



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

22 November 2019

Dear Parishioners of St Mary's Thornbury and St Joseph's Northcote,

Archbishop Peter Comensoli has appointed Fr Antony Shabin Kaniampuram Raphael IVDei as Parish Priest of St Joseph's Northcote in addition to his current duties as Parish Priest of St Mary's Thornbury, effective 11 December 2019. He has asked Fr Shabin to work with both communities with the aim of bringing them together into a closer working relationship.

Fr Minh Tran, currently Administrator at St Joseph's Northcote, will be moving to St Michael's Bell Park, Geelong as Priest in Charge, effective 11 December 2019.

I understand this is short notice for both parishes but unfortunately an urgent need emerged that had to be addressed at short notice. I rely on your generosity and understanding as this change takes effect.

Last weekend a large parish in the Archdiocese, Bell Park, became vacant unexpectedly. In response, the Archbishop has asked Fr Shabin to take on the role of Parish Priest of St Joseph's Northcote in addition to his current role as Parish Priest of St Mary's Thornbury. This will allow Fr Minh Tran, who is currently Administrator of Northcote, to be transferred to run the large parish of Bell Park in Geelong.

By way of the most recent Census and Mass count data, Northcote parish has a Catholic population of 2625 and an average weekly Mass count of 151. Thornbury parish has a Catholic population of 2672 with an average weekly Mass attendance of 277.

St Michael's Parish Bell Park is an amalgamation of three parishes, it maintains three churches and has a Catholic Population of 11,250 with weekly Mass attendance of 1350.

I understand that numbers do not always tell the whole story and that Parish communities have their own histories and traditions. We do not want to lose those histories and we want to continue to support vibrant parish communities but, at the same time, we need to have a mind for our present reality and our future.

Vicar General's Office

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The Archdiocese is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.

I encourage parishioners and leaders of both St Joseph's and St Mary's to work with Fr Shabin to ensure that the stories of these two wonderful communities stays alive and thrives into the future.

I wish both parishes every blessing as you continue together in the journey of faith.

With every best wish,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe Caddy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Father Joe Caddy AM
VICAR GENERAL

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