



St Mary's Parish Concord

Third Sunday of Easter

Year A

23 April 2023

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Acts 2:14, 22-33

It was impossible for Christ to be held in the power of death.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Psalm 15

Lord, you will show us the path of life.

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:17-21

Through Christ you have come to trust in God.

GOSPEL: Luke 24: 13-35

They recognised him at the breaking of the bread.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for those who continue to suffer because of war and violent conflicts.

We pray for communities in many places recovering from recent natural disasters.

We pray for those who are sick, especially those who have no one to care for them.

We pray for the men and women serving in our defense forces that they may receive the personal support they need both during and after their service.

We pray for all who have given their lives in the defense and service of their country; may they have eternal rest.

We pray for Denis Joyce and all those who have died recently; we pray for Pina Battista, Cristina Bortolussi, Edoardo Bregolin, Cath & Frank Collins, Teresa Fitzmaurice, Harold & Mavis Hewish and for all those whose anniversaries occur about this time; for all our deceased family members and friends.

ANZAC DAY: Each year we join with the wider Australian community to pray for those who have served in the Australian Defense Forces, particularly those who have been killed or injured in war.

ANZAC Day always falls in the Easter Season, a time when we remember that the Resurrection of Jesus has opened for us the way to eternal life.

The parish ANZAC Day Mass will be on Tuesday 25 April at 8.30 am.

EASTER OFFERINGS: Thanks to all who have contributed to the Easter Offerings. As noted on the envelopes, the Easter Offerings, together with your contributions throughout the year to the parish first collection, go to the support of the clergy. Your contributions not only support our parish priest here at St Mary's Concord but also assist those smaller parishes where the local community cannot support a priest. It is one of the ways that we as a community help to support struggling parishes.

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Wangal people of the Eora nation as the traditional custodians of this land.

CONFIRMATION 2023: Confirmation will be celebrated within a special Mass at 11.00 am on Sunday 4 June. **Registrations will open on Monday 24 April and close on Friday 5 May.** After that date please send an email to Parish Office. A registration form and an information letter will then be sent to you by return email.

ST MARY'S PLAYGROUP will not be meeting during the school holidays. Playgroup will recommence **Friday 5 May 9.30am** in the parish hall.

COVID HEALTH REPORT: A 2023 COVID-19 vaccine booster dose is recommended for adults who have not had a COVID infection or a vaccine dose in the past 6 months. This will provide an increase in protection against severe illness. Please also consider wearing a mask at Mass to protect yourself and the older members of our parish community. **We are still encouraged to wear a mask at indoor gatherings, especially where social distancing is difficult, and we are together for an extended time.**

THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

In the Easter Season we continue to reflect on the accounts of the appearances of the Risen Jesus to the disciples.

All four Gospels include the story of the women going to the tomb at dawn on the first day of the week. They discover the empty tomb and encounter angels who tell them that Jesus is risen.

As we heard on Easter Sunday, Matthew's Gospel then has Jesus appearing to the women and they are given a message for the disciples. The disciples are told to go to Galilee where they will encounter Jesus (Mt 28:1-10).

Last Sunday, we turned to John's Gospel and heard about two appearances of Jesus to the disciples as they gathered in Jerusalem (Jn 20:19-31).

Luke also included an account of the appearance of Jesus to the disciples in Jerusalem but before that he presents the story of the appearance of the Risen Jesus to two disciples who were leaving Jerusalem.

That story is only found in Luke's Gospel, and it serves as a bridge between the women at the tomb and the later appearance of Jesus to the Eleven.

"The Journey" is an important motif for Luke. A central theme of his Gospel is the journey of Jesus and the disciples to Jerusalem. His second volume, the Acts of the Apostles, is about the journey of the disciples from Jerusalem to the world.

In that broader context, the story of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus is a message for Luke's community about how they meet the risen Lord.

The early Christian communities gathered each week on the first day of the week (Sunday) to celebrate the Eucharist. For Luke, the "Breaking of the Bread" is the name he used for that celebration of the Eucharist (Acts 2:42, 46, 20:7 and 24:35).

We also know that the communities adapted the Jewish Synagogue Service that was based on a reading from the books of the Torah (attributed to Moses) and a reading from the prophets. In his gospel Luke presented Jesus at the beginning of his mission going into the synagogue at Nazareth and reading from the prophet Isaiah (Lk 4:16-22).

As the two disciples walked away from Jerusalem, they struggled to understand what had happened. As Jesus walks with them he explained to them the things about himself in the Scriptures, beginning with Moses and then all the prophets. We are also told that they recognized Jesus is the "breaking of the bread".

The message for Luke's community was that they will encounter the risen Lord when they gather to listen to the Scriptures and share in the Eucharist.

We are also on a journey and we too at times struggle to understand what is happening around us. We gather each Sunday to listen to the Word of God and to share in the Eucharist so that we too can encounter the Risen Jesus.

Paul Crowley

THE EASTER SEASON

The Easter Triduum is the most solemn period in our liturgical calendar. The season of Lent concluded on Holy Thursday and the Triduum began on Holy Thursday evening with the Mass of the Lord's Supper. Easter Sunday marks the end of the Triduum and is also the beginning of the Easter Season.

The unity of the Easter Season, as an extended time of rejoicing, is also indicated by the fact that this Sunday is called the Second Sunday of Easter and not the first Sunday after Easter. It is also why no other feasts can take precedence over the Sundays of Easter. The one exception is the Ascension of the Lord, which can replace the 7th Sunday of Easter.

The Easter Season extends from Easter Sunday to Pentecost Sunday. This period of seven weeks or fifty days has its origin in *The Acts of the Apostles* (2:1-11) which describes the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles on the Jewish feast of Weeks (Shavuot). That feast was also known by the Greek name "Pentecost" because it was celebrated fifty days after the feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread.

The three-year cycle of readings continues during the Easter Season and this year we continue to follow Year A.

In the Easter Season the first reading is always taken from *The Acts of the Apostles*. Written by St Luke, it is the story of the growth of the early Christian communities and the role of the apostles as witnesses of the resurrection.

The Gospel readings on the Sundays of Easter are mostly taken from *John's Gospel* which presents a different account of the teachings of Jesus from that found in the other three Gospels.

As a sign of the unity of the season, the Easter Candle, a symbol of the risen Lord, remains near the altar until the evening of Pentecost Sunday. It is lit during all Masses throughout the season.

To highlight the festive nature of the season many traditional prayers are also changed. The *Angelus* is replaced by the *Regina Caeli* and Alleluia is added to many prayers. There is also an ancient tradition that there is no kneeling during the Easter Season.

Paul Crowley

PROJECT COMPASSION



Thank you for your continued support of Project Compassion. If you still have a box or envelopes at home, we encourage you to return them next Sunday.

Donations can still be made by calling 1800 024 413 or at caritas.org.au/project-compassion or scanning the QR code.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body entrusted with the task of reflecting on the parish's vision and mission. In a spirit of service to the community the Pastoral Council works with the parish priest to foster and support appropriate pastoral action. Members serve a four-year term with half the Council changing every two years.

As we begin to plan for 2023, new members are needed. Any active parishioner 18 years of age or older may be nominated or may nominate his/herself. If you are interested, please talk to Fr Paul or to any of the current members. For more information go to the "Our Parish" tab on the Home Page of the parish website www.stmarysconcord.org.au

FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 2023: There will be a special Mass for 1st Holy Communion on Sundays 20 & 27 August. **More details and registration forms will be available in early July.** Families who believe that their child is ready to celebrate 1st Holy Communion can also choose to celebrate 1st Holy Communion at any parish Sunday Mass. Please contact the parish for more details. The best preparation for a child for 1st Holy Communion is to participate in a Mass each Sunday with their family

HOW CAN I MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

As a parish, we need to rebuild the various parish ministry teams: those who support the community at Sunday Masses and those who extend the Mission of the parish in the wider community.

We thank those who continue to support the parish community each Sunday as readers and ministers of Holy Communion. However, we need more people to become active members of our community.

For more information, contact Fr Paul or the Parish Office: parish@stmarysconcord.org.au

HOW DO I BECOME A CATHOLIC? Adults who have not been baptized and wish to become part of the community of the Catholic Church receive the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) in the **Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults** (RCIA).

The RCIA presumes that there is an extended period of formation and preparation, usually leading to the celebration of Baptism at Easter.

Baptised members of other Christian Churches who wish to become members of the Catholic Church do so through **Reception into Full Communion**.

If you are interested, or if you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a Catholic, please contact Fr Paul or the Parish Office tel 9747 4210 or email parish@stmarysconcord.org.au.

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney Safeguarding Office provides support and training for parish communities to ensure that our communities offer a safe and caring environment. The Safeguarding Office also provides support for those who have suffered abuse. If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Archdiocese of Sydney, the Safeguarding Office will listen to you respectfully, offer support and discuss the options you have available to you. Please contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office on phone: 9390 5812.

COLLECTIONS: The practice of passing around the collection plates during Mass remains suspended. Your regular donations can be placed in the appropriate containers in the church. For your convenience "Tap and Go" stations are available at the doors of the church. Tap to donate the set amount. Please note that receipts cannot be issued for donations and the "Tap & Go" transactions cannot be reversed.

CLIMATE CHANGE: World leaders gathered in Canada in December 2022 for COP 15, the United Nations Conference of the Parties on biodiversity.

In his Message for the **2022 World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation**, Pope Francis urged world leaders to commit to ambitious plans at the COP 27 to achieve the goal of keeping global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius. He also urged leaders gathering at the COP 15 to make new multilateral agreements to halt the alarming increases in destruction of ecosystems and extinction of species.



Pope Francis reminds us that the Gospel calls us to repentance, to a new relationship with God and a different relationship with others and with all of creation. This conversion of heart will lead us to take action personally, but also communally to care for our common home.

These two meetings presented another opportunity for world leaders to agree on actions which will address the twin crises of climate change and loss of biodiversity.

They also presented us with an opportunity as people of faith to join with others in calling for effective action to deal with these immense ecological crises. The Australian Catholic Bishops Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace has produced a new **Information Sheet on COP 27 & COP 15**.

For more information:

<https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au/2022/11/10/cops-docs/>

THE LETTER: The Feast of St Francis of Assisi (4 October) saw the world premiere at the Vatican of the documentary film *The Letter: A Message For Our Earth*. Based on Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical letter, "Laudato Si', on Care for Our Common Home" the film was made in partnership with the Laudato Si' Movement, the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Dicastery for Communication.

It explores the consequences of climate change through the voices of the poor, young people, indigenous peoples and others who met with Pope Francis last year. The film is streaming for free at theletterfilm.org and **YouTube Originals**.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: The 2022 Social Justice Statement, *Respect: Confronting Violence and Abuse*, invites us to engage with a complex and



confronting social reality. It explores the roots of violence and abuse, honours the voices of victims, offers a social and theological exploration of the reality of violence, especially against women and children, and invites us to develop relationships in all parts of our lives 'marked by equality and reciprocity rather than domination and violence, respect and freedom rather than coercion and control.'

If the content of the Statement raises issues or concerns for you, please refer to the Getting Help page in the Statement for a list of support channels, or speak to a trusted friend, your GP, your parish priest or parish pastoral worker.

Access the Statement: <https://bit.ly/SJS22-23>.

More information: ACBC Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace, www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au or Tel (02) 62019845.

Facebook | www.facebook.com/socialjusticeACBC

Twitter | @JusticeCatholic

Instagram | @JusticeCatholic

JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE FOODBANK

The JRS continues to support those seeking asylum and temporary migrants in Australia, as they remain excluded from all forms of Federal government support. This has meant that people who were once working and self-sufficient have had to rely on charities, like JRS, for rent, medication, bills and food. To help keep everyone fed, we are asking those who can to donate one item a week (1 or 2 Kg bags of Basmati Rice, Tuna in oil, Cooking Oil (750ml/1L/2L bottles), tinned tomatoes, tinned lentils, chickpeas, red kidney beans, pasta (spaghetti, penne, spiral) but please not tinned spaghetti. Donations can be placed in the blue bin on the table at the back of the church.

HOUSE OF WELCOME FOODBANK



Foodbank provides household necessities for people seeking asylum who have limited or no income.

People can access groceries on a weekly basis to alleviate the cost of living. The Foodbank program is largely stocked through the generosity of people in the community. No contribution is too small.

Contact: office@houseofwelcome.com.au

197 The Trongate, Granville Ph: 02 9727 9290

stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome

MARRIAGE ANNULMENT:

The Tribunal of the Catholic Church offers advice to all of those who have experienced a marriage breakdown and question the validity of their first marriage as understood by the Church. Inquiries: 9307 8300 or email: admin@sydneytribunal.org.au

Help with Alcoholism and Addiction

Do you, a family member, or friend need help with an addiction concern? You can reach out to the **Calix Society**. Calix is an association of Catholic alcoholics, drug addicts, and family members and friends affected by addiction, who are maintaining their sobriety through participation in their Catholic faith and a 12 Step program. We welcome anyone concerned with the illness of alcoholism or addiction who wish to join with us in prayer for *the virtue of total abstinence, promoting our spiritual development, and striving for the sanctification of the whole personality of each member*. Contact calixsydney@outlook.com for meeting times and resources. Perhaps this could be a crucial step toward recovery and saving a life.

HERITAGE SIGNS: St Mary's Parish commissioned five heritage signs to mark the sesquicentenary of the parish in 2020.

The signs are located in the Church Forecourt and recall the historical parish buildings that once existed on the parish site: the first church (1845), the second church (1874), the presbytery (1882), the first school building (1894) and the convent (1898). Each sign has been placed close to the original location of that building.



The Presbytery c 2003

When Father McCarthy was appointed parish priest in 1870, he lived in a cottage on the Burwood side of Parramatta Road until the Presbytery (the priest's residence) was built in 1882. It stood on the northern side of the 1874 church facing Burton Street.

The original building was extended several times as the needs of the parish changed. As well as providing a residence for the priests, it also served as the office for the parish until 1994 when the Parish Office was relocated to a cottage at 4 Ada Street.

The Presbytery continued to be the residence for the priests of the parish until 2002. As part of the strategic plan for the development of the parish site, in 2002 the residence for the parish priest was relocated to a cottage at 6 Ada Street that the parish had purchased in 1995.



In 2008 the Presbytery, the Convent and the 1950s school building were all demolished to make way for the new St Mary's Villa.