

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2021!

Hello and welcome to our first newsletter of 2021. We hope that you all had a peaceful Christmas and New Year.

Heading into 2021 has been very different to the start of other years at Ephpheta. Normally we are busy planning events where the community can come together – retreats, deaf café, special celebrations. But this year is different – the situation with COVID and the rollout of vaccines in Australia is still uncertain. We do not know when we will be back to doing things the usual Ephpheta “deaf” way.

But our Ephpheta community and our team are very strong. Last year, the community showed amazing strength and resilience in changing to life with COVID and all the changes that came with it. And we will continue to go from strength to strength. We will always be here to support the community in the best way that we can.

So let's start this New Year with strength, courage, hope, faith and love. Strength to adapt and change with whatever life throws at us. Courage to get through hard times and to be willing to change. Hope that we will all get through this difficult time and that all will be well. Faith in our God who always loves us and who is always with us. And with all we do – let us do it with love. Love for each other. Love for our community. Love of God.

So blessings to each of you as we start this new year together. Let's make it a great one!

Hope you enjoy our newsletter.

All the best from the Ephpheta team



A message from Liz & Dave!

Liz's report

Hello – welcome to our first newsletter of 2021.

I am not exactly sure what happened to 2020! It seemed to go very slowly but then it was December! All the Ephpheta team had a break in January and we are now back planning for this year.

We learned so much through 2020. We all had a chance to “pause” and think about what is truly important in our lives. For me, it made me realise how much I need contact with people and how important are my family and friends. It also made me appreciate many things which I had maybe taken for granted in the “busy-ness” of life. The many blessings which we have in our lives which come from God.

One of the blessings we all have is an opportunity to change. Sometimes the things which change around us are not what we would have chosen. But God – who is always with us – wants us to change. He wants us to grow. He wants us to love each other more. He wants us to live good lives. Even when we make mistakes, God will forgive us if we are truly sorry, so we all have a chance to start again.

We will soon start the season of Lent to reflect on our lives and how God really wants us to live. At the end of Lent, we have the greatest gift of all. The resurrection of Jesus – who died for us – so that we have the promise of eternal life with God in heaven.

Until next time,
Liz



Dave's report

Hello everyone, welcome to the year 2021 with our first newsletter!

We begin the year by sharing some sad news - Leonie Jackson, passed away suddenly on 17th January in tragic circumstances. She died a hero saving one of her two boys caught in a rip on the South Coast. A beautiful service was held recently in honour of her. Ephpheta Centre produced a memorial prayer in Auslan and voice in memory of Leonie. She has done so much for the deaf and hard of hearing community. May she rest in peace.

Faith keeps us going. Love keeps us together as a community. Our Deaf Community is very small and we need to support each other.



Australia seems to be doing very well with managing the COVID-19 situation. We still have to be mindful of our distance with people anywhere in the public places. We still are asked to wear masks in many places. Stay safe! The Centre is still not yet open to the community. We will let you know when we are open to the community. We will plan to have small events for small groups of deaf and hard of hearing people. We make our decisions based on information announced by the government, our Catholic Church and our community.

Our Mass service at Homebush will continue this year with Auslan interpreters and will be live streamed. We will also continue to have get togethers via Zoom until we can meet in person. Please see page 9 for our different Zoom groups. We wish you a wonderful and a better year in 2021!

Over and out,
David.



Fr Michael's Reflection...

Ash Wednesday

Abraham spoke with God - he wanted to ask God for something. But first, Abraham said to God that he was being bold to even ask, because, "I am only dust and ashes". What did he mean?



Abraham was humble. A person must be honest to be truly humble. Abraham was being honest about the greatness of God, and his own littleness next to God. Abraham depended upon God, his Creator, who created man from the dust. Abraham was honest about his short life on earth. It would not be long, before the end of his life. He would then return to dust, like something that is burnt up and reduced to ashes. Yet, Abraham still asked God, and God answered him.



In the Bible, there are stories about a man named Job. Job suffered many terrible things, and he even had sores all over his body. He sat down in ashes and said "I have become like dust and ashes". He spoke angrily to God. But later on, Job was sorry, and said, "I repent in dust and ashes".

In other places in the Bible, people used dust and ashes, fasting and wearing rough clothes, to show their sadness or to protest about how badly they had been treated. It was a sign for people, and especially a reminder for themselves of their need for God. When they were sad, and humbled, they prayed to God with honesty and hope.

On Ash Wednesday, the priest makes the mark of Christ's Cross on each person's forehead. (The priest may sprinkle ashes on a person's head instead this year in some places, because of COVID.) The priest says, "remember, you are dust, and to dust you shall return".

We need this reminder. It helps us to be honest with ourselves and with God. It helps us to remember that God is the giver of all good things in this life and the next. On Ash Wednesday and all through Lent we choose to be reminded. We fast, and give to the poor, and pray. We give up some of the things that make us most comfortable, because we want to remember that our hope is in God and we want to be good like God. We want to follow Christ, and believe in the Gospel, because Christ has promised to lead us, through every suffering, to life with God. Even the Cross, upon which Jesus suffered, has become a sign of hope for us.

On the first day of Lent, the whole Church begins to repent together. However, from then on, our small sacrifices, our fasts, prayers, and good deeds, are hidden. They are hidden because they are for God alone. It is like we are speaking trustingly with God, just as Abraham did.

Mother Mary, you were always humble and honest with God. Help us to be humble and honest too. May we keep a good Lent, and grow in love of God and all people.

God Bless,
Fr Michael.

In Memory of Leonie Jackson

You have probably already have heard the sad news about the death of our friend Leonie Jackson. Leonie died in tragic circumstances on Sunday 17 January.

She was trying to save her sons who were caught in a rip in the surf at a beach on the South Coast of NSW.

The Bible tells us that the greatest thing a person can do to show love is to give up their life for another person. Leonie did this for her sons.

Leonie was a good friend to all at the Ephpheta Centre. Leonie was the first deaf CEO of the Deaf Society. She worked very hard to support the Australian Deaf community. David and Liz worked closely with Leonie on many projects. We greatly valued her friendship and support. Leonie will be greatly missed.

At this very sad time, our prayers are with Leonie's family, friends, colleagues and all in the deaf community who knew her. We ask our loving God to bless them and give them comfort at the very sad time.



Loving God,

We thank you for the gift of the life of our friend Leonie.

Thank you for her life of service, for her generosity and love. Grant eternal rest to our friend Leonie and let your light shine upon her.

At this sad time, give comfort to all those people who loved her and miss her.

Strengthen them with your love, protect them and support them through the hard times ahead.

Through the Holy Spirit, gather your community together so that we can support each other through this hard time.

Mother Mary, give your love and protection to Leonie's family, especially her sons.

Comfort them and love them with a mother's love.

We pray for your peace and love, through Christ our Lord,

Amen



Pope Francis has announced that 2021 will be the **Year of St Joseph**. It started on the 8th December 2020 and will finish on the 8th December 2021.

St Joseph is the father of Jesus on Earth and the husband of Mary.

Pope Francis announced a **Year of St Joseph** because he reflected on the many people who have made sacrifices during COVID-19 in order to protect others. In his life, St Joseph made sacrifices so that he could protect and care for Jesus and Mary.

The Pope also reflected that the world needs fathers. Fathers who shows love, obedience, courage and works to support their family. Fathers who do not think about themselves but focused on the lives of others. They take responsibility to care for their family. St Joseph is the perfect example of a father who served his family with great love and humility.

The Church will also be celebrating 150 years since St Joseph was announced as the patron saint of the Catholic Church.

As Catholics we do not worship saints, but we ask them to pray to God on our behalf. We try to live like the saints in living good and holy lives. The Catholic Church honours St. Joseph as the father of Jesus on Earth. He is the patron saint of the Universal Church, of fathers, of workers and a happy death.

Prayer to St Joseph

St Joseph, the protector of Jesus Christ and the husband of Mary.

Be a father to us always and guide us on the right path of life.

Give us the grace, mercy and courage that we need and to guard and protect us from all evil.

Amen.

St Joseph, pray for us.

2021 Easter Mass Timetable 17 February - 4 April

Due to COVID, our Easter Masses and celebrations will be a little bit different this year. There will be no cuppa or get together after Masses.

Please see below for our Easter timetable. You are welcome to join if you feel safe to.

All Masses will be live streamed onto Ephpheta's Facebook page.

	Date	Time	Where	
Ash Wednesday	Wednesday 17th February	11am	Our Lady of the Assumption 74 Underwood Road, Homebush	Deaf Mass
Palm Sunday	Sunday 28th March	11am	Our Lady of the Assumption 74 Underwood Road, Homebush	Deaf Mass
Holy Thursday	Thursday 1st April	7pm	Our Lady of the Assumption 74 Underwood Road, Homebush	Integrated Mass
<p>Spaces at the 7pm Mass will be very limited but it will be livestreamed.</p> <p>We hope to have a deaf only Mass at Our Lady of the Assumption earlier that afternoon but we cannot confirm this yet.</p> <p>For updates, please check the Ephpheta website or Facebook page.</p>				
Good Friday	Friday 2nd April	3pm	Our Lady of the Assumption 74 Underwood Road, Homebush	Integrated Mass
Easter Saturday Vigil	Saturday 3rd April	7pm	Our Lady of the Assumption 74 Underwood Road, Homebush	Integrated Mass
Easter Sunday	Sunday 4th April	11am	Our Lady of the Assumption 74 Underwood Road, Homebush	Deaf Mass



Lent

A Time to Renew

Lent is a very special time in our Catholic community. Starting on Ash Wednesday, it is a time when we prepare to meet the resurrected Jesus at Easter.

Lent is a time when we focus on 3 things in particular – on prayer, on fasting (giving something up for God) and for doing good works to support the poor.

This year our Lent will look a little different because of COVID. But we are still having our Lenten groups (all are welcome) and this year we are adding in some extra discussion groups with a deaf priest Fr Michael Depcik from America.

Lent Groups 2021 via Zoom

This year we will be having Lenten groups on Zoom which will be held in the weeks from Ash Wednesday to Easter. A Lent group is a great opportunity to read and reflect on the Gospels through Lent. The schedule of sessions is listed below.



Session 1:	Jesus in the Garden and His arrest	Friday 19 February
Session 2:	Jesus with the High Priest	Friday 26 February
Session 3:	Peter's Denial	Friday 5 March
Session 4:	Jesus with Pilate	Friday 12 March
Session 5:	The Crucifixion	Friday 19 March
Session 6:	The Death of Jesus	Friday 26 March

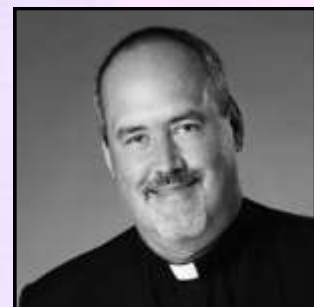
If you would like to join a Lent Group please contact Brett Beath 0407 064 872 or email brettb@ephpheta.org.au.

Zoom with Fr Michael Depcik

Fr Michael Depcik is a deaf Catholic priest in America. He is a good friend of the Ephpheta Centre - he has visited us in Australia a few times.

During Lent this year Fr Michael will join us for two Zoom groups:

- Thursday 18 February at 10am
- Thursday 4 March at 10am.



If you would like to join a Lent Group with Fr Michael Depcik please contact Donovan 0408 697 773 (SMS) or email donovan@ephpheta.org.au.

Deaf Picnic in the Park

In 2020 we really missed running our regular deaf café events. Until we can safely get together at the Ephpheta Centre we are going to trial having social get togethers **elsewhere**. Join us for our first community picnic for 2021!

Because of COVID it will look a little bit different to our usual events.

**Please bring your own morning tea, lunch, drinks and a folding chair to sit on.
Or you can buy your morning tea and lunch from a shop at Burwood Westfield.**

When: Tuesday 9 March from 9.30am

Where: Burwood Park - 2 Corner Street, Burwood

When you RSVP we will provide you with a map of where to meet + information how to get there.

RSVP: It is important that you let us know you are coming. We need to have contact numbers. If it is cancelled because of wet weather, we will contact you in the morning.

Please **make sure you RSVP** to Pat 0414 412 852 (SMS) or email pat@ephpheta.org.au or Donovan 0408 697 773 (SMS) or email donovan@ephpheta.org.au.



Do not worry if you cannot come to this picnic. We will have small mini deaf cafés (small get togethers at cafés) in different areas throughout the year.

If you would like to join a mini deaf café, please contact Pat and Donovan.

We pray for those who have died...

Our 2020 newsletters did not have any notices for those in our deaf community who had passed away.

From now on, we will be adding these notices to let our community know of those who are no longer with us so we can pray for them.

If you would like us to pray for someone who has died, please make sure their family has given permission for their name to be mentioned in our newsletter.

Starting in our next newsletter, we will print the names of friends and family who died in 2020. We will also start listing the names of people who pass away.

If you had someone dear to you who passed away in 2020, please contact David 0408 669 672 (SMS) or email david@ephpheta.org.au.

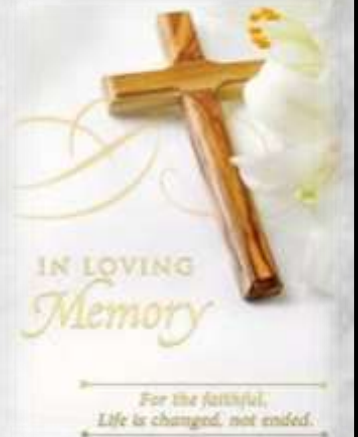
We pray for all the people in our deaf and Ephpheta community who have died in 2020.

Lord, give the soul who has died eternal rest.

Let your light shine on them.

May their soul and all the souls who have died through God's mercy, rest in peace.

Amen



Zoom with the Ephpheta Centre

The Ephpheta Team has been using Zoom for our regular meetings and catch ups. We will continue this in 2021.

The Ephpheta team has set up some Zoom chat groups so that we can chat together online.

We have a men's group, craft group, rosary group and a prayer group.

We need to keep the size of the groups small but all are welcome. Zoom is **fun** to use and we can all chat together while we are at home. Make a cup of tea and join us for a chat!

Please contact any Ephpheta staff for more information.



BINGO!!! Craft catch up on Zoom!



The Ephpheta Centre is still closed to the community. We need everyone to stay safe and well. We will let you know when this changes.

If you are well and would like to come to Mass, we have interpreted Sunday Mass each Sunday.

Mass only. No morning tea or lunch.

Where: Our Lady of the Assumption, 74 Underwood Road, Homebush.

When: 11am each Sunday

If you are over 70 or not well or are worried about coming, please do not come. You do not have to come to Mass.

You can watch this Mass **live streamed** on our Ephpheta Facebook page (look for 'Ephpheta Centre for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People') or we can SMS you the video link.

You can also watch it later on our Ephpheta website.



AN ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT MASS READINGS:

Ephpheta will not add the weekly Mass readings to the newsletters for 2021.

If you would like a printed copy of the Mass readings for the year, we can mail them to you separately. Please contact Chrisso 0405 749 488 (SMS) or email christiane@ephpheta.org.au.

Prayer of Spiritual Communion when we cannot receive Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things and I desire You in my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.

As though You were already there,

I embrace You and unite myself to You;

permit not that I should ever be separated from You.

Amen.



Jesus Washed the Disciples' Feet

Compare the picture on the top with the picture on the bottom. Circle 12 things that are different.



Happy
easter



S C C E L E B R A T E T O I A
 U U C R O S S Q C S F V N E H
 P H N B P T W B U E I Z E I O
 G J S D D F R Y R F A N E V L
 V M E Z A G O D R I H S S Y Y
 K F J B G Y S X U I S A T X S
 L O J W S A V I O U R E P E I
 M R E D Z N Z R W M Y W N P R
 E G S F V Q Y T O M B A F P Y
 W I U R Y K C O V X W G A C P
 V V S I U L P X T O K C I Y J
 Q E N D Y I Q U Y R Y D T K Y
 M A H A T H U R S D A Y H U O
 B O S Y J L N C X G W K S R U
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F I N D A

W O R D



CELEBRATE HOLY
 CROSS JESUS
 EASTER RI SEN
 FAI TH SAVI OUR
 FORGI VE SI NS
 FRI DAY SUNDAY
 GOD THURSDAY
 HAPPY TOMB



4 Turner Street,
PUNCHBOWL NSW 2196
Phone: (02) 9708 1396
TTY: (02) 9708 6904
Fax: (02) 9709 5638
Email: office@ephpheta.org.au
www: www.ephpheta.org.au

 Join us on Facebook!
<http://www.facebook.com/thecentrefordeaf>

The Ephpheta Centre is supported by the Charitable Works Fund.



Staff Email Addresses:

Brett	brettb@ephpheta.org.au
Chrisso	christiane@ephpheta.org.au
David	david@ephpheta.org.au
Donovan	donovan@ephpheta.org.au
Liz	liz@ephpheta.org.au
Pat	pat@ephpheta.org.au
Fr Michael	frmichael@ephpheta.org.au

EPHPHETA WEBSITE NEWS

Have you seen our website recently?

Our website is now being updated regularly so it is always full of current information.

Please keep checking it!

If you have any ideas or feedback for our website please contact David at david@ephpheta.org.au

www.ephpheta.org.au

Please send your news, stories, information and requests to Liz or David to be considered for the next newsletter!



What does "Ephpheta" mean?

The name Ephpheta of our Centre came from the bible - a story about Jesus meeting a deaf man, he says "Ephpheta" which means "Be open".

We are always open to you all!