

WELCOME TO ST. ANNE'S STRATHFIELD SOUTH PARISH

Fifth Sunday of Lent (Year C)

2 & 3 April 2022

Weekday/Weekend Mass Timetable:

Saturday Vigil: 5:00 pm
Sunday: 8:00 am & 10:00 am
Tuesday - Friday 9:15 am
Saturday: 9:15 am

Reconciliation - Saturdays from 9:45 am
Baptisms, marriages and funerals - by appointment only.

SUNDAY READINGS:

Isaiah 43:16-21
Philippians 3:8-14
John 8:1-11

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge and celebrate that this land is of the Wangal people of the Darug nation on which we are gathered. We commit ourselves to work together for reconciliation, justice and peace.



Responsorial Psalm:

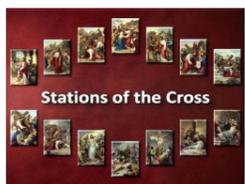
The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy

Gospel Acclamation:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! With all your heart turn to me, for I am tender and compassionate. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!



David Hayward
The Naked Pastor



STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Please join us next Friday during this season of Lent at 7.00pm, Friday 8th April

'Nothing is so important to the church as human life, as the human person, above all, the person of the poor and the oppressed, who, besides being human beings, are also divine beings, since Jesus said that whatever is done to them he takes as done to him. That bloodshed, those deaths, are beyond all politics. They touch the very heart of God.'

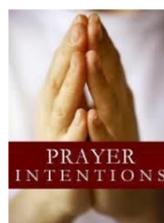
Archbishop Oscar Romero

Please
Pray
for...



FOR OUR SICK

especially Bill Petrie, Fr P. Maher, Peter Simon, Tony Grace, Frank Zerafa, Mgr John Usher, Mgr Brian Raynor, Frs M Kelly, Frank Coorey, Paul Foley, David Coffey, and Don Willoughby.



Should you have any prayer requests that you would like our families of families to pray for, please send them to the Parish Office on below email address.

A very warm welcome to all who are visiting our family of families of St Anne's. It is good to have you with us.

Currently we are providing a small number of hard copies of the bulletin; we will continue to offer the electronic bulletin. Please continue to provide your thoughts on the Bulletin, its content and what form you prefer. If you know of anyone who is not receiving the bulletin and would like to, encourage them to contact the Parish Office via the email address below.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about our family of families, please contact Fr Jacek on the email address above. We welcome all suggestions and enquires.

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5th Sunday in Lent

“I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.” In this one emphatic declaration Paul puts his life on the line. No ifs and buts, no escape clause, no half measures. And if this wasn't clear enough, he goes on, “I look on everything as so much rubbish if only I can have Christ.” Paul's bold confession is a bracing reality-check for us at this late stage of Lent. Have our weeks of repentance and renewal made us willing to stake our lives on Christ? Are we able to admit that we are deeply fearful of letting go of what gives us security, status and identity – even our present understanding of the Christian faith?

Just before today's reading from Philippians, Paul lists his Jewish credentials: “born of the race of Israel and of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrew parents . . . circumcised when I was eight days old . . . as for the Law, a Pharisee.” All this rich heritage Paul has to reinterpret after his life-changing encounter with Christ. As biblical scholar N. T. Wright put it, “Paul remained to his dying day fiercely loyal to Israel's God, seen in fresh and blinding light in Jesus” (*Paul: A Biography*, p. 54). Paul allowed his fierce loyalty to tradition to be radically transformed. Dare we let the Spirit shed new light on our faith in Christ?

WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Pope Francis has spoken a great deal about our need for more women to occupy positions of leadership, both in the Church and in the world at large. For example, in his wonderful letter about the way we belong to each other, *Fratelli Tutti*, he says ‘the organisation of societies worldwide is still far from reflecting clearly that women possess the same dignity and identical rights as men. We say one thing with words, but our decisions and reality tell another story.’ He is concerned about ‘those women who endure situations of exclusion, mistreatment and violence’.

Pope Francis is very much reflecting the attitude of Jesus whose closeness to women distinguished him as a leader and teacher in his time. You might think of significant encounters in the New Testament: the woman at the well, Martha and Mary, the widow of Nain. You might also think of the woman we meet in today's Gospel, described by the scribes and Pharisees as ‘caught in the very act of committing adultery.’ Listen to the sneer in those words.

These men, who are supposed to be educated and respected, have been peeping through the window. Their behavior is salacious, domineering and demeaning. In their self-righteousness, they threaten violence. There is no sign of the woman's partner who is surely just as much part of the story. Jesus neatly turns the tables. He starts by sitting on the ground, occupying a position lower than that of the woman. He is the only one not taking an eyeful of her.

Caritas Australia, whom we support through Project Compassion, has long acted in constructive ways to uphold the dignity of women and honour their strength, resilience and leadership. A good example is Shaniella, a young woman from a remote village in the Solomon Islands. She is the feature of this week's story and embodies the theme of this year's Project Compassion: For all future generations. Take a few minutes to share her story and consider the odds she is overcoming to create a safer and healthier environment for herself and her community. She is the kind of person who should surely grab our attention.

Today's second reading reminds us that none of us is perfect. But like St Paul, we are still running, still trying to achieve ‘the perfection that comes through faith in Christ.’ This does not mean judging others as the scribes and Pharisees did. It means challenging ourselves, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, to put water in the wilderness as we consider what we might do ‘for all future generations.’



THE LENTEN VEIL – COVERING OR REMOVING THE STATUES DURING LENT.

The church looks different, as it should during Lent; this is to develop the fullness of which this season presents to us. The covering or removing of objects from the church has a long and biblical tradition.

First of all it links our religion with the drama, which occurred at the very beginning in Paradise. The gift of freedom was misused and people lost their full friendship with the Creator, lost Paradise and heaven was shut out. That loss caused emptiness, shame, fear – these were the terrible effects of the original sin, and generations had to wait a long time for new freedom in the Redeemer, the Christ. The Lenten Veil tells us that the misuse of freedom separates us from God, even after being baptised – incorporated in the Body of Christ we still can't see his face plainly. We can say: "I have never committed any serious sin, which totally breaks my union with God. Why then cover *his face*?" There is however a communal aspect of the original sin. We regular churchgoers can do our best, but we must realise that a huge percentage of our brothers and sisters do not. Once baptised they waste away the gifts of baptism. It weakens the strength of the community and therefore will be a long journey to develop that gift of grace. Our Lenten practices can help them to remove the veil, which covers their eyes, and to make them able to see God face to face.

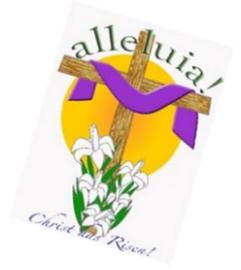
Another, more historical connection of the Lenten Veil goes back to the Babylonian deportation (approx. 600 years B.C.). The *chosen people* lost their homeland, culture, traditions and clear meaning of their religion. They felt ashamed, humiliated, and sad and soon recognised the deportation as an effect of their unfaithfulness to God. "*By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our harps...*" (Psalm 137). From that time while fasting, mourning or asking to be reconciled, people used to cover or put aside religious symbols or objects and after being reconciled or consoled to seeing them again in a renewed meaning. Psychological nature mirrors this action: when something is lost we are usually sad, when something is found – happiness returns to our lives.

Christianity well adopted Jewish tradition. Early Christian writers made a connection of the material veil to the spiritual "veil" which covers our eyes and hearts to see God and neighbour, because of sin. In ancient times at the start of Lent, penitents were marked with ashes and then expelled from the church. They were expected to keep Lent in strict practise of penance, before being welcomed back during the Triduum. Soon, the whole congregation to support penitents received ashes and kept fast out of compassion for them. Practice of expelling was changed into covering the altar and certain objects from view throughout Lent with a curtain, as a sign of solidarity with the repentant sinners. The veil came down in joy on Easter Eve, when the reconciliation was offered.

The Lenten veil is a strong image of exile. Ever since we were thrown out of paradise, death deprives us of the company of our ancestors, the saints. A veil keeps us from seeing heaven, a sight that religious art is meant to anticipate. In Isaiah's words, on that day that death is destroyed, gone also will be the veil that veils all people over the earth.

Have we taken a step backwards in our decorations to the "old fashioned tradition"? Most probably not. We are trying to develop various resources to make our Lenten season and Easter celebrations as fruitful as possible.





ST ANNE'S CHURCH HOLY WEEK AND EASTER TIMETABLE



Holy Thursday - April 14

7pm – Mass of the Last Supper followed by Adoration until 11pm .

Good Friday - April 15

10.00am - Stations of the Cross

3.00pm - Celebration of the Passion of the Lord



Easter Vigil - April 16

5:00pm - Easter Vigil Mass of the Lord's Resurrection

Easter Sunday - April 17

Masses are at 8:00am, 10.00am

Second Rite of Reconciliation – April 6

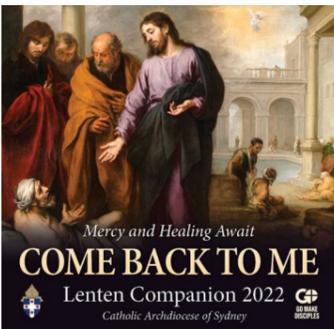
7:00pm - The Second Rite of Reconciliation will be held at St Anne's Church on Wednesday, 6th April.



Easter Monday – April 18

9:15am - Mass

COME BACK TO ME: MERCY AND HEALING AWAIT LENTEN COMPANION 2022



The beautiful Season of Lent is here. Let us make the most of this precious time to gather in our parishes and communities to reflect on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus, using the Lenten companion *Come Back to Me*. This free booklet contains Gospel readings for the Sundays of Lent until Easter Sunday, and spiritual reflections on the Gospels by Dr Peter McGregor, Professor Renee Kohler-Ryan, Mother Hilda Scott and Fr James Baxter OP and others.

Designed for individual or group prayer, either in-person or online. The resource has been distributed among the parishes and will also be available for download on the *Go Make Disciples* website at www.gomakedisciples.org.au.

PROJECT COMPASSION:

Please take home a Project Compassion box and or a 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 vulnerable communities around the world to tackle poverty, food security, education, water and sanitation, and disaster risk reduction. Project Compassion 2022 reminds us that the good that we do today will extend and impact the lives of generations to come to build a better future for all.

