

Ephpheta Sunday Prayer - 16th August 2020

Today is *Ephpheta Sunday* when we usually celebrate with a special Mass for the Catholic Deaf community every August. This year is more special because John Pierce Centre celebrates 40th anniversary since it began in 1980. We planned to have a “high” Mass and then have a celebration luncheon. Unfortunately, this celebration is on hold due to the Coronavirus pandemic. In spite of that, we still celebrate in our hearts and give thanks to God in prayer:

Loving God,

Today is *Ephpheta Sunday* and John Pierce Centre’s 40th birthday.

We thank you for our long Deaf history in Australia, especially in the Catholic Deaf Community. We thank you for all the people who were involved and supported the Deaf community in the early years. They gave the John Pierce Centre such a good foundation. We especially think of the last 40 years, and we remember those who have given time, energy and financial support to the John Pierce Centre, especially Board members, staff, volunteers and all the Deaf people who have been involved.

We thank you for our unique gift of sign language in Australia – AUSLAN. Before JPC was established in 1980, way back to 1920’s, 1930’s, 1940’s 1950’s the Catholic Deaf community often used their own Australian-Irish Sign Language. Today, we recognise its contribution to Auslan. Sign language helps us to communicate clearly within our own eyes, facial expression, emotions, etc. It certainly helps us to understand more of what the word Ephpheta means “Be opened”. May this allow our minds and hearts be more open with your love and express our compassion and justice in our communication.

We thank you for our wonderful community spirit – in our gatherings at John Pierce Centre who many call their second home : through Sunday Masses, Pankina Group, Ladies’ and Men’s groups and other groups. May the light, colour and warmth of our community Centre continue to be like a lighthouse guiding us in our lives with love and continued respect for each person. May this Centre continue to provide care and support to the Deaf Community in many years to come.

May God bless you all. Amen.

–

Happy Ephpheta and happy JPC 40th anniversary!

Keep safe. Good bye.