

**CATHOLIC PARISH OF HEALESVILLE, INCORPORATING HEALESVILLE (ST BRIGID'S),
YARRA GLEN (ST ALOYSIUS) & MARYSVILLE (OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS)**



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FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT
(YEAR B) 14th MARCH 2021

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First reading: 2 Chronicles 36:14-16,19-23

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, 'Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation.'

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: 'Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in

Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up."'

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 136(137):1-6

R: Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat and wept,
remembering Zion;
on the poplars that grew there
we hung up our harps. R.

For it was there that they asked us,
our captors, for songs,
our oppressors, for joy.
'Sing to us,' they said,
'one of Zion's songs.' R.

O how could we sing
the song of the Lord
on alien soil?
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither! R.

O let my tongue
cleave to my mouth
if I remember you not,
if I prize not Jerusalem
above all my joys! R.

Second reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with

Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus. This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Gospel Acclamation: John 3:16

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,
that all who believe in him might have eternal life.

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel: John 3:14-21

Jesus said to Nicodemus: ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God’s only Son. On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

FROM FR FRANCIS

Laetare Sunday

“Rejoice O Jerusalem: and come together all you that love her: rejoice with joy, you that have been in sorrow.”

So begins the antiphon of the fourth Sunday of Lent, which gives today’s Mass its name: ‘*Laetare*’ – or ‘Rejoice’ – Sunday. As with *Gaudete* Sunday on the third week of Advent, *Laetare* Sunday marks a slight shift from the more sombre penitential focus of Lent with a ‘lightening’ of mood. We can rejoice as we edge nearer to the light of Easter. This is represented symbolically in the option of using rose coloured vestments, which are expressive of a this more joyful tone of the liturgy.

The entire human race is busily engaged in the search for joy, though surprisingly few seem to find it with any lasting success. If joy could be purchased in bottles in a store, I think they would struggle to keep up with the demand! Perhaps a good few do indeed seek joy from a bottle, but every bottle eventually runs dry. When we look for joy in finite things (food, drink, new tech, possessions, holidays, etc.) they often give us a little buzz of satisfaction, but it invariably wears off pretty quickly. This can feed an endless and futile cycle of joy-hunting in materialism.

King Louis XIV, the so-called ‘Sun-King’ on account of his resplendent court, built the vast Palace of Versailles, about 20km outside of Paris. What began as a hunting lodge became a palace on a scale never realised before, both in terms of its vastness and magnificence. Every detail of the palace was crafted with unbridled opulence, embellished with the very finest in tapestries, paintings, sculpture and furnishings. The gardens stretched out to a seemingly limitless horizon with every tree and hedge clipped into perfect formation, as a symbol of the King’s absolute power and indeed, his hubristic egoism! As the years went by Versailles continued to grow – more projects, more wings, more gardens. Yet with every project he accomplished King Louis found himself dissatisfied and looking for the next thing that would bring him that fleeting spark of joy. In the end the King felt so suffocated and overwhelmed by the vastness of his own

palace, that it filled him with anxiety, not peace. So he decided to build an escape. In a back corner of the parklands he built the Queen's hamlet. Unlike the stifling formalism of the Palace complex the Queen's hamlet was designed to resemble a tiny rustic village. The cottages had thatch rooves in which flowers were left to grow. The cottage gardens rambled and roamed with charming informality. And so it was that the richest, most powerful French King came to seek solace in imitating the life of charming simplicity of the rural peasant.

Those who imagine that joy can be purchased on Ebay or Amazon are setting themselves up for disappointment. God created us for eternal happiness – in a word, for Himself. As King Louis XIV discovered, no matter how much we acquire of the finite things of this world there is always something missing – something more that can be added. Ironically the Palace of Versailles is a testament to the King's twisted yearning for the infinite – for God. Only God is big enough to fill the void in every human heart. *Laetare* Sunday gives us an opportunity to ask ourselves: where do we go to find joy? Do we seek joy in things or in relationships? Do we truly believe that Jesus Christ is sufficient to bring us the happiness for which we were created? Lent is a great period of purification from worldly attachments, that serves to help us better unite ourselves to Christ, who alone can bring us everlasting joy. We open our hearts to receive that joy, peace and consolation from the Lord in this great season of grace.

Yours in Christ, Fr Francis Denton

OUR SUNDAY CUPPA IS BACK!!!



Please join us for our usual cuppa in the hall after Sunday Masses. Hope to see you there!

ANOINTING MASS – SAVE THE DATE

Thursday 25th March at 11 am followed by lunch in the hall. Please join us!



THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION IN LENT

Fr Francis will be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation for 30 minutes before Masses throughout Lent.

MASS TIMES AND LINKS THIS WEEK

Thursday 18th March, 10.30 am at Our Lady of the Snows, Marysville

Sunday 21st March, 8.30 am at St Brigid's
Link <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQND>

MASS TIMES FOR EASTER

We welcome Fr John O'Reilly who will be with us for the Easter ceremonies this year.

Trybooking links open 15th March. Please book online for each Easter ceremony if you can. Remember that visitors to the area will be booking too and numbers are still limited by Covid restrictions.

Mass of the Lord's Supper, Holy Thursday 1st April 2021, 7.30 pm, St Brigid's.

<https://www.trybooking.com/BPQOA>

Stations of the Cross, Good Friday, 10 am at St Aloysius, Yarra Glen.

<https://www.trybooking.com/BPQOW>

Celebration of the Lord's Passion, Good Friday, 3.00 pm, St Brigid's

<https://www.trybooking.com/BPQOY>

Easter Vigil, Holy Saturday, 7.30 pm, St Brigid's

<https://www.trybooking.com/BPQPE>

Easter Sunday Mass, 8.30 am, St Brigid's

<https://www.trybooking.com/BPQPH>

LENTEN PREPARATION GROUP

Fr Francis leads a Lenten reflection group via zoom every Thursday at 4:00pm during Lent.

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81469092109?pwd=_SFVLRy9lZXJ2WG5ZOUFmUFI3ZFFmQT09

Meeting ID: 814 6909 2109
Passcode: 734266

LENTEN RESOURCES – PARISH WEBSITE

Check the Parish website for Elissa's Lenten prayers and activities to do at home.

SOME THOUGHTS FROM DEBBIE

Lent is the perfect time for us to reconnect with the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and Fr Francis is making himself available as much as possible before Easter to encourage us to do so. Over the years I have come to recognise that many people are hesitant to come to Confession as they get stressed out about what to say or do, so I thought it might be useful to revisit how to go about receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Sacrament commences with **the Sign of the Cross**, a reminder for me that Jesus knows all about my suffering before I even open my mouth, and he gets it! I begin with the blank declaration "**Bless me Father, for I have sinned**". This is an important statement, I acknowledge that I have sinned, to God and to myself. I am laid bare, honestly open to the healing love of Jesus, just as those he met in the streets he walked were in need of that same healing love. "**It is 2 weeks/ 6 months/ years/ a reeeally long time since my last Confession.**" This statement helps Father to work out how to help me. Perhaps I may continue with words like "I would like to bring to God the things I know I don't do well...." or any other way of introducing what I would like to confess that happens to come to my mind. I round up my list of things I wish to confess with something like "**for these and all my sins I am sorry**". The words don't actually matter. My willingness to open my heart to God does. Father is always willing to help out if I just cannot find words to express what I want to share with God, and that can and should be anything that I am holding on to, no matter what it may be. Have you ever considered that it is actually appropriate to admit, for instance, that I may be struggling to feel sorrow for my actions, or to forgive someone else who has hurt me? Say the words! Honesty is the key here, God knows every secret thought that each of us has, we just may not know our own mind to the degree that he does! If I am struggling to forgive, or to handle any given situation, now is the time to lean on Father for some help to think with

the mind of Jesus. Exploring my conscience in the light of the Gospels, and in the light of my own individual circumstances, is one of the healing aspects of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Father and I discuss what is worrying me, or challenging me, or defeating me, and I am given a chance to physically say sorry to God for the things I do that I do not seem to manage well. At the conclusion of the discussion, **Father asks me to complete a penance**. This is a task that encourages me to do something physical, an action that makes reparation for my poor choices. Father would never ask anyone to make reparation in a way that would identify a sin! This is a really important part of maintaining the Seal of the Confessional. Father may simply ask for prayers for the person against whom I may have offended. (I don't know, I am guessing, as I would never ask anyone else what happened in their visit to Father!) More to the point, each situation and each conversation is totally unique and totally private. The Seal of the Confessional is a grave responsibility that comes with the honour of Priesthood.

Father then asks me to make an **Act of Contrition**. This is a prayer that expresses my sorrow, and should come straight from the heart. The 'right' words don't actually matter. Father will always help, but I can say the traditional prayer "Oh my God, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, for you are so good, and with your help I will try not to sin again". Father then prays the **Prayer of Absolution** "*...through the ministry of the Church I grant you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit*" and the **Sign of the Cross** is prayed again. The Prayer of Absolution stands as one of the prime reasons I give against the argument that 'I don't need to come to Confession, I say sorry to God in the privacy of my own heart'. We should each do that anyway, each and every day. But through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I physically say the words 'I am sorry', and I hear the words that say "you are forgiven". I am then free, liberated, to 'go in peace', with the assistance of the power of the Sacramental healing love of God accompanying me, as I head back, refreshed, to all of the struggles that daily life brings. What a gift.

COLLECTION TOTALS – THANK YOU!

St Brigid's Healesville, 28th Feb 21

Thanksgiving: \$494.35

Presbytery: \$194.90

St Aloysius, Yarra Glen 28th Feb 21

Thanksgiving: \$65.00

Yarra Glen Op Shop: \$2500

Our Lady of the Snows, Marysville 21st Jan

Thanksgiving: \$70.00

PROJECT COMPASSION – CARITAS

AUSTRALIA

Project Compassion boxes and envelopes are available in the church. You can watch video clips or read the stories that accompany Caritas' 2021 Lenten campaign, entitled 'Be More', on their website: <https://lent.caritas.org.au>

PARISH PRAYER LIST

WE PRAY FOR ALL WHO HAVE DIED

Brian Warton.

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK AND FOR THOSE WHO CARE FOR THEM

Babies Emmett, Noah Glen Christie, Tedi and

Santi; Roman, Blake Smith, Trish Leahy, John Snell, Abby Sharp, Peter Munro, Megan, Bernie Jansen, Andrew Sharp, John, Glenn, Lyn Francis, Dorothy Barber, Fiona, Annie Preuss, Michelle Ryan, Damian, John, Alison, Heather, Julie Bates, Garry Dettman, Bradley Jordan, Jeanette Henkel, Richard Galbraith, Debbie Huby, Geoff Lucas, Sandra Donkin, Dorothy Fraser, Glen, Fred Bullas, Fred Coullas, Evie Gleeson, Indy Dawes, RadeKrstic, Megan Williams, Michael Wood, Bill Howie, Jennie, Michael, Margo & Stephen Youngberry, Marie Hammond, John Mulholland, Rhiannon Days, Val Savitt, Ron Garland, Jaz Nueber, James Cooney, Robert, Mary & Gerard Bariola, Tilly Van der Zee, Lydia, Joyce Slattery, Lawrie Field, Annie, Bob Ireland, Val & Michael Christie, Ted & Peter Bowling, Natasha, Mia, James, Richard Adams, Mitchell & Wynn Wilson, Anne Bateman, Veronica Ireland, Wendy Turner (Ireland), Lauren, Brooke, Anthony, Laura Baosde Pinto, Michelle, Judy, Annette Fromholtz,

WE PRAY FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES ARE IN MARCH

Sr Nell Russell (03.03.16), Ronald Donchi (05.03.83), H. Weda (12.03.03), Rene Chandler (13.03.96), Helen Srafford, (16.03.08), Frank McDonald (12.03.04), John Doensen (17.03.17), Ziggy Nadolski (18/3/11), Claudio Latin (20.03.13), Mary Snell (22.03.12), Antionio Bariola (24.03.99), John Field (23.03.42), Mary Wood (23.03.03), Eva Jansen (2006), Erica Fries (2005), Mavis McKenzie (2006), Harry van de Ven, Susan Sosic (25.03.19)

