



OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
*Chatswood Catholic Parish*



19<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME

9 August 2020 – Year A/2

WITH OUR LADY OF DOLOURS  
WE PRAY FOR:

**Recently Deceased:**

Mavis Johnson, Bartolo Silvio,  
Joemel Delos Reyes

**Deceased Anniversary:** Wah  
Chew Chan, Frances Hung

**Sick:** Siew Kee

**Church** - Cnr Kirk & Archer Sts,  
Chatswood

**Parish Office** - 94 Archer Street,  
Chatswood, 2067

PO Box 1446, Chatswood, 2057

Phone: 9410 9000 or for an after  
hours' emergency call:

0473 046 906

[www.bbcatholic.org.au/chatswood](http://www.bbcatholic.org.au/chatswood)  
[chatswoodoffice@bbcatholic.org.au](mailto:chatswoodoffice@bbcatholic.org.au)

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Mon-Fri 9.30am-4.30pm

Closed for lunch 1pm – 1.30pm

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(New Parishioner Engagement Co-  
Ordinator)

From Aldrin Valdehueza, our Seminarist here in the Parish, who spoke about his past in our Parish at all masses last weekend. For those of you who were unable to attend mass, please read on...

**Took. Broke. Blessed. Shared.**

As I reflected and prayed about the readings today (Matthew 14: 13-21; Romans 8: 35, 37-39), I looked back on the moments when I, too, personally experienced God's love in my life, on how He took care of me, and on how He transformed me?

Now allow me to share my vocation story. I grew up in the Northern part of the island of Mindanao in the southern part of the Philippines. As an only child, I always have the undivided love and attention of my parents, and it made me very confident and secure whilst growing up. As parents, they had made sure that the truth of my being their adopted child would come from them. As early as four years old, I already knew that I am adopted. For this reason, I thought everything was alright in my life. It was only after six years of being formed in the seminary that I discovered that despite the love I experienced in my life, I never felt complete security. As I wrote in my journal in 2010, "It is in this particular year that I began to really feel the difficulty as I continue handing myself over to the seminary formation. I just found myself so wounded and broken. I am confronted with the feelings that there is something missing in me that I need to find; that there is a part of me that is disconnected and longed for reconnection. I do not understand where these feelings were coming from. This is terribly incomprehensible...it is slowly affecting my community life. I just feel so unlovable."

That was the time that I slowly became disillusioned with my faith and with my vocation. Many times, I asked the questions: "How could a loving God allowed me to be abandoned by the person who should be the first one to cherish and to protect me?"



mum, birth mum, and  
midwife

"How could God allow me to experience the hurt of a broken relationship, of a broken trust if He is, indeed, a just, loving and merciful God?" End of the year of 2011, I decided to leave the seminary as the sense of bereavement at not having met my birth mother began to take hold on me.

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However, on March 24 2013, my mum broke the news to me that they finally got information of the whereabouts of my birth mother. It was only then that I

discovered that they have been searching for her to show me again how much they love me and want the best for me. The day after they got the information, they were already planning to get in touch with my birth mother. But they did not know how to begin. They were also worried that I might get hurt if she declined to meet us. Surprisingly on the following morning, my dad met his cousin whom he had not seen for long years. As they were catching up with one another, my parents discovered that my dad's cousin lives in the same city of my birth mum. They were astonished even more to find out that my birth mum is a family friend. My birth mum's husband happened to be a best friend of my dad's cousin.

On April 07, 2013, during the Feast of the Divine Mercy I finally met my birth mother. As I reminisced that day, *I vividly remember that the first time I looked at her, I already felt within me that we have connections. We both cried. Without any words, she just held her hands around me, caressed my face, and kissed me tenderly on the cheek.* It was really a grace-filled encounter. Series of revelations unfolded. She mentioned that she was even present during my baptism, but she was hiding to make sure that none of my family would see her. She knew which Uni I went to and what degree I finished. She even knew that I joined the seminary, thus she became an anonymous benefactor in order to support me indirectly. Lastly, she eventually revealed that my biological father is the older brother of my adoptive mother who died when I was eight years old. As my biological father was married then, they both decided to keep it a secret to everyone.

Looking back on that wonderful day, I felt as if a great weight had been lifted from my shoulders. It brought forth a sense of completeness, of piecing together the missing

dots of my life. It provided me with a gift of tremendous healing, peace, and joy in my life.

As we heard from the psalm today: "The Lord is just in all his ways and loving in all his deeds. He is close to all who call him, who call on him from their hearts" (Psalms 145: 17-18). As my birth mum told me in our second meeting: "You know, son, the moment you said I have forgiven you, you do not know how much it meant to me. You released me from deep anguish caused by guilt and shame that I carried for years. I still could not believe that finally God has answered my prayers."

So, whenever I have been asked by people of the reasons of why I want to become a priest. In the heart of my hearts I can only say: "How can I refuse to respond to the call of the Lord who lavished me with great love and compassion?"

Moreover, without the witness of my mum and dad to their own vocation, I would not be as free and generous as I could be in giving my "yes" to God's call. They have shown me of what selfless love is. They have demonstrated me faithfulness and generosity. As they always said to me: "You are the most precious gift that God has given us, and you are the same precious gift that we can offer back to Him."

Please pray for me, sisters and brothers in Christ, that I will remain grateful to God, to always remember all His deeds, and to stay faithful to His call all throughout my life.

**Ad Maiorem Dei Gloriam +**

## **WITHIN OUR PARISH**



### **FIRST HOLY COMMUNION:**

Please pray for the 75 children in our Parish who have just begun their preparation for First Holy Communion.

**FEAST OF THE ASSUMPTION** is celebrated on Saturday August 15<sup>th</sup>. It will not be a holy day of obligation this year, because Bishop Anthony has temporarily dispensed us from the obligation for Mass on Sundays and holy days. It remains a significant feast day which many people will want to celebrate, so we will have a vigil Mass on Fri Aug 14<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, as well as Saturday Aug 15<sup>th</sup> at 9am. Bookings will be required for either Mass - [www.bbcatholic.org.au/chatswood/mass-times/sunday-mass-times](http://www.bbcatholic.org.au/chatswood/mass-times/sunday-mass-times)



**“They were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other Apostles, Brothers - what then must we do?” Acts 2:37**

The ACBC National Catholic Men’s Gathering for 2020 is now being offered as an online event for registered participants. This modified program will be delivered in four pre-recorded sessions of approximately 1 hour in length. Each session will offer input from a variety of speakers and musicians, along with a response and questions for group discussion or individual reflection. The program offers flexibility so that you may participate individually or gather with others from your parish/diocese or men’s ministry group.

- Aim:** To inspire and encourage all Catholic men with a vision for personal discipleship, service and mission in the family, parish, diocese and the world.
- Cost:** FREE
- Registration:** Available from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> June
- Event Program:** Available from Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2020
- Go to:** [bit.ly/cm2020event](http://bit.ly/cm2020event)

**PARISH WORKING BEE SATURDAY 29 AUGUST:**  
Our pre-Spring Working Bee will be on Saturday 29 August from 9am to 12 noon. Our goal is to have as many of our committed parishioners available to help us get the church and grounds sparkling ready for the new season. If you can make it on the day to help out, please give some thought to what tasks you would like to get involved in and then email Nicole on

Task	Materials Required	No. of People Required
Tennis Court Car Park - Trim Bushes, clean up branches and other rubbish and sweep car park	Green Bin, Garden Shears, Pruner, Rake, Gloves, broom and shovel	2
Clean Pews	Cloths, Spray and Wipe, Bucket and Rubber Gloves	2
Clean Ledges on side walls of church (after painting done)	Cloths, Spray and Wipe, Bucket and Rubber Gloves	2
Clean Window sills after windows cleaned	Cloths, Spray and Wipe, Bucket and Rubber Gloves	2
Dusting of Church	Duster, gloves, cloth, spray and wipe	1
Weed Spraying around church, office grounds and Presbytery	Pump Bottle and Zero Concentrate	1
Remove Wax	Scraper	1
Clean Stairs and Handrails of Meeting Room (levels 1 and 2)	Bucket, Detergent and sponge	1
Polishing Floor Boards Under Pews	Gloves, Floor Polish, Polishing Mops	2
Touch up painting of internal church walls.	Paint, Paint Brushes, drop sheet, terps	2

chatswoodoffice@bbcatholic.org.au. We look forward to seeing many of you there.

**STAYING COVID SAFE:** With the NSW Premier now strongly recommending that masks be worn in indoor venues such as churches, we now encourage you to wear a mask when you come to Mass, as well as taking all other measures for safety: maintaining 1.5m distance from others, using hand sanitiser and staying home if you have any symptoms. From this weekend the clergy and Communion Ministers will wear a mask while they are giving Communion to you, as you will be removing your mask to do so. The clergy won't be wearing masks during the majority of the mass as they are a significant distance away from the congregation and reading of facial expressions is an important part of communication.

On Monday Fr Jim had mild virus symptoms and so immediately had a Covid test and self-isolated, causing the Monday Mass to be cancelled. His test result was negative, but we mention this to show that the clergy and parish team are also doing whatever is necessary to keep everyone safe, and will not take short cuts just to keep the church doors open. Everybody's health is the top priority at this time.

**RECONCILIATION ROOM (Confessional):**

Physical distancing is going to continue to be necessary for some time. One of the things we haven't been able to do lately is to use our Reconciliation Room or Confessional because it is too small an enclosed space (just over 2 sq metres) for two people (priest and penitent) to be, and so we have been having the sacrament of Penance in various corners of the church. Our reconciliation room is ready for use after its' renovation. We have reinstalled the wall, partially glass, between the priest and the penitent to keep a physical separation between them. You as the penitent will still enter via the same door as before, and have the option of kneeling behind a screen or sitting face to face with the priest. You will have the option of closing a curtain next to you if you feel you want additional privacy, or leave it open if you don't like enclosed spaces. There are just some small air holes high above face level to allow the priest and penitent to hear each other without shouting. We are confident that this will provide the necessary protection for each person who approaches the sacrament of Penance. Our regular times are Thursdays 7pm – 8pm and Saturdays 9.30am – 10.30am each week, or contact Fr John or Fr Jim to make an appointment for another time.

**BIBLE STUDY:** Our Philippians bible study groups began their four week program this week, some in person, and some by video. We looked at how St Paul, who was in prison at the time, wrote to encourage the Christians at Philippi to keep up hope even though he was so far away from them. He felt a strong bond with them, calling them "partners in grace". It seemed apt to apply this to our time when we too are often separated from each other but can continue in Christian fellowship and prayer for each other.

