



# THE NORTHERN PLAINS



## MESSAGE FROM THE PARISH PRIEST 2019 FR. NOVELITO LIM

It has been a wonderful 19 months spent in the parishes of Kerang, Cohuna and Pyramid Hill. I have mentioned in my first few months here that the three parishes have a great sense of community. You support one another as you build your own parish and your own church. Priests in these three parishes have come and gone but you kept the place strong in faith and in camaraderie.

The support you have given through all the projects and changes in the parishes like the new toilet in Kerang, newly refurbished meeting room in Cohuna, and newly painted porch and outdoor toilet of Pyramid Hill. This wouldn't be possible without your help, my dear parishioners.

Christmas is a season of great jubilation for Christ has come to save us. Moreover, it is also a season of thanksgiving. Hence, I would like to thank the Parish Pastoral Councils and all the volunteers no matter how great or small your impact for the betterment of our parish, your second home. It is and will always be appreciated and held in high esteem.

May our celebration of Christmas be a time to seek and find growth in our faith and trust in our saviour Jesus Christ. I humbly pray to the Lord that the spirit of generosity will always be at present and at work all the days of our life, not just during this festive season. To all of us this Christmas, may our expression of gratitude and love for who we are and what we mean to each other be forever present.





## ST. PATRICK'S PARISH, KERANG BY MAUREEN DAGGE



During 2019 we have continued with our parish priorities of Community, Education and Formation, Parish and School and Our Buildings and Surrounds.

Our Community Celebration this year was held on the 24 March. It was well supported. We also celebrated Christmas early at our recent "Y" Mass. The Holy Week ceremonies between the three parishes were a huge workload for Father Novie. All ceremonies were meaningful including the Combined Churches of Kerang Stations of the Cross ceremony held in the main street.

In June 2018 we were advised of the upcoming Plenary Council which was to be conducted in Australia with our requirement to have a dialogue with our parishioners about the future of the Church, and what God is asking of us in Australia. Father Novie, Christine O' Donoghue and myself attended an information day in Bendigo. Resources became available with a survey. A group session was held in February after the surveys were collated and themes identified. Father Novie submitted St Patrick's answers to the diocesan pool. As a result of discussion, and Father Novie's enthusiasm we have commenced our "Y" Masses, and to date three Masses have been conducted in St Joseph's hall with increased interest from parents and parishioners.

The Grief Support Group continues to meet, and the Bereavement team continues to assist in the preparation of funerals, and both groups are highly valued within our parish community. Thank you to those who carry out this work. We farewelled former principal Nick Hall and his family and welcomed Chris Mitchell and his family into our parish. Commentary commenced at the beginning of Mass and is working well. Our Acknowledgement to Country was developed and is at the top of the front page of the bulletin each week.

The Master Plan for Maintenance and Capital Development has continued.

This year we have had the new toilet facility come to fruition and it is now in use. The confessional has had the glass panel installed, the broken window at the front of the church repaired the entrance doors adjusted and rehinged, and the piety stall moved to make way for the new toilet. The seats have been rearranged to allow for wider aisles and to fit in with the new entrance as a result of the new toilet. A Defibrillator has been donated and installed in the church and some parishioners have undertaken training in the use of it should it be required. Our communal area used for the cuppa after Mass is working well with increased numbers attending each month.

The Memorial Garden continues to be developed with an Exmouth magnolia tree planted to fill in the vacant area. A new crib for outside the church was purchased and installed from money raised by the ladies who cater for the funerals. It serves to remind us all of the true meaning of Christmas. The parish has also decorated a rustic tree to bring a Christmas message to all, and it is to be placed in the Autopro shop window in Kerang.

Parish members continue to take turns to mow the lawns, and along with our working bees which were held in June and November, the grounds are being well maintained. Our most recent working bee concentrated on interior cleaning of the church after the builders had completed their work. A constitution has been developed for the Parish Pastoral Council and this has been submitted to the bishop for endorsement.

Thank you to Father Novie for the dedication and enthusiasm you bring to your work. We are indeed grateful that you are among us. My sincere thanks to all parishioners for all that you do to make this parish function so well, and to my fellow Parish Council members for your support and encouragement during the year. May you all enjoy a blessed and happy Christmas season.



## ST. PATRICK'S PARISH, KERANG PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: MAUREEN DAGGE

**Members:** Ellen Bortolotto, Margy Mowat, Denise Franz, Pam Hirst, Frank Kelly, Terri-Anne Hastie, Liz Bland, Lindy Wilson, Chris Mitchel





## ST. MARY'S PARISH, COHUNA BY PETER BOYLE

St Mary's Parish Cohuna has a great deal to be thankful for, including the year of 2019 but also for the many years of wisdom and commitment of the Parishioners of St Marys.

Our Parish operates by volunteers and is supported both financially and in spirit by all who find comfort and support and who feel at home in our Church and community.

We have had a wonderful year with Father Novie and all have embraced his energy and ability to connect and deliver the message of Christ. On behalf of the Parish I thank Father Novie for his work in our community, including his input to ensure good governance within our Parish Council, his willingness to accommodate family's needs in their sacramental participation, and implement important programs that provide support to those in need. Initiatives include Supporting youth through scholarships, - The Good Samaritan Award at all schools in Cohuna, and ensured the elderly continued to be visited who reside in care facilities in Cohuna and the vulnerable remained supported through St Vincent's de Paul.

Judy Doyle and Father worked together to ensure candidates and families were supported as they undertook the sacraments. Thank you to Mary Harker and Lyn Byrne for their support to Father in preparation for funerals and Sunday Mass. We baptisms, 4 funerals and together with the school 11 and 13 candidates undertake their first reconciliation and first Eucharist/confirmation respectively.

With the generous support of the Parish we purchased a new sound system

for the Church and refurbished the meeting space in the Presbytery. A wall was removed, new carpet purchased, and the walls were painted. It is now indeed a wonderful space for meetings, social gatherings and other functions. The Catholic Ladies Guild also kindly donated a split system for the refurbished space. Lead by Liz Keely and Mary Wight.

Each week we have a ministry team who provide incredible support to the Church and are always willing to step up when needed. Our lawns are always immaculate, and our church is a beautiful building and quite possibly one of the oldest buildings in our town. As a Parish we are mindful of repairs and maintenance and continue to plan to ensure we have funds for the upkeep of the Church and surrounds.

Thank you to Simon and Anne Raffin and Anne-Marie Link who prepare the Prayers of the faithful each week, thank you to our wonderful musicians Elaine Keely and John Doyle and the Choir Kevin Harker and Jenny Appleby who, each week share their gifts and provide us with the privilege of live music.

Acknowledgement to Rob Shanahan and Kylie Doyle who work with the Sandhurst Diocese to complete the financial and reporting obligations of the Church. To the Parish Council Team. Bruce Bird, Mary Harker, Betty and Barney McLoughlin, Hayden Bird, Judy Doyle, Jasmine Ryan, Mick Carmody and Rob Shanahan thank you for a positive and constructive year. St Marys along with many other parishes are experiencing a decline in attendance at Mass, we must continue to evolve and have relevance to our community and ensure our Parish remains a welcoming place for all.



## ST. PATRICK'S PARISH, COHUNA PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON: PETER BOYLE

**Members:** Bruce Bird, Judy Doyle, Hayden Bird, Rob Shanahan, Betty McLoughlin, Brian McLoughlin, Kylie Doyle, Mic Carmody, Mary Harker, Adelia Muldoon, Jasmine Ryan (School Principal)



# ST. PATRICK'S PARISH, PYRAMID HILL

BY CARMEN CAUCHI



It was early in June 2018 when we were entrusted to the care of our newly installed Parish Priest by Bishop Les Tomlinson. It was a day of great rejoicing knowing that God never abandoned his promise to leave us.



Father Novie had just been appointed Dean of Western Deanery. After some months of planning, discussion and consultation, we got the insurance finances to have the spire fixed which has earned compliments by the parishioners and the people in the community. Credits to the love and generosity of everyone who donated.



During the year we had working bees to fix the room at the back of our Church, cleaning the presbytery, the garden and the Church itself. Moreover, to foster camaraderie, a meal was served. Later, a change of occupancy of the presbytery took place.



We also had Masses to celebrate the opening of the academic year at St. Patrick's Primary School attended by all the families and the surrounding communities. In August, Bishop Les Tomlinson attended for the sacraments for 3 students from St. Pat's School and 2 from the parish community.



At the end of every month, a Filipino mass is offered for the Filipino community and followed by a meal. We also have bingo nights which are much enjoyed by everyone. The involvement of the Filipino community is greatly appreciated.



The Introduction of commentators and readers has commenced resulting in more parishioners involved in the Church.

During the year, we welcomed the Peacock family to our Catholic community. It was a significant event as we formally welcomed Ron and Jenny in our growing and enlivened Christian community. St. Patrick's finances are looking good with ongoing planned giving in progress through the guidance of our pastor and the Parish Pastoral Council.

**ST. PATRICK'S PARISH, PYRAMID HILL PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL**

**CHAIRPERSON: CARMEN CAUCHI**

**Members:** Kate Wood, Bernie Smith, John Carroll, Abi Umali, Marilyn Fernandez, Anne Grogan, Colleen Hampson, Rachel Cain, Vincent Bartels, Ron Peacock