



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

UNDER THE CARE OF THE VINCENTIAN COMMUNITY

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2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER YEAR A 19th April 2020



GOSPEL:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them.

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

'As the Father sent me,
so am I sending you.'

After saying this he breathed on them and said:

'Receive the Holy Spirit.
For those whose sins you forgive,
they are forgiven;
for those whose sins you retain,
they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. 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.

doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me.

Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

FR ALAN'S REFLECTION

WE WILL RISE AGAIN

During the week I was sent a YouTube link <https://youtu.be/D5DhJS5hGWc> to a beautiful inspiring piece of music. The song is in Italian, but it has English subtitles which can be easily accessed. The English translation of the refrain of the song 'Rinascero, Rinascerei' is 'I will be reborn, we will be reborn'. The music is about the city of Bergamo in Italy which is 45 kilometers north of Milan in the Lombardy Province. This is a city which has a population of 120,000 people. It is estimated that 4,500 people have died there. The daily news out of Bergamo has shown images of trucks moving the bodies of those who have died for burial. What is particularly sad about this is that there is no funeral ceremony and no loved ones are able to be present. I sent this piece of music to a friend who remarked how incredible it was that in the midst of all this, people were still able to be creative in a way that inspires and uplifts others. Reflecting on the song after listening to it a couple of times led me to the conclusion that not even the most terrible of circumstances can stop the human spirit from rising. This is what the resurrection is all about.

Today's Gospel finds the disciples in a locked room for fear of the Jews. In the midst of chaos, fear and shame Jesus comes and stands amongst them and tells them "Peace be with you." He extends them this blessing at a time when external circumstances seemed to dictate that they had no reason to feel peaceful. Yet the peace that Jesus offers is not a peace that the world knows of. It is a peace based on deep contentment of knowing that despite whatever is happening God is still present. This message made such an impression on the disciples that they were able to respond to Jesus' accompanying message "As the Father has sent me so am I sending you." From there they moved beyond the locked doors and went out to fearlessly proclaim his mission. Even Thomas, who had initially refused to believe unless he had physical proof, was convinced. From the moment they left that locked room behind they began their participation in Jesus' resurrection.

This week on the local front we heard news that perhaps there would be a relaxing of the restrictions. The curve appeared to be flattening. Then we subsequently heard that the State of Emergency in Victoria would be extended to May 11th. One can only imagine what we

must have felt when we heard all of this. Another month of having to stay within the confines of our own homes being only allowed to leave for specific reasons. One can only wonder how long this will go on for? It is into the situation that we currently find ourselves that Jesus comes and stands amongst us also offering us the same message "Peace be with you." Just as

As Jesus was able to go through the locked doors of the room where the disciples were staying Jesus comes into the confines of our homes to be present to us. Just like the disciples he also commissions us to keep moving forward in hope. We may be restricted in how we can do that physically, but nothing can stop us if we respond to Jesus's message by determining that our human spirits will rise nevertheless.

As the Christian community in our First Reading were united in heart, mind and soul let us remain united in our efforts to encourage one another. In the Gospel Jesus breathed on his disciples and told them to "Receive the Holy Spirit." In placing his hands into Jesus' hands and side and saying, "My Lord and my God", Thomas made an act of loving surrender. Let us also place ourselves in God's hands and allow him to breathe new life into us during these troubled times.

Message from Fr Alan

I hope this finds everyone well and that you all had a good Easter. On Easter Sunday I blessed our Easter Candle in readiness for the day when our Church can be open once more. Over this past week the CDFPay for Parishes – Online Payment Portal has been put on our parish website.



This allows those who would normally contribute to the Parish by cash or envelope to keep contributing to the Parish during this time of lockdown. It is easy to use. This week I did the funeral for Chris Jenkins, who had been part of our parish community for over 60 years. Up until recently Chris was normally at mass at Cabrini on Thursdays and Saturday night. I ask if you would please keep Chris and his family in your prayers at this time. Finally, this week I have included an article in the bulletin on the situation in Bergamo, Italy. It reminds us how many parts of the world are deeply affected by the Coronavirus COVID-19. In my homily I have placed a link which contains an inspiration song which I think speaks much to us about the resurrection. With best wishes for this week.

Fr. Alan

Monday 20th April 2020

Readings: Acts 4:23-31; John 3:1-8

WHERE ARE WE?

In our readings today we have two positions in regard to faith. I am going to start backwards here. Firstly, we have Nicodemus. He comes to Jesus because he was attracted by what Jesus has to offer. However, the Gospel also notes that he went to Jesus by night. He was timid in his faith. He went at that time because he did not want anyone to know. By contrast in our First Reading we hear about the Early Christian Community boldly proclaiming their faith. They were not afraid to bring their faith into the light for all to see.

Where do I stand in regard to these two positions on faith?



Tuesday 21st April 2020

Readings: Acts 4:32-37; John 3:7-15

THE CHALLENGE

In today's Gospel we listen to the continuing dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus. It is clear that Nicodemus was attracted to Jesus. He wanted to know more about him. He was keen to see if Jesus could enlighten him. Jesus responds by spending time with Nicodemus. In the process he challenges him to believe that there is more than what the world in front of him was offering. Jesus speaks about the things that are above. It was their belief in things above that enabled the early Christian to live united in heart and soul. They felt no need to capture or possess anything because they knew that God would provide everything they ever needed.

The challenge for us is do we trust God like that?

Wednesday 22nd April 2020

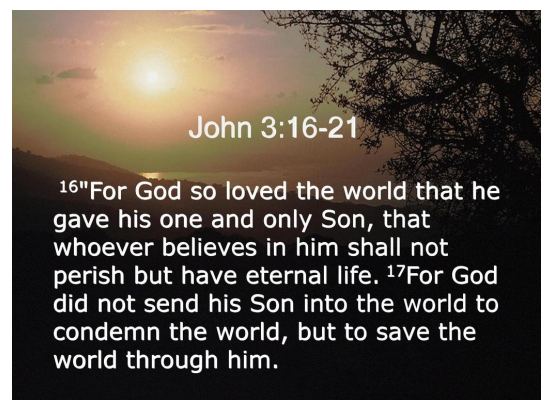
Readings: Acts 5:17-26; John 3:16-21

DECISION TIME

Today concludes the dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus for now. We will not hear about Nicodemus again until after Jesus dies on the cross. Jesus was trying to tell Nicodemus who he was and his mission. Nicodemus was grappling with the presence and person of Jesus. He believed Jesus was of God. Yet despite being amazed at Jesus and his works he had yet to commit at that stage.

Jesus tells Nicodemus the heart of his mission. He tells him he comes from God as his only Begotten Son in order to open the way to salvation for all humanity. Jesus leaves it at that. He had told Nicodemus everything he could. It was now time for Nicodemus to make a decision.

Is this not true for us as well? We have heard as much as we can about Jesus through the scriptures. Having received all the information, we can we either decide to give ourselves completely to God or not?



John 3:16-21

¹⁶"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

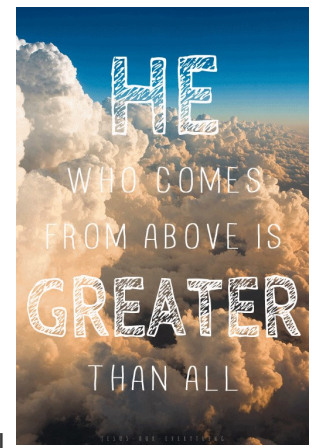
Thursday 23rd April 2020

Readings: Acts 5:27-33; John 3:31-36

THE GREATER AUTHORITY

Who has the greater power? Jesus answers this by contrasting the things of heaven to the things of earth. In the First Reading by bringing the disciples before them and demanding an explanation it seemed that the Sanhedrin had the greater power, but they did not. The disciples had the greater power through their willingness to testify to the one who comes from above.

This reminds us that no matter what position or status we hold in life there is no substitute to moral authority. By submitting to God and placing his authority above all others opens the way to eternal life.



Friday 24th April 2020

Readings: Acts 5:34-42; John 6:1-15

GIVING ALL



Today we hear how the boy with the five loaves and two fishes gave everything he had to Jesus. As a result of this Jesus was able to multiply the offering to more than satisfy the crowd. Similarly, in the First Reading, the number who believed in Jesus multiplied as a result of the disciples' efforts of giving all to the Lord.

If we prepared to give our all in life and it has God as its origin, then God will also multiply our efforts many times over.

Saturday 25th April 2020 (ANZAC DAY)

Readings: Acts 6:1-7; John 6:16-21

ACCEPTING THE INVITATION

During my twelve years in Fiji, I was either part or leading Come and See Weekends. These weekends were for men who were considering a vocation to the Vincentian Community, whether it be priesthood or brotherhood. Over the course of these weekends I was always touched by the willingness of these men in their attempts to open their hearts to discern what the Lord was asking of them.

Today we hear the words from Jesus "Courage it is I do not be afraid." It reminds us that the primary vocation for all of us is to accept Jesus' invitation to come to him. It is not what we ultimately do with our lives that is of primary importance. What matters most is how open we are to responding to whatever it is that God is asking of us.





CDFpay for Parishes – Online Payment Portal

During this time, when visits to our Church are suspended, we are striving to ensure that our parishioners remain connected through new and creative pastoral programmes. While we continue to help those in our community the parish continues to incur ongoing overhead costs and we need your help.

The good news is that Catholic Development Fund (CDF) and the Archdiocese of Melbourne have partnered to build an online parish payment portal, *CDFpay for Parishes*.

This site enables you to make quick and easy online thanksgiving payments – you can set-up a recurring payment, if you haven't done so already, or you can choose a one-off offering.

The St Joseph's Parish Malvern site is live and can be found via this link:

[CDFpay for St Joseph's Parish, Malvern](#)

We thank you in advance for supporting our parish community.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

As They Console Coronavirus's Victims, Italy's Priests Are Dying, Too

Doctors and nurses on the front line have become symbols of sacrifice, but priests and nuns have also joined the fight, often at great risk.



The Rev. Claudio Del Monte preparing for a private Good Friday procession in Bergamo, Italy. Credit... Fabio Bucciarelli for The New York Times

By Jason Horowitz and Elisabetta Povoledo

April 11, 2020

ROME — On the Sunday before Easter, the priest's phone rang.

The Rev. Claudio Del Monte carried the phone, given to him by staff in the Bergamo hospital, along with a small cross and some homemade sanitizer. Instead of his usual cleric's collar, he wore disposable scrubs, a surgical mask covered with another mask, protective eyewear and a cap over his head. On his chest he had drawn a black cross with a felt pen.

He excused himself from two coronavirus patients he was visiting in the hospital and answered the call. But he already knew what it meant. Minutes later, he arrived at the bedside of an older man he had met days earlier. An oxygen mask now obscured the man's face, and intensive care staff huddled around his bed.

"I blessed him and absolved him from sins, he squeezed my hand tightly and I stayed there with him until his eyes closed," Father Del Monte, 53, said. "And then I said the prayer for the dead, and then I changed my gloves and continued my round."

Italy's coronavirus outbreak is one of the world's deadliest, and while the doctors and nurses on the northern [Italian front line have become symbols of sacrifice](#) against an invisible enemy, priests and nuns have also joined the fight. Especially in [deeply infected areas like Bergamo](#), they are risking, and sometimes giving, their lives to attend to the spiritual needs of the often older and devout Italians hardest hit by the virus.



Father Del Monte during rounds at the Humanitas Gavazzeni hospital in Bergamo.Credit...
Luca Cepparo/Humanitas Gavazzeni

Across Italy, the virus has killed more than 100 priests, many of them retired and especially vulnerable to a scourge that preys on older people, whether it be in nursing homes or monasteries. *Avvenire*, the newspaper run by the Italian bishops conference, is honoring the dead with the hashtag "PriestsForever."

But some priests have also fallen in service, and in a Holy Thursday Mass in an empty St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Francis remembered them.

"In these days, more than 60 have died here in Italy, attending to the sick in the hospitals," he said, calling them "the saints next door, priests who gave their lives in service."

Francesco Beschi, the bishop of Bergamo, said he had lost 24 priests in 20 days, in a region where more than 2,600 people have died of the virus by the official count. About half the priests were retired and out of service, but others still tended to pastoral duties.

They offer solace through WhatsApp groups, wave from behind car windows as they bring food to the sick, lean against the door frames of infected bedrooms as they deliver last rites and shroud themselves in personal protective equipment as they whisper prayers and encouragement at hospital bed sides. They complain they cannot get closer, that the last touch the faithful feel is a gloved one, that the last face they see is often on a screen. With a virus that separates families and spouses as it kills, priests said that they were also pained to be distanced from their flock when they were needed most.



Coronavirus patients in the intensive care unit of Policlinico San Pietro in Ponte San Pietro.Credit...
Fabio Bucciarelli for The New York Times

One of those was the Rev. Fausto Resmini, 67, esteemed as the chaplain of Bergamo's prison for nearly 30 years and the founder of a center for troubled youth. His fellow priests said that in the course of his work last month, he caught the virus. He received treatment at the Humanitas Gavazzeni hospital where Father Del Monte does his rounds, before dying on March 23.

Local residents are trying to name a new field hospital after him.

"His death is a huge loss for the Bergamo church," said the Rev. Roberto Trussardi, director of Bergamo Caritas, the church's charitable arm.

Such sacrifices have not deterred many other priests from ministering to the sick.

"Staying home is the right thing to do," said the Rev. Giovanni Paolini, 85, in the central Italian town of Pesaro. "But I am a priest and sometimes it is necessary to bend the law to meet people's needs."

On Monday, he said a burial prayer for one of the 15 members of a local parish killed by the virus.

He said he used the phone or social media when possible to console. But he also said he puts on his mask and other protective gear to visit old people fearing death, often alone.

"You choose this life to be useful to others," he said.



Pope Francis celebrating Good Friday in an empty St. Peter's Square at the Vatican. Credit... Nadia Shira Cohen for The New York Times

Those priests embody a vision of the church articulated by Pope Francis, who has often invoked the image of a field hospital and the characters of the Italian masterpiece, "The Betrothed," in which heroic Milanese priests selflessly treat those afflicted by the plague.

On March 10, Francis prayed in a morning Mass, "for our priests, so that they have the courage to go out, and go to those who are sick."

That encouragement seemed in violation of restrictions Italy adopted that very day that sought to keep people in their homes to prevent the spread of the virus, but the Vatican's spokesman immediately argued that the pope's appeal clearly understood the need for priests to act "while respecting the health measures established by Italian authorities."

Cardinal Michael Czerny, a close adviser to Francis, said that the pontiff has seemed calm but also intensely involved in the church's response to the virus in recent days.

"What makes him most happy are the priests who don't need to be told, but who know that this is what they should do," he said. "If he had his druthers, he would be on the front lines, too."

"He wants us at the frontiers," Cardinal Czerny said. "And beyond the limits."



A private funeral in Alzano Lombardo. Credit...Fabio Bucciarelli for The New York Times

Those limits are not safely placed. And once the danger of contagion became clear, Bishop Beschi said, priests began adopting the appropriate precautions. He had sent a letter to his own priests telling them, "We want to bring Christ to people but not contagion." He added, "This was a painful choice, because it was a limitation."

In Castiglione d'Adda, one of the first towns quarantined by the Italian government during the initial February outbreak, nearly all public religious ceremonies and services have ceased. The Rev. Gabriele Bernardelli, 58, said he kept contact with his parishioners through WhatsApp and Instagram. The phone, he said, "becomes a pastoral instrument."

But he said that the vast majority of the 67 people his town lost in the last 40 days had died in the hospital, and that he had not been able to see them. He took some solace in the fact that local bishops had deputized devout medical workers in hospitals to make the sign of the cross on a dying patient's forehead.

Last month, during the explosion of cases, Father Bernardelli visited the home of an older man, the father of a priest, as he lay dying in his bedroom.

"I used to be close to a dying person, like a doctor next to the sick," he said. This time he stayed at the threshold of the door watching the man clutch a tank of oxygen. Father Bernardelli delivered last rites through a mask from outside the door frame.

"This is what you can do," he said.



Father Del Monte in the courtyard of the Church of Santa Croce in Bergamo. Credit...Fabio Bucciarelli for The New York Times

Father Del Monte also visits the sick at home. A chemist by training, he has made vats of disinfectant. He dabs it in his nostrils and rubs it on his hands.

The precautions were both to protect himself and to make sure that he did not inadvertently spread the virus himself, as he goes home to home.

"Like all my priest friends, we go around to the houses," he said, "so we cannot be the ones who bring the contagion. We cannot only get the sickness; we can give it. Maybe we are asymptomatic, and then it's a disaster."

Last week, he too delivered last rites in a mask from the threshold of a bedroom, this time for a woman in his parish. He added that on Monday morning, he said simple prayers at the Bergamo cemetery during a burial.

"Three or four minutes," he said.

Before 3 every afternoon, he leaves his parish, changes out of his clerical clothing and gets dressed for visits in the hospital, which falls within his parish.

He has comforted wives whose husbands died in other hospitals and lingered when doctors rushed off.

"The priest's time is freer," he said, adding, "It's not about looking for it, it's about accepting the suffering that comes."

Sometimes he sees new patients taking the place of the dead he prayed with the day before. But he has also found a letter on the bed of a patient who survived.

"Until next time," it read.



Father Del Monte praying with the Holy Cross after the private Via Crucis on Good Friday. Credit... Fabio Bucciarelli for The New York Times

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
Friday—NO MASS

Reconciliation

by appointment only

PLEASE NOTE!!

Mass Intentions are still being taken and said by Fr Alan each morning at a private Mass.



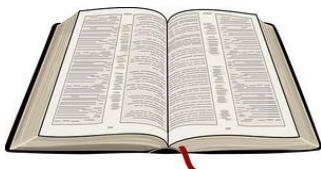
Parish Office is closed until further notice.
Please ring, 9401 6391 before you stop by to make sure there is someone in attendance.

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.

2nd SUNDAY OF EASTER (Year A)

FIRST READING: Acts 2:42-47
SECOND READING: 1 Peter 1:3-9
GOSPEL: John 20:19-31



Next Sunday's Readings

3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)
Acts 2:14.22-363
1 Peter 1:17-21
Luke 24:13-35



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:

Christopher Jenkins

ANNIVERSARIES:



MASS INTENTIONS

April 19 People of the Parish
April 21
April 22
April 23
April 24
April 25 Deceased Australian Diggers (dec)

If you are wanting to book a Mass Intention, please call the Paris Office on 9401 6390 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.