



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.*

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

5 April 2020

My dear Parishioners,

A BLACK DOT!

I suppose many of us have been receiving countless emails on how to survive this current crisis – some of them helpful, some humorous and others fairly annoying. This morning I received one from my friend, Barbara who lives in New York state in the US.

It was a very short video of a teacher telling her students that they were going to have a test today. The students paid attention, and one by one the teacher went around the room handing out the test paper but leaving it turned face downwards. After everyone was intrigued, she asked them all to turn over the page and there was a single black dot on the page. She then asked her students to describe what they saw.

When she collected the papers invariably everyone in the class wrote about the black dot: how big it was, how it was centred or not; why was it on the page, etc. NO ONE in the class mentioned the fact that this black dot was on a white page and therefore, NO ONE wrote about the white page at all.

Not a bad analogy when you think about it! Most of our lives are spent concentrating on the black dots in our lives; very few of us see the white page on which the dot is placed. In other words, we focus of the dark parts but forget that there is far more white than there is black! It's like this with the virus – we see the virus (metaphorically) and we become absorbed by it but we forget to remember that life contains more good things than bad. The fact is that if we centre

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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 and 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.au 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 Poliakov, 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: Those affected by COVID - 19.

Those whose anniversaries of death occur about this time: Joseph Jelencic and Carmelites, Michael Camilleri, Bernard Shah and John Butler.

IN OUR PARISH

ourselves always on the dot, we don't realise all the blessings around us.

Yesterday I was at Woollies trying to get some of the necessities of life and there was an eerie silence about the supermarket. People were lined up at every available cashier on the markers the store had set up to keep us apart. But the strangest thing was the silence – no one was talking to each other. Perhaps we were all afraid that if we spoke we might either spread a germ or, if truth be told, we might inhale one. When it came my turn to pay I was impressed by the simple courtesy of the cashier. He was friendly, over-worked, probably not making much money, but he was both courteous and helpful. In his own unique way he was a blessing and I bet that he had put up with more than a few disgruntled customers who took their frustrations out on him and his co-workers during his shift at work.

You and I can be a blessing for anyone – we don't have to say anything; we just need to smile and express appreciation for those who are around us. It's simple really and it's not a bad idea that the Gospel can be housed in one simple, genuine smile – don't forget the black dot, but more importantly don't forget the page that it is on.

Keep safe and smiling even when we would like to scream or lash out. We can save that part for our pillow at night!



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.

AN OPEN LETTER FROM BILL GATES

Bill Gates: "The Corona Virus... is sent to remind us of the important lessons that we seem to have forgotten and it is up to us if we will learn them or not."

But multi-billionaire Gates, 64 – who donated £85 million to combat the virus last month – believes that despite the chaos, there is 'a spiritual purpose behind everything that happens'.

In an open letter, entitled 'What is the Corona/ Covid-19 Virus Really Teaching us?', he wrote:

A SPIRITUAL PURPOSE

I'm a strong believer that there is a spiritual purpose behind everything that happens, whether that is what we perceive as being good or being bad.

As I meditate upon this, I want to share with you what I feel the Corona/ Covid-19 virus is really doing to us.

1) It is reminding us that we are all equal, regardless of our culture, religion, occupation, financial situation or how famous we are. This disease treats us all equally, perhaps we should too. If you don't believe me, just ask Tom Hanks.

2) It is reminding us that we are all connected and something that affects one person has an effect on another. It is reminding us that the false borders that we have put up have little value as this virus does not need a passport. It is reminding us, by oppressing us for a short time, of those in this world whose whole life is spent in oppression.

3) It is reminding us of how precious our health is and how we have moved to neglect it through eating nutrient poor manufactured food and drinking water that is contaminated with chemicals upon chemicals. If we don't look after our health, we will, of course, get sick.

4) It is reminding us of the shortness of life and of what is most important for us to do, which is to help each other, especially those who are old or sick. Our purpose is not to buy toilet rolls.

5) It is reminding us of how materialistic our society has become and how, when in times of difficulty, we remember that it's the essentials that we need (food, water, medicine) as opposed to the luxuries that we sometimes unnecessarily give value to.

6) It is reminding us of how important our family and home life is and how much we have neglected this. It is forcing us back into our houses so we can rebuild them into our home and to strengthen our family unit.

OUR TRUE WORK

7) It is reminding us that our true work is not our job, that is what we do, not what we were created to do. Our true work is to look after each other, to protect each other and to be of benefit to one another.

8) It is reminding us to keep our egos in check. It is reminding us that no matter how great we think we are or how great others think we are, a virus can bring our world to a standstill.

9) It is reminding us that the power of freewill is in our hands. We can choose to cooperate and help each other, to share, to give, to help and to support each other or we can choose to be selfish, to hoard, to look after only our self. Indeed, it is difficulties that bring out our true colours.

10) It is reminding us that we can be patient, or we can panic. We can either understand that this type of situation has happened many times before in history and will pass, or we can panic and see it as the end of the world and, consequently, cause ourselves more harm than good.

11) It is reminding us that this can either be an end or a new beginning. This can be a time of reflection and understanding, where we learn from our mistakes, or it can be the start of a cycle which will continue until we finally learn the lesson we are meant to.

12) It is reminding us that this Earth is sick. It is reminding us that we need to look at the rate of deforestation just as urgently as we look at the speed at which toilet rolls are disappearing off of shelves. We are sick because our home is sick.

13) It is reminding us that after every difficulty, there is always ease. Life is cyclical, and this is just a phase in this great cycle. We do not need to panic; this too shall pass.

14) Whereas many see the Corona/ Covid-19 virus as a great disaster, I prefer to see it as a *great corrector*. It is sent to remind us of the important lessons that we seem to have forgotten and it is up to us if we will learn them or not.

PROJECT COMPASSION

Dominic from Papua New Guinea

Dominic, 47, is a father of six from Papua New Guinea. He became involved in a Caritas Australia supported program and turned a difficult life and an unhappy relationship around. Domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and limited employment opportunities mean that many in PNG struggle to meet their basic family needs.



In 2016, Dominic joined the Safe House program run by Centre of Hope, one of Caritas Australia's partners in PNG. The program provides Gender-Based-Violence prevention training, counselling services and safe accommodation for women and children survivors of violence. Dominic and his wife, Christophylda, say that their family life is now harmonious, happy and safe.

Gender inequality is also a major issue in PNG, with around 67% of women experiencing gender-based violence.



Dominic undertook further training as a Safe House community volunteer because he wanted to help other people like him. He soon became a valuable member of the support network.

"After entering the program, I have actually changed some of my bad attitudes. It has really opened my mind and heart to see where my weaknesses are and I'm trying to improve" Dominic



Your donation will support programs around the world that provide vulnerable people with the skills and opportunities they need. Project Compassion money boxes and envelopes are available for collection from the Church foyer.

The money boxes are an excellent way to introduce your children to Project Compassion.

Reflection by Artist - Jenny Close

The first day of Holy Week is a strange combination of celebration and sombre reflection. For Jesus, his entry into Jerusalem was a triumph that had a seriously sinister side. The elation that stirred the atmosphere of the city was contagious, but Jesus was fully aware of playing a part. The cross was casting its shadow over him.



REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

As a child I can remember our diocese having large processions for the feasts of Corpus Christi, Christ the King and one of the Marian feast days. They were called 'public demonstrations of Catholic faith'. For children they were sometimes long and boring, but they did give us a sense that we belonged to something big, and someone bigger, and that our faith had a 'stand up and be counted' dimension to it. For many Catholics today large-scale religious processions are quickly becoming a thing of the past. That's a pity.

The point of religious processions is not just to get us from one location to the next. It is also to mark a rite of passage. Think of the smaller processions most Christians undertake in their lives: to the baptismal font; down the aisle to take their marriage vows, or to graduate from a school or college and to be farewelled. In each case we recess out of the Church differently from how we entered it: as a newly initiated member of the Christian community; as a husband or wife; as a graduate; and to be buried.

The Palm Sunday Procession is the last congregational one mandated by the Missal to be observed throughout the entire Church. Recalling Jesus' procession into Jerusalem this procession is not meant to be an historical pageant. Like all liturgical moments it's meant to intersect with our own lives and speak to our journey of faith. What makes this procession so powerful is that it starts with hysteria and ends in death. And that tells us something we need to hear.

Matthew's account of the Passion is very tough on the Jewish leaders. His entire Gospel has been preparing the hearer for this. Matthew shows that even though the Jews had the New Moses right in front of them, they were unable to recognise him because he didn't fit their expectations of the Messiah. The crowd in Jerusalem receive him like a pop star, acclaiming him as their own. By week's end the Chief Priests and elders manipulate the crowd's enthusiasm to force Pilate to execute Jesus. And throughout it all, during the adulation of the crowd, their change of allegiance to Barabbas and at his trial, Jesus hardly says a word. In Matthew's Gospel Jesus' silence is deafening.

In the journey of faith we should always be on our guard against being part of a manipulated crowd. The unchecked enthusiasms of a crowd can carry us away to places, people or things we would not ordinarily choose and should not embrace. If we are vulnerable, a gifted guru through his or her version of eternal life can whip us up into a frenzy. We only have to look at the power of the media and advertising to see how susceptible we are to becoming a slave to fashionable ideologies, dress codes and what and who is in or out. Every time we buy something because someone else has it or because we convince ourselves that our wants are really our needs, the crowd has won. The story of Passion Sunday is that manipulation of a crowd, even by legitimate authorities, can be the beginning of spiritual death. Hype often distorts priorities, blurs good judgment and can choose expediency over integrity.

So what's the remedy to being manipulated, to regaining a sense of what really matters, to standing up against the crowd for the values we know are right? Jesus shows us in Matthew's

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READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Cf. Jn 12: 1, 12-13; Ps 23: 9-10

Six days before the Passover,
when the Lord came into the city of Jerusalem,
the children ran to meet him;
in their hands they carried palm branches
and with a loud voice cried out:

* Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant mercy!

O gates, lift high your heads;
grow higher, ancient doors.
Let him enter, the king of glory!
Who is this king of glory?
He, the Lord of hosts, he is the king of glory.

* Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed are you, who have come in your abundant mercy!

FIRST READING

Isaiah 50:4-7

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue.
So that I may know how to reply to the wearied
he provides me with speech.
Each morning he wakes me to hear,
to listen like a disciple.
The Lord has opened my ear.
For my part, I made no resistance,
neither did I turn away.
I offered my back to those who struck me,
my cheeks to those who tore at my beard;
I did not cover my face
against insult and spittle.
The Lord comes to my help,
so that I am untouched by the insults.
So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

Response: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend.'

Response

Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.
They tear holes in my hands and my feet.
I can count every one of my bones.

Response

They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me!

Response

I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.'

Response

SECOND READING

Philippians 2:6-11

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.

But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

GOSPEL

Reader 1: Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, the governor, who asked him: 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'It is you who say it'.

But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer them. So Pilate said to him: 'Do you hear how many charges they have brought against you?' But to the governor's amazement Jesus offered no reply to any of the charges.

Reader 2: At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd had gathered, Pilate said to them: 'Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?'

The chief priests and the elders had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when Pilate asked them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?', they said, 'Barabbas.' 'In that case what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all shouted, 'Let him be crucified!' 'But why? What harm has he done?' But they shouted all the louder, 'Let him be crucified!'

Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression. In fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd: 'I am innocent of this man's blood! And the people shouted, 'His blood be on us and on our children!'

Then Pilate released Barabbas and ordered Jesus to be scourged and then handed over to be crucified.

Celebrant: The Governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort round him. They stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him.

Reader 1: On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him.

Above his head was placed the charge against him: it read 'this is Jesus, the king of the Jews'. At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

Reader 2: The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said, 'So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!'

The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way. 'He saved others, he cannot save himself. He is the king of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe him. He put his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants to. For he did say, "I am the son of God!"

Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way.

Celebrant: From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani! that is, 'My God, my God, why have you destroyed me!'

When some of those who stood there heard this, they said, 'The man is calling on Elijah,' and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and putting it on a reed, gave it to him to drink. 'Wait!' said the rest of them 'and see if Elijah will come to save him'. But Jesus again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

Reader 1: At that, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy people rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people.

Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said, 'In truth this was a son of God'.

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As we process into Holy Week, this annual rite of passage for our faith, may we model our lives on Jesus in every way by creating the silence we need in our lives to sort out our priorities, by using silence powerfully in a world that loves words but has very little to say about our meaning and destiny and allowing our sacrificial love, even to the point of death, to do all the talking.

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**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.**