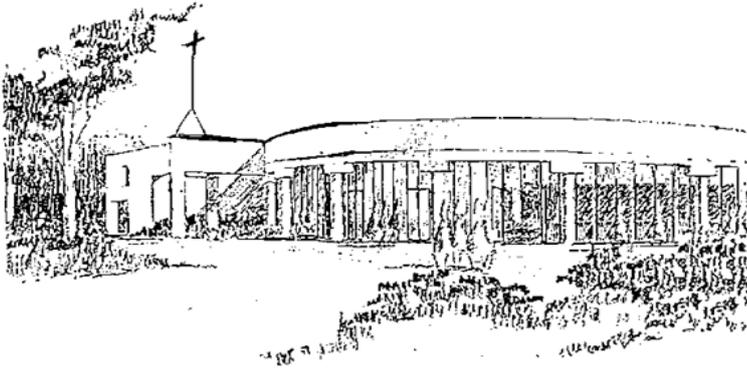


St. Catherine Labouré Parish



*Address: 123 Gymea Bay Road,
Gymea NSW 2227*

*Parish Office: 9525.1138
Presbytery: 9525.9993*

*Email: office@stcaths.org.au
Website: www.stcaths.org.au
ABN: 45 940 814 978*

Dear Parishioners,

What a strange way to leave St Cath's after nearly 16 years with a COVID lock-down keeping us apart from each other even with the ban on celebrating Mass.

Concluding my appointment on Friday, 30 July, I will become a resident of John Paul Village at Heathcote. Father Greg Morgan, your new Parish priest, will arrive on 14 August.

How blessed I have been to share our spiritual journey in the Catholic Faith here at St Catherine's. There have been many blessings in that time and some wonderful experiences and friendships. There have been the happiness Baptisms and Weddings and the sadness of Funerals. In between there have been social highlights and some lows, but overall, what grand families and individuals have made my Ministry so enjoyable. I will miss the children of the Parish who are so innocent and delightful – full of the potential to be amazing human persons – hopefully also as amazing committed Catholics.

To Liz Ermers, my Secretary for most of my time here, I am so grateful to have had her guiding all Parish activities. Her professional skills and charming personality ensured everything was carried out so well. To Kerry Ginman, the 'new' Parish Secretary, I thank her for the tremendous work, especially in organising compliance with Safe Guarding protocols. To Grahame Cashman, who has been involved in the parish for half a century, what an extraordinary love of the Parish without financial gain. An organiser beyond description who allowed me to concentrate on Pastoral matters rather than the IT, Liturgies, and overall physical care of our Parish were his expertise and what a job he did.

Our many Parish volunteers ensured the place hummed and I thank each and every one of you for your contributions in making our Parish a happy and holy part of God's creation in so many ways.

The Parish School has had many good principals and with Jodie McKay, I could not ask for a more caring and personal leader of our School. She has made my final years here full of happiness and confidence knowing she was mastering everything for the staff, the parents and the students. Providing us with a 'top of the art' new School, Jodie has given all the students the opportunity to excel and her up-to-date knowledge of educational trends, including for those with special needs, gave the School a gentle, but firm, pastoral approach. To her Executive and staff, I see clearly this love of their teaching vocation.

Cathy Rizzo, our School/Parish liaison, has worked marvellously linking the parents with the overall Parish, introducing many spiritual involvements that educated the religious side of families, especially around Sacramental times.

Fikry Bassiouni, who runs our 'Before and After' School Care (for almost all the time I have been here), I thank him for his devoted care of the children with a trust in which the parents can rely as he lives out his "business side" as a really caring and loving "grandfather" with top concern.

To each of you who individually we have shared so much, I pray God's Blessing on you and ask God to continue to protect you and bless you. For the sick of the parish, be assured of my continued prayers and Masses for your comfort. I hope you see the Parish as a happy and holy one.

Endeavouring to preserve our Parish for a sustainable and financial future, your money has been directed to the purchase of 3 properties in that pursuit. Two properties in Bonnie View Street will, I expect, be used for affordable housing with no costs in the building of the complex which CatholicCare will supervise. Later, after about 15 years, the perfectly maintained complex will revert to Parish use, with an expected \$100,000 rent per annum (to the Parish) in the meantime – CPI adjusted (annually)

The residence, diagonally opposite the Church, provides rental income to the Parish until another use is found, maybe a Convent!!

The old Church hall, is the Montessori Academy Day Care, and always, at 72 children capacity, brings in \$250,000 a year – CPI adjusted – for at least 20 years. The recent repairs of the Church roof, please God; will not need further attention for a while.

There is still an outstanding of \$594,749.27 (as at 30 June 2021) which should be paid off pretty soon.

Your contributions to various charities, given you awareness of social justice in your Catholic lives, I hope will get you to enjoy the company of the Saints when your earthly journey is complete.

Consider, in making your will, after family consultations, leaving something to the Missions, especially to the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Suva, Fiji. Also, the Australian Tax Office has provided me with a tax deductible charity status which I will run in retirement, so if I can assist, please ask.

My mobile number is 0411.408.303.

EVERY CENT will go to your charity, and I will bear all audit costs, stamps, bank transfer fees, etc. personally.

To those “pen pals of the Archbishop,” please treat Father Morgan well and your anonymous, groundless complaints about me have NOT helped the Parish, the Church overall or me personally. Go gently my dear accusers.

Thank you all for your kindness, prayers and charity shown to me, you will always be in my prayers too and may God keep you in the palm of his hand.

Monsignor Brian Rayner