

PARISH LIFE IN ISO

Milestones. Many have been reached during our time in ISO when celebrations have had to be very low key, if they are allowed at all. This week in a special two-page edition of Parish Life in ISO we acknowledge and celebrate the milestones of a few of our parishioners. We also hear from Assunta Iacovino who is celebrating a professional milestone and offers real insight into the challenges faced by schools during ISO.

Pamela and John Penticoss this week celebrate 50 years in Australia, and as Essendon parishioners.

Jenny and Clarry Answerth celebrated 60 years of marriage on Thursday this week.



Jenny and Clarry Answerth

The couple have a long history with our parish, having met playing tennis at St Therese's tennis club where Clarry volunteered as Secretary of the club. Clarry also played the drums in a band, 'The Jesters' where many parishioners got together for Saturday night dances in the 1960s

Jenny and Clarry were married on 17 September 1960 at St Therese's when it rained all day! Jenny worked as a teacher at our school and still volunteers for the Senior Friendship Group.



Jenny and Clarry on their wedding day 17 September 1960

The Answerths have lived in the same home in Essendon all their married life and have raised six children.

One of our long-term parishioners reached a rather grand milestone during ISO. Many happy returns to *Fred Carisse* who celebrated his 101st birthday on 29th August!



Fred Carisse at 101

Dear Parishioners of St Therese's,

My name is Assunta Iacovino and I am a member of the Parish Leadership Team.



I have been asked to share my ISO news with you. Two weeks ago, I received news that my application for Principal of Mother of God Primary School, Ardeer, had been successful. I will commence my new appointment in 2021. I ask you to pray for me as I enter this new phase of my professional life, which comes after many years in leadership roles in Catholic Education. I am currently Deputy Principal of St Catherine of Siena in Melton West. Other leadership roles I have held have been in the areas of Religious Education, Learning and Teaching, Numeracy and Learning Diversity.

ISO has been difficult for everyone and, as you can appreciate, has impacted schools very significantly. My current school community is very diverse. Many cultures are represented and there are pockets of disadvantage. Some of our families are large, with parents who speak little English and have limited access to digital devices. As you can imagine, this would make for a very challenging setting for home learning!

As a school, we have had to overcome these challenges and continue to engage the children in continuing their education online. We have supported families and facilitated home learning by lending them school laptops, preparing resource packs and by, both leaders and teachers, keeping in almost daily contact throughout.

Our families have provided feedback that they have been amazed at the quality of learning that has been delivered and the efforts that the school has made to support wellbeing during these difficult times. The comment most often made is "We now have a new appreciation for the work that teachers and schools do."

Schools have always had a large focus on wellbeing. As educators, we know that building positive relationships with students and families, supporting connectedness and

community engagement, engendering a sense of safety and providing opportunities that challenge and extend our students as learners, all lead to better outcomes. These factors contribute significantly to improving engagement, wellbeing and academic achievement. The ISO experience has further reinforced the importance of this.

For the remainder of this year, there will be a very small window of opportunity for students and families to reconnect 'face-to-face' and to experience some of the things we do in Term 4 to celebrate and express our gratitude for the school year that has been. Events such as Year 6 Graduation, end of year Mass and end of year Picnic may occur, but they may look and feel quite different compared to past years. So, we will need to continue to restore and replenish our social connections when school restarts next year. God willing, we hope to be able to operate under 'Covid normal' conditions and to provide all the experiences of onsite schooling without interruption!

At Mother of God School there is already a very strong focus on community and wellbeing. Gerard Broadfoot, the current Principal, has described it to me as 'a beautiful school community'. I will bring my newly informed and energised understanding of the importance of community relationships to MOGS to continue to build on this.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Fr John and the team at St Therese's for keeping parishioners connected to parish life and to the liturgy through recordings and publications. I look forward to the time when we can all meet in person again.

We'd love to hear what you've been up to in ISO. Email jac.radcliffe@cam.org.au to contribute to Parish Life in ISO



A reminder that you can still respond to our parish survey – what will life AFTER ISO look like? – by clicking on the linked picture above.