



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.*

4th Sunday of Lent

29 March 2020

My dear Parishioners,

LOOK TO NATURE TO REMEMBER THAT GOD REPLENISHES!

Standing in our garden this week, I was reminded of a little story that Mike Murray told me the other day. He spied a fairly rare sight one morning – it was a Butcher Bird – all too rarely seen around this part of the world. What struck Mike was the fact that the Butcher Bird, as with all other aspects of nature, has no idea what we humans are experiencing! They don't have the anxiety, the confusion and the sense of helplessness that can too easily engulf us.

Butcher birds and everything else in nature will continue to do what is best for them and what they know how to do – to find food, to nest, to fly, to mate, in other words, to be themselves. But not only that! The seasons will come and go and each year will bring its share of sunshine and (hopefully) rain, warmth and cold, wind and stillness. The circle of life will continue and a new beginning is always promised in the morning even as the seasons run their course.

We humans are now virtually confined to our homes except for the most essential things in life. But that needn't stop us from looking out of a window, standing in our yard, opening our door and remembering that creation is a gift of which we are a part. All life begins and, as we know, it also ends. But the wonderful difference between ourselves and all the rest of creation is that God promised to take us into the life of God. Why is that so scary when we understand that God is love? Why are we frightened when we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus? (See St Paul!!)

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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 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, 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: Carmelite, Joseph Butler.

IN OUR PARISH

To watch the TV or to listen to the radio or social media and read the papers so constantly does not contribute to a healthy state of mind. In fact, it does the opposite – it frightens us and causes us to be anxious in ways we have probably never experienced before. I reckon, we should limit our news intake each day. Morning and evening news is sufficient to keep us up-to-date. Let's turn off the constant gloom and find new ways to live: read a trashy novel, play the piano, stitch on those buttons that need mending, lie on the floor and concentrate on our breathing, listen to music instead of voices, ring up friends and relatives and tell them to stop talking about a virus and start talking about the wonderful people and things that are in our lives.

Good leadership is truthful leadership and sometimes the truth scares us witless; but good leadership is also about encouraging the best in others. It is about exhibiting an outreach to other people and doing what we can. It doesn't have to be spectacular, it just has to be real: a kind word, a smile, a compliment, a helping hand, a patient listening, a joke especially at our own expense. The list is limitless so let the imagination run riot!

Take it easily and carefully and, for heaven's sake, don't forget to smile – our smile is a way of saying: God bless you!



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

for your generosity last Sunday

St Joseph's

Carmelite and

Parish Offering \$

Our Lady of Mt Carmel

Carmelite and

Parish Offering \$

PROJECT COMPASSION

Tawonga from Malawi

Tawonga is a 10-year-old girl, living with a disability. She lives in a village in northern Malawi in a region plagued by food insecurity and poverty. For most of her life, her parents have struggled to put meals on the table. Tawonga often had to miss school because she was too sick from hunger. The family also faced discrimination in their community due to her disability.



Since participating in a Caritas Australia supported program, Tawonga's life has transformed. Her family now grows enough food to provide three meals a day, ending the struggle of malnutrition, and helping her thrive at school.

Tawonga, whose name means 'thank you', says her community is blessed with many resources, like rivers, fertile soil and hills. However, with dry spells followed by floods, armyworm infestations and crop failures, her parents struggled to make a living.



In 2016, Tawonga's parents heard about the A+ program run by Caritas Australia's partner, CADECOM (Catholic Development Commission in Malawi). They learned irrigation farming and were given fertiliser and high-yield seeds. With these new techniques, their production of crops almost tripled.

With your help, this transformational program can continue to empower vulnerable women, men and children, and strengthen the communities around them. Let's Go Further, Together.

"It gives me hope that I will finish my education," Tawonga says. "My community now understands that my living with a disability is not inability. Although I sometimes face discrimination, most of the community has realised my value as a person."



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

'Unbind him and let him go.' Lazarus was bound by more than bandages, he was wrapped in his own mortality. He was pretty convincingly dead and the stench of death ruled out coma. The witnesses thought it was too late to do any miracles, but Jesus knew the power of God. That did not stop him from weeping, though. This is a very human story! Just look at the state Lazarus was in after his resurrection – was he an angel, or a spirit? No, he was still a human being. The God of Jesus is God of the living and in the story of Lazarus we see some of the finer aspects of being alive.



REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The plunging of an adult or an infant into the baptismal font three times is the most important moment in the ceremony and meant to be the most moving one as well. Most of us think that this action is associated with the Trinity. It is. But the more ancient association is with the three days Jesus lay in the tomb. This is one reason why the Church now encourages candidates for baptism to be fully immersed wherever practicable. The sprinkling of water over a catechumen's head just doesn't capture the drama which the ritual intends. But when we see a person take a breath, plunge under the water and come up for air three times, we can powerfully see the identification between Jesus' time in the tomb and the person rising to new life in Christ.

The season of Lent has its origins in third century Egypt where there was a commemoration of Jesus' forty days in the desert. In the fourth century these forty days are moved to their present location in the Church's calendar as the final preparation time for baptismal candidates at Easter and by the fifth century these penitential and baptismal focuses came together as one season for all believers to observe. Even the word Lent, from the old English word *Lencten* meaning Spring, alerted Christians in the northern hemisphere that this season was linked to the waking of nature after the long sleep of winter. Lent is about waking up to see that light and life have come in Christ.

Over the centuries the Church has tended to place more emphasis on penance than baptism. The Second Vatican Council, however, went back to the most ancient sources of this season, re-established the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and encouraged us to see the link between our acts of penance and our ongoing conversion to Christ expressed in the baptismal promises made for us many years before.

On this last Sunday in Lent Lazarus is given to us to help us think about the tombs in which we lie hidden and the life to which we are called. The bad spirit seduces most of us into having some form of secretive life. It might be a secret we can't tell, a sin we can't confess or a memory we want to bury. At its worst it can be a lifestyle or a pattern of unethical behaviour we have divorced from the rest of our lives. We may even con ourselves into believing that all of this is normal and 'not so bad'.

These tombs often look similar. They seem small on the surface, but as we get away with our secrets we bury ourselves in them more deeply. We jealously guard the entrance, displacing energy to defend our tombs and we're ashamed if anyone rolls away the stone and sees the mess inside.

But this Sunday Jesus stands at the entrance of our tombs and calls us out of them. We're asked to face down the bad spirits that keep us locked in secrecy, to move away from shame, embrace repentance, recognise the price to be paid for being true to what's best in ourselves and we're invited to know the light and life of Christ's healing and forgiveness.

No one can pretend that this journey is easy, but it's what Lent is all about: the journey from the tomb of our own particular deaths, through penance to the new life of Easter. May this Eucharist allow us to see the Lord stand at our tomb and gently call us by name, 'Come forth'. And at His word may we be unbound and let go free.

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READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 37:12-14

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 129 WITH THE LORD THERE IS MERCY

Response: ***With the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption.***

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord, Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading.

Response

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you.

Response

My soul is waiting for the Lord, I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak.
(Let the watchman count on daybreak and Israel on the Lord.)

Response

Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity.

Response

SECOND READING

Romans 8:8-11

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

GOSPEL

John 11:1-45

The sisters Martha and Mary sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.
If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me
will never die.
Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.' Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.
I knew indeed that you always hear me,
but I speak
for the sake of all these who stand round me,
so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

**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.**