

Parish Link!

Message from Father Denis

Dear Parishioners

When this current lockdown commenced, we had no inkling it would last for so long. As it continues to stretch on, we would like to do a weekly communication/newsletter by email to stay in touch. We know lockdown poses a myriad of challenges unique to each person/household, so we trust you are coping ok.

During the past 6 weeks the parish has continued to operate. We have had a few funerals. A number of parishioners have had health issues: Mary O'Keefe unfortunately broke her hip which landed her in Westmead hospital and then into rehab where she currently resides; Simon Roodenrys also found himself in Westmead hospital and could be relocating to an Aged Care facility in Blacktown. Pat Coogan is having a stint in Auburn hospital so we trust she will make it home again. Sr Margaret Harrison is also in Concord hospital, recovering from emergency surgery. We have been advised that she is recovering well. If any of you have news about other parishioners, then please let us know.

The long-awaited repairs to the church roof are due to commence on Monday 13 September. We realized we had a serious problem when water began pouring through the lights in the church during a major rain event. An investigative report indicated it was due to long-term normal wear and tear and maintenance work that had been done on the church over the decades. The repairs will cost \$74,877 which will be quite a challenge for the parish, so we are grateful for any financial support during this time.

We miss seeing you at daily/Sunday Mass and look forward to the day when we can celebrate Mass together in church. In the meantime, the parish Facebook page has an abundance of resources for prayer at home on a Sunday. Also, the Carmelites in Melbourne put out an excellent publication each weekend around the Sunday Mass readings and we always leave a few copies outside the church for anyone who wants to use it to collect. And if anyone would appreciate a phone call from any of us here then please let us know.

Fr Denis

on behalf of the parish team of Lyn Bryant, Paola Yevenes, Fr Januarío and Fr Anthony.

To Whom Shall I Go?

Today's Gospel presents us with the concluding verses of the very important sixth chapter of St. John's Gospel. In order to follow today's Gospel, we have to go back to the beginning of the chapter where Jesus tells the crowd that for them to have life, they must eat his flesh and drink his blood. Many of the disciples find this "a hard saying" and murmur among themselves. They turn their backs on him and "no longer walk with him". Jesus goes on to reveal to these disciples that they will see him ascend into heaven and that he will give them the gift of the Spirit who is the fullness of life.

Jesus then turns his attention to the twelve and offers them a choice: either they believe in him or walk away from him. Peter, in utter faith, answer on behalf of the twelve, and on our behalf, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God."

Jesus is clearly disappointed in his disciples, even though he does understand that what he is asking of them is indeed "a hard saying". He is disappointed in their murmurings. Jesus expects of his disciples an understanding with the heart, not just with the intellect, a belief in his person because he is the Holy One of God. The life that Jesus is offering his disciples, us, is the very life of a loving Father.

Peter may have been impetuous and sometimes a bit slow on the uptake, but he certainly believed in the person of Jesus, that Jesus was the Son of God, the Holy One of God. This is precisely what Jesus expects of his disciples, us.

Can I, like Peter, truly, deeply, and lovingly say to Jesus, "To whom shall I go? You have the words of eternal life, and I have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God"?

- Fr Anthony Scerri O Carm



We are extremely grateful to all those parishioners who have kept up their generous planned giving, direct debit donations and other forms of contribution to the parish during these very difficult times.

The Carmelites would also like to thank those parishioners who have dropped off meals for the Community. Thank you for such a thoughtful gesture.

Thank you also to Andrew and others who have continued to maintain the church grounds. Our church surrounds would have been looking pretty disorderly by now without their care and concern.

We all realise that the Lockdown situation in our area and surrounding areas of Sydney provide challenges to us all. Our prayers are with everyone affected by the Covid pandemic and particularly with the members of our parish family. Stay safe!

NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS:

22nd Sunday of Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 4: 1—2, 6—8

2nd Reading: James 1: 17—18, 21—22, 27

Gospel: Mark 7: 1—8, 14—15, 21—23



In Loving Memory

Recently Deceased: Maurizia Xuereb, Nazzarena Cauchi, John Cuschieri, Pauline Tipper, George Char, John Deguara (Malta),

Anniversaries & Memorials: *Sack Papallo, Greg Carroza, Sebastian Pennisi, Stella Aaron, Monica Kung, Catherine Kung, Ignatius Paiva, Daphne Sivasubramaniam, Kata, Filip, Zelemir, Nevenka, Centenic Pensa, Joseph & Mary Bonello, Carmen Ebejer, Henk de Roo, Charlie Navan, Joyce Cini, Tony & Antonia Cini, Mary & Frank Teuma, Charlie Sultana, Michael & Carmen Attard, Frank & Pauline Vella, Rani Sathi, Pushpa Kantha, Anthony Peter, Connie Bezzina & Jeanne Black, Pauline Grech, Renato Zammit, Francesca Zammit, Concetta & Joseph Sciberras, Joseph & Josephine Gauci, Holy Souls in Purgatory & All Souls, All Saints, Suffering Souls*

Other Intentions

Thanksgiving: In Honour of St Anthony

Special Intentions: The People of Afghanistan, All those who are suffering through the Covid Pandemic

School News!

Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, led by their principal Olympia Perovich have continued to provide learning online as well as face to face teaching for children of whose parents are essential workers. The teachers have also been meeting with families for online activities. Please keep the teachers and the school children in your prayers as they face these difficult learning conditions together.

GET VACCINATED FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Vaccination against COVID-19 is a morally good thing, providing protection for the person vaccinated and the wider community. Some COVID-19 vaccines are associated with ethically questionable production and research practices, but Pope Francis and the Australian Bishops have advised that it is morally permissible to receive any vaccine made available. More information is available at <https://www.catholic.org.au/coronavirus>

Hard Sayings

Many people walked away from Jesus after he spoke about being the Bread of Life. This passage is often called "the crisis" in John's Gospel; Jesus loses a large portion of his followers back to the world after this. He turns to the Twelve, to test their willingness to remain. As usual, Peter represents the group with his fearless answer, "Lord, where would we go?"

Suppose you were to reject the life of faith today as being too demanding. The Church's teachings aren't contemporary enough. The leadership seems flawed. The liturgy needs work. The community is, for all its professions of faith, just a bunch of sinners. If you bundled all of your grievances against the Church into a handkerchief and tied it to a stick and got ready to walk, just where would you be going?

Most people who walk away in anger have only their anger for company. Most "retired Christians" I know still carry that handkerchief of outrage around with them, dangling from the stick. We can imagine that those who become disillusioned with Jesus muttered about it for years to come. "Some prophet he was, Some Saviour!" But those who stayed with him and his words of eternal life, got past the cross and all the way to Easter.

Thought for Today

Rise above the storm and you will find the sunshine!



Feast Days this Week

Monday: St Rose of Lima

Tuesday St Bartholomew

Wednesday: St Mary of Jesus Crucified, St Louis, St Joseph Calasanz

Thursday: Bl Jacques Retouret

Friday: St Monica

Saturday: St Augustine

Sunday: 22nd Sunday Ordinary Time