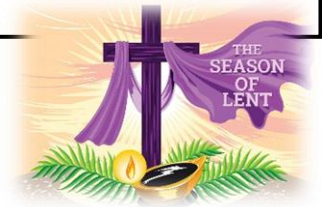




4TH SUNDAY IN LENT
YEAR A

19 March 2023

LITURGY AND BULLETIN



OPENING PRAYER

*Father,
Teach us, the people who bear Jesus' name,
to follow the example he gave us
and may our faith, hope and charity turn hatred to love,
conflict to peace and death to eternal life.
Amen.*

FIRST READING: A reading from the first book of Samuel

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

Response: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)

2. He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. (R.)

3. You have prepared a banquet for me
In the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. (R.)

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. (R.)

SECOND READING: A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

Gospel Acclamation

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 9:1-41.

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.



Reflection on the Gospel of John 9:1-41 by Greg Sunter

Today's gospel reading is the second in a series of three quite lengthy readings from the gospel of John that are a feature of the Lenten season in Year A of the liturgical cycle. The three readings address three significant themes and images: water; light; and new life. Although today's passage is about the healing of a blind man, the event takes place as part of a longer section of the gospel dealing with the image of light and specifically the image of Jesus as Light of the World.

The question asked by the disciples at the opening of this event is an interesting one. They ask, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' In Jewish culture at the time, any physical affliction was deemed to be punishment from God for sinful behaviour. As the man had been born blind, the suspicion falls on his parents as having committed such a terrible offence against God that their son is born blind. Jesus immediately rejects this interpretation of the man's affliction. Physical and mental illnesses or disabilities are in no way punishment from God.

Although the man's physical sight is restored by Jesus simply enough, his journey from darkness into light is a more complicated affair. He faces disbelief, ridicule and even abuse from the Jewish authorities as they try to discredit Jesus and diminish the impact of the miracle. In fact, their treatment of the man is what drives him along the road from recipient of an act of mercy to a confirmed believer. Furthermore, the Jewish authorities, despite their physical capacity for sight, are shown to be the ones who are truly blind and trapped in darkness because they deny the light that is before their very eyes.

Historical Context – Light of the World

The events of today's gospel passage occur within an extended passage of the gospel of John in which Jesus attends Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles (Jn 7:1 following). A feature of the feast was the illumination of the Temple. Pilgrims would cover the Temple with lights and torches so that it shone out over the entire city. It was during this feast that Jesus declared himself to be the Light of the World and, a few verses later, healed the blind man and brought light into his world.

Living the Gospel – Lenten Light

The story of the man born blind is a perfect choice for the Lenten season. During this season we are invited once again to open our eyes to Jesus; to step out of darkness and into the light; to look towards the future with hope and not despair. When we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus at the Easter vigil, we celebrate the coming of the Light of the World into our lives. This annual call to turn away from darkness and walk in the light is a powerful and poetic call to focus our lives on the way of Jesus.

Gospel Focus – None so blind

There's a very old saying that has its roots in the Bible but is not a direct quote from the Bible: 'There are none so blind as those who will not see.' It would be a fitting summary of today's passage for there are two movements between darkness and light that are evident in the story. Firstly, there is the blind man who can see. He can see physically but can also see the truth of who Jesus is. Secondly, there are the Jewish authorities who have physical sight but are completely blind to the truth of Jesus.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

We pray for church communities around the world, that they be beacons of Christ's saving light.
(Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for peace-makers in every sphere of conflict, that they will never waver in their efforts to bring an end to bloodshed and violence. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for Hindu believers celebrating New Year this week and the followers of Islam beginning Ramadan (both 22 March), that their faith observances will be a blessing for the world. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for Caritas Australia's partners in Vietnam: that their work of empowering people with disabilities will grow through our generous support for Project Compassion. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for the diverse communities that form the people of Australia, that this week's Harmony Day (21 March) will help make sure 'Everybody Belongs'. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for the visually impaired, that their gifts will be fully appreciated and their needs well met. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who are suffering ill health, especially Archbishop Frank Carroll, Eadaoin Corcoran, Maurice Farley, Ann McDougall, Ross Lawless, Val Biggers, Rongo Tee Peeti, Helen Montgomery, Judy Nielson, Tony Riley and all who need our prayers; that they will be cared for by loving family, friends and community (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

We pray for the recently deceased Ann Fisher, Phillip Lee, Frank Stuart and David Nicholson. . . and for those whose anniversary of death occurs around this time, that they will live in the light of Christ for ever. (Pause) Let us pray to the Lord.

CONCLUDING PRAYER

Father,

fill our hearts with the light of your Gospel so that our thoughts and actions always please you.

Amen.

PARISH ADMINISTRATOR: Father Mick Burke

Mobile: 0448 414 541

Pastoral Associate: Br Brian Berg

Braidwood Contact Numbers: Ph. 4842 2444;

Mobile: 0408 687 915

Parish email: braidwood@cq.org.au

Parish Website: <http://cg.org.au/braidwood/Home.aaspx>

Br. Brian email: bcberg@edmundrice.org

ACTING SCHOOL PRINCIPAL: Mark Chifley Ph. 4842 2413

PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Mondays: 9am – 3pm; Fridays: 9am – 12pm

Weekday Mass: Tuesdays at 10.00am

Meditation: Thursdays in Presbytery at 10.30am

Social Justice Group: Wednesday 5 April 2023 at 9.30am, at the Presbytery

First Rite of Reconciliation: 5-5.15pm Saturdays during Lent.

Krawarree Mass: 30 April at 11am.

Easter Service times:

Palm Sunday: 1 April at 6pm (Vigil)

Holy Thursday: 6 April at 7pm (Mass of the Lord's Supper)

Good Friday: 7 April Stations of the Cross: 10am; Passion: 3pm.

Easter Vigil: 8 April at 6pm

Dear Parishioners,

Markets in Ryrie Park: 9am - 1pm Saturday 25 February: Produce; Crafts; Plants; Antiques & Collectibles; Trash & Treasure; Monthly Raffle Donations of cooking etc gratefully accepted at the Parish table. Enquiries to Cathy Ffrench on 0418 262 011



News from the Pews:

Majors Creek Festival: 17 - 19 March.

NSW State Election Saturday, 25 March 2023 - 8am-6pm

Easter Water bottles: if you have empties, please return.

The Nowra Catholic Women's League are once again coming to Nerriga to celebrate St. Patrick's Day (March 17) with Mass in the church at 11.30am and lunch afterwards at the pub. We are all invited to attend the celebration and lunch.

HOME in Queanbeyan's Movie Night Fundraiser March 17 @ 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM. The movie is "Made in Dagenham". Tickets \$80 include hot drinks, snacks & movie. Book: www.THEQ.NET.AU or ph 02 623856290

HOLY TRINITY 'SHOW 'N SHINE': North Woden Parish and the ACT Street Machine Association invite you to enjoy a display of beautiful cars of bygone years in the parish grounds, 10am – 3pm, Sun, 26 March, 3 Strangways Street, Curtin. Monies raised support Camp Quality. Inq 0418 208 129

CHRISM MASS: Join the Archbishop and the Clergy of the Archdiocese on Monday 3 April at 5.00pm in St Christopher's Cathedral, Forrest for this most important Holy Week ceremony. It is this Mass that the Holy Oils used in the various Sacramental Rites of the Church are blessed and consecrated. Everyone is most welcome.



Thu lost his leg after stepping on a land mine in Vietnam as a child. With the support of the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development, Thu can now earn extra income and care for his wife as she recovers from a stroke. For Thu, the greatest impact the program has had is enabling the change in Linh's physical and mental wellbeing. With the support of a physiotherapist, Linh can now walk short distances with the aid of a walking stick.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2023.

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/envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion, or by calling 1800 024 413.

Readings for Mass: 1st: 1 Sam. 16:1,6-7,10-13. 2nd: Eph. 5:8-14. Gospel: John 9:1-41.

Readings for next week: 1st: Ezek. 37:12-14. 2nd: Romans 8:8-11. Gospel: John 11:1-45.

Ministry Rosters for our Masses

Date	Acolyte	Welcomer	Readers
18 Mar		Helen P	Michael/Cathy F
25 Mar	Felix	Cathy F	Bobbie/Tommy
1 Apl		Helen P	Wendy H/Germaine
8 Apl	Easter to be advised		

Ministries of service:	<u>17 March</u>	<u>24 March</u>	<u>8 April (Easter)</u>
Altar Decorating:	no flowers during Lent		all arrangers please
Cleaning:	Pauline & Wendy	Felix	Helen P & Sarah
Counters: 1 st Sunday:	Pauline & Bobbie.	2 nd : Sunday:	Wendy H
3 rd Sunday:	volunteer please	4 th :	Phil Owen

Please advise if you are unable to fulfil your roster, so alternative arrangements may be made.

Take care of each other,
Helen Hart

The Parish of St Bede's Braidwood acknowledges the Yuin people, the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for many thousands of years. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.