

ST. AMBROSE CATHOLIC PARISH WOODEND VICTORIA

The Town of Woodend is situated in the Macedon Ranges Shire at about 600 metres above sea level. It is 70 Kms from the Melbourne GPO by road and is serviced by a reliable VLine train station in town. The journey to Melbourne takes about an hour to get to Southern Cross.

The Faith Community gathers to celebrate and remember the Death & Resurrection of Jesus at 6pm for the Vigil Eucharist and 11am for the Sunday Eucharist. Families with children to be baptised are welcomed when we gather Sunday mornings and the Baptisms continue after Mass. During the week, Mass is celebrated on Wednesdays, Thursdays & Fridays at 9.30am with a class or two of children sometimes.

St Ambrose Church has been a welcoming place of worship since it was built in 1916. The second Archbishop of Melbourne Dr. Carr laid the Foundation stone in May of 1916 and the Church was opened and blessed in December of 1916 by the soon to be, third Archbishop of Melbourne Dr. Mannix. The First Archbishop of Melbourne Dr. Goold had Laid the foundation stone for the first church which was built of stone on the same site about 50 years before. The parish of Woodend was founded in 1889 and had been part of Kyneton.

In 2023 there were 19 Baptisms, 21 children Confirmed and 25 children receiving their Eucharist for the first time. There were 10 Funerals and 2 weddings.

St Ambrose Parish Woodend has 557 Families and 1875 people on the books.

The average weekly attendance at Sunday Mass is 100. The last stewardship was in Nov/Dec 1917 with about 50 generous regular contributors now.

The Sunday liturgies and those at Christmas, Holy Week & Easter are supported by two long standing groups of singers and musicians who prepare the music and provide a very valuable contribution to our Liturgies. St. Ambrose Parish School has 220 Children consisting of 143 families. Some of these numbers are possibly not on the parish books. It has a very dedicated Principal and staff.

A 4.2 million dollar building work has just been completed at the school which has been done well with future growth of Woodend in mind.

'Ambrose Care' is a committee of parishioners who respond to the needs of the poor in the area in a discrete way working with the Parish Secretary.

Sunday Cuppa after the 11am Mass occurs on the last Sunday of the month; a number of people are responsible for it.

The Parish Office is in the Front room of the Presbytery and our dedicated Parish Secretary who has held the position for over 20 years works in the office two days a week; mostly Mondays & Fridays but can change according to need.

A Parish team of 8 parishioners has been working as part of 'Taking the way of the Gospel' looking at the possibility of ministries which can be taken up by parishioners. They have been speaking to the Parishioners and reflecting on the Gospels all through the Sunday Masses in Lent this year.

The Parish Priest is also responsible for the Parish of Lancefield /Romsey which until recently with the arrival of an assistant Priest who now resides in Lancefield Presbytery, meant a deal of travelling between the two places for Masses, Funerals, Baptisms school visits and visits to parishioners.

The Parish house in Woodend was built in 1889. It was reduced to one storey in the 50s and expanded. It is now a comfortable residence, Gas heated which helps in the winter and some major maintenance done recently to the roof, storm-water drainage and a bathroom.

Finance has always to be carefully considered. The few parishioners who come on Sunday are very generous as most are retired, semi-retired, widows, widowers and pensioners. Our Parish secretary keeps a steady eye on the PPs spending which is helpful.

The Macedon Ranges is a great place to live and so central to everything in Victoria. The people of the area are friendly and the Parishioners are committed to their parish.

Rev Martin Fleming PP since end September 2011.