral visitation, meetings, social gathering, and of course congregations have been severely impacted. As with every other parish we have scrambled to meet the needs of our people by phone, mail, email, websites and online streaming platforms, and amid all the consternation some positive things have also emerged.

While some were immediately disadvantaged, many others have discovered a new found facility with online and mobile communication, joining livestreamed worship and meetings from the convenience of their homes.

In the absence of regular parish events and special celebrations, the idea of hosting guest speakers has met with general approval. The range of speakers and topics has meant that we have hopefully provided something stimulating for everyone regardless of age or interests. A brief review of our offerings may be worth recording here in one place

FR TONY BANKS OSA



The parish was fortunate to have Fr Tony Banks, Assistant General of the Augustinians, residing with us for a period. He kindly accepted an invitation to address parishioners on the evening of July 15th at 7pm on the subject **“The Evolving Church”**. Fr Tony brings to us a wealth of experience of the life of the world Church and the Augustinian Order.

SR MARY COLOE PBVM



We were grateful that Sr Mary Coloe pbvm, an internationally recognised scholar of the Gospel of John and someone known to many of us, offered to present a talk on the Book of Revelation with the title of **“Apocalypse Now”** on Tuesday August 11th. Mary is Associate Professor at Yarra Theological Union of the University of Divinity.

FR JOE FARRELL OSA



On Tuesday Sept 1st at 7pm Fr Joe Farrell OSA spoke to us via Zoom on a work of St Augustine entitled “On the Happy Life”. Fr Joe has served in Rome as an assistant general of the Order for the past seven years and has made a deep study of Augustinian spirituality.

RHYANNON ELLIOT



On Tuesday Sept 17th at 7pm Rhyannon Elliot of Catholic Care Melbourne moderated a session for parishioners on self care in a time of pandemic. Ryannon has a vast experience in counselling and marriage preparation in the Archdiocese.

FR FUTOSHI MATSUO OSA



Our September 29th Zoom conference featured a young Augustinian priest in Japan, Fr Futoshi Matsuo OSA. Fr Futoshi was ordained in 2017 and now serves in a parish in Nagasaki, where he also teaches. The session opened a window for us on the Church in a different part of the Asia Pacific at this time of pandemic, from an Augustinian perspective.

PATRICE MORIARTY

‘Spiritual Nourishment during COVID’ Hosted by YAM, this session on October 13th was in a Q&A format, where topics as not being able to gather or receive the Sacraments were discussed, and we heard the insights of Patrice Moriarty, an experienced youth minister who leads the Social Justice Office at the Diocese of Parramatta.



SR LORRAINE TESTA (ASJM)

The October 29th Thursday night 7pm conference was led by Sr Lorraine Testa a local Augustinian sister who addresses the question of *“Ageing – Can it be Good?”* – a thought-provoking and encouraging conversation on ageing.



FR MICHAEL SULLIVAN OSA

Fr Michael Sullivan agreed to spend an hour with us from Vietnam on our Zoom Conference of Thursday November 12th at 7pm. It was a great opportunity to hear about his first year in his new missionary assignment and learn something of the Vietnamese Church.



FR PERCIVAL SEVARE OSA

For our Zoom Conference on Tuesday November 24th Fr Percival joined us for a session from his current location in Sydney. Fr Percival now works as Provincial Secretary of the Augustinians in Australia as well as his many other duties including vocations director.



One final thought..... Had we perhaps planned a series of guest speakers through the same period in a normal year in the parish I doubt we would have had as many in attendance. As we said at the beginning, some positive things have emerged during this time of isolation from each other.