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Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15

People of the light

Welcome to Proclaim, a regular newsletter to help keep parish leadership teams informed and inspired as they proclaim and live out the joy of the Gospel.

In his recent [Patrick Oration](#), Archbishop Peter A Comensoli offered us a striking image of ourselves as the light-refracting people of God—each of us a unique shard of glass, together forming a great window through which the light of God might shine into our homes, families, communities and relationships, and from there out into a world wearied by pandemic, overshadowed by conflict, and riven by division and distrust.

Drawing on this inspiring vision for the domestic Church, and the foundational place of marriage and families within it, we explore how our homes and our mission might both be transformed through initiatives such as the [Marriage Kit Formation Program](#). We also hear about how one Melbourne parish has been [engaging with its community in creative ways](#) through the seasons of Advent and Lent, and we offer some practical advice from Fr Dan Serratore MGL on how our mission can be reinvigorated by [a team-based approach to parish leadership](#).

Archbishop Peter takes up the theme of the dawn light of the risen Jesus [in his Easter message](#), and we announce two new initiatives to get involved in over the coming month. First, Archbishop Peter will be celebrating [two special Masses in May](#), recognising the contribution of health- and aged-care workers throughout the pandemic, and remembering the lives that were lost during this challenging and socially isolated time. We also have some suggestions for how local parishes can celebrate their own Masses of thanksgiving within their communities. Second, the *Take the Way of the Gospel* Steering Committee is

[seeking expressions of interest](#) from clergy and laity to become members of the Stakeholder Advisory and Reference Group.

Other events and resources featured in this bumper issue of *Proclaim* include the *Walking in the Spirit* Plenary Council prayer campaign, our new UDisciple website for students and young people, an online faith formation series being offered by Catholic Theological College in May, resources for Laudato si' Week, and advance notice to save the date for an RCIA training opportunity.

This Holy Week, as we travel from the dereliction of the cross and darkness of the tomb out into the Easter dawn, may we recommit ourselves to being people of God's light and hope—in our homes, our parishes, our communities and our world.



Take the Way of the Gospel—Stakeholder Advisory and Reference Group expressions of interest

We are currently seeking expressions of interest from clergy and laity to become members of the *Take the Way of the Gospel*/Stakeholder Advisory and Reference Group. The Stakeholder Advisory and Reference Group provides advice, suggestions and feedback regarding the *Take the Way of the Gospel*/journey to the Steering Committee (and other sub-working groups). The Terms of Reference provide further details on the membership and responsibilities of the group, and expressions of interest close on Wednesday 4 May 2022.

[Apply now](#)



Parish in Focus: Holy Trinity Parish – Bentleigh, East Bentleigh, Moorabbin

As their parish emerged out of lockdown last year, Fr Raju Jacob and the Holy Trinity parish leadership team recognised that their community needed a time of prayer, healing and hope. Part of their response was to develop and offer an inspiring and diverse Advent-to-Easter program, 'From Darkness into Light'. In the midst of this parish's struggle to adapt to change, a great team has been formed, new ways of reaching people are being tried, and parishioners are beginning to return to the community with a renewed feeling of hope for the future.

[Read more](#)



Archbishop Peter A Comensoli's Easter Message 2022: 'The Eternal Dawn'

In his Easter message this year, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli invites us to go out and meet the Lord, who is the 'dawn of a new creation'. As the Gospel tells us: Mary Magdalene, wrapped in grief and shock, dutifully went to attend to the dead body of Jesus, but what she encountered was the dawn of the risen Jesus – a light that broke into her darkened life. 'The light of dawn also emerges for us, as the dark of night gives way to a new day.'

[Watch video](#)



Marriage formation opportunity for parishes

In his recent [Patrick Oration](#), Archbishop Peter A Comensoli spoke about passing on the Gospel personally in our local communities, most importantly through the domestic Church. Marriage, as the foundation of the domestic Church, requires particular attention. So how can we support the married couples in our parish communities? One way we can do this is by offering couples the support and resources to strengthen their own marriages, and also the tools to equip them in building up other married couples. The [Marriage Kit Leader Formation Program](#) from SmartLoving is one tool being made available (free of charge) to all parishes in the Melbourne Archdiocese this April.

[Read more](#)



Parish missionary renewal: Where do we start?

On 19 February, teams from twenty parishes gathered for a day of prayer and of sharing about their vision for parish missionary renewal. Three key elements of renewal were unpacked: developing a missionary vision, effective team leadership and making new disciples. The parish teams that attended shared a number of inspiring stories and testimonies, helping each team to kick-start their own discussion.

Fr Daniel Serratore, Parish Priest of St Benedict's Parish in Burwood, gave a very helpful talk on how to take a team

approach to parish leadership. A useful parish resource entitled 'Seven steps to a healthy, effective leadership team' has been developed from Fr Dan's talk.

[Download PDF](#)

Let us know what you think and go in the running for a prize!

The *Proclaim* e-newsletter aims to keep parish leadership teams informed and inspired as they proclaim and live out the joy of the Gospel. We are seeking honest feedback from our readers to help us achieve this goal. Please take a few minutes to complete our [short survey](#) and go in the running for a \$150 voucher from the Central Catholic Bookshop.

Walking in the Spirit

The people of God are invited to make a prayerful journey towards the Second Assembly of the Plenary Council through the *Walking in the Spirit* prayer campaign. *Walking in the Spirit* begins on Easter Sunday, 17 April, and runs until the Second Assembly, which opens on Sunday 3 July. Resources have been created for use by individuals, families, schools, parishes and other Catholic communities.

The resources include a bulletin notice, general intercessions, Plenary Council prayers, prayers to the Holy Spirit, Prayers to Our Lady, the Litany of St Joseph, prayers in the spirit of Mary MacKillop, prayers from the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council, and prayer experiences focused on *lectio divina*, the Jesus prayer and the examen, along with a useful set of Walking in the Spirit PowerPoint templates. Find out more at

www.plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/walkinginthespirit/

Two special Masses as we emerge from COVID

Two special Masses will be celebrated by Archbishop Peter A Comensoli in May to recognise and remember some of those whose lives have been especially affected by the COVID pandemic:

- **Mass of Thanksgiving for Health and Aged-care Workers**
Sunday 1 May 2022 (Feast of St Joseph the Worker and May Day), 11am
St Patrick's Cathedral

Employees in the aged- and health-care service sectors are invited to attend this Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, with hospitality to follow.

- **Mass to commemorate those who have died during the COVID pandemic**

Sunday 22 May 2022, 11am

St Patrick's Cathedral

This Mass will be offered for all the departed who could not be mourned properly or whose lives could not be celebrated suitably because of pandemic restrictions.

A [set of resources and suggestions](#)—including intercessions and bulletin notices—has also been developed to assist parishes to mark these events at Mass in their own communities.

Explore our new Udisciple website

Visit our new website for young people and students at udisciple.melbournecatholic.org.

Udisciple is a hub for building community among students from various campuses. The Udisciple website brings together news and events from the Archdiocese and from student-led Catholic societies at the University of Melbourne, Monash University, RMIT, La Trobe and the two Deakin campuses. The website aims to provide a steady flow of quality content to young people throughout the Archdiocese.

Alongside regular articles on the 'Good Reads' tab, the website also hosts an online learning platform, the 'Engage Online Classroom'. This virtual classroom provides a range of opportunities for ongoing formation on topics of Catholic faith and culture. It also draws together various formative digital resources, including testimonies, talks and the weekly *Udisciple Podcast*. A subscription to the weekly *Udisciple E-news* provides a wrap of the new content straight to your inbox.

CTC to offer online faith formation series in May

Catholic Theological College (CTC) is once again offering a series of online faith formation sessions for those looking to deepen their faith understanding and spirituality. There are up to 16 different sessions on offer, each providing a 'taster' for those interested in a variety of topics from biblical studies to Vatican II, pastoral studies, *Laudato si'*, Christian meditation, interfaith relations, and the relationship between science and religion. [Learn more.](#)

Laudato si' Week resources

Laudato si' Week—a celebration of Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato si'* and a call to action for Catholics around the world—is being celebrated from 16 to 24 May 2022. These [resources](#)—including images, quotes, and daily reflection and action

sheets—have been developed for parishes, social justice groups and individuals to use throughout this time.

RCIA teams workshop: save the date

Save the date: RCIA Teams Workshop, Saturday 18 June 2022. Keep an eye on the next *Proclaim* e-newsletter for further details.



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OF MELBOURNE

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