



TO BE ON EARTH THE HEART OF GOD

KIT



OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART PARISH
St John the Apostle - Kippax ACT
St Thomas Aquinas - Charnwood ACT

AUGUST 2026

Time for Reflection

God's Tears

There are moments in life when words fail us. The suffering of the world can feel too vast, too relentless, too heavy to hold. Wars rage, nations divide, children suffer, the vulnerable are forgotten, and so often humanity seems to drift further from God and from one another. At times like these, it is tempting to wonder whether God sees, whether God cares, whether heaven remains untouched by the grief of earth.

Yet the Gospels reveal something profoundly consoling: God does not stand distant from human sorrow. God weeps.

In Br. James Maher MSC's song ***There are no Words*** we hear these moving lines:

*When Jesus wept for all the world
The tears of God were given to us.
The One who loved us into birth.
Shares our pain.*

What an extraordinary thought — that the tears of Jesus are the tears of God. Christianity does not present us with a God who is cold, unmoved, or detached. In Jesus, God enters fully into the ache of human existence. The tears of Christ reveal the Heart of God.

Jesus weeps over Jerusalem because the people have lost their way. His tears are not tears of anger or rejection, but tears of longing. He sees people turning away from the path that leads to life and peace, and His heart breaks. These are the tears of mercy — the tears of a God who never stops yearning to gather humanity back into love.

At the tomb of Lazarus, Jesus weeps again. Even knowing resurrection is coming, He does not bypass grief. He stands beside Martha and Mary and shares their sorrow. Here we see that love does not protect us from pain; love makes us vulnerable to it. God is not embarrassed by human grief. God enters it fully.

And then there are the tears of Gethsemane. Jesus prays with loud cries and tears before His death. He does not romanticise suffering. He does not pretend courage means the absence of fear. Jesus loved life. He did not want to die. In His tears we see the agony of surrender, the cost of love, and the deep humanity of the Son of God.

Perhaps this is what gives such meaning to the tears of God: they are never tears of helpless despair, but tears born from love. We cry over what matters to us. God cries because humanity matters to God.

Maybe every act of violence, every child who goes hungry, every refugee who flees in fear, every person crushed by loneliness or despair draws tears from the heart of God. Perhaps God weeps not only for the suffering of the world, but also for what humanity could become if we truly learned to love.

And maybe God's tears are also an invitation.

An invitation not to harden our hearts.

Not to become numb to suffering.

Not to accept division, hatred, or indifference as normal.



The tears of God call us back to compassion. They remind us that faith is not simply about correct beliefs or religious practice, but about allowing our hearts to remain tender in a wounded world.



"You will be sorrowful,
but your sorrow will
turn to joy."

John 16:20

To weep with another person is one of the most sacred things we can do. It is to say: You are not alone in your pain. That is precisely what God says to humanity through the tears of Jesus.

The One who loved us into birth still shares our pain. And perhaps in every tear of compassion, mercy, grief, or longing for peace, the tears of God continue to fall upon the world.

EDITOR'S NOTES

It is wonderful to be back with you after an amazing family holiday. I return with a renewed sense of gratitude for the gift of family, community and the many blessings that surround us.



August has been a month rich in celebration and reflection. We celebrated two significant feast days: the Feast of Mary MacKillop on 8 August and the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary on 15 August. Both women, in their own distinctive ways, remind us of what it means to say “yes” to God and to allow faith to shape the way we live and serve others.

We were also pleased to welcome Fr Tinh Nguyen MSC, who celebrated the weekend Masses on 15–16 August while Fr Tru took a week of annual leave. We are grateful for Fr Tinh’s presence among us and for his ministry within our community.

On Saturday 22 August, the Archdiocesan Assembly brought together people from across the Archdiocese for a time of synodal discernment. The focus was on listening to the Holy Spirit and exploring ways in which we might strengthen local evangelisation..



Spring and Living Water

As we move into September, we welcome the Season of Spring. Here in Canberra, the arrival of spring is beautifully announced by the flowering of the wattle trees. Their golden blooms seem to proclaim that new life is always possible and that creation has its own rhythms of renewal, growth and transformation.



September also marks the beginning of the Season of Creation, which commences on 1 September with the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and concludes on 4 October, the Feast of St Francis of Assisi.

The theme for the 2026 Season of Creation is “Living Water.” Water is both a physical necessity and a powerful spiritual symbol. We cannot live without it, and throughout Scripture water speaks of creation, renewal, cleansing, baptism and the life-giving presence of God.

The theme has particular resonance for us in Australia, one of the driest inhabited continents on Earth. Yet it also has significance far beyond our own shores. Europe has experienced an exceptionally hot summer, with very little rainfall in many places.

During my travels, I was struck by the effects of the lack of water. The Tiber River, which flows through Rome, reached exceptionally low levels, exposing the stone piers of the ancient Pons Neronianus, or Nero's Bridge. Weeks of extreme heat, a lack of rain and low snowfall in the northern mountains during the previous winter have contributed to the river running at around half its normal summer average.

Celebrating Fathers

On Sunday 6 September we will celebrate Father's Day. It is an opportunity to give thanks for fathers, grandfathers, stepfathers, foster fathers and all those men who have played a loving and formative role in the lives of others. You will find an article celebrating fathers on pages 10 and 11. I trust it provides an opportunity to reflect with gratitude on the fathers and father figures who have helped shape our lives.

As spring begins to unfold around us, may we also allow something new to unfold within us: a deeper attentiveness to God, to one another and to the beautiful world entrusted to our care.

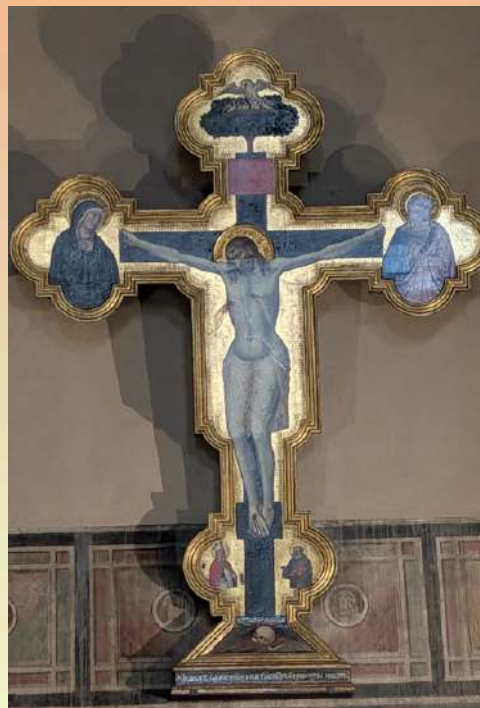
May September be a season of living water, new life and renewed hope for us all.

Blessings
Marian





Photos from
Siena, Assisi,
& Rome



SEASON OF CREATION GATHERING 2026

Listen • Reflect • Act



An endorsed Caritas Australia initiative, with the support of the
Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service

Event Details

- Dates:** 3–4 September 2026
- Time:** 10:00 am – 4:30 pm AEST daily
- Format:** Two-day national online event
- Theme:** Listen, Reflect, Act (focused on integral ecology and Catholic Social Teaching)
- Day 1 Focus:** Shared formation and keynote presentations (with Auslan interpretation)
- Day 2 Focus:** Practical, sector-based workshops for communities, schools, and ministries [1, 2]
- Cost:** Individual Ticket: \$20 per person (covers both days)

REGISTER THROUGH CARITAS AUSTRALIA



Season of Creation Gathering 2026 - Online Catholic
Ecology Event | Catholic Earthcare

Join us online to celebrate the Season of Creation in 2026
at our Catholic Earthcare Gathering! 3-4 September 2026

 caritas.org.au

BAPTISMS

*Phoebe Dong daughter of
Viet and Thi*

*Lily Warmenhoven daughter of
John and Jessica*

*Sutton Patterson daughter of
John and Elissa*

*Dustin Hunt son of
Bevan and Kayley*

*Darcy Hall son of
Blake and Megan*

*Nolan, Rowan and Ethan Fuda
children of Bruce and Elisabeth*

*Austin Kennard son of
Samuel and Zuzana*



RECENTLY DECEASED



Margaret "Peg" McGrath
18.06.1929 - 27.07.2006



Toss Van den Huevel



Cecily Ferguson

COME

Such was the storm on Lake Gennesaret
that its waves were like those of the sea;
in the fourth watch of the night,
from their battered boat, the disciples
gasped, for they saw a majestic figure
walking on the water serenely . . .

‘It is a spirit!’ they cried.

‘No,’ Jesus spoke, ‘it is me.
Take heart; do not be afraid.’

‘Lord,’ Peter answered,
‘if it is you, command me
to come to you on the water.’

‘Come,’ the Lord said.

At first, Peter’s faith
was firm as the ship’s mast,
and he too strode upon Gennesaret;
but then he focused on
its white-crested mountains,
not on his master.

The headwind whistled in his ears;
his heart beat to the rhythm of fear.
He was sinking.

‘Save me, Lord!’ he shouted.

Jesus reached out and caught him,
saying to him,
‘You of little faith,
why did you doubt?’

Shane Murtagh



Why did you doubt?

CELEBRATING FATHERS

THIS FATHER'S DAY

In Australia, we celebrate Father's Day on the first Sunday of September. This year, Father's Day falls on 6 September. Around the world, however, fathers are celebrated on different days. In Spain, for example, Father's Day is celebrated on 19 March, the feast of St Joseph, Jesus' earthly father.

Whatever the date, Father's Day gives us a wonderful opportunity to pause and celebrate the gift of fatherhood.

We know today that a father's presence and involvement can make an important contribution to a child's development. Loving, attentive fathers can help their children grow in confidence, resilience and emotional wellbeing. A father's encouragement, affection, guidance and simply being there can make a lasting difference in a child's life.

Of course, there is no single way to be a father. Fathers come in many forms. Some are biological fathers; others are stepfathers, foster fathers, grandfathers, uncles, mentors or other men who have played a fatherly role in someone's life. What they share is the capacity to offer something precious: presence, love, encouragement and a sense of belonging.

Father's Day is therefore about much more than gifts and cards. It is an opportunity to say thank you – thank you for the countless ordinary things that often go unnoticed: the early mornings, the hard work, the practical help, the words of encouragement, the listening ear, the laughter, the protection and the quiet sacrifices made for the good of the family.

We can also celebrate the positive qualities that fathers and father figures bring to family life. They can teach us through their example about kindness, honesty, courage, patience, responsibility and resilience. Sometimes the most powerful lessons are not spoken at all but learned by watching someone live with love and integrity.

For Christians, Father's Day can also turn our hearts towards God the Father, whose love is at the heart of our faith. In Jesus, we discover a God who is not distant or indifferent but who knows us, loves us and calls us his beloved children. The best of human fatherhood can offer us a glimpse of this generous and unconditional love.

Father's Day can be a joyful celebration of the men who have helped shape our lives. It can be a time for families to gather, share a meal, tell stories, laugh together and perhaps recall some of the wonderful memories that make a family unique.

And perhaps the greatest gift we can give our fathers is a simple one: "Thank you for being there. You have made a difference in my life."

This Father's Day, let us celebrate fathers with gratitude and joy – the dads, grandfathers and father figures who love, encourage, guide and inspire. May they know how deeply their presence matters and how much they are appreciated.

Happy Father's Day to all the fathers and father figures in our community!



A Prayer for Fathers

Loving God,
we thank you for all fathers and father figures.
Bless them with wisdom, patience and strength,
that they may love generously, guide gently
and bring joy and encouragement to those in their care.
May they know how deeply they are loved and appreciated,
and may their lives reflect your faithful and tender love.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Panama Canal



It's daybreak
and our ship
is boarded by
a special crew
to steer her safely
through the narrow stretch
of water linking Pacific
and Caribbean.

Steel mules are hitched
and given the go-ahead
as slowly we move
towards the first lock.

Then a huge steel gate
heaves to behind us
and in a surprisingly
short space of time
we rise –

all 30,000 tons of us –
a height of some 30 feet;
magnificent . . .
what mind and muscle
are capable of!

The process thrice repeated
and then the centre lake
on our own steam
we're back to locks
one, two and three
this time in reverse
till soon we're ploughing
through the Caribbean
hugging the coast
of South America
in search of Curacao.





Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish

West Belconnen

"To be on Earth the Heart of God"

CALLED TO SERVE

An evening to pause, gather, and renew our service around the table - drawing from the Eucharist, the wellspring of our ministry.

Join us for an Agape meal, and shared discussion on how we serve together in liturgy and community.

All parishioners currently serving in, or interested in, liturgical ministry are warmly invited.

- **Date: Saturday, 5 September, 2026**
- **Time: 6:15 – 8:30 PM**
- **Venue: Parish Centre (25 Blackham St, Kippax)**

RSVP for Catering By 29 August, 2026:

- via email: belconnenwest@cg.org.au
- or via link: <https://tinyurl.com/4c9cdznh>
- or via QR code:



MENTAL HEALTH • MINISTRY

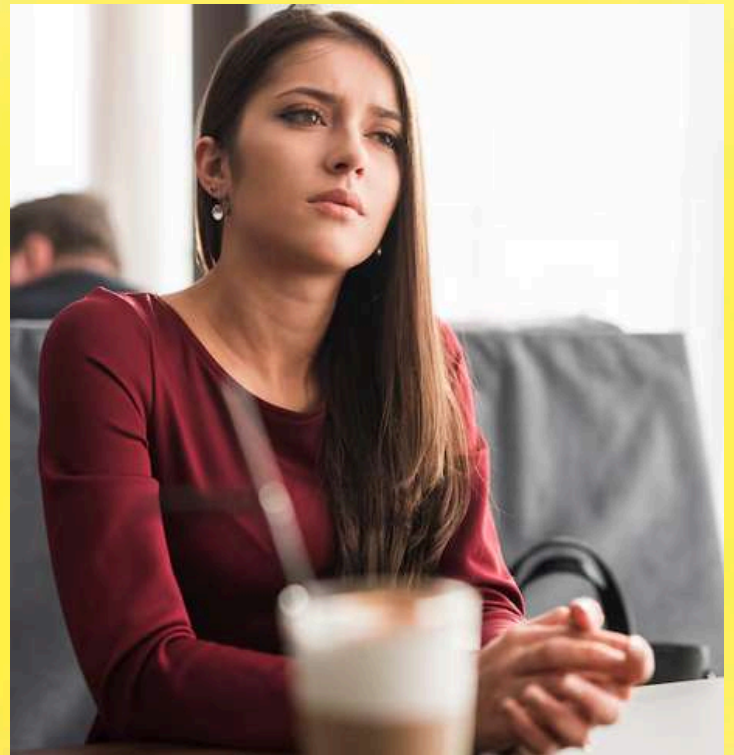


The Blessings of Tears

The tears rolled down her face as she sat quietly in the corner of the café. She made no effort to hide them or wipe them away.

Around her the morning carried on as usual. People came and went, ordering their regular Saturday coffee. At the counter there was the familiar exchange of small talk — comments about the weather, a laugh shared with the waitress, the gentle rhythm of an ordinary day.

No one seemed to notice the woman in the corner.



On the window of the café was its name: Café Stitch, curious name, perhaps, yet there is something quietly fitting about it. Because sometimes tears are a little like a stitch in time — a small but important signal that something within us needs care and attention.

In a culture that encourages us to “hold it together,” tears can feel uncomfortable or embarrassing. Many of us have learned to apologise for them or to hide them as quickly as possible. Yet both psychology and spiritual wisdom suggest that tears can carry an important message. They can be the body’s way of speaking when the heart needs to be heard.

First, tears can tell us that something within us needs to be acknowledged.

We may be carrying grief, disappointment, fatigue, or worry that we have quietly pushed aside while continuing with the demands of daily life. Tears can be the heart’s gentle way of saying, “Pay attention to what you are feeling.” When we allow ourselves to notice what is happening within us, we take the first step toward understanding and healing.

Second, tears can tell us that something within us needs to be released.

Emotions can build slowly over time. When tears come, they often help the body release tension and stress that has been held inside. Far from being a sign of weakness, this can be part of the body's natural way of restoring balance. In this sense, tears can be a small but important step toward emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

Third, tears can tell us that something within us is being softened.

The spiritual tradition has long spoken about what it calls "the gift of tears." A heart that is able to weep is often a heart that is becoming more open – more compassionate, more aware, and more able to love. Tears can soften places that have grown hard through disappointment, hurt, or exhaustion. When this happens, tears are not only an expression of pain. They can also be a sign that the heart is slowly being renewed.

Our faith reminds us that God meets us not only in moments of strength, but also in moments of vulnerability. Scripture often speaks of God's closeness to those who are broken-hearted and of God's deep compassion for the human heart.

Many people move through their days carrying burdens that others cannot see. The person beside us in the pew, the neighbour we greet at the shops, or the colleague we speak with each day may be quietly holding grief, anxiety, or exhaustion.

This awareness invites us to treat one another with patience, kindness, and compassion. And when tears come into our own lives, perhaps we can learn not to fear them quite so much. Sometimes they are not a sign that we are falling apart. Sometimes they are the quiet work of grace. Like a careful stitch in fabric, they begin to mend what has been strained or torn within us. Slowly, gently, almost without us noticing, the heart is drawn back together again – one small stitch at a time.



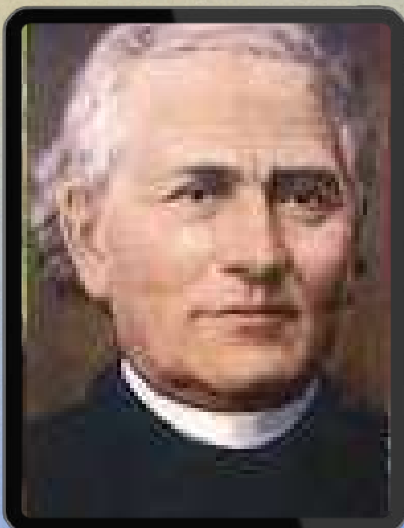
Heart Spirituality

The act of creation takes place within us

God does not create from a distance, sending existence to us like the sun its rays. He is in us, in our most intimate depths more present to us than we are too ourselves. Our God is everywhere; equally everywhere; fully present in an angel and a grain of sand. He could not be more present in one than the other. But God is not active in all beings equally.

His intimate, creative action gives existence with a variety of characteristics. To the plant, it give life; to the animal, a more perfect life; to a human being and to an angel, intelligence in various degrees. How great and beautiful is the world when seen in this light! It is a divine discourse expressing in space all the perfections of God. Blessed are those who listen to this discourses and understand something of it. That, in fact, is our natural end. To attain it, we need two things: an intellect and a heart.

Jules Chevalier msc, *Le Sacre-Coeur de Jesus*, p. 281. Paris 1900.



Jules Chevalier msc

To live a "Spirituality of the Heart" means that:

"We have to go down to the depths of our own soul in a realisation of our profound personal need of life, of love and of meaning".

E.J.Cuskelly msc *Jules Chevalier: man with a mission*. p. 128

POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR SEPTEMBER

For the care of water and its just use.

Let us pray for a just and sustainable management of water, a vital resource, so that everyone may have equal access to it.



ENCYCLICAL LETTER – MAGNIFICA HUMANITAS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE LEO XIV ON SAFEGUARDING THE HUMAN PERSON IN THE TIME OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

#19. The Church is present in the world as a sign of unity for the entire human family. She recognizes today's questions and challenges as the current setting in which to carry out her particular vocation of listening, dialogue and service, and of being responsive to everything concerning the lives of contemporary men and women. This involvement in people's lives helps the Church understand ever more clearly that her mission has a historical scope and entails a responsibility for the way in which social relations are built. For this reason, she cannot consider herself a stranger to the forces shaping society.

On the contrary, the Church actively participates in the processes by which society grows and is organized, and she offers her own contribution to the creation of a more just and fraternal society. Pope Francis emphasized this historical dimension of the Church's mission: "No one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting society." [9]

Praying for Pope Leo *supporting him in his ministry*

Loving God,
we pray for Pope Leo XIV,
May he remain steadfast in truth,
living with integrity the
message of the Gospel.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish – SAFEGUARDING COMMITMENT

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart parish is committed to safeguarding and upholding the dignity and rights of all our children and vulnerable people.

We seek to empower children, their families and carers, and vulnerable people, to have a say, to be listened to, and to be protected. This approach is at the centre of all of our thinking and action.

PARISH SAFEGUARDING VOLUNTEERS

The role of the Parish Safeguarding Volunteer is to be an additional point of contact in the Parish on matters relating to the safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people, complementing the roles of the Parish Priest and Parish Secretary. They can provide advice on how complaints can be made, and forward concerns, relating to the protection safeguarding of children, young and vulnerable people within the Parish to the Institute for Professional Standards and Safeguarding Manager.

Carl Madsen, and Marg Hourigan –
belconnenwest.safeguarding@cg.org.au

*We love to celebrate mass with the children and vulnerable people of our parish.
Safeguarding and care is everyone's responsibility.*

CONTRIBUTIONS TO KIT

We are looking for front cover images - please email your photos to belconnenwest@cg.org.au by 15th of the month

KIT Keeping In Touch

KIT is produced for Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Community from contributions submitted by parishioners. Send submissions to belconnenwest@cg.org.au

Editor Marian England * **Graphic Design:** Kirsty Vera *

Front Cover: Statue of Mary MacKillop and children - Broken Bay Diocese

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Belconnen West ACT * 25 Blackham Street, HOLT ACT 2615 and Lhotsky Street, CHARNWOOD ACT 2615

JOIN US AT OLSH!

BOOK CLUB
4TH SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH



COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS FOR
PEOPLE LIVING ALONE
3RD SUNDAY OF
THE MONTH



FRIENDSHIP GROUP
LAST WEDNESDAY
OF THE MONTH



MENS GROUP
3RD FRIDAY OF
THE MONTH



MOVIE NIGHT
4TH FRIDAY OF
THE MONTH



PINS & NEEDLES
3RD MONDAY OF
THE MONTH



WOMEN'S BREAKFAST
4TH TUESDAY OF
THE MONTH



YCS BELCONNEN
AFTER SUNDAY MASS 7PM-8PM





1	Tuesday	
2	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
3	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Gethsemane Thursday - Praying with the Blessed Sacrament
4	Friday	First Friday Mass of the Sacred Heart 9:30am - Meditation 5:15pm - MFLibrary
5	Saturday	
6	Sunday	23 rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
7	Monday	
8	Tuesday	Community Connections For People Living Alone- 2:00pm Coffee Ichi Cafe Klppax
9	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
10	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass Parish Pastoral Council meeting 7:00pm Mary French Library
11	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library
12	Saturday	
13	Sunday	24th Sunday in Ordinary Time
14	Monday	The Exaltation of the Holy Cross
15	Tuesday	
16	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
17	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
18	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library Men's Group 6:00pm - Parish Centre
19	Saturday	
20	Sunday	25th Sunday in Ordinary Time Community Connections - Mary French Library 3:30pm
21	Monday	Pins & Needles 7:15pm - Mary French Library
22	Tuesday	Women's Breakfast 7:30am Bean Origin Cafe Belconnen
23	Wednesday	Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
24	Thursday	Open Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass
25	Friday	Meditation 5:15pm - Mary French Library
26	Saturday	
27	Sunday	26th Sunday in Ordinary Time
28	Monday	
29	Tuesday	Saints Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, Archangels
30	Wednesday	Friendship Group - 10:15am Parish Centre Men's Scripture Discussion at Charnwood - after 9:30am Mass