

PARISH RENEWAL PROGRAM

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PARISH
FERNTREE GULLY



**FAITH
ENGAGEMENT
COMMITMENT**

*“...be animated by a missionary spirit,
where faith is communicated,
and charity is seen.”*

– POPE FRANCIS

DEAR FRIENDS

Welcome to our Parish Renewal Program!

We are blessed to be part of a wonderful parish and pride ourselves on being a welcoming and caring community – one enriched by the diversity and contributions of our people.

As we continue to re-emerge from the years dominated by COVID-19, this Renewal Program is a wonderful opportunity – as individuals and collectively as a community – to reflect on the importance of our parish, as we appreciate the past, engage in the present, and plan for the future.

What are our expectations of the parish and of each other as members of our faith community? Are we content to be ‘inward looking’, doing just enough to look after our regulars and maintain the status quo? Or do we take up the challenge from Pope Francis and Archbishop Peter, to be an outward-looking parish, providing a warm welcome and home to all?

It is up to each of us to play our role – to make a commitment to each other – to ensure we provide the human and financial resources for mission, for vibrant liturgy, quality pastoral care and outreach to the needy, as well as honouring our rich history by maintaining our beautiful church and parish facilities.

Our Renewal Program provides the opportunity to make this commitment. We invite you to be engaged in the Program and ask that through it every parishioner renews their personal commitment to coming together to celebrate Mass, to serve our community through our parish groups and ministries, and to meaningful financial support through a pledge commitment to Thanksgiving and the Presbytery. Your commitments in all these areas are not an expense

– they are your opportunity to make a difference to the worship of God and the care of His people in our parish.

I invite us all to take up the challenge – and thank you in advance for your strong, on-going support.



Fr Thomas Kuruvila
Parish Priest

OUR FUTURE

THE WEEKEND EXPERIENCE

The 'Weekend Experience' refers to everything that happens when we come together at weekend Mass. We want it to remain the highpoint of our faith celebrations and we need to do everything possible to make it so. This is not just about our regulars and is particularly important for visitors and potential parishioners who we would like to become a part of our parish family. We have identified three areas key to the Weekend Experience:

- *Vibrant Liturgy* – reflective homilies, proficient Readers and Special Ministers, and quality music, which has the power to lift the spirit and speak to the soul
- *Good use of Technology* – presentations that add to our involvement and which are particularly beneficial to those unfamiliar with the structure and flow of the Mass
- *Warm Welcome* – we proudly state that we are a welcoming and caring community. We need to ensure that everything we do at the weekend reaffirms this commitment. How do we greet each other? How do we make newcomers feel at home? Would a first-time visitor to our parish be eager to return a second time?

To ensure the continued quality of our Weekend Experience at St John the Baptist, we need your support and involvement in four key ministries:

- *Welcome Ministry* – grow the involvement in this important Ministry at each weekend Mass – greeting attendees with a smile, distributing newsletters, introducing newcomers, assisting with finding spare seats at our major events at Christmas & Easter etc.
- *Music Ministry* – we will continue prioritising quality music at all weekend Masses. Do you have skills to contribute? Do you sing well, play keyboards, guitar or another instrument? If so, we would welcome your involvement in this vital ministry
- *Technology* – assist with showing the PowerPoint presentations that accompany each Mass. It's not too difficult and training can be provided!
- *Readers/Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist/Altar Servers* – more volunteers are needed for these important ministries that are central to our weekly celebrations

WHO WE ARE

We are a faith-filled, welcoming, and hospitable community – one that is enhanced by the rich diversity of our people. We have a strong commitment to service, expressing our faith through pastoral care, outreach, and social justice. We believe that our lives are enriched by coming together as a community to celebrate Mass and the Sacraments – welcoming nearly 300 people to our weekend celebrations.

OUR PRIORITIES

OUR MISSIONARY FOCUS

Our challenge is how best to respond to Pope Francis' call that our parish *"...be animated by a missionary spirit, where faith is communicated, and charity is seen."* This will require continued financial investment in staff and resources, as well as YOUR support – bringing your energy, talent, and commitment as we reinvigorate our parish Groups & Ministries. We have identified the following key elements of our 2023-2026 response:

PASTORAL CARE & OUTREACH

- *Mission Priority* – to be an active 'mission parish', charged with spreading the Good News to all within our parish boundaries – bringing our community together through the living example of our faith in action – and handing that faith over to a new generation, and those that are still to come
- *Our Youth* – prioritize our youth as a valuable presence in our parish community – they are the future of our faith and our parish. We supported 2 young members to attend World Youth Day 2023 in Portugal, and have commenced a Youth Choir that engages at monthly Mass. Our vision is to grow this focus through a dedicated Youth Group





- *Children's Liturgy* – this is such an important ministry and feeds into our Youth focus. Already available at Saturday 6pm and Sunday 11am Masses, we would love to grow the already promising numbers
- *Visitation to the Sick, Elderly & Housebound* – parishioner visitation and Communion to these wonderful members of our parish – to supplement the work of Fr Thomas. Includes monthly Mass at 2 Aged Care Centres and hospital ministry, as well as support for our active St Vincent de Paul group

MAKING AND GROWING DISCIPLES

Our parish endeavours to accompany all as we grow in relationship with God and share our gifts with each other across the whole lifespan. The work of our Faith Development Coordinator (Mary Makarucha) is so important, with wonderful assistance from parishioner volunteers. We aim to do so by:

- Accompanying those joining the Church family through the RCIA Program
- Engaging in sacrament preparation and celebration
- Children's Liturgy of the Word
- Opportunities to encounter God and grow in faith – retreat days, seminars, Lenten and Advent reflection groups etc.
- Prayer and worship – rosary, Charismatic Prayer Group, Mother's Prayer Group, weekly Adoration etc.

OUR CHURCHES & FACILITIES

We have a clear responsibility to maintain our church and parish facilities – honoring our past and stewarding for the future:

- *St John the Baptist Church* – in recent times we have repaired the leak to the roof, fitted exterior security cameras, upgraded the sound system, and recoated the church vessels. Our next works are to re-stain the pews, upgrade the computer and add another screen for enhanced visual, and replace the heating/cooling system, as the cooling no longer works – replacement cost of \$100,000+
- *Presbytery* – necessary upgrade required for our priest's home, which was built in 1937. Replace the now very old carpet and paint the interior for the first time in 20+ years.
- *Footpath* – concrete the footpath between the Presbytery and Parish Office
- *Parish Office* – whilst not slated to be undertaken in the short term, it is important to flag that upgrade works will be required to this now 100+ years old building (former convent), to make it more suitable for contemporary requirements. These works will include refurbishing the Parish Office and removing some walls to create necessary and functional meeting spaces

CONTINUING TO BUILD COMMUNITY

- We strive to build the church community you want your family to live in. To do so we need you! We need your energy, your gifts and talents, and your commitment to doing three important things:
 1. Celebrate our faith together as a parish community – prioritizing weekend Mass
 2. Be actively involved in at least one parish Group or Ministry
 3. Make a meaningful pledge of financial support to Thanksgiving
- We will need to encourage and nurture a new team of parishioners, who by their example will lead us on this journey. What role are you prepared to play?



PARISH FIRST
BUILDING BETTER PARISHES

Produced by Parish First P/L based on information supplied by
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MY FINANCIAL PLEDGE TO ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PARISH

Surname: _____ Given name: _____

Address: _____ Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Email: _____ Mobile: _____ Phone: _____

My age group is: under 20 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80-89 90+

Credit Card

Please debit my Credit Card with the sum of: \$ PARISH PRESBYTERY
 every month quarter half-year year

Name on Card: _____

Please tick   Expiry Date: ____ / ____

<input type="text"/>							
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I understand that I may cancel this authority in writing at any time.

Signature: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Direct Debit (from a nominated bank account – forms available from the Parish Office)
 PARISH PRESBYTERY

My financial pledge will be: \$
 every month quarter half-year year

Envelopes (envelopes available from the Parish Office)

PARISH PRESBYTERY
 My financial pledge will be: \$
 every week month quarter half-year year

Our Privacy Commitment

The information collected on this card is for Parish information and use only. Be assured that Parish First P/L and our Parish are committed to upholding and maintaining the Privacy Principles and Legislative requirements as set out in the Statutory Regulations of the Australian and State Governments. This relates particularly to the gathering, recording, storing and disclosure of information relating to parish operations and the provision of religious and pastoral care services. We will never disclose your personal information to other third parties for other fundraising purposes without your consent.



OUR THANKSGIVING REALITY

- Our Thanksgiving Income suffered during the COVID-19 years – and is only returning closer to that achieved in 2019. However, we still have much work to do. If we are to prudently fund the mission priorities and essential works of the parish identified in this brochure - we need to increase pledged Thanksgiving Income. We have set ourselves a challenge – a significant one – to increase by 25% on current levels. It can be done – but only with your support.

HOW DO WE FUND THESE VITAL PRIORITIES?

- Thanksgiving Income is traditionally our major source of revenue
- Whilst donations are always helpful – we really need all parish families to make an on-going pledge commitment to Thanksgiving
- We prefer a monthly direct contribution – by direct debit or credit card automatic deduction, or by your direct transfer into the parish account – however the traditional cash envelopes are also available
- We are also making a plea for direct support to the presbytery – giving you the option to pledge to both parish and presbytery

HOW MUCH SHOULD I PLEDGE?

- We simply ask that you contribute to the very best of your ability. How do you use your discretionary income? Is parish support a financial priority for you?
- We unashamedly ask those with the greatest capacity to contribute the most
- We reserve special thanks for those on restricted incomes – your continued support is greatly appreciated

OUR FINANCIALS

PARISH INCOME

ITEM	2019	2020	2021	2022
Thanksgiving	85,000	64,000	65,000	82,000
Rental Income	101,000	103,000	103,000	111,000
Job Keeper		96,000	19,000	
Other Income	<u>9,000</u>	<u>7,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>	<u>6,000</u>
Total:	195,000	270,000	192,000	199,000

WHAT WE ASK OF YOU

Our **BIG** challenge in this Program is to increase
PLEGGED THANKSGIVING INCOME
from \$1,200 to
min of \$1,500 per week

OVERALL POSITION

Income	195,000	270,000	192,000	199,000
Expenditure	<u>159,000</u>	<u>214,000</u>	<u>180,000</u>	<u>220,000</u>
Surplus	36,000	56,000	12,000	21,000
Without Grants*		40,000	7,000	

Note*

Parish had deficit in 2020 & 2021 without Job Keeper



EXPENDITURE

ITEM	2019	2020	2021	2022
Staff	69,000	104,000*	71,000	75,000
Repairs & Maintenance	13,000	23,000	4,000	32,000
Insurance		24,000	18,000	24,000
Archdiocese Levies	21,000	10,000	20,000	23,000
Elec/Gas/Water	24,000	20,000	19,000	21,000
Accounting	3,000	7,000	8,000	7,000
Telecomms	4,000	5,000	4,000	4,000
Other Expenses	25,000	21,000	36,000	34,000
Totals:	159,000	214,000	180,000	220,000

Note:

*2020 Staff incl. Job Keeper

