My Dear Parishioners,

Oh what a week we have endured. Let’s all hope and pray we don’t have continuing lockdowns. The disturbance to our lives is difficult, yet we must feel for those in businesses and individuals who are devastated.

With the commencement of Lent, 40 days to prepare for the Institution of the Eucharist (Holy Thursday), the Death (Good Friday) and Resurrection of Christ (Easter), there is an opportunity for all of us to ponder and prepare, reflect and consider, the important aspects of our lives. Yes we all know our health and wellbeing are important, yes it is important we keep safe, yet what is important perhaps more so is the understanding of the value of family life, the way we interact with each other. These days of Lent offer us an opportunity to practice self-denial and focus on the graciousness of our loving God. The Gathering Prayer for our weekend Masses reminds us of this as we pray to recognise the riches Christ has to offer us:-

*Grant, almighty God,*

*through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding*

*of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.*

*Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,*

*who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,*

*God, for ever and ever.*

As we were not able to gather on Ash Wednesday for Mass, I will distribute ashes during each Mass this weekend. The ashes are the burnt palms from Passion/Palm Sunday. The ashes remind us we are to remain faithful to the Gospel and strive to follow the Lenten observances.

*Dear brethren* ***(****brothers and sisters****)****, let us humbly ask God our Father*

*that he be pleased to bless with the abundance of his grace*

*these ashes, which we will put on our heads in penitence.*

*After a brief prayer in silence he continues, with hands extended:*

*O God, who are moved by acts of humility*

*and respond with forgiveness to works of penance,*

*lend your merciful ear to our prayers*

*and in your kindness pour out the grace of your* ***✠*** *blessing*

*on your servants who are marked with these ashes,*

*that, as they follow the Lenten observances,*

*they may be worthy to come with minds made pure*

*to celebrate the Paschal Mystery of your Son.*

*Through Christ our Lord*

***Amen.***

The link for this weekend Masses are:-

Saturday 20th January 6.00 pm Mass link:  <https://forms.gle/xEuJTbLWzdW7JVMf8>

Sunday 21st January 8.30 am Mass link:  <https://forms.gle/BDnkF8RfLCcoT4eo9>

Sunday 21st January 10.30 am Mass link:  <https://forms.gle/4cfuEd1QKggxoCK16>

I’ve also attached a copy of the Sunday Scripture and the children’s worksheet. You may also like to print out the little prayer book, offering some prayers you may like to share as a family during Lent.

During the week Archbishop Peter a Comensoli distributed a letter regarding the impending COVID vaccinations which I’ve also attached for you.

May these days of Lent help us all to remember the sacrifice of Christ as we also make sacrifices to support each other.

May God bless us all,

Peter