

## St Peter Chanel & St Joseph Berala

*Streams of living water will flow from within. ~John 7:38*

Parish Office: 60 Kingsland Rd, Berala, 2141, Ph: 96447787 E: [info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au](mailto:info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au)  
Parish Website: [www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au](http://www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au), facebook: [stpeterstjoseph](https://www.facebook.com/stpeterstjoseph) YouTube: [BeralaParish](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBeralaParish)

Holy Mass: Tuesday to Friday 6.45am, Saturday 8.00am | Holy Hour: Saturday 8.30am-9.30am

Lord's Day Mass : Saturday 5.00pm Vigil - LiveStreamed, Sunday 8.00am & 10.00am

Reconciliation: Saturday 8.30am - 9.30am

For Baptisms, Weddings, Bible Study and Catholic Enquiry, please contact Fr Thomas or the parish office on 9644 7787.



7TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR A

19 FEBRUARY 2023

### BE INGENUOUS, WIN OVER THE EVIL



Stories of violence and shooting reported in the media which were acts of revenge were meant to settle disputes. But does retribution settle matters? No. It creates a “*hard to break*” cycle of violence, one aggression leading into another. Hate and violence is not the way to settle matters; and surely it is not for those who trek their way to the Kingdom of Heaven. A story about Saint Teresa of Kolkata (Mother Teresa) shows the wisdom of a disciple of Christ. In her early years she went begging for money to support her work with the destitute. Once, she stretched her begging hands before a well to do man, he not only refused to help the mother, but did something horrible, spat into Teresa’s palm. Most people would be outraged if it happened to them; but not Mother Teresa. She clenched the sputum in one hand and stretched the other to the man and calmly said, “*That is for me. Now please give something for my children.*” That man was mortified. Ironically, acts of hate are the way of the weak, not of the strong. Mother Teresa’s act of goodness was much stronger than the repulsive act of hate by the rich man. The rich man felt like nobody before the Mother. It is things like this that made Teresa of Kolkata a perfect model of Christian discipleship.



Jesus asked his disciples to be perfect like the heavenly Father is perfect. How to become perfect? *Matthew 5:38-48* is teaching us about how to become perfect. This was written at a time when the people of Israel were revolting against the oppressive imperial rule of Roman power. There were many armed revolts against Romans, with the hope of liberation from the oppressive reign of the emperor. In such a situation Jesus says, “*You have learnt how*

*it was said: Eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you: offer the wicked man no resistance. If anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; if a man takes you to court and demand your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him.*” Revenge and payback are not the ways for a disciple of Jesus. A good disciple is able to bring the opponents to their knees by being extra good to them. If a lender wants to deprive you of your outer garment, instead of fighting with the lender, take off all your clothes and give them to him. Then you standing naked will make people say ‘shame on you’, not to you but to the lender who made you undress! This might sound unreal. Then again, Mother Teresa clenching the spit of a man in her hand and calmly begging something for the orphans was also unimaginable.

The imperial power of the emperor permitted his soldiers to demand any bystander to carry their luggage for one mile, and one mile only. But instead of resisting his demands, if someone carried the luggage an extra mile for him, the soldier would be in trouble with his officers. That would teach him a lesson.

These teachings of Jesus are part of the ‘*Sermon on the Mount*’ in the course of Jesus training his disciples to be effective missionaries. You and me, as disciples of Christ learn from this sermon, how to become effective missionaries. No evil can be stopped by returning evil. Only goodness in return for the evil can bear lasting fruits. It is not hate and revenge, but acts of goodness that keeps the families together. The world needs Christians who are strong enough not to go the path of revenge, but love their enemies and do good to establish peace and joy. Sometimes it requires a bit of ingenuity, but you and I can do it. Upcoming Lent is the time for practising such a spiritual discipline.

**Parish Priest**

Fr Thomas Kurunthanam  
 info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au (Office)  
 pp@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au (for confidential)  
 T. (02) 9644 7787

**Parish Secretary**

Lea Baldoria  
 info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au  
 Tue to Fri 9am -3pm  
 T. (02) 9644 7787

**Sacramental Co-ordinator**

Sophia Brewty  
 Tue & Wed 10am-3pm  
 sacraments@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au

**Youth Ministry Co-ordinator**

Annuncia Sinisa  
 0401 291 114  
 youth@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au

**Catechist Co-ordinator**

Josie Pangilinan  
 0406 515 050

**Catholic Inquiry—RCIA**

Andrew Tham 0403 566 001

**Parish Pastoral Council**

Karim Kassis (Chair), Robert McGinn (Vice Chair), Renee Salar (Secretary), Julia Babic (Assistant Secretary), Maria Simeone (Co-ordinator, Social Committee, Jenny Michael (Asst Co-ordinator, Social Committee), Amanda Dowdell, Amanda Gahan, Annuncia Sinisa, Dom Pangilinan, Josie Pangilinan, Jennifer Makerry, Michael Kim, Natasha Ellis, Susie Mravunac, Sr Cecilia Joseph, Sophia Brewty

**Finance Committee**

Brendon Nazareth (Chair), Joe Moses, Sylvia Jukic, Nader Badra

**Parish Schools**

St Peter Chanel, Regents Park  
 T. (02) 9644 9083  
 Principal—Sr Cecilia Joseph  
 Family Educator - Jenny Michael

St Joseph the Worker, Auburn South  
 T. (02) 9646 1434  
 Acting Principal - Susie Mravunac

**CatholicCare.** Patricia Lay. Provides caring advice and advocacy to help families . 0447 529 122 | CCareline 13 18 19

**Alcohol & Drug Information Service:**

(Confidential) 02 9361 8000

**Spiritual Retreats:**

Benedictine Abbey  
 Jamberoo - www.jamberooabbey.org.au/  
 retreats Ph: 4236 0533

**Carmelites Varroville -**

www.carmeliteretreats.com.au  
 Ph: 8795 3400

**Healing After Abortion:**

0400 092 555  
**Vincentian Retreat Centre Somersby -**  
 www.divineretreatcentre.org.au  
 Ph: 4372 1598

**Sara's Place:** For pregnancy support or grieving after abortion visit  
 www.sarasplace.org.au Ph: 9699 8190

**PARISH DIARY THIS WEEK**

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Mon<br>20/2 | <b>No Mass.</b>   |
| Tue<br>21/2 | 6.45am Mass<br>11.00am Ageing Well Masterclass (Jubilee Hall)                 |
| Wed<br>22/2 | <b>Ash Wednesday</b><br>6.45am Mass<br>9.15am Mass<br>7.00pm Mass             |
| Thu<br>23/2 | 6.45am Mass<br>7.00pm 1st Reconciliation Information Evening (Jubilee Hall)   |
| Fri<br>24/2 | 6.45am Mass   |
| Sat<br>25/2 | 8.00am Mass<br>8.30am Rosary, Confession<br>5.00pm Vigil Mass                 |
| Sun<br>26/2 | 7.45am Morning Prayer<br>8.00am Mass<br>10.00am Mass<br>5.00pm Malayalam Mass |

**26 FEBRUARY 2023****1ST SUNDAY OF LENT**

| Mass   | VIGIL            | 8AM  | 10AM                                |
|--|------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| ACOLYTE  | Dom PANGILINAN   | Charlie SCULLY   | Jenny MICHAEL                       |
| MUSIC & SINGING  | N/A              | Cyril EDWARDS<br>Liva FUNAKI & Lavinia FIFITA                  | SPC & SJW<br>PRIMARY<br>FAMILY MASS |
| POWERPOINT   | Need Volunteer   | Need Volunteer   |                                     |
| LECTOR/S   | Christine KENSEY | Maria SIMEONE  |                                     |
|  | Renee SALAR      | Robert MCGINN  |                                     |
| CHURCH SHOP  | Joseph LAHOUD    | Catherine MCGINEE  | Alan THAM                           |
| <b>Cleaners SPC:</b> Maria Perica, Teresa Escobar, Kata Jurcic |                  | <b>Altar &amp; Sacristy:</b> Group 1 Gwen Bergstedt; Anita Yip |                                     |
| <b>Saturday 8AM</b>  |                  | <b>25 FEBRUARY</b>   |                                     |
| LECTOR FOR MASS  |                  | Joy SKERRITT   |                                     |

*"Family that prays together stays together"*

**PILGRIM STATUE**

*This week the statue will be with the:*

**Snell & Skerritt Families**

To host the Pilgrim Statue and Rosary prayer please contact Mona Goubran on 9709 8701 or 0417 282 603 or Phil Lopez on 9646 1756.

**MASS INTENTIONS****Sick:**

Doreen Stanmore, Pauline Lian, Gerard Del Rosario, Romaine Cheema, Virginia Naidu, Veronica Jacobs, John Shanley, Nazih Melhem, Danilo Carreon, Fiya Gourani, Zekia Al Asady, Graham Turner, Patsy Dutton, Aurora Flores, Olive Torino, Maureen Hynes, Giovanni Simeone, Arthur Doumit, Joey Kiraz

**Recently Deceased:** Terry Flanagan, Mackenzie Luke Miller, Elizabeth Foliaki, Rosario Cruz

**Deceased:** Florence Rodrigues, Cynthia de Souza

**Anniversary:** Venancio Barrozo Jr, Estefania Sarmiento, Eugenia Gianan

**Birthday:** Filippa Bartolotta

**Other Intentions:** Holy souls in purgatory, Our Lady of Miraculous Medal, Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph

## ANTIPHONS & READINGS

### Entrance Antiphon

Ps 12:6

O Lord, I trust in your merciful love. My heart will rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord who has been bountiful with me.

### First Reading

Lv 19:1-2. 17-18

The Lord spoke to Moses; he said: 'Speak to the whole community of the sons of Israel and say to them: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.

"You must not bear hatred for your brother in your heart. You must openly tell him, your neighbour, of his offence; this way you will not take a sin upon yourself. You must not exact vengeance, nor must you bear a grudge against the children of your people. You must love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord."

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 102:1-4. 8. 10. 12-13. R. v.8

#### The Lord is kind and merciful.

My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name. My soul, give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings. **R**

It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. **R**

The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger and rich in mercy. He does not treat us according to our sins nor repay us according to our faults. **R**

As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins. As a father has compassion on his sons, the Lord has pity on those who fear him. **R**

### Second Reading

1 Cor 3:16-23

Didn't you realise that you were God's temple and that the Spirit of God was living among you? If anybody should destroy the temple of God, God will destroy him, because the temple of God is sacred; and you are that temple.

Make no mistake about it: if any one of you thinks of himself as wise, in the ordinary sense of the word,

then he must learn to be a fool before he really can be wise. Why? Because the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As scripture says: The Lord knows wise men's thoughts: he knows how useless they are, or again: God is not convinced by the arguments of the wise. So there is nothing to boast about in anything human: Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life and death, the present and the future, are all your servants; but you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.

### Gospel Acclamation

1 Jn 2:5

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Whoever keeps the word of Christ, grows perfect in the love of God.  
Alleluia!

### Gospel

Mt 5:38-48

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You have learnt how it was said: Eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you: offer the wicked man no resistance. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; if a man takes you to law and would have your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to anyone who asks, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away.

'You have learnt how it was said: You must love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say this to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be sons of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike. For if you love those who love you, what right have you to claim any credit? Even the tax collectors do as much, do they not? And if you save your greetings for your brothers, are you doing anything exceptional? Even the pagans do as much, do they not? You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

### Communion Antiphon

Ps 9:2-3

I will recount all your wonders, I will rejoice in you and be glad, and sing psalms to your name, O Most High.

#### Next week's Readings:

1st Reading: **Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7**

2nd Reading: **Rom 5:12-19**

Gospel: **Mt 4:1-11**

## REFLECTIONS ON MATTHEW 5:38-48

### Historical Context – Walk two miles

Roman soldiers were allowed by their own military laws to require any person to carry the soldier's pack along the road from one milestone marker to another. That is, they could order a man to walk one mile with their pack. If they made someone carry their pack for more than one mile, the soldier himself was subject to discipline and punishment. Jesus says, 'If anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him.' Like turning the other cheek, it is turning the tables on the one who would oppress you and bringing shame upon them.

### Historical Context – Let him have your cloak as well

This one is a little stranger to our modern cultural norms. In Jesus' time, it was not shameful or embarrassing for a person to be naked but it was shameful for the person who caused them to be naked. By law, if you were unable to repay a debt, the person to whom you owed money could literally take your clothes as payment of the debt. What Jesus says is, if someone demands your tunic as payment of a debt, give them everything you're wearing to shame them for making you naked to collect their debt.

### Living the Gospel – Love your enemy

Jesus tells us that it's easy to love those who love us – anyone can do that. The test of Christian love is to love those who seem unlovable or even seek to make themselves appear unlovable. It's easy to stop saying hello to the person who never returns your greeting. It's easy to avoid the person whose disability makes you uncomfortable. It's easy to hate the person who's nasty to you. But Jesus says that it's these people who we must love. If we are only polite, pleasant and hospitable to our friends then we are failing to follow the footsteps of Jesus.

## NEWS

### Ash Wednesday - First Day of Lent



**February 22, Ash Wednesday** opens Lent 2023, a season of fasting and prayer. From then only 45 days to Easter Vigil.

The ritual of smearing ashes on head has got its roots in the ancient Jewish tradition of penance and fasting. The ashes symbolize the dust from which God made us. As the forehead is marked with ashes the minister says, "Repent and believe in the Gospel." All, including non-Christians are welcome to receive the ashes.

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent. It is a season of penance, reflection, and fasting which prepares us for Christ's Resurrection on Easter Sunday, through which we attain redemption. It is important to remember that Ash Wednesday is a day of penitential prayer and fasting. Feasting on this day is highly inappropriate.

Catholics, with the exception of children and the sick, are obliged to fast and abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday. On Good Friday also, similarly, Catholics are obliged to fast and abstain from eating meat.

### Stations of the Cross

Starting on 24 February, Stations of the Cross will be prayed in the Church every Friday of Lent 6.00 – 6.30PM.

The Stations of the Cross are a 14-step devotion that commemorates Jesus Christ's last day on Earth as a man. The 14 devotions, or stations, focus on specific events of His last day, beginning with His condemnation. You can make it a mini pilgrimage by moving with the leader (priest) from station to station. All are welcome to join this devotion in preparation for the Easter.



### Lenten Bible Reflections

**Tuesdays of Lent at 7 - 8 PM | At St Peter Chanel Church**

Based on Lenten Sunday Gospel Readings.  
Enter into the mystery of Christ and his passion.

## Lent

(An excerpt from A Statement Issued by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops November 18, 1966)

Lent has had a different history than Advent among us. Beginning with the powerful lesson of Ash Wednesday, it has retained its ancient appeal to the penitential spirit of our people. It has also acquired elements of popular piety which we bishops would wish to encourage. Accordingly, while appealing for greater development of the understanding of the Lenten liturgy, we hope that the observance of Lent as the principal season of penance in the Christian year will be intensified. This is the more desirable because of new insights into the central place in Christian faith of those Easter mysteries for the understanding and enjoyment of which Lent is the ancient penitential preparation.

Wherefore, we ask, urgently and prayerfully, that we, as people of God, make of the entire Lenten Season a period of special penitential observance. Following the instructions of the Holy See, we declare that the obligation both to fast and to abstain from meat, an obligation observed under a more strict formality by our fathers in the faith, still binds on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. No Catholic Christian will lightly excuse himself from so hallowed an obligation on the Wednesday which solemnly opens the Lenten season and on that Friday called "Good" because on that day Christ suffered in the flesh and died for our sins.

In keeping with the letter and spirit of Pope Paul's Constitution *Poenitemini*, we preserved for our dioceses the tradition of abstinence from meat on each of the Fridays of Lent, confident that no Catholic Christian will lightly hold himself excused from this penitential practice. For all other weekdays of Lent, we strongly recommend participation in daily Mass and a self-imposed observance of fasting. In the light of grave human needs which weigh on the Christian conscience in all seasons, we urge, particularly during Lent, generosity to local, national, and world programs of sharing of all things needed to translate our duty to penance into a means of implementing the right of the poor to their part in our abundance. We also recommend spiritual studies, beginning with the Scriptures as well as the traditional Lenten Devotions (sermons, Stations of the Cross, and the rosary), and all the self-denial summed up in the Christian concept of "mortification."

Let us witness to our love and imitation of Christ, by special solicitude for the sick, the poor, the underprivileged, the imprisoned, the bedridden, the discouraged, the stranger, the lonely, and persons of other colour, nationalities, or backgrounds than our own. A catalogue of not merely suggested but required good works under these headings is provided by Our Blessed Lord Himself in His description of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:34-40). This salutary word of the Lord is necessary for all the year, but should be heeded with double care during Lent.

During the Lenten season, certain feasts occur which the liturgy or local custom traditionally exempts from the Lenten spirit of penance.

### Sacramental Program 2023 — Registrations Are Now Closed

Thank you to all the families whom have registered. We are looking forward to journeying along with each one of you. May your personal witness continue to lead your children to the heart of the Father.



**Eucharist**



**Reconciliation**



**Confirmation**

We would like to request the parish community to keep these families in your prayer while they prepare to receive these sacraments.

Thank you and God bless.

**Sophia Brewty—Sacramental Coordinator**

sacraments@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au / 02 9644 7787

## AGEING WELL MASTERCLASS 3: Navigating Aged Care

Outlines the aged care options for older adults from Retirement Living, to Home Care, to Residential Care communities.

When: **Tuesday, 21 February**  
Time: **11AM**

Where: **Jubilee Hall, St Peter Chanel & St Joseph Parish**  
**62 Kingsland Road, Berala**

**Register for free!** Phone Lea on 9644 7787 or email [info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au](mailto:info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au)

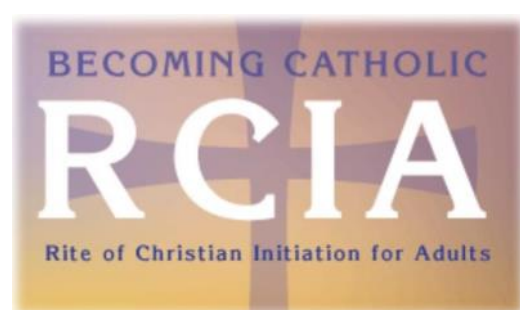


## Project Compassion Sunday 18 & 19 February



Please take home a Project Compassion box or set of donation envelopes to support Caritas Australia this Lenten season and help support vulnerable people around the world, now and **For All Future Generations**. With your support, Caritas Australia has been able to support communities around the world to tackle poverty, food security, education, water and sanitation and disaster risk reduction. Project Compassion 2023 reminds us that the good that we do today will extend and impact the lives of generations to come.

As St Pope John Paul II said, **"The future starts today, not tomorrow."** Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **For All Future Generations**. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion), or by calling 1800 024 413.



## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

The formal enrolment of the catechumens and candidates will be held at St Mary's cathedral on the first Sunday of Lent, 26 February. David Phillips, Katy Tepermann and My Nghi Hong with their sponsors and the RCIA team will be joining hundreds of catechumens and candidates from other parishes at the Cathedral. During Lent they will be going through rites of purification and scrutinies. All parishioners are invited to pray for them.

Spirit of God constantly inspires people and attract them to the Church. So far we have three new adult inquiries about initiation in our parish RCIA. A program of formation for them will be commencing soon. We are happy to hear from anyone interested in joining the new group of seekers.

This week we welcome into the Catholic faith

**Camilla Celestino**

May she always know the love of God  
and feel His guiding hand throughout her life.



## Just for Laughs

A man walks into an enchanted forest and tries to cut down a talking tree. "You can't cut me down," the tree exclaims, "I'm a talking tree!" The man responds, "You may be a talking tree, but you will dialogue."



## St. Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School

Come experience the SPC difference!



Sydney Catholic Schools



### OPEN DAY 8th March 4-7PM



@stpeterchanelregentspark ~ spcregentspark.syd.catholic.edu.au

## St Peter Chanel Primary School Update

The new school year is off to a great start at St Peter Chanel. As we conclude week three, we are already engaged in much prayer, learning and fun! Last week we gathered together for our Opening School Mass. At the end of Mass, Fr Thomas blessed Miraculous Medals for the Year 6 cohort and invested each student with it.

This sign of their leadership in the school will now become part of their uniform.

With Lent fast approaching, we are in the midst of planning for Shrove Tuesday and deciding on how we will imitate the fasting, prayer, and almsgiving on Jesus during these 40 days.

Our Open Day is Wednesday, 8 March, 4-7PM. Please spread the word and invite anyone who might be interested in learning more about our parish school. To keep up to date on what is happening, follow us on social media @stpeterchanelregentspark.

~Sr Cecilia Joseph, Principal



### NEWS FROM YOUR PARISH SCHOOL



9646 1434  
2 New St  
Auburn



We have been busy celebrating 'Friendship Week'. On Saint Valentines Day we reflected on our greatest friend - Jesus. We sent prayers up to God with our bubbles wishing all communities in the world to experience love.

Our students then put their faith into action. The Mini Vinnies decided to organise a fundraiser for those affected by the earthquakes in Syria and Turkey called 'Gold or Fold'.

Yours faithfully,  
Susie Mravunac  
Acting Principal



STJW THE BEST KEPT SECRET



**St Joseph the Worker**  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL  
AUBURN SOUTH



2 NEW ST, AUBURN, NSW, 2144  
stjwauburn.syd.catholic.edu.au  
Ph: 9646 1434

We can't wait to welcome you!

### OPEN DAYS

8 March 2023

5-6pm

11 March 2023

10-11am

At St Joseph the Worker Catholic Primary School Auburn South we believe that each child is unique and can reach their potential in our inclusive, welcoming, caring and resource rich environment. We are a Newman school catering for gifted students and offer the Amadeus music program.

Come and find out why  
WE ARE THE BEST KEPT SECRET!



### A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney:

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police.

Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org).



You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.



*"Lent is the favourable season for renewing our encounter with Christ, living in his word, in the sacraments and in our neighbour." ~ People Francis*

# JOURNEY TO EASTER

## WEEK 1 - FAST

The focus for Easter can often be the material things. The chocolates, holidays and show bags may over-shadow the true meaning of the most important season in our church year.

The story of Lent, Holy Week and Easter is the basis of our faith. Through this gentle activity, the few moments spent together preparing for Lent, Holy Week and Easter can be a time when your family can slow down, pray together and remember what is important in our lives.

Each week during Lent you will receive a reflection with a specific focus. Of course these are things we do on a continual basis throughout Lent but the specific weekly challenges give a depth to each task and helps us reflect more deeply.

Each week during Lent a member of the family can choose which activity the family will practice, I have included ideas, you may wish to come up with your own ideas. I have also included prayers your family may use for each week during Lent. These prayers can be read by the children during mealtimes or bedtime.

This family activity concludes with the joyous celebration of Jesus' resurrection on Easter Sunday, by lighting a candle in the center, just as the Paschal candle is lit at the Easter Sunday Mass.

May this Lenten journey bring you closer together as a family and lead you closer to Christ's unfailing love.

### ASH WEDNESDAY



Gospel Reading: Mathew 6:1-6, 16-18

Loving God, today I am reminded that, in order to serve You, I need to let go of the things that get in the way of loving others. Jealousy, anger, saying mean things and being selfish, stop me from following Jesus' example. I know that with Your help I can change. This Lent I pray that I grow closer to You through the love I show others, at home, at school and in my community. I want to follow Your way Lord, even when it is hard. Forgive me for the times I did not show love and bless me as I try to become more like Your Son, Jesus.

Amen.



I WONDER WHAT THINGS I CAN DO THIS LENT TO HELP ME GROW CLOSER TO JESUS?



### THE FOCUS OF THIS WEEK IS: FASTING

This week challenges you to create space in your life for the full life that Jesus came to give us.

- giving up something such as not eating meat on Fridays during Lent (and Ash Wednesday)
- or giving up something for the whole of Lent: sweets, meat, coffee, alcohol
- Unplug your devices for "rest time". Do this on an allocated day or time of your choice each week during Lent. Spend the time on your connection with family and friends (eat dinner as a family, without electronic disruptions).

### 1ST SUNDAY OF LENT



GOSPEL READING: Luke 4:1-13 J

Loving God, I know that whenever I speak to You, You hear me. I pray today for the many people in the world who are suffering, lonely, hungry and who are feeling forgotten. May they feel Your love for them no matter what they are facing. Remind them that You never forget any of us and are with us always. Give me courage to help those who need it, and strength to speak out about things I know are unfair or wrong. Amen.



I WONDER IF JESUS WAS LONELY AND SCARED IN THE DESERT?

When we fill our lives with obligations, relationships, or ways of thinking that distract us from focusing on Jesus, we are less able to experience life to the fullest. This week challenges you to create space in your life for the full life Jesus came to give us.





**This week we begin Lent. We see the colour in our classrooms and church change colour to purple.**

**It is a time of waiting, of thinking about our relationships with each other and with God and a time where we can make changes to become more like Jesus.**

The Gospels tell us that Jesus went into the desert to pray and think about what was going to happen to him. The desert is a difficult place – it is hot and with little food or water.

When we enter into Lent we too are asked to go into a time where things are not so easy.

Prayer, giving up certain foods we enjoy and sharing what we have with others can challenge us.

But we do this so we can follow Jesus in all ways – not just the ways that suit us.

This Lent we walk in Jesus' footsteps. We remember the stories about him and pray, think and act in ways that help us to become more like him.

The focus for Easter can often be the material things. The chocolates, holidays and show bags may over-shadow the true meaning of the most important season in our church year. Each week during Lent, our Church altar display will feature symbols reflecting the Passion of Jesus.

**We are all invited to pause and reflect on the immeasurable love of Jesus and the suffering He endured for our salvation.**

### **The Cross of Salvation**

The moment that Jesus of Nazareth took up the Cross in order to carry it to Calvary marked a turning point in the history of the Cross.

The symbol of a shameful death, reserved for criminals, becomes the key to our salvation.



### **The Crown of Thorns**

The Roman soldiers pushed a crown of thorns down upon Jesus' head as they mocked Him and called Him 'King of the Jews'.

Jesus' pain and suffering for our sins showed how much He loves us.



### **The Veil of Veronica**

The Redeemer of the world presents Veronica with an authentic image of His face.

The veil on which the face of Christ remains imprinted becomes a message for us.

In a certain sense it says:

This is how every act of goodness every gesture of love towards one's neighbour, reflects Jesus in the one who acts that way.



## **Without love everything is in vain**

*A treatise on Charity by St Maximus the Confessor*

Charity is a right attitude of mind which prefers nothing to the knowledge of God. If a man possesses any strong attachment to the things of this earth, he cannot possess true charity. For anyone who really loves God prefers to know and experience God rather than his creatures. The whole set and longing of his mind is ever directed towards him.

For God is far superior to all his creation, since everything which exists has been made by God and for him. And so, in deserting God, who is beyond compare, for the inferior works of creation, a man shows that he values God, the author of creation, less than creation itself.

The Lord himself reminds us: Whoever loves me will keep my commandments. And this is my commandment: that you love one another. So the man who does not love his neighbour does not obey God's command. But one who does not obey his command cannot love God. A man is blessed if he can love all men equally. Moreover, if he truly loves God, he must love his neighbour absolutely. Such a man cannot hoard his wealth. Rather, like God himself, he generously gives from his own resources to each man according to his needs.

Since he imitates God's generosity, the only distinction he draws is the person's need. He does not distinguish between a good man and a bad one, a just man and one who is unjust. Yet his own goodness of will makes him prefer the man who strives after virtue to the one who is depraved.

A charitable mind is not displayed simply in giving money; it is manifested still more by personal service as well as by the communication of God's word to others. In fact, if a man's service towards his brothers is genuine and if he really renounces worldly concerns, he is freed from selfish desires. For he now shares in God's own knowledge and love. Since he does possess God's love, he does not experience weariness as he follows the Lord his God. Rather, following the prophet Jeremiah, he withstands every type of reproach and hardship without even harbouring an evil thought towards any man.

For Jeremiah warns us: Do not say: "We are the Lord's temple." Neither should you say: "Faith alone in our Lord Jesus Christ can save me." By itself faith accomplishes nothing. For even the devils believe and shudder.

No, faith must be joined to an active love of God which is expressed in good works. The charitable man is distinguished by sincere and long-suffering service to his fellow man: it also means using things aright.

## **Lenten Companion 2023**

*Spirit & Truth: The Power of Christ Revealed*

The Lenten companion *SPIRIT AND TRUTH: The Power of Christ Revealed*. Booklet is available for download online [www.gomakedisciples.org.au](http://www.gomakedisciples.org.au).

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