



St Paul's Catholic Church

Mount Lawley

July 2021

Dear St Paul's Parishioners –

I want to bring your attention to a few events and 'happenings':

- **live-streamed Mass this Thursday**
- **two church break-ins**
- **upcoming bible study programs**
- **parish retreat at New Norcia**
- **Adoration time**

Live-streamed Mass: Thursday 22nd July

This is the Feast of Saint Mary Magdalene, Disciple of the Lord. At the 5.45pm Mass, both Theodore and Eimear will sing the beautiful music from Easter that recalls Mary going to the tomb and discovering the Risen Christ. Please attend if you can, and spread the word.

Two church break-ins

First, two men in their early 30s came to the Presbytery door last Friday at 3.15pm. One asked if I were 'connected with the church next door'. When I said that I was the parish priest, he said, "Well, we're not here for prayers or anything . . ." and he lunged forward to grab the screen door handle and open it. Luckily, it was locked. I slammed shut the inside door, and as I hurried to lock all the side doors of the Presbytery, I could see the two men running across the lawn and into Rookwood Street.

Second, our sacristan David Cleary came into church the next day to set up for Mass, and discovered the last stained glass window (near St Mary MacKillop chapel) wide open, and a pane of glass missing. The intruders had used a looped cord to reach inside the broken window, grab the window latch and open it wide. They cleaned up all the broken glass except one small piece, and left their cord on the brick pavement outside the windows (facing the car park). Nothing seemed disturbed in the church. I contacted the police and submitted a report over the phone. They came on site when I wasn't present, so they only looked around outside. But they did contact some neighbours, and there is CCTV footage from several homes which they are examining.

The police told us not to touch anything, other than to seal up the gap in the window because of the rain. Father Mariusz and his brother Wojciech cut a piece of thick plastic and neatly filled in the gap without touching anything else.

The police attended on Monday afternoon and, with me present, inspected inside and outside the church, and took fingerprints (which were very obvious on the window). The officer agreed with me that it was probably the two men who accosted me at the Presbytery who are the suspects. He also agreed with me that they were probably 'casing the joint' to determine where money is kept, and what equipment they would need, before returning.

Well, last night (Monday) they were back. They punched a fist through the plastic repair job, put their cord through again, opened the window and entered the church. They left via the front door, leaving their cord on the floor of the church foyer. But again, nothing seemed to be disturbed, other than a loose cover on the votive candle box in St Mary MacKillop's chapel.

I again filed a report with the police, and this time they asked me to keep for them in a plastic bag the cord used to assist in entry. They will check this for fingerprints, as well as the inside door

handles, etc. As I write this (7.35pm Tuesday), the officer has not yet arrived.

I'm telling you all of this to remind you to be aware of any suspicious activity you may see around the church, day or night. Also, I'm now leaving the lights on inside the church, as a bit of a deterrent. So if you see them on at night, there's no need to ring and let me know!

We have had several older priests approached at their presbyteries by people asking for a handout or a sandwich. The usual technique is that the priest goes to get some cash or a sandwich, opens the door to hand it to the people (there are usually more than one), and then the assailants grab the priest, push him inside, beat him, leave him lying on the floor, and ransack the presbytery, thinking the church money is there. This has happened to several of our priests. So please keep watch if you notice anyone suspicious, or anything amiss, around the church and presbytery.

Bible study programs

If you've read this far (!), I want to let you know the following:

- We will begin watching Season 2 of *The Chosen* on Tuesday 9th August, and every Tuesday thereafter through 21st September. This excellent TV series on the life and ministry of Our Lord was enjoyed by a group of our parishioners this past May and June. So you are encouraged to join us, whether or not you saw Season 1 (you can catch up on a free app if you want): Catholic Pastoral Centre in Highgate (next door to Sacred Heart Church), 7.30 – 9.00pm
- After the October holidays, we will begin *The Great Adventure*, an 8-week program that goes through the Bible timeline and basically gives an overview of the entire Bible. Each week's program will be offered twice weekly: Tuesday evenings, 7.30 – 9.00pm AND Sunday afternoons, 3.30 – 5.00pm. Location not yet determined. We will begin on Tue 12 Oct / Sun 17 Oct. *Please consider making time for these programs, and spread the word to others.*

Parish Retreat at New Norcia

Friday 12 – Sunday 14 November. There are only 26 spaces, and we have already filled 11 – so don't wait until the last minute! Some have asked about the possibility of driving up just for the Saturday without an overnight stay, and I'll look into that. For those spending the two nights, the fee is \$200, including meals. One or more of the Benedictine monks will give short talks twice a day; we will have discussions, plus join in prayers and Mass with the monks, have meals together, an evening discussion together, and then plenty of free time to walk, read, pray, or nap! *This is only for St Paul's parishioners, so please don't spread the word to others!*

Adoration Time

Both Father Mariusz and I have spoken over the last two weekends about how we are all called to be prophets (share the Word with others), be part of the Remnant (the faithful few who strive to live by God's Law), and make time for quiet – either at home, in the park, or especially in our church when you make a private Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, or when you join us after 5.45pm Mass on Wednesdays for quiet Adoration. The church is totally quiet. Jesus is on the Altar in the Sacred Host. A priest is in the confessional for those who want to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation (10 last Wednesday!). At 7.10pm, we have prayers in honour of St Joseph and a simple Blessing with the Blessed Sacrament. *O come, let us adore Him.*

Thank you!

Finally, let me say a deep-felt thank you to all of you who expressed your best wishes on the occasion of my 71st birthday this past Sunday. It was a bit of a stressful birthday, given the break-in, etc. But so many of you are so kind to me – thank you for your support.

Next Tuesday, 27th July, I begin my 13th year here at St Paul's. With your prayers and strong support, and the wonderful help from Father Mariusz, I hope to serve you for some years more.

Father Tim

