

# Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Issue 16  
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Year C

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



## VERITAS



HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

**Parish Priest**  
Fr Kieran Adams OP

**Assistant Priests**  
Fr Rafael Cabezón OP  
Fr Bernie Maxwell OP

**Holy Rosary Church**  
Cnr Phillip Avenue &  
Antill Street, Watson ACT

Postal Address  
PO Box 900, Dickson  
Ph. 6248 5925

Email: [watson@cg.org.au](mailto:watson@cg.org.au)  
[www.cg.org.au/watson](http://www.cg.org.au/watson)

**Office Staff**  
Jacquie Cortese  
Jim Smith

**Office Hours**  
Monday, Tuesday,  
Thursday, Friday  
9.00am–12.30pm

**Parish Council**  
Andrew Blakey

**Mass times**  
Wed 5.30pm  
Tues & Thurs 6.45am  
Fri 5.30pm

**Saturday 5pm (Vigil)**  
**Sunday 8am, 10am & 5pm**

9am Mass Saturday & Public  
Holidays  
excluding Mondays

**Pray the Rosary**  
Wed & Fri before 5.30pm Mass  
Saturday after 9am Mass  
and First Saturday each month  
3.30pm

**Reconciliation**  
Saturday 12pm–12.30pm  
and 4pm–4.30pm

**ACU Chapel Signadou**  
Wednesday at Midday

# ASH WEDNESDAY



If you are in Urgent need of  
a Priest Call - 6248 8253

A warm welcome is extended to guests & parishioners celebrating our Eucharist today.

<b>ENTRANCE</b>	You are merciful to all, O Lord, and despise nothing that you have made. You overlook people's sins, to bring them to repentance, and you spare them, for you are the Lord our God.
<b>RESPONSE</b>	Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.
<b>GOSPEL ACCLAMATION</b>	Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! If today you hear this voice, harden not your hearts. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
<b>COMMUNION ANTIPHON</b>	He who ponders the law of the Lord day and night will yield fruit in due season.



## ASH WEDNESDAY

The Wednesday after Quinquagesima Sunday, Ash Wednesday, is the first day of the Lenten fast.

The name *dies cinerum* (day of ashes) which it bears in the Roman Missal is found in the earliest existing copies of the Gregorian Sacramentary and probably dates from at least the eighth century. On this day all the faithful according to ancient custom are exhorted to approach the altar before the beginning of Mass, and there the priest, dipping his thumb into ashes previously blessed, marks the forehead — or in case of clerics upon the place of the tonsure — of each the sign of the cross, saying the words: "Remember man that thou art dust and unto dust thou shalt return." The ashes used in this ceremony are made by burning the remains of the palms blessed on the Palm Sunday of the previous year. In the blessing of the ashes four prayers are used, all of them ancient. The ashes are sprinkled with holy water and fumigated with incense.

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01775b.htm>

## ASH WEDNESDAY REFLECTION

The ashes of Ash Wednesday carry a sense of urgency. They remind us that we are not permanent residents here on earth, that in fact life is quite short.

This makes Lent a valuable time for examining our direction, refocusing our priorities, and making sure that God is at the centre of our lives. We need this time of Lent each year to open ourselves to being captured anew by the love of God - and to find ways for the love we have received to flow through us to others.

Lent is also a time for recognising that we cannot help but be moved and respond. The words of St Basil are still true today: "When someone steals another's clothes, we call them a thief. Should we not give the same name to one who could clothe the naked and does not? The bread in your cupboard belongs to the hungry; the coat unused in your closet belongs to the one who needs it; the money which your hoard up belongs to the poor."

In Lent we pay special attention to the three traditional practices of almsgiving, prayer and fasting - but, as the Gospel cautions, we do them 'not to attract notice'. The Gospel encourages us to be people of joy and hope, advice that is echoed in Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation, 'The Joy of the Gospel'. "With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, God makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew."

In Australia, Project Compassion has become a part of the Church's Lenten practice. It is a key way to bring joy, hope and food for life to those in need.

## PROJECT COMPASSION

Each year Project Compassion brings together thousands of Australians in schools, parishes and the community to stand in solidarity with the world's most vulnerable communities, to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity. This year's Project Compassion showcases the many ways Caritas Australia works around the world with our local partners to offer hope to people most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Through a holistic approach Caritas is working with communities providing hope for a just and fair world regardless of their ethnicity, political beliefs, gender or religion. We are assisting women, children and men to break free from the cycle of poverty whilst ensuring they are the architects of their own development. We hope that the resources we provide help you bring Project Compassion to life in your parish, making it an inspiring and rewarding experience for everyone.



**PROJECT COMPASSION SHARE PACKS AND GIVING BOXES CAN BE PICKED UP FROM ALL EXIT TABLES.**

## PSALM : 50:3-6, 12-14, 17

**Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offence.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin.

My offences truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned:  
what is evil in your sight I have done.

A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.

Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.

O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise.

**Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.**

## ASH WEDNESDAY

Following the example of the Ninevites, who did penance in sackcloth and ashes, our foreheads are marked with ashes to humble our hearts and to remind us that life passes away on Earth. We remember this when we are told "Remember, Man is dust, and unto dust you shall return." Ashes are a symbol of penance made sacramental by the blessing of the Church, and they help us develop a spirit of humility and sacrifice.

The distribution of ashes comes from a ceremony of ages past. Christians who had committed grave faults performed public penance. On Ash Wednesday, the Bishop blessed the hair shirts which they were to wear during the forty days of penance, and sprinkled over them ashes made from the palms from the previous year. Then, while the faithful recited the Seven Penitential Psalms, the penitents were turned out of the church because of their sins — just as Adam, the first man, was turned out of Paradise because of his disobedience. The penitents did not enter the church again until Maundy Thursday after having won reconciliation by the toil of forty days' penance and sacramental absolution. Later, all Christians, whether public or secret penitents, came to receive ashes out of devotion. In earlier times, the distribution of ashes was followed by a penitential procession.

[www.catholic.org](http://www.catholic.org)

## FIRST READING : Joel 2:12-18

A reading from the prophet Joel

*Let your hearts be broken, and not your garments torn.*

'Now, now – it is the Lord who speaks – come back to me with all your heart, fasting, weeping, mourning.' Let your hearts be broken not your garments torn, turn to the Lord your God again, for he is all tenderness and compassion, slow to anger, rich in graciousness, and ready to relent.

Who knows if he will not turn again, will not relent, will not leave a blessing as he passes, oblation and libation for the Lord your God? Sound the trumpet in Zion!

Order a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, call the people together, summon the community, assemble the elders, gather the children, even the infants at the breast.

Let the bridegroom leave his bedroom and the bride her alcove. Between vestibule and altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, lament. Let them say, 'Spare your people, Lord! Do not make your heritage a thing of shame, a byword for the nations. Why should it be said among the nations, "Where is their God?"'

Then the Lord, jealous on behalf of his land, took pity on his people.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

## SECOND READING : 2 Corinthians 5:20 - 6:2

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

*Be reconciled to God, now is the acceptable time.*

We are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God. As his fellow workers, we beg you once again not to neglect the grace of God that you have received. For he says: At the favourable time, I have listened to you; on the day of salvation I came to your help. Well, now is the favourable time; this is the day of salvation.

This is the word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

## BOASTING

When someone speaks too much about the good things they do, it is called "boasting." We do need to know that what we do is good. We do need to know our gifts and talents. We need to know the truth about ourselves. But boasting is done to show off, to try to impress others, or even to lead others to feel envious or less talented. Do you detect boasting in yourself? Tell yourself the truth about yourself. When you talk with others, of course tell them the truth, too. Then say to that person, "Tell me what you are good at or what you like to do." This is a way of sharing.

Do you detect boasting in others? Sometimes people feel they have to "toot their own horn" because no one appreciates what they do. For the next few days, look carefully around your group. Try to notice the good things others do. Try to "toot someone else's horn" whenever possible. You may find that someone will be tooting your horn, too!

Thanking others for the good things they do might be a good positive action for Lent.

## SIGNS

Today we begin the outward signs of our desire for this inward turning toward God. The cross of ashes placed on our foreheads is a sign of turning to God in repentance for all we have not done or been. It is a sign of hope, too, that we will live by the gospel, the good news, from now on. Our abstaining from meat today and on the Fridays of Lent is another sign that we consider God and his ways more important than having "the best of everything" in this world.



## GOSPEL : Matthew 6:1-6. 16-18

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

*Your Father, who sees all that is done in secret, will reward you.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'Be careful not to parade your good deeds before men to attract their notice; by doing this you will lose all reward from your Father in heaven. So when you give alms, do not have it trumpeted before you; this is what the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win men's admiration. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you give alms, your left hand must not know what your right is doing; your almsgiving must be secret, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

'And when you pray, do not imitate the hypocrites: they love to say their prayers standing up in the synagogues and at the street corners for people to see them. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you pray go to your private room and, when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

'When you fast do not put on a gloomy look as the hypocrites do: they pull long faces to let men know they are fasting. I tell you solemnly, they have had their reward. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that no one will know you are fasting except your Father who sees all that is done in secret; and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

## CREATED BY FIRE

On the first day of Lent we are reminded that we are dust but that is not all we are. We were not created to be dust but to be fire. In some ways Lent is like a film run backwards. Normally, ashes are what remain when a fire burns out. Lent begins with ashes and ends with the fire, the paschal fire of the resurrection, the assurance of what we shall be.

As we make our way through the penitential season of Lent we clear the debris of our lives, symbolised by the small sacrifices that we make, in order to allow the mercy of God to fall upon us. Many people today say that there is no realisation of sin anymore and that penitential seasons make no sense. It seems to me that we are in a much more dangerous state: there is a strong sense of sin but not much hope of forgiveness. Many feel that they cannot be forgiven. They rest content with the dust, and fear to approach the light of the fire; but the dust of our lives is drenched in the precious blood of Christ which is the assurance of forgiveness.

So, if we are concerned about what we might give up or sacrifice this Lent maybe we should try to give up the spirit of pretence and allow ourselves to be fashioned into instruments of forgiveness. We should remember that we are dust but that is not all we are. We were created to be fire.

*Sermon Extract - Allan White OP*

## PLATO

Plato once described time as the moving image of eternity. We are constantly dying, but we are also constantly living as we reflect God's vision in the world of the flesh. This day, this moment, is a "thin place," for God is with us, revealed in flesh, blood, and healing touch.

# Lent



## LENTON SEASON

The Lenten Season has a twofold character:

1. It recalls baptism or prepares for it;
2. It stresses a penitential spirit.

By these means especially, Lent readies the faithful for celebrating the paschal mystery after a period of closer attention to the Word of God, and more ardent prayer. In the liturgy itself and in the liturgy-centred instructions, these baptismal and penitential themes should be more pronounced.

- Hence:
- a. Wider use is to be made of baptismal features proper to the Lenten liturgy...
  - b. The same approach holds for the penitential elements....

During Lent, penance should not be only internal and individual but also external and social... In any event, let the paschal fast be kept sacred. It should be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection may be visited on uplifted and responsive spirits. [Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Vatican II](#)

### ASH WEDNESDAY AND GOOD FRIDAY are days of Fasting and Abstinence from meat

On all other Fridays, except solemnities, the law of the common practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following.

- a. **Prayer** - for example, Mass attendance; family prayer, a visit to a church or chapel; reading the Bible; making the Stations of the Cross; praying the Rosary; or in other ways.
  - b. **Self-Denial** - for example, not eating meat; not eating sweets or dessert; giving up entertainment to spend time with the family; limiting food and drink so as to give to the poor of one's own country or elsewhere; or in other ways. Project Compassion is a major means of expressing our self-denial in Australia.
  - c. **Helping Others** - for example, special attention to someone who is poor, sick, elderly, lonely or over-burdened; or in other ways.
- All who have completed their eighteenth year and have not yet begun their sixtieth year are bound to fast. All who have completed their fourteenth year are bound to abstain (Canon 1252).
  - The Season of Lent is a time of penance. During this season the faithful are exhorted to devote themselves in a special manner to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity, and to deny themselves.
  - Each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled between Ash Wednesday, 10 February and Trinity Sunday, 22 May 2016 unless for a good reason it is fulfilled at another time during the year.
  - The wonderful gift of the Lord's merciful love is offered in a special way in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Lent is a most appropriate time to receive this Sacrament. All the faithful who have reached the age of discretion are bound faithfully to confess their grave sins at least once a year.



## I'M STRESSING ABOUT GIVING UP SUGAR FOR LENT

Melanie Pritchard - Tue Feb 17, 2015

Lent is here and like usual I am scrambling to figure out what I should give up. Many Christians are deciding whether to give up sweets or swearing or something else. All for what? To humble ourselves in some small way to unite our sufferings to those of Christ on the cross?

Sugar? Swearing? *Is that all we got?* Our modern day sacrifices don't seem enough when we compare them to the incredible sacrifices happening around the globe.

Just a little over a week ago the world watched as ISIS fighters beheaded Christian victims whose hands were cuffed behind their backs. Egyptian officials said they believed that 21 Christians were killed that day. It is also said that a few of the hostages cried out "Oh God" and "Oh Jesus" before their untimely deaths.

Pope Francis commented about the horrific event: "The blood of our Christian brothers is a witness that cries out." He went on to say to his audience, "If they are Catholic, Orthodox, Copts, Lutherans, it is not important: They are Christians. The blood is the same: It is the blood which confesses Christ."

In February 2015, nearly 2000 years after Christ's death and Resurrection, 21 martyrs lost their lives in the name of a God they were not willing to forsake.

I go about my daily life in America where I practice my Catholic faith freely and wonder if giving up sugar will just be too much of a sacrifice for Lent, wondering if I can endure it for 40 days. I realized my own weakness as I watched 21 men give their lives in the ultimate sacrifice.

It just puts things into perspective. My friend and speaker Patrick Madrid wrote on his Facebook page last week after this ISIS attack on Christians, "I am thinking of these brothers in Christ as I prepare for my own paltry, insignificant Lenten 'sacrifices.' Praised be Jesus Christ, now and forever. Onward Christian Soldiers!"

That about sums up how I feel about my own Lenten sacrifices, which seem more like inconveniences than real sacrifices.

This tragic loss of lives should be a reminder to all of us what Lent is truly about and what it leads to. It's not about giving up the sugar or the swearing, but the greater commitment through fasting, giving alms, and prayer to re-unite ourselves to Christ. To give up those things that distract and deter us from giving ourselves fully over to Him. It is a time to focus and reflect on the life and death of Christ for 40 days in preparation for the Easter celebration that reminds us that Christ was exactly who he revealed himself to be—the son of God, the one who triumphs over sin and death, and the lover of our souls.

The United States Catholic Conference of Bishops states, "The key to fruitful observance of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent, but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ."

As I receive the sign of the cross in dark, dusty ashes on Ash Wednesday, this year will be different. This year I will try harder to sacrifice in a way that brings me closer to Christ. The dark dust of those ashes will be not only be a reminder for me of Christ's death but of the many who have lost their lives for a religion that I sometimes take for granted.

May this Lent be a time where true fasting, almsgiving, and prayer will not be done in some measly attempt to fulfill a requirement, but rather be done to unite ourselves to Christ's suffering and turn away from sin and be faithful to the Gospel, the same Gospel 21 men died for.

