*St. Theresa’s Parish Community Newsletter*



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Principal: Rob Macklin

Mother of God Primary School - 93631734

Blanche St., Ardeer 3022

Principal: Assunta Iacovino

*“Do Small Things Well”*

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PALM SUNDAY Year B 23 & 24 March 2024

EASTER CEREMONIES

Holy Thursday, 28th March

7.00pm - Mother of God (Polish) Mass of the Lord's Supper

7.00pm - Queen of Heaven Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday, 29th March

10.30am - Queen of Heaven to Mother of God Stations of the Cross

3.00pm - Mother of God Solemn Ceremonies

5.00pm - Mother of God (Polish) Solemn Ceremonies

Saturday, 30th March

12.00noon - Mother of God (Polish) Blessing of Food

5.00pm - Mother of God (Polish) Vigil Mass

7.00pm - St Theresa's Vigil Mass

Easter Sunday, 31st March

9.00am - Queen of Heaven Mass

10.15am - Mother of God (Polish) Mass

10.30am - St Theresa's Mass

Easter Monday, 1st April

9.00am - Mother of God (Polish) Mass

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| MASSES THIS WEEK  ST THERESA’S  Drummartin St, Albion  10.30am Sunday  MOTHER OF GOD  Blanche St, Ardeer  10.00am Wednesday (Pol)  10.15am Sunday (Polish)  QUEEN OF HEAVEN  Holt St, Ardeer  8.00am Wednesday  9.00am Sunday |  | CHRIST’S CATHOLIC COMMUNITY  Prayer Group meets every Thursday, 7.00 - 8.30pm, at Queen of Heaven Church. All are welcome  COLLECTIONS RECEIVED  Thanksgiving $613 Loose Money $317 Presbytery $502  COUNTERS 31st March  Team 1: D Catania, E Catania, C Xuereb  FEAST DAYS The Annunciation of the Lord, 25 March  READINGS Today Next Week  Isaiah 50.4-7 Acts 10.34a,36-43++  Ps 22.7-8,16-17,18-19,22-23 (R.1) Ps 118.1-2,16-17,22-23 (R24)  Philippians 2.6-11 Colossians 3.1-4  Mark 14.1 – 15.47 John 20.1-18++ |

PARISH MOVIE MORNING Is back on Monday 25th March, meet at 'Sunshine Village Cinema', $10 entry, movie to be decided on the morning, enquiries Ann-Maree 0401 192 079

QUALIFIED ELECTRICIAN NEEDED For paid work to check switchboards, smoke detectors tag and test within the Parish buildings, please contact Parish Office on 9311 3091

Project Compassion

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| As Project Compassion 2024 comes to an end, we want to thank you for your incredibly generous support throughout Lent.  This year, we shared with you the story of three inspiring women from across the globe, who overcame challenges to complete their education, access water and find secure employment. With the support of compassionate people like you, they are now forging a path to a better future for their families and their communities.  There is still time to donate! Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, for all future generations. |

Sunday Reflection 24 Mar 2024 Palm Sunday

Philippians 2:6-11; Mark 14:1-15:47

My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?

Mark’s Gospel provides us with the first written account of the Passion and provides the basic shape for the other evangelists to follow. What is distinctive in Mark’s interpretation is the emphasis given to Jesus’ suffering and sense of abandonment. Mark’s account expresses what Paul describes in his letter to the Philippians, the full self-emptying of Jesus in death. Many Christians, when asked about the death of Jesus tell the story combining many aspects from the four Gospels without being aware that each Gospel is quite different. The basic story stays the same – arrest, trial, crucifixion, and death, burial – but the details are different and it is in the details that each evangelist’s focus becomes clear.

For Mark, Jesus’ passion is also about his disciples and their failure. The only disciple who is commended is the woman who anoints Jesus. Peter fails, in spite of his profession to remain faithful. The disciples all sleep during Jesus’ distress in Gethsemane, then they all desert him. During Jesus’ trial, when asked if he is the Christ, Jesus replies to his accusers, ‘I am.’ This declaration is the Greek equivalent of Israel’s name of God, YHWH – I AM. Simultaneously Peter is denying his identity as a disciple. In Mark there are no male disciples at the cross, just some women who keep watch.

Mark’s Gospel is being written around the year 70 CE. It is a time of great turbulence and the small Christian community in Rome is under threat. Since the year 64 CE the emperor Nero had begun a wave of persecution of Christians, and in the year 70 Roman armies finally captured and destroyed Jerusalem. It is a time when the faith of believers is being tested. They might well feel that God has abandoned them.

Mark depicts a Jesus who also experiences suffering, anguish, the sense of abandonment by God and even death. Jesus, in Mark's gospel, is no super-hero, but a vulnerable human being, victim to the power of the Empire, the dismay of human friends who abandon him in his hour of need, and even the apparent silence of God. Jesus knows human suffering. This is a Jesus whom Mark’s community can identify with. The disciples also are presented as weak and frightened followers of Jesus. Again, Mark’s community could identify with these failing men and women.

The good news is that in spite of God’s apparent absence on Friday, God does keep faith with Jesus, and Jesus keeps faith with disciples, even disciples who fail. In fact, in Mark, it seems that failure is one of the necessary credentials for being a disciple.

When Jesus cries out with the words of the Psalm 21, ‘My God, my God, why have you abandoned me,’ he hears no answer. God is silent. The heavens stay closed and darkness covers the earth. Mark’s Gospel presents the crucifixion as the apparent triumph of evil over good. Jesus is mocked by some and tortured by others. If Jesus dies, the Gospel seems to say, there is no God.

As Christians, we know that this is not the end of the story, but it would be wrong to hurry through this week and not enter into this dark and fearful place of abandonment. Many of us know this place. At some time in our life we too have voiced this cry of Jesus and found the heavens silent. This week we are to bring the memory of these times into our prayer with God. For in spite of appearances, in spite of the silence, God is here.

Jesus prays from his ‘heart of darkness’. He speaks out his anguish to his God with words of protest and lament. In his prayer he draws to himself all who protest and lament, all who suffer unjustly, all who die abandoned and reviled.

Pray this cry of Jesus during this week. Let his cry become your cry and his surrender be your surrender.

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*St Theresa’s Parish is committed to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults*