

**Dear friends,  
Darkness, pain and dignity!**

With the Feast of the Assumption during this past week, we were reminded of the great dignity of our human condition. That special belief of our Catholic story, that Mary was assumed into heaven, body and soul, was long held by people of faith before being officially proclaimed as a dogma of our faith by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

It is greatly significant that this was proclaimed not too long after the end of World War II. In today's world of course, we have technology that allows instant communication. Obviously this was not so at the end of the war and it took some time for the stories of horror to filter around the world. It must have been a frightening reality for people to come to realise how representatives of the world's leadership had committed the world's population to such unspeakable and large scale trauma, pain and loss. With the gradual release and sharing of photographs and stories, human lives and their physical bodies looked more and more like they'd been treated as expendable trash. So many dead military and civilian lives from all 'sides' of the horrific conflicts were not even identified, leaving remaining loved ones unable even to honour lost life with burial.

**Mary and The Assumption – a feast of humanity**

On top of this darkness, the Pope proclaimed a powerful story of light; the Assumption of a human – one of us - Mary. It was and is a belief that honours the whole of human life, including the physical body, as sacred and enduring. As Mary was physically assumed into heaven, and in our spiritual tradition made queen of heaven, we were given a special link to the big picture of life. Her prayers of intercession for us are real, adding to the true connection with us and knowledge of us in heaven, by name, even now. We are already part of the 'communion of saints'.

Such a story and such a feast potentially gives great comfort and strength to our human existence, even and especially in the face of horrors such as war. Such a story and feast proclaims God's victory for us over all that threatens. Yes there are newer challenges and fears that exist in our world this century, but the statistics of war horror are not a patch on the realities of last century. Likewise the rate at which the wider creation was being destroyed last century is being addressed hugely more significantly now. There is a long way to go as we are currently hearing from Pacific leaders whose people are losing homes through climate change. But we can be thankful that last century's gross misuse of the world's resources has entered our global consciousness.

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**OUR LADY OF THE WAY  
PARISH EMU PLAINS**

*What does the LORD require of you but to act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with your God MICAH 6:8*

The Assumption, as a feast of human dignity, calls us to be active players in continuing to build the hope and joy of God's view of life on earth and of all creation.

**Hence our Catholic 'holy days of obligation'**

So significant is the Assumption to who we are as human, and the hope and identity into which we are called, that it is one of our designated 'holy days' – along with each Sunday and Christmas Day. These are the core days of the year on which Catholic Christians make a priority to gather at the Lord's table and be graced together. We are a people called to be hope and life for the world – together, not alone - as the Body of Christ. Our faith - together – is fundamental to what it means to be followers of Christ. Our pattern of life is to come together in faith and witness to God as the source of life. Hence as Catholics we say that our gathering is not negotiable. We commit to it as an obligation to each other and to God, in love. And in that pattern of life, we receive our dignity anew – the grace of the Sacraments - in order to go out as the Body to shine Christ in the world.

***With friendship in God's mission, fr Paul***

**REST IN PEACE: Moira Thomas passed away on the 11th August surrounded by her loving family.** Moira and her family were an integral part of our community of Our Lady of the Way. Moira was a much loved teacher in our school and very active in Parish ministry. Our love, condolences and prayers go out to Moira's husband Ian, daughter's Amy and Emily and all her family and friends. Moira's funeral will be at St. Joseph's Church Mereweather (The Junction) Cnr. Farquhar & Kenrick Streets on Monday 19th August at 11am. We pray God's blessings and peace for all at this very sad time.

**STAND FOR LIFE RALLY AGAINST PROPOSED ABORTION LAWS:**

The Bill was pushed through the Legislative Assembly and will be debated in the Legislative Council from Tuesday, 20 August. Join us in peaceful protest against this radical proposed legislation. **DATE:** Tuesday 20 August. **WHERE:** Martin Place (Macquarie Street side) **TIME:** 6pm until 9pm (including vigil outside NSW Parliament). Please pray for our Parliamentary leaders, that God's wisdom and truth will be manifested during this time. St. Mary's Parish is organizing a bus to the city—contact 96231962 for more information.

**PARISH TEAM**

**Paul Roberts**  
Parish Priest  
**George Bryan**  
Deacon  
**Chris Rannaste**  
Parish Secretary  
**John Cowen**  
Parish Pastoral Council Chairperson  
**Jim Prendergast**  
Finance Committee

**CONTACT US**

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**FR. PAUL'S BLOG:**  
[paulfromifm.org.au](http://paulfromifm.org.au)

**MASS TIMES**

**Weekend Masses**  
Saturday 6:00 pm  
Sunday 8:00 am & 9:30 am  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the Month**  
Filipino Mass 1.00 pm

**Weekday Masses**

**Wednesday 9.15 am**  
**Thursday 8.15am & Friday 7.15am.**

**Children's Liturgy**  
During 9.30 am  
Mass on the  
1st & 3rd  
Sundays each  
month

**SACRAMENTS**

**Reconciliation:**  
Saturday 4.45pm-5:30 pm  
**Baptisms:** By appointment  
**Weddings:** By appointment

**First Holy Communion and / or Confirmation**  
Please contact Parish Office  
olowpar@pnc.com.au or  
[emuplains@parracatholic.org](mailto:emuplains@parracatholic.org)  
**R.C.I.A :** The process for adults interested in becoming Catholic. Office: 4735 1041

**Please pray for Recently Deceased Moira Thomas and for the Anniversaries of Bill Allabyrne, Tess & Harry Kain and members of the Fitzgerald & Molloy Families.**



**Please pray for those who are sick in our community:**  
*Grace Perry, Kevin Rose, Karen Gulliksen, Harry Beasley, Maddison Farrugia, Leone Kirton, Vicki Wells, Mark Simmonds, Max Scott, Anita Glynn, Libby Lawson, Paul Dalton, Bernie Payne, Shirley & Les Coburn, Graham & Christine Hall, Michelle Gardam, Melissa Reardon, Jacqui Walker, Mary Berkout, Patricia Knoke, Brian Payne, Mervin McCaster, Marie Mahoney, Jeffrey Ridley, Habib Kaltoum Rahme, Michael Mercieca, Carmen Smith, (baby—Jordan Edwards), Joyce Dukes, Beryl Page, Frances Payne, Val Smith, Barbara Grant, Gregory Clare, William Simmonds, Judy Chesters, Maria Apap, Paul Cudmore*