



THE CARMELITE

Parish of Port Melbourne and Middle Park
in the care of the Carmelites since 1882

We acknowledge the Yalukit Willam Clan, the traditional owners and custodians of this land. We pay our respects to them. May we walk gently here.

2nd Sunday of Easter

19 April 2020

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

No doubt you've enjoyed the break from my emails but it's now back to work. Some news:

- Fr Pat is in St Vincent's Private Hospital where he is being looked after due to tummy and heart issues. Please keep him in your prayers;
- Br Leo celebrated turning $\frac{3}{4}$ of a century last week in splendid isolation with Maurice and I;
- Anne and Bram Ierardo became grandparents with the arrival of a baby girl to their son, Tom and daughter-in-law, Nicole. Infant Blake Cecelia Ierardo weighed in at 71/2 pounds after 43 hours of labour!
- Cardinal Pell is out of prison (as if you hadn't heard!)
- The grass keeps growing in the backyard and around the churches Ho hum!

And how have you been spending your time? Is your answer the same as everyone else's? As for me, it's probably exactly like yours: shopping when necessary, throwing out superfluous stuff, bingeing on Netflix when the internet works, writing emails to parishioners, drinking, writing an essay on the Magnificat, drinking, reading Louise Penny's novels, sleeping, drinking ... ho hum!

This Sunday is Divine Mercy Sunday and if you can remember back before the pestilence, we were due to host the relics of Sts Therese, Zelig and Louis Martin this Saturday. Due to conditions beyond even their control, they are now being housed at the Carmelite Monastery at Kew and are not accessible to the public. Nevertheless, their spiritual presence gave me a thought for this weekend.

This family which, I might add, was full of daughters and no sons, was an extraordinary family – most of the girls became nuns, Mum died too young and Dad had a nervous breakdown toward the end of his life and Therese went on to become known as the Little Flower - a household saint for those of us old enough to remember.

If you look at the life of St Therese, she was very much influenced by her parents and her sisters and her spirituality, as she described it in her "little way", was about finding

Both our Churches are fitted with a hearing induction loop. Please use the 'T' or other appropriate switch on your hearing aid. Please tell us if you experience any difficulty.

OUR PARISH

Churches

St Joseph's
cnr Rouse & Stokes Streets
Port Melbourne

Our Lady of Mount Carmel
cnr Richardson & Wright Streets
Middle Park

Sunday Masses

6.00pm (Sat) Mount Carmel
9.00am Saint Joseph's
10.30am Mount Carmel

Reconciliation

after 9.00am Mass Saturday

Carmelite Parish Office

274 Rouse Street
Port Melbourne Vic 3207

Telephone 03 9681 9600
Facsimile 03 9681 9608

After Hours Emergency
0408 754 283

Email parish@sj-mc.org.au

Parish Website www.sj-mc.org.au

Carmelite Website
www.carmelites.org.au

**Office Hours 9am-4pm
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
(CLOSED TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS)**

Parish Priest

Fr Hugh Brown OCarm

Parish Secretary

Anne Ierardo

Pastoral Life Co-ordinator

Michael Murray

Finance Officer

Shane Harrison

Facilities Manager

Ken Chaffer

Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Bank Street
South Melbourne Vic 3205

Telephone 03 9699 2928
Principal Simon Millar

PARISH OFFICE

**The Carmelite Parish Office is now
closed to the public.**

**The office is still functioning between 9.00am & 4.00pm
on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.**

**You can contact us by telephone:
9681 9600**

**Email: parish@sj-mc.org.au or by checking our
website on
www.sj-mc.org.au for further updates.**

**If you are in need of a priest urgently then please
call 0408 754283.**

WE REMEMBER

Please ask permission of the sick person(s) before asking their name(s) be put on the list. We need to be sensitive to the fact that some people may not wish their names published.

If you would like someone remembered in our sick list, recently deceased or anniversaries, then please contact the parish office by email: parish@sj-mc.org or by phone 9681 9600.

Those who are sick or ill and in need of prayer: Baby Luca, John Bassett, Paul Caghi - Cao, Peter Crump, Kelly Edwards, Rose Fennell, Gary Finn, Maurice Fitzpatrick, Michael McGowan, Marino Mihocic, Sylvia Poliakova, Rafal Rafalski, Lorraine Rohan, Keith Ryder, Helen Stanley, Helen Sullivan, Jim Sullivan, Maureen Toohey, Troy Vincent, Julie Wain, Sr Barbara Walsh RSG, Jonathon Wil, Tami Yap.

Those whose have died recently: Frank Hilliard, Those affected by COVID - 19.

Those whose anniversaries of death occur about this time: Carmelites, Wilfred Frizzell, Peter O'Dwyer and John Gearon.

Free Vegetarian Meals Delivered to your home

Do you live in the City of Port Phillip?

Are you in need because of the coronavirus emergency?

Please only genuine, needy recipients need apply

SMS 0438 716335 with your:

* name & address

* Concession/card type and why you need meals

* number of meals to deliver

Place your order up till 6.00am on the day of delivery
(meals are delivered from 1-2pm daily).

IN OUR PARISH

the ordinary extraordinary. "Extraordinary" because everything can be done with love!

For Therese and her parents, it was the love and endless mercy of God that brought them to acknowledge that even you and I are worthwhile, not because we achieve great things, but because we can do the ordinary things of life with love. And that is what counts!

St Faustina, a Polish saint, who instigated the devotion to the Divine Mercy, gave us a simple prayer: "Jesus, I trust in you"! What better prayer is there to say when we are doing the ordinary things of life?

Trust is such a beautiful virtue – it reminds many of us of our childhoods when we had to trust in the people who loved us. I suppose the same is true today. There are people in our lives that we trust and place our faith in. So too, it can be so with the Lord. There's no better person to place our trust in.

Thanks to all those who sent emails over Easter – it was wonderful to hear from you and brightened my day. And to hear that you are coping well.

I had thought of doing a video message and putting it on the website or something – heaven knows what I would say! Anyway, if you think it's a good idea, let me know and tell me what to say.

On a humorous note: John Tidey's reflections on the past 2 years:

2019: Stay away from negative people!

2020: Stay away from positive people!

Keep well and don't lose your sense of humour and a sense of fun. Trust in the Lord!



PS. I don't really drink all that much unless it's decaf coffee.

ARCHDIOCESE

Archdiocesan Hotline for COVID-19

In light of changing advice and circumstances, please keep visiting this webpage: www.cam.org.au for quick access to the latest news, information and resources. Should you require any further information specific to a parish concern relating to COVID-19 and the guidelines produced by the Archdiocese, please contact the newly established service desk for our Priests and Parishes:

Phone: 9926 2469

Email: covid-19@cam.org.au

This phone line and email will be monitored Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm, by Archdiocesan staff.

THANK YOU

We understand that these are very unusual circumstances and difficult times for many people both emotionally and financially.

Thank you to our parishioners who have been continuing to send in their thanksgiving envelopes. If you would like to continue supporting our parish you might like to consider changing your contributions to EFT, direct debit or credit card deductions. Please contact the parish office to organise this.

REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The gospel story about doubting Thomas has to be one of the most misunderstood episodes in the New Testament.

If you're like me, for years we have been consoled by Thomas doubting that Jesus had been raised from the dead. Thomas' doubts were in Jesus, we have been led to believe. But let's read the story very carefully. It's not Jesus Thomas doubts, it's the disciples. In fact when Jesus appears to them seven days later, Thomas has the opportunity to share in the experience of the Risen Lord and like the others he immediately confesses Easter faith.

There are three elements in this story that should give us great comfort. The first is that Thomas doubts the early Church, and not just in regard to a minor issue of discipline or procedure. He doubts the central Christian message: that God raised Jesus from the dead. Some of us, too, at various times in our lives, can have doubts about all sorts of things in our faith. There are very few Catholics who get through life without asking some serious questions of God, about Jesus, the Spirit and the Church. These questions are good in themselves. They are necessary for a mature, adult faith. What we need to ensure is that we sincerely want answers to the questions we ask and not just use them to justify our wandering away from our faith. Thomas is the patron saint of all of us who sometimes struggle to believe what everyone else in the church seems to accept. And he is also the patron saint of those of us who seek the courage and patience to wait for the answers.

The second consoling fact to this story concerns the earliest Church. Even though they were filled with the presence of the Risen Lord and though Thomas refuses to believe their witness, they remain faithful to him in his doubts. We know this because he is still with them a week later. They didn't expel him from the group or excommunicate him, they held on to him in the hope that he would experience the Lord for himself.

Sadly for us, today, there are some who argue that Catholics who struggle with their faith should 'shape up or ship out'. While every group has its boundaries and there are limits to what people can dissent from, we could take the earliest Church as our model and stay faithful to our doubters and help them come to see the transforming truth that has changed our lives.

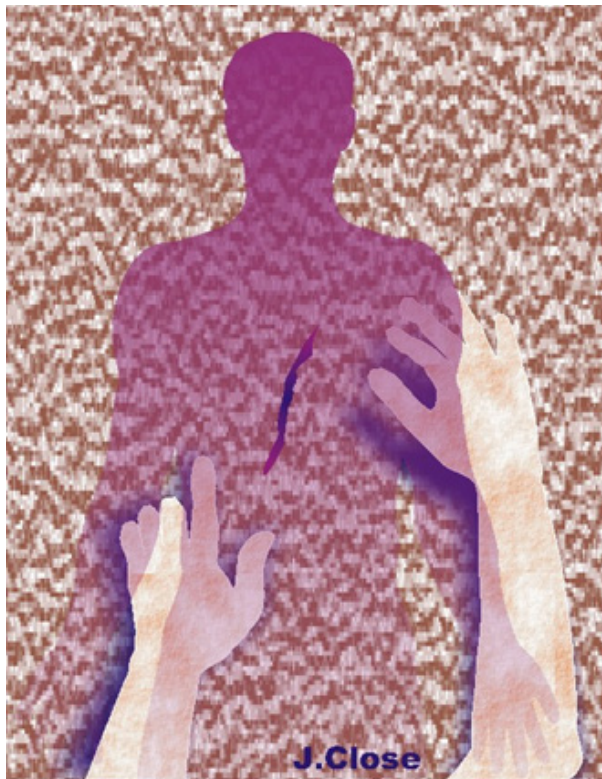
The final element in this extraordinary story which can help us in our Easter faith concerns the significance of the time between the first and second appearances of Jesus. We're told it was seven days and the parallel to the story of creation would not have been lost on the first hearers of John's Gospel. And even though the earliest disciples experience the Risen Lord on Easter Sunday, they are still locked in their fears one week later. The creation of the early Church, the movement of its earliest leaders from timidity to boldness took time and having a doubter in their midst ends up a great blessing for them all, for Christ is present at every step of the Church's creation and re-creation as well.

This story was written for people like us who do not have access to the historical Jesus. The birth of the Church is an ongoing act of God's creation in every generation. It takes time, and people will be at different stages at different moments. Our fidelity to one another on the long journey of faith is only surpassed by our Crucified God who does not give up on us, no matter how many questions we ask or how much we doubt.

May this Eucharist give us confidence enough to hold on to each other in good times and bad so that we can all continue to experience his presence and have life in his name. © Richard Leonard SJ

Reflection by Artist - Jenny Close

Faith works on all the levels of human experience including the sensual. Our senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell can be ways of encountering God in the world. At first Thomas refused to believe it was Jesus. He was invited to engage in a more intimate visual and tactile experience. But in the end, Thomas still required a leap of faith to recognise that Jesus was the Christ.



READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

FIRST READING

Acts 2:42-47

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone.

The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.

They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: PSALM 117 GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD

Response: ***Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
his love is everlasting.***

Let the sons of Israel say:

'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say:

'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.'

Response

I was thrust, thrust down and falling

but the Lord was my helper.

The Lord is my strength and my song;

he was my saviour.

Response

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.
This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.
This day was made by the Lord;
we rejoice and are glad.

Response

SECOND READING

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

GOSPEL

John 20:19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.

'As the Father sent me,
so am I sending you.'
After saying this he breathed on them and said:
'Receive the Holy Spirit.
For those whose sins you forgive,
they are forgiven;
for those whose sins you retain,
they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.



**THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF PORT MELBOURNE AND MIDDLE PARK
IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A SAFE AND NURTURING CULTURE
FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR PARISH.**