



**SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A 19 FEBRUARY 2023**

***We live in a culture where there is so much talk about protecting oneself and one's property, about guns and gated communities. How do we reconcile this with Jesus' call to turn the other cheek and love one's enemy?***

***What does it take to embrace these teachings, which many of us — quite honestly — find foolish?***

***As we have journeyed through the Gospel these past weeks, you may have concluded by now, that living the Gospel of Jesus is very demanding.***

***Today is no exception as we are encouraged not to be "driven by fear" but build friendship and trust, especially with those we see as other. Jesus offers us a great challenge.***



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Awabakal People who, long before us lived, loved, educated and raised their children on this Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we recognise the young people who are our future. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our communities. We respect their deep physical and spiritual connections to Country through their stories, traditions and living cultures.

**PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM:**

Foundation	Leader	In Office
1. Identity and Community		
2. Worship and Prayer.	Uta France	Mon
3. Formation and Education		
4. Mission and Outreach.		
5. Leadership and Structure.	John France	Sat & Sun

If you have any concerns or questions you can also talk to any member of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) who are: Juliet Hutchins, Mal and Pam Melvey, Kerry Lendon, and Rod Hay.

PRIEST SUPERVISOR:	Fr Joseph Figuardo
SACRAMENTAL PRIEST:	Fr John Purnell
Parish Secretary:	Mrs Rosanna Suckling

OFFICE: 60 Yambo Street, Morisset, PO Box 87, Ph: 02 4973.6859  
Office Hours: 9.00 am to 2.00pm—Monday to Friday (except public holidays)  
(Due to COVID we ask that you make an appointment to come to the office)  
Morisset Parish Office email: [morparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:morparish@mn.catholic.org.au)  
Morisset Parish Web site: [www.vianneymorisset.org](http://www.vianneymorisset.org)  
Morisset Parish Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/stjvparish>  
Morisset Parish Instagram : [https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish\\_morisset/](https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish_morisset/)  
Morisset Parish Bulletin Items: [morparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:morparish@mn.catholic.org.au)

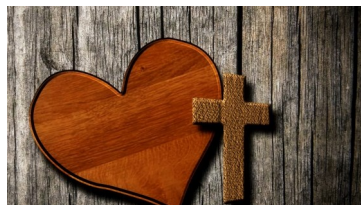
**UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :**

Saturday	18th February 5pm Family Mass— Morisset
Sunday	19th February 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Tuesday	21st February 9.30am Liturgy— Morisset
Saturday	25th February 5pm Mass— Cooranbong
Sunday	26th February 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Tuesday	28th February 9.30am Liturgy— Morisset

**We are back to walk in at all services.**

**We are still recording our Sunday Services and placing them on our Website and Facebook page for you to view if you are sick and unable to attend services.**

**TO KEEP OUR COMMUNITY SAFE WE ENCOURAGE :  
MASK WEARING ,  
PHYSICAL DISTANCING,  
HAND SANITISING,  
And STAYING HOME IF SICK**



### **2023- SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME -REFLECTION**

Shortly it will be Lent. Next Wednesday is Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten Season. Today's Gospel gets

the possibilities for Lent going.

What could you or I do for the forty days of Lent, that would somehow train us to live the kind of life Jesus speaks about in the Gospel today?

Remember the Gospel? Love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Offer that other cheek. Lend what you have and expect nothing back. Stop judging. Stop condemning. Forgive. Give. Forgive Give.

Are you kidding! Are you serious!

Well, all those words in the Gospel were spoken by a Jesus, who was serious.

These words from Jesus' teaching I am sure are familiar to us. They constitute.

the crux and the challenge of what it means to be a disciple.

So, getting back to Lent. A few things that Lent is not.

Lent is not meant to be a one-day show, or some sort of self-improvement program, that asks a tiny bit of self-denial, which rewards us with a few lost kgs, or saved money. Lent is meant to be more than that. Well, you might ask, what is Lent meant to be?

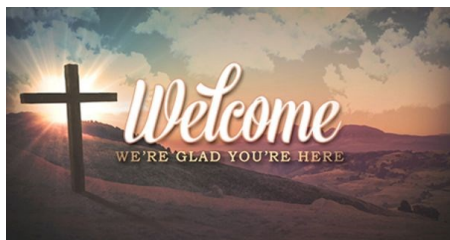
Lent is hard and deeply disturbing, because it is not about our piety, not about our sins, not about earning grace or points or anything else.

Lent should be good human beings like us, trying to grapple with what today's Gospel asks of good human beings here and now, in 2023.

In our nation, and in our world, that is so beaten down by greed gone wild, yet it remains the world that God so loved.

On Ash Wednesday we will receive the ashes, to remind us that they summon us into training to try to do and be, all that we promised and renounced at our baptism.

So today we pray, Lord open our eyes to your deeds, and our ears to the sound of your call. John France



### **WELCOME MINISTRY WORKSHOP**

presented by  
Rose McAllister  
(Manager Formation  
and Education)  
The welcome someone  
receives in church has a

huge impact on their sense of belonging and contributes to whether they decide to become part of the community.

You are invited to explore the important ministry of WELCOME!

The aim of this workshop is to assist parishes reflect on the need to create an

environment where those who visit or are regulars are warmly welcomed into the church community.

The following topics will be covered in the session.

- \* Welcoming, where does it all begin
- \* The Theology of welcome
- \* How to welcome everyone
- \* Welcome training
- \* Welcome packs

Date: 24 February Time: 10.30- 12.30

Location: Callinan Centre Morisset Parish Hall

Please Bring a plate to share for morning tea.

### **RITE OF ELECTION – 26 FEBRUARY 2023**

The Rite of Election on Sunday 26 February 2023 is an opportunity to welcome all the catechumens who will be baptised in their parishes at the Easter Vigil [a catechumen is an unbaptised person whose search for meaning has brought them to the Catholic Church]. You are invited to join the People of God in witness and prayerful support of those who choose to be Catholic from 2.30pm at Sacred Heart Cathedral Newcastle West, followed by afternoon tea. Please RSVP for catering to [Esharon.murphy@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:Esharon.murphy@mn.catholic.org.au) P 4979 1134.

### **HUNTER COMMUNITY ALLIANCE CANDIDATE FORUMS – 8 AND 9 MARCH**

On 8 and 9 March the Hunter Community Alliance will host two Candidate Forums to hear how our Hunter candidates will address community concerns about climate change and housing. The event will see people share stories and expertise about housing, homelessness, and climate change. The group will present policy proposals that they have developed this year to help solve and alleviate these pressures. Then we will negotiate those proposals with Hunter region candidates for the NSW election and seek commitments to make them happen.

You can register for one or both of the following forums:

[Wednesday 8 March:](#) Wallsend, Cessnock, Maitland and Port Stephens

[Thursday 9 March:](#) Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Charlestown and Swansea

### **2023 LENTEN REFLECTION: FINDING LIGHT WITHIN THE DARKNESS**

Pastoral Ministries has prepared a Lenten resource for our diocese, *Finding Light within the Darkness*. Every Lent there is a fresh invitation to retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life. To listen with our heart, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively focus on humanity. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can find light in the darkness and how we can be light to others. This resource provides opportunities for prayer, faith-sharing, and outreach in our local community. To access this resource, go to:

[www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/lent-2023/](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/lent-2023/)



### **aMeN caMiNo**

The aMeN CaMiNo offers an opportunity to become a local pilgrim in your own diocese, to encounter God through nature, to escape from the busyness of life and to connect with others. During this one-hundred-kilometre experience you

will walk with others over a variety of terrain, exploring bush, beach, lake and mountains. As the days pass and you experience self-emptying, an awakening of the senses is heightened, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in the wonder and awe of God's creation. There will be many moments to reflect, pray, journal and be still, all within our very own Maitland-Newcastle Diocese.

For more information, visit: [www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/amen-camino/](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/amen-camino/) Expression of Interest close on 24 February: <https://forms.office.com/r/ZysE5V5Fiy>

### **PROJECT COMPASSION LAUNCH**

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle will launch Caritas Australia's Project Compassion on Shrove Tuesday, 21 February 2023. The Theme *For All Future Generations* reminds us that what we do today can have a significant impact on our future generations. As part of the Liturgy, students, parishes and agencies within the Maitland-Newcastle Diocese\* will be called forward to receive their 2023 Project Compassion Box and Commissioning from Diocesan Administrator, Fr. Greg Barker.

***Complimentary pancakes will be served at the Southern Cross Hall, following the Liturgy.***

To register, visit: <https://PC2023.eventbrite.com.au> For more information, please contact Kate on 4979 1329 or [kate.crncevic@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:kate.crncevic@mn.catholic.org.au)

### **MIDDLE EAST EMERGENCY APPEAL**

Caritas Turkey and other Caritas agencies are responding to a series of powerful earthquakes in southeast Turkey and Syria, where thousands of lives have been lost already and the death toll increases by the hour.

Caritas Turkey are on the ground coordinating with local authorities and other organisations to see how they can best assist. Your generous support can help provide emergency relief to help families recover and rebuild from disaster. Visit [www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/turkey-and-syria-earthquake/](http://www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/turkey-and-syria-earthquake/) or call 1800 024 413 toll free to provide much needed support to the Middle East. by donating to our Middle East Emergency Appeal.



### **ART AND SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOP**

Creation of art provides an opportunity for a deepening awareness of oneself and the world, and can act as a catalyst for evoking the Spirit. Art is a means to see-to-research and find the living meaning of what it means to open the heart. Everyone has the ability to create art, but in order for it to be theological, the artist needs to explore ways that it makes sense of faith. Opening the heart through art involves making meaning through the creation, then reflecting on the art itself and the unfolding the moment-to-moment direct experience of the process.

This workshop will provide an opportunity to awaken the Spirit through the beauty of God's creation, prayer, and reflection. Participants will engage in art making experiences which will nourish their faith.

Date: Thursday 23 March, 9am-3pm Venue: Kilaben Bay Community Centre Cost: \$25 per person To register go to: [www.eventbrite.com.au/e/art-and-spirituality-workshop-march-2023-tickets-532521174167](http://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/art-and-spirituality-workshop-march-2023-tickets-532521174167)

### **SISTERS IN FAITH DINNER**

The Diocesan Ecumenical and Interfaith Council would like you to join us for our Sisters in Faith Dinner to mark International Women's Day. It's an opportunity for all women of faith to come together to form friendships.

Date: Wednesday 8 March Time: 6pm to 9pm Location: Victor Peters Suite, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West Cost: \$30 per person RSVP by: 1 March Registration is open now: [www.eventbrite.com.au/e/sisters-of-faith-dinner-tickets-513511305137](http://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/sisters-of-faith-dinner-tickets-513511305137)



### **POPE FRANCIS' PRAYER**

#### **INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY 2023**

We pray that parishes, placing communion at the centre, may increasingly become communities of faith, fraternity and welcome towards those most in need.

### **SUBSCRIBE TO THE DIOUPDATE**

Want to stay up-to-date with things happening across the Diocese? If you answered yes, you should sign up for the DioUpdate! It's a weekly newsletter full of inspiring stories, important news, and events happening across our Diocese. Sign up for it here: [www.mn.catholic.org.au/news-events/dio-update-enewsletter](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/news-events/dio-update-enewsletter)

### **IGNATIAN CAMINO: 15 SEPTEMBER TO 7 OCTOBER 2023**

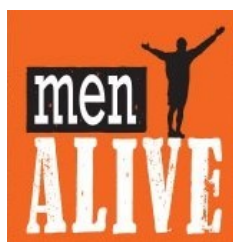
Walk the route taken in 1522 by Inigo Lopez de Loyola (who later became Saint Ignatius of Loyola). The camino will commence in Spain's Basque Country, and will conclude in the town of Manresa, near Barcelona. This 20-day pilgrimage will offer participants periods of silence, prayer, personal reflection, spiritual conversation, and sharing in small groups. Led by Michael Smith SJ, a Jesuit priest originally from New Zealand. Michael is a spiritual director, pastoral counsellor, and also teaches in the Master of Spiritual Direction at ACU.

Contact Michael at [michael.smith@acu.edu.au](mailto:michael.smith@acu.edu.au) to register your interest.



### **WORLD DAY OF PRAYER.**

Is held on the first Friday in March each year, people in over 170 countries, join in a service prepared by of a different country, to celebrate both unity in Christ and our diversity in culture. This year Bonnells Bay Salvation Army 188 Station St Bonnells Bay are hosting the World Day of Prayer Service on Friday March 3rd, 2023 at 10am The host country for 2023 is Taiwan.



### **menALIVE WEEKEND FOR MEN**

Real men don't do church? Wrong, but living out your faith can be pretty tough, and most of us need help. If you are a bloke over 18, consider this: On the 25 and 26 March, experienced leaders from the menALIVE team will be running a menALIVE weekend in Toronto for Catholic men.

Come along and be inspired, encouraged, and rediscover God's purpose for your life. Details and registration forms are available in the church foyer. The cost is \$50 per person, with lunch and dinner on Saturday provided. Enquiries, phone Phil McWilliam (0408 88 0408), Col Gwynne (0409 047 644), or Toronto Parish Office (4959 2777).

### **PRAYING THE GOSPELS**

You are invited to connect and pray with each other across the Diocese from your own home. God speaks to us through the words of the Gospel and then through artist's images of the Gospel message.

Join us each Wednesday 5.00 - 5.45pm.

Zoom link: <https://mncatholic.zoom.us/j/68191395109>

Password: 316071 For more information contact: [rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au)



### **SUPPORTING THE CLERGY / 1ST COLLECTION**

If you would like to make contributions to support the Clergy / 1st Collection please do so at Mass in the BLUE bucket or electronically using the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page, the Diocese App, Bank Account Name: CCF BSB: 062815 No: 00328161 Ref: 5016 1st Collection or set up a direct debit arrangement (contact the parish office for this).

### **SUPPORTING OUR PARISH / 2ND COLLECTION**

If you would like to make contributions to support our Parish please do so at Mass via the RED bucket or deposit directly into the Parish Account our details are: Account Name: CCF 96014 Morisset Parish BSB:062815 Account Number: 00328161 Ref: 5004 2nd Collection or 5004 PG and your Giver Number or Surname, or you can use the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page or the Diocese App. If you are considering taking up **planned giving** you may like to know that **a percentage of the contributions are tax deductible**. If you would like to know more on how planned giving works please contact the Parish Office.

### **WEEKEND ROSTERS**

		<u><b>THIS WEEK</b></u>	<u><b>NEXT WEEK</b></u>
<u><b>Presiders</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	Mass Mass	Mass Mass
<u><b>PROCLAIMERS:</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	L Hutchinson H White	M Shamley K Lendon
<u><b>PSALMIST:</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	U France M Shamley	H White J Vipan
<u><b>GIFTS</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Vipan Jo Patrick P Melvey A Dussin	P Melvey M Melvey H White P Herbert
<u><b>SERVERS</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Melvey J France	J France V Paulo
<u><b>AV</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	J France J Vipan	M Foo U France
<u><b>SOUND / VIDEO</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	L McArdle U France	L Hutchinson J France
<u><b>WELCOMERS</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Andersen TBA	TBA TBA
<u><b>COVID TEAM</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	P Herbert K Lendon A Walker G Walker	L Hutchinson P Robertson L McRae L McRae
<u><b>COVID CLEAN- ING</b></u>	5PM 9.30AM	All available Covid team members	All available Covid team members
<u><b>CHURCH CLEANING</b></u>	COOR MOR	XXXX R Hay C Hay	K Lendon A Walker G Walker

*The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding (ph: 4979 1390 or email: [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au)), or visit their website for further information ([www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)).*

### **UPCOMING FEAST DAYS MEMORIALS AND SOLEMNITIES**

SAINTS CYRIL AND METHODIUS— 14TH FEBRUARY  
ASH WEDNESDAY— 22ND FEBRUARY  
SAINT POLYCARP— 23RD FEBRUARY  
RITE OF ELECTION— 26TH FEBRUARY  
EMBER DAY— 3RD MARCH  
SAINTS PERPETUA AND FELICITY— 7TH MARCH  
SAINT PATRICK— 17TH MARCH  
SAINT JOSEPH— 19TH MARCH  
THE ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD— 25TH MARCH  
PALM SUNDAY— 2ND APRIL

### **Please pray for those who are sick, in hospital or recovering at home:**

Les Findley, Peter Martyn, Brian Grogan, Fiona McAlinden, Stephen McKay, June Purcell, Jeremy McMullen, Harry Goldman, Bernadette Martin, John Francisco, Joan Gillett, Bruce Gillett.

### **Please pray for those who have been called to eternal life may they always be in our prayers.**

**Remembrance:** Jack Chrissy and Ray Bransby



### **PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE BULLETIN**

If you would like the parish to pray for a family member who is sick, recently deceased or you would like remembered please call or email the parish office or complete a prayer card for each person and place in the mail box near the parish office door. Cards are available at the back of the church and at the Parish Office.

All prayer requests require permission from a family member or the person. Due to Australian privacy laws.

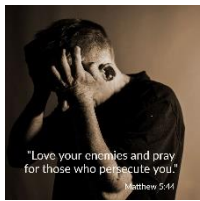
### **AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION**

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  
myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.



**Live stream Mass every Sunday at 9.30am at**  
[www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream)





**SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE**  
**Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time**  
**Year A**  
**Sunday 19 Feb 2023**

**The Introductory Rites**

**Acknowledgement of Country**

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Australia's First Peoples and the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we work and live. Our Parish of St John Vianney Morisset is located on the traditional lands of the Awabakal and Darkinjung people. We honour and pay respect to, Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the spiritual culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia.

**Project Compassion Sunday**

This weekend we celebrate **Project Compassion Sunday**. Project Compassion is Caritas Australia's annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal. During the six weeks of Project Compassion, millions of Australians come together in solidarity to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Project Compassion is built around the **theme of 'For All Future Generations'**. This theme asks us to reflect on the great **yes** that Mary said when the angel told her that she was to become the mother of Jesus. She freely accepted a unique place in the history of the human family. The great prayer she shared with her cousin Elizabeth, says 'all generations will call me blessed.' Her **yes** is 'for all future generations.'

**Supporting Project Compassion** is a way for us to proclaim the faith that is in our hearts and help our brothers and sisters in need.

**Project Compassion Prayer**

God of all generations,  
We thank you for those who have gone before us,  
Especially those who have cared for your earth and  
Who inspire us to help respect your creation  
And contribute to its healing.  
We thank you for those with whom we share our lives today,  
Especially those who work for justice and peace.  
May we welcome the opportunity that Lent brings  
to walk more closely with you,  
especially through fasting, almsgiving and prayer.  
We thank you for the challenge of the future.  
May the cross of Jesus remind us that only love finds the way  
forward.  
As we work with big hearts, may we join with Mary in her hope  
that from now on all generations will experience  
the great things you will do through us.  
We ask this in Jesus' name.  
Amen.

**Gathering**

The Lectionary/Roman Missal or a Bible may be placed  
on a table together with a candle and a cross.

**Sign of the Cross**

Leader:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All:

**Amen.**

**Greeting**

Leader:

Blessed be Jesus who makes us one,  
and strengthens us  
by the power of his Spirit.

All:

**Blessed be God forever.**

**Introductory Remarks**

Leader (in these or similar words):

Friends in Christ,  
although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day,  
we gather in God's name  
for when two or more come together  
God is always with us.  
We worship in union with the whole Church  
keeping this day of the Lord holy.

**Opening Rite**

**LITANY OF PRAISE**

Leader:

Before listening to the Word of God  
let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ.

A brief period of silence follows.

Leader:

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way of love: Lord, have  
mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, your Spirit is with us always: Christ, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you fill us with your gift of peace: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord, have mercy.**

Leader:

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

All:

**All: Amen.**

**Opening Prayer**

Leader:

Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

God of love  
you teach us to be kind to those we do not like  
for all people are your children.  
Help us to see the good in those we meet  
and may your peace always reign in our hearts.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever.

All:

**Amen.**

**The Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading**

**Lv 19:1-2. 17-18**

A reading from the book of Leviticus

*You must love your neighbour, as yourself.*

The Lord spoke to Moses; he said: 'Speak to the whole community of the sons of Israel and say to them: "Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

"You must not bear hatred for your brother in your heart. You must openly tell him, your neighbour, of his offence; this way you will not take a sin upon yourself. You must not exact vengeance, nor must you bear a grudge against the children of your people. You must love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord."

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 102:1-4. 8. 10. 12-13. R. v.8

(R.) The Lord is kind and merciful.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,  
all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings. (R.)
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the grave,  
who crowns you with love and compassion. (R.)
3. The Lord is compassion and love,  
slow to anger and rich in mercy.  
He does not treat us according to our sins  
nor repay us according to our faults. (R.)
4. As far as the east is from the west  
so far does he remove our sins.  
As a father has compassion on his sons,  
the Lord has pity on those who fear him. (R.)

### Second Reading

1 Cor 3:16-23

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

*All things are yours, but you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.*

Didn't you realise that you were God's temple and that the Spirit of God was living among you? If anybody should destroy the temple of God, God will destroy him, because the temple of God is sacred; and you are that temple.

Make no mistake about it: if any one of you thinks of himself as wise, in the ordinary sense of the word, then he must learn to be a fool before he really can be wise. Why? Because the wisdom of this world is foolishness to God. As scripture says: The Lord knows wise men's thoughts: he knows how useless they are, or again: God is not convinced by the arguments of the wise. So there is nothing to boast about in anything human: Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life and death, the present and the future, are all your servants; but you belong to Christ and Christ belongs to God.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

### Gospel

Reader:

From the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mt 5:38-48

*Love your enemies.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You have learnt how it was said: Eye for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you: offer the wicked

man no resistance. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well; if a man takes you to law and would have your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to anyone who asks, and if anyone wants to borrow, do not turn away.

'You have learnt how it was said: You must love your neighbour and hate your enemy. But I say this to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you; in this way you will be sons of your Father in heaven, for he causes his sun to rise on bad men as well as good, and his rain to fall on honest and dishonest men alike. For if you love those who love you, what right have you to claim any credit? Even the tax collectors do as much, do they not? And if you save your greetings for your brothers, are you doing anything exceptional? Even the pagans do as much, do they not? You must therefore be perfect just as your heavenly Father is perfect.'

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All are seated.

### Reflection on the Word

Q. In what ways is Jesus' teaching more complex than a simple lesson of revenge vs submission?

Q. What do you think may have happened to a person who acted on Jesus' teaching at the time?

Q. What aspects of today's gospel do you find most confronting/challenging?

Q. What aspects of the gospel passage do you find most comforting/reassuring?

### Profession of Faith

Leader:

In union with the whole Church  
let us profess our faith.

All:

**I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: Sisters and brothers, with faith in God's law let us bring our prayers before the Lord.

Reader: That the Holy Church, as the people of God, will seek for perfection in the eyes of Christ.

(pause)

In your mercy:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That hostile nations and races at war will set their differences aside in accordance with God's message of love.

(pause)

In your mercy:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That those who cause hurt through wrongdoing will find a contrite heart through Christ.

(pause)

In your mercy:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That our parish community will strive to live by God's law of love for all our neighbours.

(pause)

In your mercy:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That our support for Project Compassion will enable us to join Mary in saying yes to God's plan of justice for the whole human family.

(pause)

In your mercy:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That everyone who is sick will find healing and comfort in the Lord, especially those who are in our community and families .

(pause)

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That all who have died will live forever in God's perfect love, especially those who were members of our community and families.

(pause)

In your mercy:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: God our Father, your love for us is perfect. Hear our prayers and help us to overcome conflict with our neighbours and give us lasting faith in your law of perfect love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

**Leader:**

At the Saviour's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

**All:**

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.**

## The Concluding Rite

### Blessing

**Leader:**

May the Lord be with us, and protect us, now and for ever..

**All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.**

**All:**

**Amen.**

### Dismissal

**Leader:**

Let us go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

**All:**

**Thanks be to God.**

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## FAITH MATTERS: Shining Our Light through Story

The vision of the column 'Faith Matters' was born from the realisation we live our earthly existence as trinitarian beings, relationships are at the heart of our continual growth and development.

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It is through this deeper knowing and understanding of ourselves and the other, that can lead us to the transcendence and divine. Our human story unfolds along our journey and relationships carry us from the womb to tomb. When we share our story, we are given insight into one's life, this is truly a precious gift.

2023 may be the year that we take time to connect and reconnect, to listen and learn and hold these pearls of wisdom as we travel on our journey.

Our 2023 Diocesan Lent Reflection *Finding Light within the Darkness* provides the opportunity to share life experiences.

There is a sense of intensity that exists during the liturgical season of Lent. Unlike the joyous feeling in the waiting during Advent, we enter Lent with a different mindset. The word intense comes from the Latin *intendere*, meaning to stretch out for. We know that during this time we are reminded of hardship, suffering, and ultimately dying. It is an intense time, when we stretch ourselves, to pray more and intentionally give more to those in need. We also are conscious of the consumption that we need to fast from, for many this is a period of abstinence from whatever is taking hold of their life. It is most fitting that this season is at the start of the year as many people enter the new year with a range of things that they want to focus on or make changes to. Some may call this their new year's resolution. There is a desire to die to old ways and be reborn into a new way of thinking and living.

Lent invites us to listen with our heart and to really turn in, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively

turn out and focus on humanity. It can be hard to listen when our world will not stand still long enough to take a breath; our world is full of competing white noises that never turn off. It is difficult to feel free of the world's ongoing struggles that fill all spaces every day.

Lent provides us with a gift to make space, to recognise our breath and to focus on how we can be mindful of finding light within the darkness. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can bring forth light in our life and in the lives of those we encounter.

How can we be the listening ear and non-judgementally hear the stories of our brothers and sisters?

How can we be the one who respectfully acknowledges the other with a smile and greeting, to demonstrate their dignity and worth?

How can we find the light in the other just as Jesus did?

Jesus invites those who he encounters to see with a different lens, with fresh eyes to see the light that is sometimes hidden within the darkness.

Acknowledging story removes the light from under the basket and places it on the lampstand where it shines for everyone to see. We are influenced by stories, they can have an impact on our own lives.

This Lent you are encouraged to use the resource to reveal the mystery of God each week through the scriptures and in faith sharing. Through an examination of our Spiritual Foundations, individuals and groups may feel compelled to not only reflect on how these principles are currently lived out, but what can be done to bring about action and change in the future.

To access the Diocesan Lenten Reflection, *Finding Light Within the Darkness* go to <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/lent-2023/>

Each fortnight we would love to hear your stories of faith that are a living reality within your local and wider community. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you feel you have a story to share. [rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au)

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