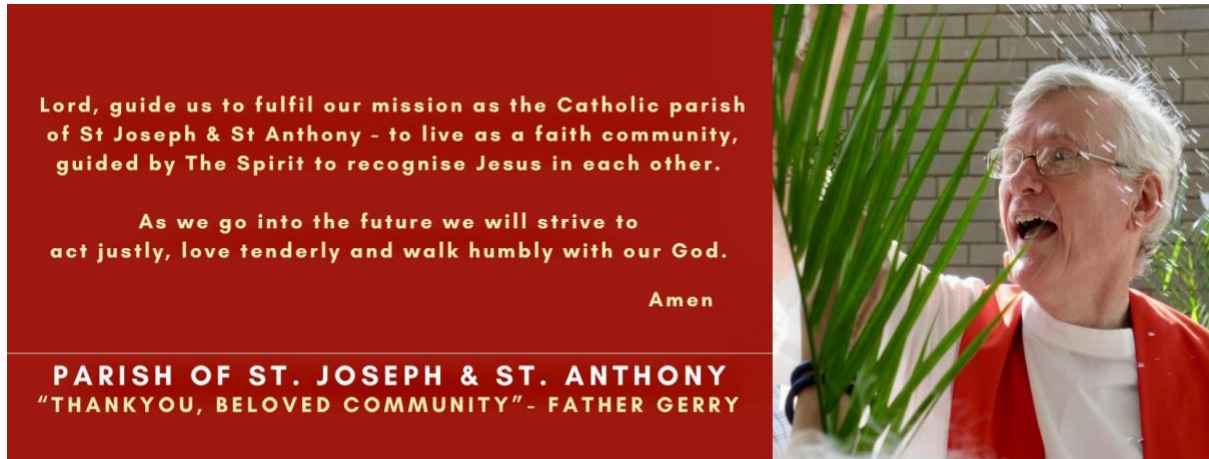


THANK YOU, BELOVED COMMUNITY

Father Gerry Hefferan – 30 July 2023



Lord, guide us to fulfil our mission as the Catholic parish of St Joseph & St Anthony - to live as a faith community, guided by The Spirit to recognise Jesus in each other.

As we go into the future we will strive to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God.

Amen

PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH & ST. ANTHONY
"THANKYOU, BELOVED COMMUNITY" - FATHER GERRY

Father Gerry spinking Holy Water outside the church of St. Joseph's

THANK YOU

When Archbishop Bathersby phoned me in 2011 to advise me of my transfer, I immediately thought of what a privilege it would be, to follow in the footsteps of Bernie Costigan.

FATHER BERNIE

When I arrived in mid 2011, Fr Bernie explained the design of the church as it symbolises the church in prayer, community and action. As I complete my 12 year appointment as Parish Priest, I think of Fr Bernie and all parish family members who have contributed so much over many years to the *Mission of Jesus*.

ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH DESIGN & SYMBOLS

The design of the church building helps us to gather together as a community of faith to praise God. The sanctuary shape reminds us of *a boat*, on a journey together. The *exterior western cross* reminds us that we are to follow Jesus into the world. The *sail tower* above the roof reminds us of the Spirit moving us. The *western church windows* allow us to see some of God's wonderful creation, with the mountain range, sky and clouds, trees and life. We give praise to God.

Since then, other gifts have added to the depth of insight into our parish life, including the cross in the Sanctuary, the painting of the girl from South Sudan, the fossilized rock from Blackall, the Last Supper Icon from Murhaf Obeid, the icon of Jesus and the eternal life crosses in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, art work of St Francis of Assisi, the icon of our Lady of Perpetual Help and other symbols that point to our parish relationships with other communities over the years.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all parish staff and to all parish ministry groups.

Thank you to Margaret our ministry coordinator, to Bronwyn our parish secretary, to Fr Minje Kim, to our leadership team on the Parish Pastoral Council over the previous 12 years, to St Joseph's School and St John Fisher College, to St Joey's EarlyEd Care, and to the prayer of all parish community members.

In one of my homilies in 2020, I said

*“Called by Jesus to love, the leaders of some early Christian communities in Asia and Europe during the New Testament period, spoke of **the beloved**. Even though cultures varied in the Middle East, Turkey, Greece and Italy, the Christian communities in those cultures used the word **‘beloved’** of each other. They knew that the Father called Jesus ‘My Son, the **‘Beloved’**. They knew that in the Old Testament sacred writing of the Song of Songs, ‘beloved’ had a special meaning... What an incredible difference it makes to a Christian community, when the genuine love of God and neighbour is the very centre of their lives, and they recognize each other as **‘beloved’** of God.”*

THANK YOU, BELOVED COMMUNITY OF ST JOSEPH’S & ST ANTHONY’S

Thank you for your love of God and love of neighbour.

WELCOME JOHN GRACE & BRYAN PIPINS

Welcome to John Grace who will be resident priest for the month of August.

Welcome to Bryan Pipins as the new parish priest.

A MEMORY

I conclude with a memory in 2016, when at a 9am Sunday Mass, all gave a standing ovation as people from Iraq and Syria arrived at the church door. The tears and joy were overwhelming.

A Community of Beloved.

Thank you.

Gerry Hefferan



*Our new parish families from Iraq & Syria with Bishop Vincent Long on 23 March 2017
(first arrivals came by bus, travelled across town, arrived at church just after the start of 9am Mass, Sunday 1 May 2016 – [Facebook](#))*