



Catholic Mission of South Yarra
St Joseph and St Thomas Aquinas Churches
Incorporating Korean Catholic Ministries
Mount Waverley (and Western Melbourne)



A Ministry of the Order of Saint Augustine Australia

Mission Statement (Draft September 2022)

“We the people of the Mission of South Yarra” are committed to continue to walk the path of missionary discipleship (“The Way of the Gospel”) and address the missionary call, inviting all to the fullness of the Gospel of life, with a sense of vibrancy and vitality, such that:*

- *The Gospel is at the heart of our life, worship and outreach.*
- *Our faith communities are arranged in a way to flourish*
- *And are sustainable—spiritually, pastorally and materially.*

In the spirit of Mission Renewal:

- A Mission Statement has been added to our Pastoral Plan
- We are conscious that our mission is closely aligned with the Korean Catholic Community in the Archdiocese of Melbourne
- We continue to engage with our neighbouring parishes – Port Melbourne/Middle Park, South Melbourne, Toorak/Armada
- We affirm the role of our nominated lay Mission Coordinators
- Our pastoral teams involve clerical and lay leaders
- We are alert to the need to communicate with our faith communities
- We liaise with Archdiocesan offices for Mission, Properties, Finance
- We affirm our close ties with our Outreach Services (SJOS)
- We affirm our role assisting with pastoral care at the Alfred Hospital and local nursing homes
- Our ministry is enriched by the tradition of Augustinian spirituality

(Citing the address to a meeting of South Yarra Catholics in 1887)*

THE STORY SO FAR.....

“Take the Way of the Gospel” (Re-imagining our Local Church as Mission Communities)

In 2021, Archbishop Peter Comensoli met with the clergy and lay leaders from around the Archdiocese of Melbourne to begin discussing what the local Church in Melbourne might look like in the future in the light of significant, structural, personnel and financial challenges.

How might our local communities of faith continue to address the missionary call of the Gospel into the future? How might we invite people into the fullness of the Gospel of life, and do so with a sense of vibrancy and vitality?

Our parish took tentative steps along this path by attending online presentations during the Covid lockdowns, discussing the issue at Parish Council and parish committee meetings. We spoke with our neighbouring parishes, appointing Lay Mission Co-ordinators (Stephy Coosnappa, from staff, and Tony Grant from Parish Council) and by beginning to explore what a shared future might look like for our community.

From time to time at Mass we have addressed the matter and provided updates regarding the Parish Mission Renewal process. We were also visited by two Archdiocesan representatives from the Evangelisation Office, Lorraine McCarthy and Cath Garner. We are now overdue for an opportunity for a forum for parishioners to hear more and provide some feedback.

Among the neighbouring parishes who initially shared our discussions, St Mary's East St Kilda and St Joseph's Malvern, have made decisions to look towards adjacent parishes to their south and east respectively. That leaves the four remaining parishes, South Yarra, Port Melbourne/Middle Park, South Melbourne and Toorak/Armadale to continue the discernment as to our middle to longer-term future.

The Archdiocese has made it clear from the beginning that a “Mission” may be constituted by either a geographical, demographic, or some other ‘ministry focus’ that identifies and unites a community.

A voiced concern is that a plurality of communities who decide to collaborate and work towards a shared future, or have such a structure imposed upon them, should not in the process, lose their particular character, history, spirit or charism. As some have noted, we should not be in the business of creating “Bunnings” style super-parishes.

What has become apparent is that our “Mission” and therefore our future, is tied to two principal stakeholders, one internal and one external to the parish. We are closely linked to **St Joseph's Outreach Services (SJOS)** now an incorporated body in their own right, who share and utilize our premises, and importantly, the Augustinian ministry to the Melbourne **Korean Catholic Community** based at Mount Waverley but soon to expand to the western districts of Melbourne.

Historical Note

The term **Mission of South Yarra** is rooted in the historical title given to the first Catholic community in the area in 1887 (Mission of South Yarra/Toorak). (The Parish of South Yarra was not established until 1906).

The Augustinian Community

An Augustinian connection is also identifiable from the beginning. The then Bishop of Melbourne, James Alipius Goold OSA, first promulgated the "*Mission of Prahran and St. Kilda*" in 1862. He died in office in 1886, a year before the appointment of James Francis Fitzgerald as first pastor of the South Yarra Mission in 1887. Fr Fitzgerald had been educated in the Augustinian Monastery of Callan, County Kilkenny. From that perspective, the presence of an Augustinian community in South Yarra to this day for close on 50 years, seems appropriate. **The pastoral approach to mission seems well suited to a religious community where community life and shared ministries are intrinsic to their religious vocation.**

Towards Collaboration

The **Melbourne Mission Renewal** is far from a unique response to the challenge of providing an adequate evangelical outreach in the current pastoral environment. The **Archdiocese of Boston** has inaugurated what are called 'parish collaboratives', where

"Led by a group of priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers, called a pastoral team, would provide pastoral services to parishes in the collaborative. Under the plan, each parish in the collaborative group will maintain its separate identity and retain control of its own property and assets."

The particular structure of the South Yarra Mission might be characterized as a **collaboration of ministries** that comprise a traditional geographical parish setting, combined with ministry to a migrant community (The Korean Catholic Community) spread more widely throughout the Archdiocese and liaison with an incorporated outreach organisation, St Joseph's Outreach Services (SJOS). While specific pastoral roles may be delineated within the mission (e.g. South Yarra Pastor, Migrant Chaplain, Mission Moderator, pastoral team members) the hope would be that the various threads of the ministry might be woven together more tightly as the understanding of shared mission develops.

Stability and Sustainability

The Augustinians are committed to South Yarra for the coming four years but the alliance with an expanding Korean Catholic Community in Melbourne and availability of Korean Augustinians is vital.

The financial viability of the mission is underpinned by rental arrangements with SJOS and other tenants. There is no debt and maintenance is manageable. Our community is small, transient, but only partly diminished after the Covid period.

As circumstances evolve and change, an openness to future closer collaboration with neighbouring parishes is also an essential element of the mission charism.

It is proposed that after consultation with parishioners and the Korean Community a submission to the Archdiocese be made constituting our response to the call to Gospel discipleship.