

**BATHURST  
DIOCESE**  
*Sharing Jesus for Life*



PARISH PROFILE

**KELSO**

## ABOUT US

The Parish of Kelso is located just east of Bathurst and includes Kelso (the eastern part of the city of Bathurst) and the villages of Raglan, Peel and O'Connell in the surrounding rural area. Kelso is one of two Parishes within the city of Bathurst.

Kelso has been a rapidly growing area of Bathurst, for a number of years. The population is a mix of families in social housing, and new housing and older people in retirement/aged care.

Holy Trinity is the principal centre of the parish. It is set on approximately 6 hectares of land which overlooks the centre of Bathurst. Also on the site are the Rectory, The Parish and Community Centre, Cemetery and off-street parking.

The church building was commenced in 1834 and has been added to over the years. It was first used for worship at Easter, 1835, and consecrated in December 1836. It is the first consecrated church west of the Blue Mountains.

The building has seating for 120 worshippers. It is wheelchair friendly and has a hearing loop and audio equipment.



*The Church – looking from the car park*

## OUR MISSION

A people who know we are loved by God and because we are loved by God, we are able to go out to love and serve others in our community, in God's name.

## OUR NEED

- PASTOR – a gift and passion for pastoral care, especially to older Australians, who may be lonely and disconnected and to young families. Someone who will home visit, is approachable, caring, energetic and committed.
- PREACHER – teaching, reminding us and helping us to understand the Bible's message of Grace, that even when we have turned from God, God still loves us.
- PRIEST – administering the Sacraments, leading by example to equip others for God's work. Someone with enthusiasm, vision and motivation to grow the parish

## CURRENT CHURCH SERVICES

Regular worship services are conducted throughout the Parish. Services nearly always include Holy Communion.

Holy Trinity, Kelso:	Each Sunday at 9:00am, average attendance 20-25
St John Evangelist, Peel:	4th Sunday of the month at 11:30am, attendance 5
St Thomas, O'Connell:	4th Sunday of the month at 5:00pm, attendance 12
Ilumba Gardens:	1st Tuesday of the month at 11:00am, attendance 10-15
Bible Study in the Parish Centre:	Each Wednesday at 10:30am

## DEMOGRAPHICS

The congregation consists mostly of people over 80. Many have worshipped at Kelso since childhood (for some this is more than 70 years). A third of the regular attendees have joined our Parish in the last 10 years. Children and those in their twenties rarely attend.

There are approximately 70 on the Parish Roll, however many have retired, and their attendance is less regular, as they enjoy their retirement and take trips away. Others deal with poor health, find the service time too early, are hesitant to attend due to COVID vulnerability, limited mobility and transport. A significant number of long-term parishioners have moved to Ilumba Gardens in recent years.

With an aging population there is a diminishing number who are physically able to participate in many of the volunteer activities. As a result much of the organising for events, and other duties has fallen to members of the Parish Council, who have held positions for many years.

## COUNTRY CENTRES

The parish also includes two centres in the surrounding rural area.

St John the Evangelist, Peel (12km north) is situated in a small village surrounded by an established grazing area. In 2020, the advent of COVID and the Peel Church Warden, suffering a stroke, resulted in services being suspended.



*St John the Evangelist, Peel*

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St Thomas, O'Connell (20km southwest) is in a district where some subdivision has occurred. It has a Church building and small cemetery, hall which is rented out for a preschool during the week, and a rectory which is in the process of being repaired and renovated.

The O'Connell community is part of Oberon Local Council. Over the past 12 months, services have been led by Bishop Mark.



*St Thomas', O'Connell with Hall in background*

## CEMETERY

Within the grounds is an active Cemetery which comprises five sections: Pioneer, Monumental, Lawn, Rose Garden and Columbarium. Burials and internments remain an integral part of the Rector's role. A database is kept with bookings for burials and internments. The Parish receives many family history enquiries each month.

*Figure 1. Driveway to the Church through the Pioneer Cemetery*



*From the driveway to the church looking through the Pioneer cemetery*

The Parish has been blessed by the support of prisoners from Bathurst Correctional Centre, who have assisted in mowing the grounds and cemetery.



*Rose Garden*

## OUTREACH

Bible Study is held each Wednesday morning in the Parish and Community Centre. Bible Studies generally follow the lectionary. Attendees do not require Biblical knowledge and are free to sit and listen and ask questions. It is a time to explore, to read and to spend time with others exploring the scripture. It is a time of fellowship with the Word of God.

The Parish maintains an extensive Baptismal Roll on the Parish computer. Birthday cards are sent out by volunteers, and each Easter and Christmas cards are sent with greetings and worship times for services. Ilumba Gardens, is a retirement village in Kelso which comprises independent retirement units, an aged care hostel and high care facility. They welcome pastoral visits, especially by the Rector and services held at Ilumba. At present services are held in the High Care section of Ilumba, however discussions have commenced regarding a second service being held each month in the Community Centre of the Village.

The Parish Roll includes a pastoral carer for each member on the roll. This was implemented during COVID, with pastoral volunteers being responsible to call people on their list, each fortnight. This outreach was much appreciated, especially during lockdown and needs to be reviewed and reactivated.

While the catering group formally disbanded just prior to COVID, a small group of parishioners continue to be available to serve grieving families, by catering at wakes. They also have catered for other Parish and Diocesan gatherings such as Synod, and Safe Ministry Training.

Volunteers who clean the church and tend to the grounds often interact with visitors to the church and cemetery and with prisoners from Corrective Services, providing an opportunity to show the love of God.

In previous years, we have had a contemporary service catering to young people and young families. This was held in the Parish Centre and allowed for a more relaxed service, numbers dwindled, and the service was put on hold. It is hoped that this could be re-visited.

## BUILDINGS

The Rectory is a four-bedroom, two storey structure designed by the colonial architect Edmund Blackett. It was built in 1878. Alterations and improvements have been made through the years.



*The rectory – overlooking Bathurst*

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The Parish and Community Centre was completed in 2000 and is used for both parish and community activities. Parish and Community Centre is wheelchair friendly, has a well-equipped kitchen, tables and chairs audio/visual equipment and ample parking. These facilities are perfect for social interactions and can be used for Conferences, alternate services, and fellowship activities. It is also a good source of income if marketed as such. The Parish office and Rector's office is also situated in the building.



*Congregation in the Parish and Community Centre, during Children's Christmas Service 2021*

## FINANCES

For many years, the Parish has relied heavily on fundraising by volunteers. The main fundraising activities are Autumn Market Day (March), Spring Fair (October), High Tea, catering and hall hire. During COVID, these main fundraising activities significantly decreased. Since the break as a result of COVID restrictions, many of our volunteers have realised that they are no longer physically capable of doing the work they have done for years. In order to maintain sufficient income to meet general running costs, transfers from other accounts were necessary. Two of the three accounts are now depleted and transfers from the Cemetery account is limited. The Cemetery has separate accounts and is in a secure financial position.

## Strengths

Caring, supporting people in the parish family in their day-to-day journeys with down to earth, physical, emotional and social needs.

There is a growing population of people over 80 in Kelso, who can be lonely and disconnected. Because we are older, we understand their needs and have the opportunity for outreach to this section of the community. We have opportunities for outreach to the aged and their families, through pastoral care, involvement at Ilumba Gardens and funerals (including catering for wakes, and burial arrangements).

## Concerns

Kelso is in an area of high residential growth, but there has not been a corresponding increase in worshippers. We need to reach out to establish relationships with casual contacts (baptismal, wedding and funeral families) and reconnect with parishioners who have become disconnected.

We are a small worshipping congregation, many with fixed incomes. Costs are increasing and without significant change, we will continue to struggle to meet our running expenses. We need to find alternative ways to worship, volunteer and fundraise.

## Opportunities

In the writing of the next chapter...for what should the parish be known...in how they speak and act...in the stories of faith lived? What will others experience in their contact with us, individually and as a faith community? How can we improve our sharing of what it means to be known and loved by God?

- Reconnect with those who have been 'lost' to us, understand what has created a stumbling block for them and explore ways to reconnect with them.
- Build on pastoral care/home visiting, especially to the lonely and disconnected - aged pensioners and those in nursing homes and villages.
- Review of Worship Services – times, styles, locations. Making 'church' more relevant to the people we are called to serve in 2023.
- We have the opportunity to grow and enhance our witness and care for this part of our community, recognising that other parishes in Bathurst, have different talents and are better suited to meeting the needs of younger families at this time.
- Outreach to the Kelso community – housing commission areas of Bonner and Bannerman area, Aboriginal community and new housing estates (very different areas with diverse populations). Rekindling links with schools, including Scots/All Saints and public schools.
- Improved utilisation of the signage on the road, updating service times, and using inspirational texts, to inspire curiosity and attendance.

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- Maintain alternative communication strategies (hand deliver notices, special services etc), for those who do not have computer confidence, so that they remain connected.
- Kelso is one of the largest and fastest growing areas of Bathurst, new families need direction and social interactions in order for them to belong and feel connected.

For further information or to submit an expression of interest in this great ministry opportunity contact the Right Reverend Mark Calder,

Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Bathurst:

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