

# St Christopher's Cathedral Parish, Canberra

(including St Peter Chanel's Church, Yarralumla)

5th Sunday of Lent

— Year A

28/29 Mar 2020

Archdiocese of Canberra & Goulburn  
Archbishop: Most Rev Christopher Prowse DD STD  
Vicar General: Fr Tony Percy VG  
Administrator: Fr Trenton van Reesch  
Assistant Priest: Fr Norvin Dias



**Masses will be offered  
without a congregation  
present until further notice.**

**PARISH OFFICE**

55 Franklin Street, Forrest ACT 2603 (02) 6239 9846 (bh) cathedral@cg.org.au www.cg.org.au/cathedral  
Online Payments Link: <https://www.bpoint.com.au/payments/sccp>  
**Parish Secretary:** Michelle O'Connor—Mon-Fri, 8.30am-12.15pm, 12.45pm-4.30pm  
**Accounts Officer:** Karina Widjaja—Friday, 8am-4pm

Dear Parishioners and Visitors to Saint Christopher's Cathedral Parish,

At Mass on Thursday morning in Casa Santa Marta, Pope Francis prayed for all the world in this time of uncertainty and crisis. His prayer was that "the Lord [may] help us conquer our fear". When we suffer we naturally begin to fear and when we fear, we again naturally reveal in Who or what we trust. "In these days there's so much suffering. There's a lot of fear." The Pope said. "*The fear of the elderly who are alone in nursing homes, or hospitals, or in their own homes, and don't know what will happen. The fear of those who don't have regular jobs and are thinking about how to feed their children. ... The fear of many civil servants. At this moment working to keep society functioning and they might get sick. There's also the fear, the fears, of each one of us. ... We pray to the Lord that He might help us to trust, and to tolerate and conquer these fears.*"

Hearing his words, I turned to contemplate my own fears... and the question always emerged: *where do you place your trust?* You see, part of knowing who we are, is knowing we're not! Part of knowing what our life is about, is knowing what our life is not about! This is the crux of the Lenten reality.

One of the great changes for us in these days is the question of *how* we participate in the Mass. This can be a confronting, challenging and even heart-breaking. At the same time however it can be a place of deepening understanding and growth. The Mass is the 'source and summit' of the Christian life. It is our identity, and it is necessary. Indeed without the Eucharist the Church does not exist; God remains distant. So how are we to understand our present situation?

Pope Francis in a recent telecast told his virtual audience that "in the present situation, in which we find ourselves living more or less isolated, we are invited to rediscover and deepen the value of *the communion that unites all the members of the church.*" He reminded all that, "united to Christ we are never alone, we form one body, of which [Christ] is the head." He explained it as "a union that is nourished with prayer, and also with spiritual communion in the Eucharist, a practice that is much recommended when it is not possible to receive the sacrament. I say this to everyone..." the Pope echoed "and especially to those living alone." What this means is that Christ provides for his people in *every* situation, and will never abandon them (Ps 94:14).

Daily Mass is still offered for you all and your intentions, albeit without you all *physically* present; and I want you to take heart in knowing this. As I stood at the altar yesterday and gazed back down an empty church... I don't mind saying, I cried, just a few tears. And you know, it wasn't because the church was empty and you were not physically there. They were tears of humble joy, that even now, God has not abandoned His people. For you I am (and all your priests are what they are) but with you we are baptised members of Jesus saving and omnipresent body. Whenever the Mass is offered the priest (*in the person of Christ the Head*) offers the Sacrifice with and for the *Whole Body* of Christ, whether the baptised can be physically present or not. The Mass has power whether we are able to be there in person or not, because God is not bound by circumstance. This means that all the baptised by *virtue of their baptism* and being a member of the Body, participate in that one Sacrifice. As a parish this situation gives us an opportunity to deepen our devotion and understanding of our Catholic faith, its heart in the Mass, and the Truth it makes present to us every moment of everyday – you are members of Christ's Body, and you are not alone.

In these days you are encouraged to pause and pray with the priest. Pray the daily readings (available on the *CatholicVoice* website), offer to God your deepest fears and give Him thanks for the blessings you have received. Pray for the needs of the Church and the world. The Body of Christ is bigger than the pandemic in which we find ourselves, and the Church for millennia has found a way to nourish Her people. This is what it is to be a member of Christ's saving Body, the Church. This is a great teaching point for us all, but especially our children and our coming generations. It is a time of renewed faith and understanding.

While the Eucharist is the richest, most perfect place to encounter Christ and receive his Body, it is not the only place. We can embrace the presence of Christ in the Scriptures. The *Catholic Voice* website ([www.catholicvoice.org.au](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au)) and ([universalis.com/1100/mass.htm](http://universalis.com/1100/mass.htm)) are very helpful here for the daily readings of Mass. Viewing the Mass online also allows us to gather at the *Table of the Word* even if we cannot in this moment receive Christ's Body in the Eucharist.

We encounter Christ in many other ways in each other. Copious opportunities now illumine Jesus' words to us from John 15:12 to *love others as the Lord has loved us*. This will in these days require creativity, and patience. Indeed Jesus' words from Holy Thursday too jump out: "Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet." (John 13:14). With the wonders of technology and the era that is ours, we can do this in many ways, a simple phone call to a neighbour being the most obvious; or collecting groceries for those who now cannot do so themselves. To encounter the body of Christ in the vulnerable in the coming weeks, albeit from a 'suitable distance' is the call. How can I now as a baptised Catholic bring the hope and presence of Christ into the lives of others? What an open door this tragic situation gives, to point out to many the God who loves them, and dwells in the midst of all they struggle with and we find ourselves in.

This virus, like all "successful" viruses, is spreading so well because it has found a way to exploit an intimate part who we are. It has seized our relational nature, exploiting the human desire for closeness and community. I have found myself often stopping just before an embrace, or awkwardly resisting a handshake. You know how unnatural it feels for us to hold back from these expressions of our relationships. But in these days that God wants to remind us of an even closer relationship that binds us— His own Glorious Body! Let us be instruments of that message in these days,

With every prayer and closeness to you in the Mass,

Fr Trenton

# PARISH NEWS

## PARISH MINISTRIES

**Director of Music:** Jaki Kane

**RCIA**—Fr Trenton van Reesch  
*Weekly on Thursdays, 6pm*

### School of Religion

**Youth Minister**—Chiara Catanzariti  
Email: [chiara.catanzariti@cg.org.au](mailto:chiara.catanzariti@cg.org.au)

### Weekly Liturgical Calendar

Mon 30 Mar 5th week of Lent

Tue 31 Mar 5th week of Lent

Wed 1 Apr 5th week of Lent

Thu 2 Apr 5th week of Lent

Fri 3 Apr 5th week of Lent

Sat 4 Apr 5th week of Lent

Sun 5 Apr Palm Sunday

### **Group gatherings in recess for the moment**

**Legion of Mary**  
*Wednesday at 6.15pm*  
*Haydon Hall*

**St Vincent de Paul**  
*Assisting people in need and combatting social injustice in our community*

**Young Adults**  
*Animating parish and Archdiocesan life through prayer and event participation*

*Thursday 6.30pm Rosary/Bible Sharing/Fellowship SCC*  
*Geetanjali Rogers*

**Good Shepherd Prayer Group**  
*Wednesday at 7pm SPC Parish Room (Feb-Dec)*

**Christian Meditation**  
*Saturday at 5pm SPC*  
*"Be still and know that I am God" (Psalm 46:10)*

### **Other Communities**

**Spanish Community**  
*First Sunday of the month at 11.30am SPC*

**African Community**  
*Second Sunday of the month at 11.45am SPC*

**Filipino Community**  
*First Sunday bi-monthly at 5.00pm SPC*

**For details of any of the above, contact the Parish**

"We must rediscover the concreteness of little things, small gestures of attention we can offer those close to us, our family, our friends. We must understand that in small things lies our treasure,"  
Pope Francis

### CANCELLED EVENTS:

- **STATIONS OF THE CROSS DURING LENT** — 6pm, St Peter Chanel's 3 Apr.
- **WOMEN'S YOUNG ADULT/PROFESSIONAL LENTEN SMALL GROUP** every Tuesday 5:30pm-6:30pm at 'My Cafe' Manuka.
- **2020 CATHEDRAL PARISH SCHOOL OF RELIGION PROGRAM** - suspended until further notice due to the Coronavirus.
- **ANZAC DAY MASS**
- **SUNG VESPERS**
- **ST THERESE & HER PARENTS RELICS TOUR.**, 29 March.

**Young Adults** - Young Adults (including bible study) are looking at moving online during this time – keep up with updates on our parish website.

**Parish Phone Tree**—If you know someone who would appreciate a friendly call (and we may not have their details), please forward their name and number to the parish office. If you would like to be phoned in these days as part of our 'phone tree' please also email the parish office.

**Pastoral Visits**—Our utmost concern at this time is **the pastoral and spiritual care of our parish family**. In these days where isolation has become the new norm, the pastoral arm of the Church must be more than ever front and centre. Those who do regular home visitations are encouraged to now consider phone calls, checking-in and assuring each other of thoughts and prayers.

Fr Norvin and I are continuing to visit the hospital and nursing homes upon request to minister to the sick, struggling and dying. Let us keep all those who need care and the sacraments in our prayers. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will not take Communion to sick persons until further notice. Keeping contact via phone and other means is highly recommended and I ask all EMHC to please do this with those they visit, if possible.

### **Archbishop Christopher offers this prayer at the time of Coronavirus Pandemic for reflection in parishes.**

Heavenly Father,

We praise and thank you for your loving presence, especially in the Lent/Easter season.

We offer heartfelt thanks, dear Lord, particularly for our recent rains.

Once again, we come to you in our need. As your children we are in need of your healing and protection. Just as we have been recovering from our dangerous bushfire summer, we have now been thrown into a fearful coronavirus (COVID 19) autumn.

We are tired and frightened. We feel a sense of panic and future uncertainty on a global scale. Be with us now, Loving Master. Without you all is nothing – only empty hearts and a total reliance on our own feeble resources.

But with you "there is mercy and fullness of Redemption" (Psalm 130/7). With you there is "the loving mercy of the heart of our God (who) will give light to those who sit in darkness, those who dwell in the shadow of death, and guide our feet into the way of peace" (Luke 1/79).

It seems that so many public gatherings are now postponed or cancelled. There is virus death, the sick, and the anxious. We are spending more time on our own, or with family or friends.

We pray for the sick and those looking after them. Help us to offer practical help to those who struggle. Let us use these times, O Lord, for your greater glory, especially during Lent and Easter. Let us pray more, and truly listen to you more in loving silence, stillness and simplicity.

Almighty Father, you always journey with us in life's challenges. Help us to meet you often in the scriptures and our sacraments. Increase in us faith, hope and trust.

Protect us from this coronavirus. Remove it from our common home. Heal those who are sick and dying. Mary, Help of Christians, as always we fly to you in our need. Be close to us and point out your Son, Jesus, to us in this pandemic. St Therese of Lisieux and her parents, Saints Louis and Zelig Martin, pray for us.

We make this and all our prayers through Jesus, Our Lord and Saviour, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever, AMEN



Fifth Sunday of Lent  
29th March 2020



Tawonga is a 10-year-old girl living with a disability, and struggling with food insecurity and discrimination in Malawi. Since participating in a Caritas Australia supported program, Tawonga's life has transformed.

**Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to so this transformational program can continue to empower vulnerable women, men and children, and strengthen the communities around them.**

**Let's Go Further, Together.** You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting [www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion) or phoning 1800 024 413.

## OTHER NEWS

**THE CATHOLIC GUY LENTEN EMAIL PROGRAM 'WALK THROUGH LENT 2020'** - Receive daily talks and reflections via email from Bruce Downes @ The Catholic Guy Ministries. To participate, register at <https://brucedownes.org/lent>

### CANCELLED EVENTS DUE TO CORONA VIRUS—

**WHAT IS PRAYER?** , Waramanga parish.  
**LEGION OF MARY ACIES**—28 Mar, St Joseph's O'Connor.  
**LENTEN RETREAT**— 28 Mar, Narrabundah.  
**BACH CONCERT** 27 March Cathedral.  
**INSTAGRACE**— 14-17 – April, Narrabundah **POSTPONED.**  
**AMICUS GATHERINGS**

**ENCOUNTER TIMOR LESTE WITH PALMS** 13-25 Sept. 13-day tour experiencing the diversity of our close neighbour, from bustling Dili to its remoter communities, where dedicated organisations and Palms personnel are building self-reliance and sustainability together. For more information call Robert at Palms on 02 9560 5333 or email [robert@palms.org.au](mailto:robert@palms.org.au).

**INFORMATION FOR EASTER CEREMONIES/MASSES WILL FOLLOW. SEE WEBSITE FOR FURTHER UPDATES**

**Please visit [www.catholicvoice.org.au](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au) for more resources, prayers and news.**

### 'Spiritual Communion'

*Saints often made an act of spiritual communion when they couldn't receive the Eucharist at Mass.*

For various reasons we may be prevented from receiving the Eucharist in the Mass. In these cases the Church encourages us to make an act of "spiritual communion," where we unite ourselves to God through prayer. It is a beautiful way to express to God our desire to be united with him when we are unable to complete that union in the reception of Holy Communion.

Countless saints incorporated this type of prayer into their daily lives. Making an act of spiritual communion for them was an essential part of life and drew them closer to God, daily.

St. Josemaria Escriva encouraged everyone to make a spiritual communion as often as they could, "What a source of grace there is in spiritual communion! Practice it frequently and you'll have greater presence of God and closer union with him in all your actions."

Padre Pio also had a habit of making a spiritual communion throughout the day outside of the celebration of Mass. He desired to be always united with Jesus Christ in everything he did.

Below is a traditional prayer of spiritual communion that many saints have prayed over centuries. It can be prayed if you find yourself at Home or at work, in the car or in bed, wherever you are - lifting up your thoughts to God, pray it often in these days!

The ultimate goal of our lives should be communion with God and an act of spiritual communion can help a person draw closer to that goal.



***My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.***

***I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite***

### United in Christ we are Never Alone

"In the present situation, in which we find ourselves living more or less isolated, we are invited to rediscover and deepen the value of the communion that unites all the members of the church." He reminded them that, "united to Christ we are never alone, we form one body, of which he is the head." He explained that "it is a union that is nourished with prayer, and also with spiritual communion in the Eucharist, a practice that is much recommended when it is not possible to receive the sacrament. I say this to everyone, and especially to those living alone."

-Pope Francis

### The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

**Tap & Go PayWave Machine** to contribute to the Church collections without the necessity of carrying cash. Please PayWave your card at the pre-set Tap N Go machine located in the Church Foyer when you exit the church. Please contact the Parish Office with any questions.



### We pray for...

**Those to be married:** Joseph McDonald & Mystive Nelis

**Those who are ill:** Arianna Vignale, Anna Vincent, Lucy Duncan, Stella Lazar, Rod Duncan, Anthony, Lisette D'Cruze, David Kibbey, Jacqueline Khin, Katarina Kish, Mary Brennan

**Anniversaries of death:** Anthony Tuskens, Joan Burton, Amparo C de Baez, Patrick Charles & Kerry Agnes Purcell, Annie Duffy, Edrie Mary Duffy, Ralph Martin, Muriel Robbie, Raffaele Franze, Austin Burns, May Ledger, William Lloyd Alick Roberts, Jean Elizabeth Lennon, Catherine Semecky, Kevin Cranwell, Michael Conroy, John Hipwell, Jose Gonzales, Constance Jones, Christine Humphries

**Recently Deceased:** Regina Paredes, Hilda Quinones, Shirley Evans, Josip Persic, Don Furner, Henry Tabisz, Mary-Anne McGrath, Rod Frazer, 4 children killed at Oatlands, Roberto Emilio, Bruce Kennedy, Ronald D'Cruze, Brian Kelly, Betty O'Neill, Patricia Smith, David Cusack, Anica Soldo, John Gallagher, David Askew, Andrew Italiano, Stanley Marris, Patricia Brennan,

## Readings of the Day – 5th Sunday of Lent —Year A

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:** *Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.*

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

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** *Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me will not die for ever. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!*

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON:** *Everyone who lives and believes in me will not die for ever, says the Lord.*

---

### First Reading

Ez 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.

### Second Reading

Rom 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 Reading

Jn 11:1-45

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in the village of Bethany with the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and he was ill. – It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters 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.’ The disciples said, ‘Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?’ Jesus replied: ‘Are there not twelve hours in the day? A man can walk in the daytime without stumbling because he has the light of this world to see by; but if he walks at night he stumbles, because there is no light to guide him.’ He said that and then added, ‘Our friend Lazarus is resting, I am going to wake him.’ The disciples said to him, ‘Lord, if he is able to rest he is sure to get better.’ The phrase Jesus used referred to the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by ‘rest’ he meant ‘sleep’, so Jesus put it plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.’ Then Thomas – known as the Twin – said to the other disciples, ‘Let us go too, and die with him.’ On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. 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.’ When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, ‘The Master is here and wants to see you.’ Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were in the house sympathising with Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there. Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, ‘Where have you put him?’ They said, ‘Lord, come and see.’ Jesus wept; and the Jews 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 scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers. The English translation of the Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the Lenten Gospel Acclamations, and the Titles, Summaries, and Conclusion of the Readings, from the Lectionary for Mass © 1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved. The prayers are from the English Translation of the Roman Missal © 2010 International Committee on English in the Liturgy Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved.