



Sunday 28th March 2021

Parish Priest: Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priests:** Fr. Tao Pham & Fr. Dixon George

Parish Pastoral Associates: Jacinta Bright & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

The Partnered Parishes of:

St. Mary's

204 Grimshaw St.,
Greensborough, 3088

Parish: 9435 1543

Email: Greensborough@cam.org.au

Website: www.cam.org.au/greensborough

Secretaries: Frances Olofsson & Sharon Prosser

Communications Officer: Denise Chang-Faux

Mass Times

Monday: Liturgy of the word 9.15am

Tuesday to Friday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Mass 8.30am & Vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday: Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 9.00am & 5.45pm

Parish School Principal

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**
principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au

Sacred Heart

25 Gipson Street,
Diamond Creek 3089

Parish: 9401 6361

Email: DiamondCreek@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek

Secretary: Pat Guatta

Mass Times

Wednesday & Friday: Mass 9.15am

Sunday: Mass 9.00am

Reconciliation Times

Friday: 9.45am to 10.15am

Parish School Principal

Mr. Jim O'Sullivan **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**
principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au

St. Thomas the Apostle

251 Diamond Creek Road,
Greensborough Nth 3088

Parish: 9434 7373

Email: greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth

Secretary: Lisa Leahy

Mass Times

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.00pm

Sunday: Mass 10.30am

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 9.30am to 10.00am

Parish School Principal

Mr David Delaney **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**
principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au

ROSTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND 3rd & 4th April

SACRED HEART 9.00am

Special Minister: **Easter Roster**

Reader:

ST THOMAS VIGIL 6.00pm & 10.30am

Special Minister 6.00pm: **Easter Roster**

Special Minister 10.30am: **Easter Roster**

6.00pm: Reader: Commentator: Set Up:

10.30am: Reader: Commentator: Set Up:

Counters: M. Loy, C. Bell, B. Klepp, P. Klepp

Cleaners: N. Mefflin, B. Murray (10th April)

Mass will still be recorded and uploaded onto our Websites

*******NO MASSES AT ST PETER'S UNTIL DISTANCE RESTRICTIONS ARE REMOVED*******

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners & friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Bridie Burke, Bernice Burke, Elaine Chapman, Miran Kasalo, Martin Leonard, Joan Moran, Catherin Leonard,
Tony Ledda, Sarah Drummond, Wimal Piyumsiri,

We pray for those who have died including and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of March
that they enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom

Les Ginnivan, Madeleine Blake, Laurence Dunn, John McGauran, Kath Glennen, Sydney Raymond, Michael Pase, Carl Troiano,
Rollo Jackson, Elizabeth Salm, Antonio Gallo, Kathleen Sheehan, Lina Bertuna, Bernadette O'Brien,
Bonnie Dickson, Ian Stephens, Jean McMahon, Patrick Coyle

COMMUNITY LIFE

SENIOR MOMENTS: Next meeting 7th April at 12.00pm at the Diamond Creek Hotel. Contact Margaret.

MORNING TEA VIA ZOOM: These Zoom catch ups for morning tea for members of our partnered parishes, have been such a great initiative. Now that we are venturing out and about, the need is not so great for us to be finding ways to see and speak with others. However, the group who has been gathering doesn't want it to simply stop, so we have decided to meet on the first Friday of each month at 10.30. This gives people who go to morning mass, time to get back home and settle in for morning tea. This is a great way to get together with old friends and meet new people.

If you are interested please contact Jacinta Bright at Jacinta.bright@cam.org.au or call the parish office at St Mary's on 9435 1543. **MORING TEA DATE FOR APRIL WILL BE ON FRIDAY THE 9TH APRIL.**

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: We wish to advise all community groups that should you wish to have an event listed in our Weekly Newsletter the deadline is the 2.00pm on the Wednesday prior. Should you have any queries please contact Lisa in the Parish Office.



St VINCENT de PAUL DIAMOND CREEK CONFERENCE

The Diamond Creek Conference requires someone to take on the treasurer's position, as our current member has retired from the role. The person will be supported by the group and is not entitled to attend visitation if they choose not too. All the information will be provided of what is required in the role. If anyone is interested can they please contact myself - Ray Belli on 0413 185 722.



WORSHIP & PRAYER

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK WITHIN OUR PARISHES: It is time again to update those who we have been praying for within our Parishes. If you wish to have anyone added to the prayer list could you please notify Pat **9401 6361** or Lisa **9434 7373** or email greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au

St MARY'S PARISH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Members of our Partnered Parishes are invited to attend St Mary's Parish Annual General Meeting at 11.30am - 1.00pm on Sunday 28 March in St Mary's Church.

We look forward to a great meeting to understand what is happening across St Mary's Parish hearing key Parish leaders speaking briefly to their reports and address questions. Booking to attend is needed on <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQIH> or from the front page of St Mary's Parish website.

There will also be an important presentation about Safeguarding of Children and Young People across the Partnered Parishes updating us on this vital area of responsibility and the implications for all parishioners and Parish groups.

Reports submitted for the AGM are available on the front page of St Mary's website (www.cam1.org.au/greensborough) under the heading "PARISH LINKS" and some printed copies are available in the Church Gathering Space. Please consider the environment and read online.



For over half a century, generations of Australians have participated in Project Compassion, making it one of the nation's longest running charity campaigns.

Throughout five decades of natural disasters, conflicts and crises, Caritas Australia has worked alongside vulnerable communities with the generous support of Australians. Project Compassion has also helped with access to education, health services, agricultural training and through programs that reduce maternal and infant mortality.

This year, we have presented five stories from people striving to 'Be More' – just a few amongst the millions who have been helped through Project Compassion.

As we celebrate this Australian icon, we would like to thank generations of supporters nationwide for their generosity, which allows us to move forward with lifesaving strategies to tackle new challenges.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2021 to help continue empowering vulnerable communities around the world lift themselves and their communities out of poverty.

You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.

EXPLANATION OF COLLECTIONS

In every Parish, there are two collections and two separate accounts,

The Presbytery collection/account (1st coll.) provides the pastoral stipend and living costs of the Priest.

The Church collection/account (2nd coll.) provides for the maintenance, office and staff expenses of the Parish.

LENTEN THEME 2021– ‘God has come near’

Lent is the liturgical season for prayer, reflection and contrition for any wrongdoing we have made in our lives as we prepare for the joyous season of Easter. The theme for Lent 2021 has been taken from the Gospel of Mark. In chapter 1, Jesus came into Galilee after spending 40 days in the wilderness being tempted by Satan, and there He uttered His first words in public ministry:

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near; repent and believe in the gospel.”

The world has experienced a great upheaval because of the coronavirus which has shaken our sense of certainty and expectations of the future; all of our lives have been disrupted and changed; our livelihoods may have been adversely affected, our health and those we love may have been compromised; we may have suffered loss and grief, periods of time filled with fear, anxiety and uncertainty; we may have been challenged to find hope and peace in our lives. This theme reaches out of each of us, to remind us that God is always with us, offering us a way back from the wilderness into God’s love and care and a way to live, through the teachings of Jesus in the Gospel. Let us embrace God and each other and allow the love and peace of God to fill our hearts.

LENTEN WEEKLY REFLECTION.

Week 6 God is near

Today is the sixth weekend of Lent and we pause and reflect.

On Palm Sunday we remember Jesus entering Jerusalem, moving towards His passion, death and resurrection. God is near and we draw close and pray:

Psalm 33:20-22 We wait in hope for the Lord; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

FAITH CIRCLES

Parishioners from the partnered parishes of Sacred Heart, St Mary’s and St Thomas are invited to join Faith Circles, a simple but powerful program which centres on reflections on Gospel readings. The aim of the Faith Circles program is to provide opportunities for this reflection in small groups of approximately 6-10 people. Participants are able to think about how the reading relates to their own lives, to discuss the teaching that Jesus was sharing with us and so grow in their own faith, in a safe and welcoming environment. Typically a session will run for approximately an hour. A small group met Tuesday evenings last year via Zoom and found the experience to be very positive and enriching, as members of a parish and for personal growth in faith. However the group may decide to meet fortnightly or monthly or for particular times of the year such as Advent and Lent, as suits the group.

To express your interest or to seek further information, please contact Cathy O’Brien (St Thomas Parish) by 7 April 2021:



EASTER SERVICES

INDIVIDUAL RECONCILIATION.

St Thomas: 27/03 9.30am-10.15am

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

St Mary’s: 11.00am <https://www.trybooking.com/BPWYP>

HOLY THURSDAY

Sacred Heart: 7.30pm <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQJY>

St Mary’s: 7.30pm <https://www.trybooking.com/BPWYN>

GOOD FRIDAY 3.00pm

Sacred Heart: <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQKF>

St Thomas: <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQOI>

St Mary’s: <https://www.trybooking.com/BPWYQ>

VIGIL MASS

St Thomas: 7.30pm <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQOU>

St Mary’s: 6.30pm <https://www.trybooking.com/BPWYQ>

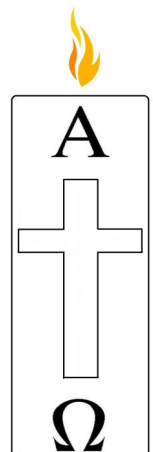
EASTER SUNDAY

Sacred Heart: 9.00am <https://www.trybooking.com/BPORQ>

St Thomas: 10.30am <https://www.trybooking.com/BPQOX>

St Mary’s: 8.00am <https://www.trybooking.com/BPWYS>

10.00am <https://www.trybooking.com/BPWYT> **NO 5.00PM MASS**



Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord, Year B

28 March 2021

Gospel Mk 11:1-10

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

When they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two of his disciples, and said to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat; untie it and bring it. If anyone says to you, "Why are you doing this?" say, "The Lord has need of it and will send it back here immediately"'. And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door out in the open street; and they untied it. And those who stood there said to them, 'What are you doing, untying the colt?' And they told them what Jesus had said; and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their garments on it; and he sat upon it. And many spread their garments on the road, and others spread leafy branches which they had cut from the fields. And those who went before and those who followed cried out, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming! Hosanna in the highest!'

or Gospel Jn 12:12-16

A great crowd who had come to the feast heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem. So they took branches of palm trees and went out to meet him, crying, 'Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, the king of Israel!' And Jesus found a young ass and sat upon it; as is written: 'Fear not, daughter Zion; behold, your king is coming, sitting on an ass's colt!' His disciples did not understand this at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that this had been written of him and had been done to him.

First Reading Is 50:4-7

I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 21:8-9. 17-20. 23-24. R. v.2

(R.) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

1. All who see me deride me.
They curl their lips, they toss their heads.
'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him;
let him release him if this is his friend.' (R.)
2. Many dogs have surrounded me,
a band of the wicked beset me.

They tear holes in my hands and my feet.
I can count every one of my bones. (R.)

3. They divide my clothing among them.
They cast lots for my robe.
O Lord, do not leave me alone,
my strength, make haste to help me! (R.)
4. I will tell of your name to my brethren
and praise you where they are assembled.
'You who fear the Lord give him praise;
all sons of Jacob, give him glory.
Revere him, Israel's sons.' (R.)

Second Reading Phil 2:6-11

He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Gospel Acclamation Phil 2:8-9

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

Christ became obedient for us even to death dying on the cross.

Therefore God raised him on high

and gave him a name above all other names.

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

Gospel Mk 14:1-15:47

N It was two days before the Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread, and the chief priests and scribes were looking for a way to arrest Jesus by some trick and have him put to death. For they said,

C It must not be during the festivities, or there will be a disturbance among the people.

N Jesus was at Bethany in the house of Simon the leper; he was at dinner when a woman came in with an alabaster jar of very costly ointment, pure nard. She broke the jar and poured the ointment on his head. Some who were there said to one another indignantly,

C Why this waste of ointment? Ointment like this could have been sold for over three hundred denarii and the money given to the poor;

N and they were angry with her. But Jesus said,

J Leave her alone. Why are you upsetting her? What she has done for me is one of the good works. You have the poor with you always and you can be kind to them whenever you wish, but you will not always have me. She has done what was in her power to do; she has anointed my body beforehand for its burial. I tell you solemnly, wherever throughout all the world the Good News is proclaimed, what she has done will be told also, in remembrance of her.

N Judas Iscariot, one of the Twelve, approached the chief priests with an offer to hand Jesus over to them. They were delighted to hear it, and promised to give him money; and he looked for a way of betraying him when the opportunity should occur.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb was sacrificed, his disciples said to him,

C Where do you want us to go and make the preparations for you to eat the Passover?

N So he sent two of his disciples, saying to them,

J Go into the city and you will meet a man carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him, and say to the owner of the house which he enters, 'The Master says: Where is my dining room in which I can eat the Passover with my disciples?' He will show you a large upper room furnished with couches, all prepared. Make the preparations for us there.

N The disciples set out and went to the city and found everything as he had told them, and prepared the Passover.

When evening came he arrived with the Twelve. And while they were at table eating, Jesus said,

J I tell you solemnly, one of you is about to betray me, one of you eating with me.

N They were distressed and asked him, one after another,

O Not I, surely?

N He said to them,

J It is one of the Twelve, one who is dipping into the same dish with me. Yes, the Son of Man is going to his fate, as the scriptures say he will, but alas for that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! Better for that man if he had never been born!

N And as they were eating he took some bread, and when he had said the blessing he broke it and gave it to them saying,

J Take it; this is my body.

N Then he took a cup, and when he had returned thanks he gave it to them, and all drank from it, and he said to them,

J This is my blood, the blood of the covenant, which is to be poured out for many. I tell you solemnly, I shall not drink any more wine until the day I drink the new wine in the kingdom of God.

N After the psalms had been sung they left for the Mount of Olives. And Jesus said to them,

J You will all lose faith, for the scripture says, 'I shall strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered.' However after my resurrection I shall go before you to Galilee.

N Peter said,

O Even if all lose faith, I will not.

N And Jesus said to him,

J I tell you solemnly, this day, this very night, before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.

N But he repeated still more earnestly,

O If I have to die with you, I will never disown you.

N And they all said the same.

They came to a small estate called Gethsemane, and Jesus said to his disciples,

J Stay here while I pray.

N Then he took Peter and James and John with him. And a sudden fear came over him, and great distress. And he said to them,

J My soul is sorrowful to the point of death. Wait here, and keep awake.

N And going on a little further he threw himself on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass him by. He said,

J Abba (Father)! Everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it.

N He came back and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter,

J Simon, are you asleep? Had you not the strength to keep awake for one hour? You should be awake, and praying not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.

N Again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came back and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy; and they could find no answer for him. He came back a third time and said to them,

J You can sleep on now and take your rest. It is all over. The hour has come. Now the Son of Man is to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up! Let us go! My betrayer is close at hand already.

N Even while he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, came up with a number of men armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief

priests and the scribes and the elders. Now the traitor had arranged a signal with them. He had said,

O 'The one I kiss, he is the man. Take him in charge, and see he is well guarded when you lead him away.'

N So when the traitor came, he went straight up to Jesus and said,

O Rabbi!

N and kissed him. The others seized him and took him in charge. Then one of the bystanders drew his sword and struck out at the high priest's servant, and cut off his ear.

Then Jesus spoke,

J Am I a brigand that you had to set out to capture me with swords and clubs? I was among you teaching in the Temple day after day and you never laid hands on me. But this is to fulfil the scriptures.

N And they all deserted him and ran away. A young man who followed him had nothing on but a linen cloth. They caught hold of him, but he left the cloth in their hands and ran away naked.

They led Jesus off to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes assembled there. Peter had followed him at a distance, right into the high priest's palace, and was sitting with the attendants warming himself at the fire.

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for evidence against Jesus on which they might pass the death sentence. But they could not find any. Several, indeed, brought false evidence against him, but their evidence was conflicting. Some stood up and submitted this false evidence against him,

C We heard him say, 'I am going to destroy this Temple made by human hands, and in three days build another, not made by human hands.'

N But even on this point their evidence was conflicting. The high priest then stood up before the whole assembly and put this question to Jesus,

O Have you no answer to that? What is this evidence these men are bringing against you?

N But he was silent and made no answer at all. The high priest put a second question to him,

O Are you the Christ the Son of the Blessed One?

N Jesus said,

J I am, and you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Power and coming with the clouds of heaven.

N The high priest tore his robes, and said,

O What need of witnesses have we now? You heard the blasphemy. What is your finding?

N And they all gave their verdict: he deserved to die.

Some of them started spitting at him and, blindfolding him, began hitting him with their fists and shouting,

C Play the prophet!

N And the attendants rained blows on him.

While Peter was down below in the courtyard, one of the high-priest's servant-girls came up. She saw Peter warming himself there, stared at him and said,

O You too were with Jesus, the man from Nazareth.

N But he denied it, saying

O I do not know, I do not understand what you are talking about.

N And he went out into the forecourt. The servant-girl saw him and again started telling the bystanders,

O This fellow is one of them.

N But he again denied it. A little later the bystanders themselves said to Peter,

C You are one of them for sure! Why, you are a Galilean.

N But he started calling curses on himself and swearing,

O I do not know the man you speak of.

N At that moment the cock crew for the second time, and Peter recalled how Jesus had said to him, 'Before the cock crows twice, you will have disowned me three times.' And he burst into tears.

First thing in the morning, the chief priest together with the elders and scribes, in short the whole Sanhedrin, had their plan ready. They had Jesus bound and took him away and handed him over to Pilate.

Pilate questioned him,

O Are you the king of the Jews?

N He answered,

J It is you who say it.

N And the chief priests brought many accusations against him. Pilate questioned him again,

O Have you no reply at all? See how many accusations they are bringing against you!

N But to Pilate's amazement, Jesus made no further reply.

At festival time Pilate used to release a prisoner for them, anyone they asked for. Now a man called Barabbas was then in prison with the rioters who

had committed murder during the uprising. When the crowds went up and began to ask Pilate the customary favour, Pilate answered them,

O Do you want me to release for you the king of the Jews?

N For he realised it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed Jesus over. The chief priests, however, had incited the crowd to demand that he should release Barabbas for them instead. Then Pilate spoke again.

O But in that case, what am I to do with the man you call king of the Jews?

N They shouted back.

C Crucify him!

N Pilate asked them,

O Why? What harm has he done?

N But they shouted all the louder,

C Crucify him!

N So Pilate, anxious to placate the crowd, released Barabbas for them and having ordered Jesus to be scourged, handed him over to be crucified.

The soldiers led him away to the inner part of the palace, that is, the Praetorium, and called the whole cohort together. They dressed him up in purple, twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on him. And they began saluting him,

C Hail, king of the Jews!

N They struck his head with a reed and spat on him; and they went down on their knees to do him homage. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the purple and dressed him in his own clothes.

They led him out to crucify him. They enlisted a passer-by, Simon of Cyrene, father of Alexander and Rufus, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross. They brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha, which means the place of the skull.

They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he refused it. Then they crucified him, and shared out his clothing, casting lots to decide what each should get. It was the third hour when they crucified him. The inscription giving the charge against him read: 'The king of the Jews.' And they crucified two robbers with him, one on his right and one on his left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their hands and said,

C Aha! So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself: come down from the cross!

N The chief priests and the scribes mocked him among themselves in the same way. They said,

C He saved others, he cannot save himself. Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down from the cross now, for us to see it and believe.

N Even those who were crucified with him taunted him.

When the sixth hour came there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried out in a loud voice,

J Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?

N This means, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood by heard this, they said,

C Listen he is calling on Elijah.

N Someone ran and soaked a sponge in vinegar and, putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink, saying,

O Wait and see if Elijah will come to take him down.

N But Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last.

All kneel and pause a moment.

And the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The centurion, who was standing in front of him, had seen how he died, and he said,

O In truth this man was a son of God.

N There were some women watching from a distance. Among them were Mary of Magdala, Mary who was the mother of James the younger, and Joset, and Salome. These used to follow him and look after him when he was in Galilee. And there were many other women there who had come up to Jerusalem with him.

It was now evening, and since it was Preparation day (that is the vigil of the Sabbath), there came Joseph of Arimathaea, a prominent member of the Council, who himself lived in hope of seeing the kingdom of God, and he boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate, astonished that he should have died so soon, summoned the centurion and enquired if he was already dead. Having been assured of this by the centurion, he granted the corpse to Joseph who brought a shroud, took Jesus down from the cross, wrapped him in the shroud and laid him in a tomb which had been hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a stone against the entrance of the tomb. Mary of Magdala and Mary the mother of Joset were watching and took note of where he was laid.



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Jesus entered Jerusalem, not as a warrior in the tradition of King David as many had hoped for, but riding simply on a donkey. The disciples and the crowd applauded him, but they proved fickle in their support.

On the other hand, Jesus remained steadfast in his commitment to *non-violent* revolutionary change of the religious and political systems so as to establish the reign of God. Why did he renounce marshalling human and angelic warriors to further his cause?

First, Jesus embodied God-for-us, and God does not want the destruction of those he has created out of love. Second, Jesus had a premonition that an armed revolt would lead to the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersal of the Jewish people (as occurred in 70AD).

Third, another Gospel (Luke) recounts that as Jesus laboured up Mount Calvary he turned to some wailing women and said, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, weep rather for yourselves and for your children.' He knew that they suffer grievously in armed uprising. This is seen in barbaric reality in our own time with women being tortured and raped in campaigns of terror, trafficked into sexual slavery, suffering the loss of sons, husband and lovers.

We could take a moment to pray that the Church of the 21st century, successor of the pacifist Church of the first three centuries, may enter on a new period of reflection on these issues, grappling with the desire to protect the innocent, yet always challenged by the man on a donkey, Divine Prince of Peace.

mtate@bigpond.com

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