

PARISH LIFE IN ISO

This week we hear from two members of our Parish Leadership Team, Kevin McCartney and Anthony Scicluna, who share with us some of their experiences of life in ISO.



'Like most people, the whole Covid19 event has turned our lives upside down for the last six months,' says Kevin McCartney. In February Kevin's wife Noreen developed a problem with her back and within a week was admitted to Epworth Hospital where she stayed until April after significant spinal surgery. In the meantime Covid19 started to spread into our country and eventually into our community. Hospital visiting hours were limited and Noreen became isolated towards the end of her treatment. During this time, the couple should have celebrated their 45th wedding anniversary, Noreen's birthday and the birth of two new grandsons Charles and Frederick.



Letter from granddaughter Abigail

'Because we are both in our 70s, and with Noreen's immune system compromised, we were quite fearful of contracting the virus. Tasks like buying food and accessing health services became quite problematic. It was pretty difficult dealing with Noreen's recovery under the shadow of Covid. There was a continual fear of what would we do if one of us got sick. I guess it was

the same for many people, especially those who are older, but it took a while to shake off to a level that we accept the new 'norm' with less anxiety.'

Kevin says one of the hardest aspects of the pandemic is not being with their children and grandchildren, especially since the arrival of Charlie and Freddie. 'While we can all call, Facebook and Zoom, the inability to cuddle the little ones leaves a huge hole in our lives. The reality of isolation for people is driven home.'

'On a more positive note, I have become quite a Mrs Doubtfire with domestic skills I haven't used for nearly 70 years. While my repertoire in the kitchen is limited, we have managed to enjoy some good food, supplemented by a couple of 'Lite & Easy' meals each week. So there you go, nothing is impossible!'

Kevin also continues to look after the garden and has just



Babies Charlie (L) & Freddie (R)
Dads Felix (L) & Brad (R)
(holding their nephews)

embarked on the restoration of a bird house and feeder, which is visited each day by the local lorikeets and rosellas.

'When this is over, we hope to spend as much time as possible with our family. As you get older, you probably need to take every opportunity to share the lives you are part of as a priority, they are rich and important opportunities. We are also looking forward to the simple things like going to Café Palms, Poynton's Nursery and playing golf. However, one day at a time at the moment seems to work!'



Kevin's Birdhouse Project



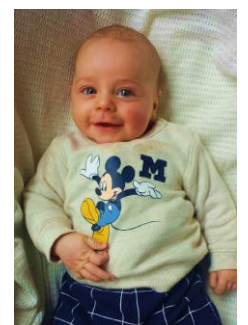
Anthony and Wendy Scicluna's fourth child was born in March just as Melbourne moved into ISO.

'When the first round of lockdown was announced, we welcomed our newest edition Luke Patrick into the Scicluna household. Wow our own little 'Coronial' baby!' Having a baby during the lockdown has had its

challenges for the family with virtual health nurse visits and no visitors in hospital other than Dad which was difficult for the couple's other children Grace, Daniel and Jude. 'Needless to say Luke's homecoming was momentous because he had three siblings that were jumping out of their skin to meet him!'

A upside for Anthony is time at home with his young family. 'Working from home has given me the opportunity to spend more time with the family, help out where possible with our new addition and for countless walks and bike rides.'

The lockdown has meant home school for Grace who is in grade one at St Therese's. Anthony commends the efforts of our parish school in the setting up and implementation of remote learning. 'This has been a great opportunity to share in her education in a way that would not usually be possible. St Therese's did a fantastic job getting the learning at home program together in such a quick time frame.'



Baby Luke

Kinder for Daniel has gone on as usual through all of ISO and Anthony says the four year olds have done remarkably well in adapting to the 'new normal'.

'These times come with their challenges but our ability to adapt is remarkable also. One example is when the kids were role playing and I asked what they were playing and to my amusement they answered 'home schooling!'