

Dear Fellow Parishioners,

On Wednesday 13 March we held our second meeting of the Parish Advisory Group for 2024. Summarised below are some of the key topics of discussion.

### **1. Safeguarding Report**

Diana Gedeon's safeguarding report was tabled. It was noted that the safeguarding audit site visit was successfully completed and the feedback was positive. A collective report will be issued in March / April on all parishes within the Sydney Catholic Archdiocese.

Diana also advised that volunteering documents and safeguarding training has been uploaded on the OLW website for all new volunteers.

A proposal was included in Diana's report for first aid training for key personnel, to enable a trained individual to be made available at all parish events. In the first instance, it was agreed that the parish would seek confirmation from staff and parishioners as to who has first aid training.

We are grateful to Diana Gedeon for all her efforts with respect to the successful completion of the audit and her work on safeguarding generally.

### **2. Parish Census & Systems Update**

Fr Richard noted that both processes were continuing satisfactorily and that the planned launch of the census was to be the first weekend of May. This has now moved to the weekend of May 11/12.

Suggested wording was also tabled for review concerning the tax deductibility status of Planned Giving donations.

### **3. Parish Priest Report**

Fr Richard shared with us some recent highlights:

- Following Pope Francis' call to bless same sex couples, this was offered within the parish. So far, one couple has enquired
- The parish was given the highest praise in the Safeguarding Site Audit on February 6
- The parish has 148 registrations for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion
- Fr Richard and Fr Sacha met with the principals of the four Catholic colleges in our parish and their Directors' of Mission to assess what worked best last year and to strategise how we can best engage with the over 9,000 students who come into the parish everyday
- The four Ash Wednesday masses were well attended with over 1,000 in attendance
- The 45-day Advent reflection "A Resurrected Life" was a sellout (200 copies distributed)
- Michael McGirr's visit to OLW was a great success for Caritas and Project Compassion
- The Young Adult Lenten Reflection group was well attended
- All black grocery bags for the Ignite Store had been distributed and a significant collection is expected on Palm Sunday, to be delivered to Mt Druitt in time for Easter
- Fr Richard's announcement of the Parish census was well received
- St Patrick's Day afternoon tea was attended by 75 people

Fr Richard also noted the coming events:

- Lenten Reflection Night, March 21<sup>st</sup> at 7pm
- Celebration of God's Love and Mercy (Rite II), March 25, 7pm

- Parish Dinner, April 13, 6pm

In addition to the above, Fr Richard is to embark on his well-earned sabbatical from August 11 to November 12, 2024.

#### **4. Parish events**

Mary McInerney advised that all tickets have been sold for the parish dinner and planning for the evening is continuing.

#### **5. First Spiritual Exercises**

Mary McInerney advised that the First Spiritual Exercises retreat will take place in the parish over 4 weeks from July 20 to August 17. The cost of the retreat is \$50.

#### **6. Jarjum Update**

Fr Richard advised that the tour of the College which had been undertaken by Fr Sacha and the College principal, Kath Zerounian was attended by 7 individuals, following which, the school has received offers of financial support, volunteers and teaching support.

Nicole Siddique on behalf of the Parish Advisory Group