

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



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FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT
(YEAR B) 21ST FEBRUARY 2021

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Genesis 9:8-15

A reading from the book of Genesis

God spoke to Noah and his sons, 'See, I establish my Covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; also with every living creature to be found with you, birds, cattle and every wild beast with you: everything that came out of the ark, everything that lives on the earth. I establish my Covenant with you: nothing of flesh shall be swept away again by the waters of the flood. There shall be no flood to destroy the earth again.'

God said, 'Here is the sign of the Covenant I make between myself and you and every living creature with you for all generations: I set my bow in the clouds and it shall be a sign of the Covenant between me and the earth. When I gather the clouds over the earth and the bow appears in the clouds, I will recall the Covenant between myself and you and every living creature of every kind. And so the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all things of flesh.'

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

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 24:4-9

R. Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

Lord, make me know your ways.
Lord, teach me your paths.
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:
for you are God my saviour. **R.**

Remember your mercy, Lord,
and the love you have shown from of old.

In your love remember me,
because of your goodness, O Lord. **R.**

The Lord is good and upright.
He shows the path to those who stray,
he guides the humble in the right path;
he teaches his way to the poor. **R.**

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:18-22

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

Christ himself, innocent though he was, died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life, and, in the spirit, he went to preach to the spirits in prison. Now it was long ago, when Noah was still building that ark which saved only a small group of eight people 'by water', and when God was still waiting patiently, that these spirits refused to believe. That water is a type of the baptism which saves you now, and which is not the washing off of physical dirt but a pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered heaven and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels and Dominations and Powers his subjects.

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

Gospel Acclamation: Matthew 4:4

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of
endless glory!

No one lives on bread alone,
but on every word that comes from the mouth
of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of
endless glory!

Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

The Spirit drove Jesus out into the wilderness and he remained there for forty days, and was tempted by Satan. He was with the wild beasts, and the angels looked after him.

After John had been arrested, Jesus went into Galilee. There he proclaimed the Good News from God. 'The time has come' he said 'and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent, and believe the Good News.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

FROM FR FRANCIS

Our topsy-turvy week of lockdown has had the effect of depriving us of the Lenten starting line of Ash Wednesday, which has been a great disappointment for many. Hopefully the Victorian Government now has a large enough supply of garbage bags to place over the heads of those coming into hotel quarantine that this won't happen again...though I have my doubts. I suppose we are expected to be grateful that Masses weren't cancelled for this weekend, however I'm more inclined to question whether the health risk posed to the public justified shutting the state down in the first place. According to the *Financial Review* analysts have estimated the 5 day lock down cost Victorians "well north of \$1 billion" (Patrick Durkin, 'Victoria's Billion Dollar Lockdown set to end'; 16/2/2021). The human toll in terms of stress, inconvenience and the shattering of dreams is harder to put a figure on. How many weddings were cancelled over this weekend? How do these couples reschedule when most venues are now booked out 12 months in advance? How many weekend getaways, Valentine's Day dinners, birthday celebrations, baptisms, anniversaries, and other plans were obliterated for the sake of a potential outbreak of a virus that's so deadly you need to be tested to know whether you have it or not. Even the Australian Open wasn't spared: the game between Djokovic and Fritz was halted mid-match in order to eject the crowd at 11:15pm to ensure they were locked up safely at home, Cinderella-style, before the clock struck midnight. It's as

implausible as a fairy-tale, though it more closely resembles a Kafkaesque nightmare. Australians have tolerated a year of this treatment because, erring on the side of caution, we wanted to avoid the disaster of Spanish-flu proportions that was predicted.

On average 2885 Australians die of influenza/pneumonia every year (according to ABS), well in excess of the 909 COVID-related deaths in Australia. That number was grossly inflated on account of Dan Andrew's bungled handling of the quarantine - he can assume responsibility for 820 of those 909 deaths (over 90% of the Australian total). Influenza is a highly communicable disease statistically comparable to COVID19 in terms of fatality for those with comorbidities. We have never been accustomed to shutting down the State every flu season. Imagine if every time 13 cases of influenza were recorded the Premier put the state into spontaneous lockdown? Most normal people would recognise that this would be plainly insane. Human beings cannot live like this. Society as a whole cannot function like this. There is nothing normal about this "new normal." Hard questions need to be asked about whether this is a sustainable or remotely coherent system of "health care" considered in a wholistic sense, one that takes into account the mental health cost of shutdowns, the effect on children, families, communities and the economy, and one that accepts the painful reality of human mortality. No one should be compelled to take a medicine that is worse than the disease and that principle applies to the health of the nation. With the Victorian Government's hand remaining poised and trembling over the panic button how can Victorians be expected to get on with life? It has come to resemble a sick hostage situation that no longer seems to have anything to do with public health, and far more to do with the concentration of political power at the top and the subversion of the rights of the individual at the bottom. Those who wield the power to shut down a state seem to act with impunity because they will never be made to pay the price for the consequences of their decisions. Dan Andrews has the power to single-handedly plunge this state into economic depression and find the audacity to congratulate himself as the hero that saved Victoria from ruin.

When I reflect on how this whole disaster has unfolded, it is clear to me that this situation could only happen because we live in a world that considers bodily health and pleasure to be the supreme good. One can sense in our culture a paralysing terror of physical suffering and death, a fear that has been exploited by manipulative governments and an irresponsible media that thrives on hysteria. For those who have no belief in the immortality of the soul and the hope of eternal beatitude with God in heaven, perhaps this fear is understandable. People today live their lives as though this life is all there is. As Christians we need have no fear of death because we live not for this world, but for the life to come. Lent is a season of *mortification* in which (as the word suggests) we practice the Christian endeavour of ‘dying’ to ourselves. This means being able to let go of our lives so as to give of ourselves generously and selfless. We do so with confidence because Christ has gone before us in walking the path of self-denial and death, which opens up to the eternal Life of the Resurrection. And so St Paul can exclaim, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21), and elsewhere he taunts, “O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?” (1Cor 15:55). How starkly different is this attitude to the attitude of the world today?

This Lenten season invites us to rehearse and interiorise the whole Christian paradox of death and resurrection. With the spectre of death in the air it is perhaps an opportunity for us to examine ourselves: am I excessively attached to the things of this world? Do I seek eternal life with God in heaven more than the good things of this life? Does my fear of death betray a lack of faith and trust in God? These are searching questions that are impressed upon our minds with the ashes of Ash Wednesday: ‘Remember that you are dust and unto dust you shall return.’

Yours in Christ,

Fr Francis Denton

[**A LETTER FROM ARCHBISHOP PETER COMENSOLI**](#)

Tuesday 16 February, 2021

To the Laity, Religious and Clergy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne

Vaccine Program

Dear Friends,

It is welcome news that the first batches of the Pfizer vaccine have arrived in Australia. Soon the most vulnerable people in our country – our frontline workers and those at greatest risk – will receive their first dose against the COVID-19 virus. I will be grateful to receive a vaccination when my turn in the staged roll-out comes around. None of the vaccines are a cure for COVID-19, but indications are that they provide a significant measure of protection from the worst effects of the virus, for the time being. For the common good, it is appropriate that our governments work together to roll out a nationwide process of vaccination for all residents. Likewise, for the common good, everyone should respect the decisions of individuals who, for medical, safety or moral reasons, are not ready to receive a vaccination immediately. At this early stage in measuring the longer-term effectiveness and safety of each of the COVID19 vaccines, calls for a ‘No jab, no service’ policy would be unjust. The Catholic Bishops have already endorsed efforts to offer a vaccination as soon as possible to all who can safely receive one.

[**https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/a-letter-to-the-faithful-regarding-development-of-a-covid-19-vaccine/#more-8597**](https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/a-letter-to-the-faithful-regarding-development-of-a-covid-19-vaccine/#more-8597)

However, the Government has indicated that there is likely to be little, if any, choice as to which vaccine will be available to individuals in the shorter term. This means that you can receive any one of the three vaccines to be made available, without moral complicity in the processes of its development. On balance, it is a good thing to do. For anyone with health and safety concerns, please speak with your family doctor. For anyone with ethical questions, please read the statement issued by the Vatican or speak with your Pastor.

[**https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20201221_nota-vaccini-anticovid_en.html**](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20201221_nota-vaccini-anticovid_en.html)

I encourage the Australian government to do all it can to make a vaccine choice available to all residents in Australia as soon as possible, and offer the same care to our poorer

neighbouring countries. Please continue to pray for those impacted by this pandemic, and to work in whatever way you can to support your neighbour in need. The God of mercy and compassion is present to us all, through the tender heads, hearts and hands we offer to one another.

Yours sincerely in Christ

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli Archbishop of Melbourne

[OUR SUNDAY CUPPA IS BACK!!!](#)

Please join us for our usual cuppa in the hall after Sunday Masses. We need to use disposable cups and only one person can pour the drinks, but at least we are able to meet for a chat once again. Hope to see you there!

[LENTEN PREPARATION GROUP](#)

Fr Francis will be conducting a Lenten Preparation group by zoom **each Thursday during Lent at 4 pm**. Commences Thursday 11th Feb, the week before Lent begins, concludes Thursday 25th March. All welcome!

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81469092109?pwd=SFVLRy9lZXJ2WG5ZOUFmUFI3ZFmQT09>

Meeting ID: 814 6909 2109

Passcode: 734266

[LENTEN RESOURCES – PARISH WEBSITE](#)

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

[ON LINE LENTEN PROGRAM –PAROUSIA MEDIA](#)

"No Greater Love: A Biblical walk through Christ's Passion"

All parishioners are invited to join in this on-line Lenten Program presented by Parousia Media. It is free but you will need to register to access the study material.

<https://www.parousiamedia.com/study-groups/>

The first session commences on Thursday 25th February at 8:00pm. It runs every Thursday for 5 weeks, finishing on Thursday 25th March.

[MASS TIMES AND LINKS THIS WEEK](#)

Sunday 21st Feb, 8.30 am at St Brigid's

Link <https://www.trybooking.com/BPALU>

Sunday 21st Feb, 5.00 pm at St Aloysius Yarra Glen

Link <https://www.trybooking.com/BPAMJ>

Thursday 25th Feb, 9.15 am at St Brigid's

Sunday 28th Feb, 8.30 am at St Brigid's

Link <https://www.trybooking.com/BPALX>

[SOME THOUGHTS FROM DEBBIE](#)

One of the challenges we face in being human is the constant pull of contradictory forces.

Life goes from one big extreme to another. I enjoyed a few quiet minutes looking out over my garden last Tuesday, enjoying a cuppa and savouring early morning peace without having to get ready to run around, thanks to lockdown. I watched the family of Indian Minor birds that have been living over my wardrobe roof hop out of the nest and take off for adventures unknown. Fluffy and cute, I felt all gooey about watching them leave the nest, until Mr Google informed me that they had just taken off for parts unknown to become a lethal danger to native birds in our area. Sigh! Dinted from that news, I turned my attention to Pancake Tuesday, which could be enjoyed by the whole busy family this year in the leisurely confines of our own home. An unexpected further benefit of shutdown. Yay! And a kid who loves to cook (and eat pancakes) had nothing else to do for the moment! Double yay!! Yet, just to keep the moment real, I then began to process the fact that Lent was about to land on me, and that under the influence of that same shutdown, I have absolutely nowhere to run! (Cancel some of those yays!!) No excuses. Lockdown forced me to acknowledge that I need to make time, despite whatever else may be happening, to be deprived, or loaded up with ideas that will positively affect the life of someone else. I do have time to devote to prayer with actual words, I just need to

allocate it properly and appropriately. It's all down to me, no one else. Another sigh! Throughout Lent we discipline ourselves, in preparation for immeasurable Easter joy.

No way out but through, if we take it seriously. This wild swinging from one extreme to the other is the staple of being human. I could go on and on, but you can fill in the blanks with your own examples from here! The Gospel accounts of Jesus wandering alone in the desert, fasting and battling temptation, locked down for 40 days as it were, comes directly after the description of his Baptism, in which the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are revealed to mankind for the first time. Jesus heard his Father's voice, and saw the Holy Spirit descend as a dove with his human senses. Scripture then tells us that he was 'driven' into the desert. Immediately following his experience of the fullness of the Blessed Trinity, whatever that was for him and for him alone, Jesus catapults into total deprivation. As happens often throughout his ministry, Jesus experiences the heights and the depths of human experience, just as we do. No get out of jail free card, he lived life as we must. I wonder about what he must have been thinking as his ministry unfolded. I used to puzzle over Jesus telling those he cured to stay quiet about his miracles. As much as anything, Jesus must have had to be very practical. Too often for his comfort, those he healed bubbled over with excitement to let others know about their miraculous experiences. Jesus was forced out to lonely places to avoid the crowds that sought him out for whatever they could get from him. A line I heard in a recent on-line homily helped me make sense of this inconsistency. Jesus cured



the lepers who were rejected and shunned, they returned to full participation in society. Yet he was forced to isolation. He actually traded places with those he healed. This helped me to appreciate that Jesus really

does 'get' our pain. And our confusion. And our elation. The famous statue of the Pieta by Michaelangelo speaks volumes to me, especially in Lent. The artist's impression of our Blessed Mother holding Jesus in death has always wrenched my heart. So many in our world suffer unimaginably, without circuit breaks, no doubt leaving them wondering what life is all about. We wonder too, facing their trauma, and our own personal pain and challenges. The sorrow of mankind itself mirrors our Blessed Mother's grief. Mary held Jesus' body in her arms, her son, her God. His death was unthinkable, yet her faith was unshakable. We ask her to hold our hands throughout our Lenten journey, leading us ever closer to her beloved son. In her company, we face our challenges with joy and confidence, and with hope that extinguishes despair, the hope that shone through her heart, even to its darkest depths. The extreme conquered.

[HALL HIRE – UPDATE](#)

The hall is available for hire to groups or individuals who may wish to hold functions. (Covid restrictions apply). Please advertise this to anyone who might be interested.

A new group has taken up a permanent booking on Wednesday evenings throughout school terms. Please be aware of our commitment to them as paying customers. If you use the hall, please ensure that it is left tidy and clean and that Covid sanitising protocols are followed, including completing contact tracing sheets.

Please ensure that you let the office know if you regularly use the hall for your group so that we do not hire the hall to others in your timeslot.

[WHERE DO OUR COLLECTIONS GO?](#)

Staff are often asked where each of the collections is directed to. By way of clarification, if you place loose money on the plate at the first collection, it goes to the running expenses of the parish and any restoration work that we need to undertake. If you place loose money on the second collection it goes to Fr Francis for his living expenses, and a portion is sent to the Archdiocese of Melbourne to support retired Priests. Please do not hesitate to ring Sharon

on 0448 658 418 if you would like further clarification.



COLLECTION TOTALS – THANK YOU!

St Brigid's Healesville, 31st Jan 21
Thanksgiving: \$868.35

Presbytery: \$183.55
St Aloysius, Yarra Glen 24th Jan 21

Thanksgiving: \$858.35
Presbytery: \$82.00

Our Lady of the Snow, Marysville 21st Jan 21
Thanksgiving: \$48.00

PALMS AUSTRALIA: IS THIS FOR YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW??

(From the Archdiocese of Melbourne with encouragement and support from ABp Peter)



Palms Australia The needs are acute!
Reach Beyond Low-income

communities are not asking us for money or gifts. They reject degrading dependence. They want you to share your skills to help develop self-reliance and sustainable solutions to poverty. The call is to all trades and professions to assist build the ability of their people and the capacity of their organisations. To properly prepare for a 2022 placement you do need to [enquire now](#).

Find out more: Saturday 20
February, 10:00am at Ross House, Mezzanine
Room, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne. Or
email: palms.org.au



PROJECT COMPASSION – CARITAS AUSTRALIA

Project Compassion boxes will be available in the church this week. 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

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, Brian Warton.

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

Laurie Nairn (01.02.13), John Holland (08.02.11), Giobatta Mioni (09.02.49), John Doyle (09.02.17), Leonard Postlethwaite (10.02.09), George Shaddock (12.02.10), Zofia (Sonia) Howie (8.02.16), Dorothy Chan (13.02.07), Claire Keppel (16.02.94), Anton Wolke (20.02.07), Ian Read (22.02.08), Tubby Dennehy (23.02.03), Jan Rijs (23.02.08), Anne Huggett, Sr Joan McKenna (26.02.16), Patricia Chandler (28.02.92), Des Murphy (29.02.08), Roy Grieve (27.02.93), Fr Bernie Hammond