



ST JOSEPH'S MALVERN *stepping out in faith and trust*

UNDER THE CARE OF THE VINCENTIAN COMMUNITY

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PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD YEAR A 5th April 2020

GOSPEL:

The passion of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Matthew

Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, the governor, and the governor put to him this question, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' Jesus replied, 'It is you who say it.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him, 'Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?' But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges.

At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?' For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.

Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message, 'Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him.'

The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the



ST JOSEPH'S IS A CHILD SAFE PARISH

At St Joseph's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our parish.

crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' they said 'Barabbas'. 'But in that case,' Pilate said to them 'what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Let him be crucified!' 'Why?' he asked 'What harm has he done?' But they shouted all the louder, 'Let him be crucified!' Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said, 'I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.' And the people, to a man, shouted back, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified.

The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort around him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him.

On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him.

Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said 'So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!' The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way. 'He saved others,' they said 'he cannot save himself. He is the king of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He put his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, "I am the son of God."' Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way.

From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said, 'The man is calling on Elijah,' and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. 'Wait!' said the rest of them 'and see if Elijah will come to save him.' But Jesus again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people. Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said, 'In truth this was a son of God.'

FR ALAN'S REFLECTIONS

PALM SUNDAY

Loving our neighbour

In the Parable of the Good Samaritan we are told about love for one's neighbour. It is about loving your enemies. It is about loving someone who is sub-human. It is about loving someone you can't stand. It is about loving someone who is against all you believe in.

In this Sunday's Reading of the Passion we listen to how Jesus broke bread and shared wine with those who would ultimately betray, disown and desert him. One can only imagine how Jesus must have felt in that moment given that he was fully human like all of us. In the face of all this Jesus drew everyone together to share a meal as a sign of unity and that he loved them just the same. It demonstrated his determination to serve others until the end. He is the epitome of what it means to love our neighbour. We are also reminded that to love our neighbour in the same way as Jesus, there is a cross involved.

This stance by Jesus represents a call from God to love our neighbours in two concrete ways.

Firstly, to love those we might otherwise consider to be unlovable. The questions we may wish to consider are: would I be prepared to help those who insulted me recently? Would I be prepared to help someone who I know had lied about me?

Secondly, to keep seeking opportunities of how we might help others and be kind to them. During this current time of fear and uncertainty it is easy to be short with people, to yell at them, or to dismiss them because we feel we are being taken advantage of. Making decisions to love our neighbour and helping them means that they not only feel better, but we do it because it takes our minds off the problems we are experiencing even if it is just for a little while. Could now be an opportunity to reach out and telephone someone who is feeling lonely or isolated? Could we love our neighbour by doing their shopping for them because they find it difficult to go themselves and they have no family members nearby to help them?

In addition, the people that we love are also feeling stressed about their jobs and are feeling alone as a result of this. Can we check in with them regularly by phone or online communication just to see how they are doing?

There are going to be people in the coming months in financial need. I particularly think about those in the hospitality sector, those who work in restaurants and cafes, professional musicians, health workers, those who work in the fitness and entertainment industries and those who serve in the not for profit sectors. These are all problems that the Church cannot completely solve but is there something we can do as Church to help the situation?

Generosity is doing more than what is required. Forgiving those who have hurt us in any way and making decisions to help both those we love and those in the wider community who we don't know but need our assistance are acts of generosity. On the way to the cross Jesus generously shared a meal with those who were going to let him down. It reminds us that we are called to love our neighbour no matter what. As we approach Easter are we able to make a conscious act of dying to self in order to show greater love towards our neighbour?

MESSAGE FROM FR ALAN



I trust this finds everyone keeping well. In the face of further restrictions this week it is a temptation to become despondent. For myself, whilst I miss not being able to be with you in person, I am trying to see this as a time of opportunity to spend more time writing and also do those jobs which I have long intended to do and managed to keep putting off. I also go into the Church each day to change the date in the Book of Remembrance praying for the day when our Church will be able to reopen. This week our Music Ministry will be making a wonderful contribution by putting together a video of music for the Easter Triduum. This will go on our parish website in the next few days. Also, in addition, to my Sunday and weekday homilies a link has been now placed on the website for those who wish to look at all the relevant readings for those days. Let us keep looking for ways to remain connected with one another whilst playing our part to stop the spread of the Coronavirus Covid-19.

Fr. Alan

Monday April 6th 2020

Readings: Isaiah 42:1-7; Psalm 26(27):1-3,13-14; John 12:1-11

Today we hear how Jesus is being anointed by Mary. This was the second of two anointings. The first anointing took place at the beginning of his public ministry when he was anointed by a repentant sinful woman (Luke 7:36-50). For this second anointing Jesus had stopped at Bethany on the way to Jerusalem. There are two possible explanations for this. Jerusalem would have been overcrowded. Also, Jesus wanted to celebrate some time with his close friends before going to the cross.



In today's Gospel we see two contrasting attitudes towards Jesus. On the one hand we have Mary who shows her love for Jesus by anointing him with costly oil. Mary's action was extravagant, but her motive is pure. Her heart overflows with love and gratitude for Jesus. By contrast Judas' attitude was selfish and impure. It had nothing to do with being concerned for the poor.

How can I show my gratitude to Jesus this week? Could I spend time in the silence of my home in adoration and prayer? Through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation we too have been anointed for service. Is there some way I can serve another this week?

Tuesday April 7th 2020

Readings: Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalm 70(71):1-6,15,17;

John 13:21-33,36-38

Today's Gospel portrays Jesus dealing with Judas and Peter. The movie Mary Magdalene portrayed Judas as one who was originally one of Jesus' closest followers because he believed that Jesus' kingdom was one of political power. Jesus would rule Israel and Judas would in turn become financial master by association. It shows that he turned on Jesus when he realised Jesus' vision was not like that at all. These could have been the reasons why Judas became hardhearted and greedy and which ultimately led him to betray Jesus. Despite knowing by then that Judas was going to betray him, Jesus showed his love for him at the Last Supper in 3 ways. Firstly, by allowing him to sit on his left so Jesus could rest on his chest. Secondly, by giving Judas the first piece of bread from the dish. Thirdly, by allowing him to retain then position of treasurer. Judas could hide his motives from everyone, except Jesus. Peter on the other hand was going to deny Jesus 3 times out of weakness. Yet he loved Jesus, and this led to his repentance.



Today's Gospel invites me to reflect upon are there areas in my life where I have become hard hearted in my attitude towards others? Do I allow the behaviour of others to determine how I am going to act? Can I, like Peter, show true repentance for sinfulness in my life?

Wednesday April 8th 2020

Readings: Isaiah 50:4-9; Psalm 68(69):8-10,21-22,31,33-34; Matthew 26:14-25

Today's Gospel shows Judas proceeding with his plan to betray Jesus. Jesus hints that it is Judas who would betray him. Today's Gospel asks us the uncomfortable question are there decisions that I am making in my life that betray my faith in God? If so, then let us make an act of repentance asking God for his help. Also, we know from experience that a betrayal of our trust by another is very painful. It strikes at the very core of our being. In the face of this, can we, like Jesus, continue to focus our attention on carrying out our Father's will?



Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper – Thursday April 9th 2020

**Readings: Exodus 12:1-8,11-14; Psalm 115(116):12-13,15-18;
1 Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15**

In the Gospel from the liturgy on Holy Thursday night we listen to how Jesus washes the feet of his disciples. This was a task that was undertaken by the lowliest of slaves. There is no comparison either in scripture or in human history where someone who had great power would lower themselves in such a profound way. If that was not enough Jesus washed the feet of those who would ultimately deny, betray and desert him. Jesus presents us a challenge here. He shows that he is prepared to serve everyone regardless. If he is prepared to do that for us, we should also be prepared to do that for each other.



Do I fail to serve others? Or if I choose to serve others do I place terms and conditions on it? Do I serve some people and not others? What do I need to do to empty myself so that I can be more loving and generous in my life?

Good Friday Celebration of the Passion of the Lord – Friday April 10th 2020

**Readings: Isaiah 52:13-53:12; Psalm 30(31):2,6,12-13,15-17,25;
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9; John 18:1-19:42**

The cross was a horrible way of dying and crucifixion was a common practice in the time of Jesus. Those crucified were stripped naked and were beaten into shock before being nailed to a cross. Also, the crosses were commonly placed on the side of the road at face height. Therefore, crucifixion was very public. For many people in Israel at that time they would have seen either their family members or friends crucified on the road. The cross was an ugly instrument of torture and it is hard to see anything redemptive about it. What is redemptive about the cross is that it comes just before the resurrection. I think it is important to remember this when we contemplate on the meaning of the cross and the resurrection in our daily lives.



The cross for us today comes in the difficulties and challenges we face in our daily lives. Some of us are facing difficult times right now and wonder how we are going to get through? However, if we follow Jesus to the cross, we also follow him to the resurrection. Christ promises us that we are going to get through what we are going through if we undertake our faith journey like this. Following Jesus to the cross is not just about doing what is right even though it is going to cost. There is a reward in this.

St Joseph,

A PRAYER to ST JOSEPH

You were receptive to God working in your life.
Help us by your prayers at this time of trial.
You kept Jesus and Mary under your watchful care:
may your prayers assist our local Church to respond
to those in need.

You taught the Christ Child your trade and prayers:
help us to follow his example of love.

You were part of God's plan for all humanity:
assist us to be vigilant and responsible this day.

You spent your life in service:
may we be mindful of others, particularly the
elderly and vulnerable, caring for them in these
difficult days.

You trusted in the clear primacy of God over all
history and every situation: help us to grow in faith
and pray to the Father, *Thy will be done.*

Amen



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

ST JOSEPH'S PARISH—Mass Times



Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil NO MASS
Sunday NO MASS

Weekday Masses

Monday NO MASS
Tuesday NO MASS
Wednesday NO MASS
Thursday NO MASS

Reconciliation by appointment

PLEASE NOTE!!

That all Mass Intentions are being said by Fr Alan each morning at a private Mass.



Parish Office is closed until further notice.

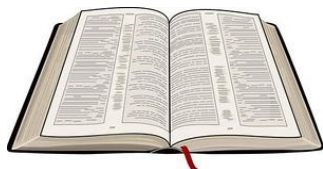
Please ring, 9401 6391 before you stop by to make sure there is someone in attendance.

CLOSURE OF CHURCH UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Due to the increased restrictions announced by the Government, it is with much regret that the Church needs to close indefinitely. Unfortunately this means personal visits to the Church are not permitted until further notice.

PALM SUNDAY (YEAR A)

FIRST READING: Isaiah 50:4-7
SECOND READING: Philippians 2:6-11
GOSPEL: Matthew 26:14-27:66



Next Sunday's Readings

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD

Acts 10:34.37-43
Colossians 3:1-4
John 20:1-9



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

BAPTISM:

THE SICK: John & Marie Horan, Mim Nerlich, Barbara Westcott, Janet Murphy, Mal Logan, Anne Peric, Br Paul Smith fsc

RECENTLY DECEASED:

ANNIVERSARIES:



MASS INTENTIONS

Apr 4 (Vigil)
Apr 5 10.00am
Apr 5 6.00pm People of the Parish
Apr 7
Apr 8
Apr 9 People of the Parish
Apr 10 People of the Parish

If you are wanting to book a Mass Intention, please call the Parish Office on 9401 6391 or info@stjosephsmalvern.org.au

Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional land of the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people and offer our respects to the elders past, present and future. We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of this land.