

Monty & Eltham

The Catholic Parishes of
St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.

Communal Rite of Reconciliation

Monday 21 March
7pm @ St Francis Xavier,
Montmorency

Thursday 24 March
7pm @ Our Lady Help of Christians,
Eltham

This includes Grade 4 students from
our schools, and their parents.

All Welcome

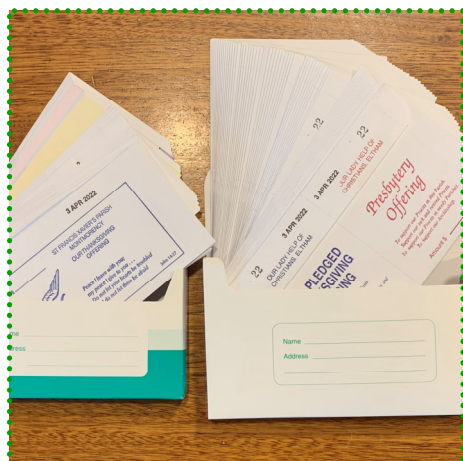
Personal Rite of Reconciliation

There are 5 opportunities every
week to receive your personal Rite of
Reconciliation, half an hour prior to
every Mass every week:

- 9am Tuesdays before 9:30am Mass
- 9am Fridays before 9:30am Mass
- 5:30pm Saturdays before 6pm Mass
- 8am Sundays before 8:30am Mass
- 9:30am Sundays before 10am Mass

An Irish Blessing

*“May God
grant you always,
A sunbeam to warm you,
a moonbeam to charm
you, a sheltering Angel
so nothing can harm you.
Laughter to cheer you,
Faithful friends near you,
And whenever you pray,
Heaven to hear you.”*



Thanksgiving Envelopes

Please collect your Thanksgiving
Envelopes from the Gathering Area
of the churches.

Please take Envelopes for your
neighbour and pop into
their letterbox.

Please help distribute Envelopes
THIS week.

This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.

For more information visit pol.org.au/eltham or pol.org.au/montmorency.

We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.



PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



Parish Priest

Michael Sierakowski - **Moderator**

michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au

Parish Office

86 Mayona Road

9435 4742

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

montmorency@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

eltham@cam.org.au

Peter Williams:

Child Safety Officer

SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au

Website:

www.pol.org.au/montmorency

www.pol.org.au/eltham

(pol stands for Parish OnLine)

Facebook:

[St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency](#)

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

eltham@cam.org.au

Schools

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Principal: Patrick Green: 9439 7824

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

RECONCILIATION

available upon request

please call the Parish Office 9435 4742

Collections: 6 March 2022

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
OLHC	\$312.00	\$875.60
SFX	\$1,928.00	\$1,239.65

Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

Saturday 19

12:00pm Baptism - Florence

Montmorency

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 20 - Third Sunday of Lent

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

12:00pm Baptism - Benjamin, Thomas

Eltham

Monday 21

6:30pm Sisters & Misterys Choir

Eltham

7:00pm Communal Rite of Reconciliation

Montmorency

Tuesday 22

9:30am Mass

Montmorency

Wednesday 23

6:30am Meditation

Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Eltham

7:00pm Lenten Rosary

Eltham

Thursday 24

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection

Montmorency

7:00pm Communal Rite of Reconciliation

Eltham

7:00pm Parish Futures Meeting

Greensborough

Friday 25

9:30am Mass

Eltham

Saturday 26

10:00am Baptism - Reuben

Montmorency

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 27 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

12:00pm Baptism - Evie & Harvey

Eltham

Tuesday 29

9:30am Mass

Montmorency

Wednesday 30

6:30am Meditation

Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Eltham

7:00pm Lenten Rosary

Eltham

Thursday 31

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion

Montmorency

10:30am ASRC Food Collection

Montmorency

Friday 1 April

9:30am Mass

Eltham

Saturday 2

12:00pm Baptism - Leon, Fletcher, Aiden

Eltham

2:00pm Sisters & Misterys Choir

Eltham

6:00pm Mass

Montmorency

Sunday 3 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

8:30am Mass

Montmorency

10:00am Mass

Eltham

12:00pm Baptism - Addison, Christian, Isla, Zayn

Montmorency

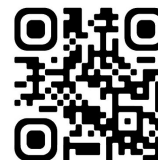
Support
Montmorency Parish
by giving with CDFpay

Simply scan the QR code with your mobile phone and in a few easy steps you can quickly and securely give to your parish.



Support
Eltham Parish
by giving with CDFpay

Simply scan the QR code with your mobile phone and in a few easy steps you can quickly and securely give to your parish.





Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...

Montmorency

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:
*Isabelle Borg, Terry Boyd, Marianna Cantone,
 John Frawley, Mary Greenwood,
 Adam Rischitelli (1 year),
 Carol Said, Maxwell Vanderwert, Michael Wellington
 Denise Wraight*

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:
*Rita Bevanda, Kim Brisbane, Alana Foulds,
 Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert), Kate Lagerewskij,
 Melanie Lam, Andrew Pighin, Aguatha Spina*

Eltham

For the recently deceased:
Marguerita (Margot) Veltkamp

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:
Violetta, Fiona Rogers, Rosemary Scully, Ian Sturman

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House
 9435 4742 or eltham@cam.org.au.

Thank you and Farewell to Fr Terry

Covid restrictions have limited our opportunities to farewell and thank Fr Terry for the 15 years that he spent with us in the parish and for him to thank the parish. Two opportunities to rectify this situation are being arranged on the following dates:

Saturday 21 May at 7pm in the SFX Parish Hall; and
Sunday 22 May at 12noon at the Monty-Eltham RSL.

[More details to follow.](#)

Communal Rite of Reconciliation

Involving Grade 4 students, parents & parishioners.

Monday 21st March at 7pm at
 St Francis Xavier, Montmorency

and

Thursday 24th March at 7pm at
 Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham



Congratulations to all who celebrate their sacraments this weekend:

Saturday 19 March

St Francis Xavier, 12:00pm

Florence Doran

Baptism

Sunday 20 March

Our Lady Help of Christians, 12:00pm

Benjamin Stepanic

Baptism

Thomas Villani

Baptism



Lent-in-brief...

Patient God, is it really possible that so many of us could be so wrong? Why do we prefer the winners to the losers, when you were clearly one of the 'losers', and always on the side of the 'losers'?

Richard Rohr

Prayers of the Faithful for 20 March 2022 - Third Sunday of Lent

Leader: We gather in faith before our God and we confidently offer our prayers for ourselves and our world.

We pray for Pope Francis and all Church leaders. May their words and actions foster peace and reconciliation throughout our world.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us reflect on the parable of the patient vineyard owner who tended his vines. Jesus told us this parable to reflect on God's patience and tenderness, particularly when we fail. May we show the same forbearance to those who are intolerant of us.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for all those affected by violence and war, especially those in Ukraine and Russia. May the healing, merciful love of God flood the lives of those who suffer violence, and transform the hearts of those who perpetrate it, so that all homes, communities and nations might become havens of peace.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

In this Lenten season, we pray for our faith community, and for a deeper sense of repentance, forgiveness and reconciliation among ourselves and in our world.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those suffering from Covid-19 and in particular the doctors and nurses looking after them disregarding their own well-being. May we be mindful of those people sacrificing their own health for the sake of others.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for the sick of our parish and for all who care for them. We remember those who have died recently, remembering especial *Margot Veltkamp*. We remember also those whose anniversaries occur at this time, *Isabelle Borg, Terry Boyd, Marianna Cantone, John Frawley, Mary Greenwood, Adam Rischitelli, Carol Said, Maxwell, Vanderwert, Michael Wellington & Denise Wraight*. Lead them all into the fullness of your life.
Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: God of love, may your peace and mercy be on all those who cry out to you. Grant us the grace to rejoice in your saving Word. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen

Francis the bridge-builder

Is there any role for the Pope in helping to end the war in Ukraine? / **By Christopher Lamb**

The horror of the war in Ukraine continues to grip the world. Cities are being shelled, children are being killed and more than two million people have already been forced to flee their homes. The threat of a full-blown nuclear conflict looms perilously close. While there is intense anguish, grief and fury, global statesmanship is in short supply. A ceasefire looks increasingly remote.

Amid the darkness, Pope Francis may offer a glimmer of hope. Last Sunday, speaking to the crowds in St Peter's Square, he said the Holy See is "ready to do everything" to bring about peace. The Pope's offer is being taken seriously. On Tuesday, Secretary of State Cardinal Parolin and Sergei Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, spoke by phone.

The Vatican has long experience in mediating conflicts. Francis has helped to normalise relations between the United States and Cuba, smoothed the path to elections in the Central African Republic and brought together the warring leaders of South Sudan. Much of this work happens behind the scenes. On Ash Wednesday - the day the Pope had asked Christians to offer their fasting and prayer for peace in Ukraine - I sat down with Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti, the papal ambassador to Britain, to find out how the Holy See is working to try to broker peace in Ukraine. How, I asked him, could Pope Francis make a difference?

"There were many attempts by the Holy See to try to avoid this war," he tells me as we talk in the living room of the apostolic nunciature in Wimbledon, south-west London. "Sometimes it was successful, sometimes it was not. But the very fact that they [Russia] accept the Holy See, and the Pope in particular, as an interlocutor is already something very special because what happens in these wars is that nobody is looking for an interlocutor. Everybody is looking for an enemy."

Last summer, the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, said the Vatican would be "the ideal place" for talks with Russia, and it is understood there was a proposal for the countries' leaders to sign a peace agreement in Rome, although this never materialised. Francis has met President Vladimir Putin three times, and the Vatican has diplomatic relations with both Russia and Ukraine. While the Ukrainians have said they would welcome the Holy See's mediation, Russia has not given an indication either way.

"President Putin listens to the Pope, I cannot say anything beyond that," Archbishop Gugerotti explains. He stresses that Putin has a "certain kind of respect" for Francis and his moral authority. Gugerotti understands how these negotiations work. A highly experienced diplomat and expert in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus region, from 2015 to 2020 he served as apostolic nuncio to Ukraine and before that was the papal representative to Belarus. He was nuncio to Georgia during the 2008 Russo-Georgian conflict. While in Belarus, he was reportedly the only diplomat able to visit the country's

political prisoners, negotiating directly on their behalf with President Alexander Lukashenko. He has also met Putin and Lavrov. At the end of 2020, he was sent to Belarus as a special papal envoy to talk to Lukashenko about the plight of exiled Archbishop Tadeusz Kondrusiewicz. Soon after Gugerotti's meeting with the Belarus leader, Kondrusiewicz returned to Belarus.

The 6-year-old Verona-born diplomat won a scholarship to study English in London as a teenager and speaks English fluently. He also speaks Russian, Armenian and French, and is an expert in the liturgies of the Eastern Orthodox Churches. He worked at the Holy See's Congregation for the Eastern Churches and taught at the Pontifical Oriental Institute before Pope John Paul II appointed him nuncio to Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in 2001. Gugerotti is a diplomat in the Francis mould, combining openness, pastoral warmth and humour with a shrewd eye for detail and situations.

Eastern political leaders "tend to be very enigmatic", but papal diplomacy is effective, he says, because it engages with people at the personal, spiritual level. "The Vatican approach is to invoke a gesture or a word by the Holy Spirit that can enter the heart of the other person. In some situations, I couldn't utter a single word, and then the word arrives." Our "system", the seasoned Vatican diplomat tells me, is "the man of faith, knowing how dialogue and negotiation work, going outside the common pattern and entering into a language that can melt hearts." There is talk of Francis making a



Archbishop Claudio Gugerotti with The Tablet's Christopher Lamb

peace mission to Ukraine with other religious leaders. Could this happen? “Everything is possible,” Gugerotti says. “The question is if it is useful at the moment.” The Pope is “never a political interlocutor” and using the Churches to put pressure on a government “is not a winning policy”. In other words, both parties need to be ready to come to the table. “What the Pope wants to avoid is to create further divisions. Whenever there is a common request, and he can see that his role will be practically positive, the day after this happens, the Pope is going - maybe even during the night.”

Before the Second Vatican Council, the Holy See’s diplomatic work was focused on serving the interests of the Church. Now, “the role of the Pope has become a universal support for peace”. And because “we are in a desert of moral figures”, he argues that the Pope’s position as a moral leader on the world stage is even more crucial. “He represents an enormous moral authority, including for non-believers ... the role is that of a person and an institution that fights for good and against evil, and has nothing to offer in exchange. No personal interest, no weapons, no kind of economy. It’s just the strength of the Gospel.”

Last Sunday, Francis countered the Russian narrative that the conflict in Ukraine was a “special military operation”, describing it as a “war” in which “the rivers of blood and tears are flowing”. It was the toughest language he has used to date and came after he had taken the unprecedented step of making a personal visit to the Russian Embassy to the Holy See to express his concern.

Francis has faced criticism for not offering an explicit condemnation of Russia or of President Putin. Gugerotti said the Pope’s approach is nothing new, pointing out that “sometimes the popes were

reproached” for not speaking out during times of war. Hanging over our conversation is the shadow of Pius XII, who continues to face intense scrutiny over allegations that he failed to speak out strongly enough against Nazi atrocities, even while he was working to save Jewish lives behind the scenes.

When it comes to mediation, Archbishop Gugerotti says the “sins of the person have to always be rejected”. On this, “we have to be very frank”. The war in Ukraine is “terrible” and “absolutely unacceptable”. At the same time, the Church’s role is also to be a “bridge of love and respect” and to avoid simply falling into rhetoric. “The goal of the Holy See is always to be an extreme possibility when all other possibilities have expired. If you pronounce a word of rejection, that possibility expires,” he explains. “The Pope and Vatican diplomacy have always to show that in spite of everything they respect every partner as a human being. That is the pre-condition of having a possible role [in mediating]. If a third party is absolutely and clearly rejecting one side, considering it monstrous, then the person doesn’t accept being involved, because the person does not feel accepted.” It is not, he adds, about looking for plaudits. “The Pope is old, he has no human glory to look for,” says Gugerotti. “The Church will continue as long as it preserves its role as being a moral guide.”

The Pope has worked hard to deepen ties with the Russian Orthodox Church. In 2016, he held a historic meeting with Patriarch Kirill in Havana, Cuba. Yet the Patriarch of Moscow, who is close to Putin, has supported the Ukraine invasion and even linked it to a battle against gay rights parades. What, I ask, would the Pope say to Kirill if he met him now? The nuncio says Francis would “probably” ask to pray with him and then to “leave the palaces and go to

the people who are suffering and just stay with them, and bless them and ask God for justice and for peace”. While speaking to Kirill could be “useful”, Gugerotti believes the most effective response would be for the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches to work together. In 2018, he was involved in distributing the €16 million (£13m) raised after the Pope called for a special collection across Europe for all Ukrainians. “this is ecumenism,” the archbishop says. “The language of faith and belonging to a population to where the Church lives is much stronger than any kind of political ideology.”

Archbishop Gugerotti has seen for himself the long-running conflict in Ukraine. He regularly visited the Donbas area to offer pastoral support to the people, some of whom were living underground. He remains in regular contact with people in Ukraine. He believes there is a “moral obligation” for the UK to welcome those fleeing the conflict. Although he recognises the need for “prudence”, he says: “We must not be afraid of poorer migrants, because some of the richer ones were probably more dangerous for our country.”

He suggests that looking back to what happened just after the collapse of the Soviet Union helps to understand the war in Ukraine. People were left starving, the oligarchs were buying up industries for nothing and, rather than helping ordinary Russians, “we continued to show we were afraid of them”. This does not justify what has happened, he says, but it helps “explain a kind of persistent danger of war”.

Despite the river of blood and tears, Archbishop Gugerotti remains hopeful for the Pope’s peace efforts. “I have seen so many things happen that were totally unexpected,” he says. “I very much believe in miracles.”

Roster for WEEKEND 26/27 March 2022	
Armstrong, Miranda	Reader
Croft, Pat & Mike	Hospitality OLHC
Dunell, Linda	Altar Society
Goss, Marian	Eucharistic Minister
Nolan, Kathleen	Commentator
Ramsdale, Sue & John	ASRC
Reardon, Kathy	Eucharistic Minister
Rough Family	Pilgrim Rosary Statue
Saltalamacchia, Carmel	Altar Society
Williams, Anne & Peter	PRYR



Biscuits must be:

1. Homemade
2. Crisp, not moist or crumbly
3. Nut free (no peanut butter, almond meal, etc)
4. In sealed, disposable containers
5. Clearly labelled with ingredients
6. Labelled with the number of biscuits in each container
7. Delivered to one of the delivery points listed (available from Parish Office - 9435 4742 or call Prison Fellowship Office - 9848 1224)

Second Sunday of Lent - A Reflection...



As he prayed, the aspect of his face was changed and his clothing became brilliant as lightning. (Luke 9:28)

The feast of the transfiguration is August 6th, the date in 1945 when the first atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima created a blinding light:

these are the extreme poles of the human potential.

I wrote yesterday about the powerful process of forgiveness and how we need to be prepared to enter it immediately if we become victims of injustice. The alternative is too horrible: to be sucked into it and become like the injustice we are suffering. In resisting injustice, as we must, we may at times lose our innocence and commit injustices ourselves. To prevent or moderate this ripple effect of evil - mirroring what we are fighting - we must struggle, heroically, and against all the odds, to love our enemy even as we fight him. Being on the right side does not give a moral carte blanche.

The Allies' demonization of the 'Hun' in the first world war fuelled the horrors of the trenches and the deaths of ten million soldiers and ten million civilians. China's demonising of the Dalai Lama, as absurd and mendacious as Putin's justification for his attack on Ukraine, justifies the rape and pollution of Tibet. Years ago I went to a cinema to watch a Lord of the Rings movie. In the digitalised battle scenes, hordes of ugly Orcs poured out against the good guys and were mown down in huge number to the delight of the children around me. This was repeated in several scenes until finally I had to go out for air. Netflix series use even more devious ways of hooking you with graphic, sadistic violence which both shocks and addicts the viewer.

A Russian in France and who opposes the war told me of being attacked and rejected by fellow-Russians calling her unpatriotic and also by non-Russians lumping her with all Russians assumed to be Putinists. Some symphony orchestras have removed Tchaikovsky from their repertoire.

In the Statements of the Ukrainian resistance I do not hear such a blanket, racist denunciation of Russia. I sense their motivation is not hatred but a courageous love of their own homeland. In their suffering in face of overwhelming, surreal brutality we see how love of enemy and forgiveness can be manifested. It is not surrendering to or imitating the Beast but an expression of love and fidelity : keeping one's attention on the Good even while we are battered by Evil.

It is this which changes the 'aspect' of the human face, transfiguring hatred into the light of God even in intense and helpless suffering. Then we can see where God is in these moments when humanity becomes inhumane. God shares in the suffering and God is unable to be anything but God. This transfigures suffering itself. It is what Blaise Pascale understood when he said that 'Jesus will be in agony until the end of the world'.

Lawrence Freeman

Lenten Reflection: Love has no alibi. Whenever we set out to love as Jesus loved, we have to take the Lord as our example; especially when it comes to loving the poor.

Pope Francis, Message for the First World Day of the Poor, 2017

Our Lady Help of Christians

There are sign-up sheets for the various roles in the OLHC Liturgies for Good Friday and the 6am Easter Morning Mass.

There is also a sheet for people to give an indication of their intention to attend the 6am Mass at OLHC, which will be a special occasion. Because of this, we plan to have a breakfast after the Mass, so numbers are needed for catering purposes.

Kathleen Nolan



Positions Vacant

- **Parish Secretary, St Brendan's & Holy Rosary Parishes, Flemington**
- **Pastoral Youth Worker, Parish of St Macartan's Mornington**
- **Continuous Improvement Specialist - Client Services Group, CDF, East Melbourne**
- **Sacramental Co-ordinator, St Dominic's, East Camberwell**
- **Parish Administration Co-ordinator S Alban's**
- **Parish Secretary - Supporting the communities of St Kilda East & Balaclava, St Kilda**
- **Stewardship Co-ordinator, Bayside**

Further details of the above positions can be found on the Archdiocese website at:

<https://melbournecatholic.org/job-vacancies>

Join us for a **FREE** day of fun and information

CLEAN ENERGY EXPO

Info sessions • Electric cars & bikes
Waste art sculptures • Children's activities
Cooking demos • Live music • Community bulk buys
BYO picnic or buy a fresh coffee • Energy solutions for your home

Register online
Sunday 3 April 11:00am - 3:00pm
Edendale Community Environment Farm, Eltham

Proudly supported by
Nillumbik
The Green Wedge Shire

WWW.CLEANENERGYNILLUMBIK.ORG.AU/EXPO

A message from Aid to the Church in Need

Australia: Aid to the Church in Need has launched a national emergency appeal for Ukraine. ACN is committed to strengthening and supporting the Catholic Church in Ukraine, as we have done for the past 70 years. The immediate emergency help will support the work of the Church in Ukraine by assisting priests, brothers, and religious sisters to continue their pastoral and outreach programs. We will continue to stand by our brothers and sisters in faith as they undergo trying times and seek to bring peace to a country that is surrounded by turmoil and unrest. Can you provide aid to the Catholic people in Ukraine? They need your help!

Visit www.aidtochurch.org/ukraine

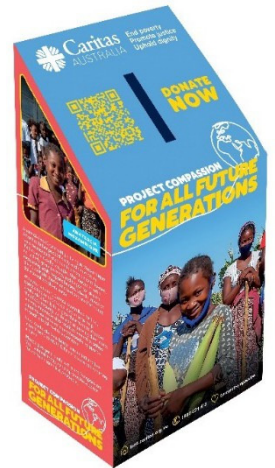




Janice 44, is a proud Wagilak woman, a traditional dancer, living in a remote community in the Northern Territory. As elders grow older and pass away, she knows she must share her knowledge with the younger generation. However, the community faces multiple challenges, including a lack of jobs, limited educational opportunities, and socio-economic which can lead to young people becoming disconnected from culture.

With your help, Caritas Australia supports Djilpin Arts Aboriginal Corporation, which operates a centre for traditional and contemporary Aboriginal arts and culture, providing employment and generating income for local communities.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2022 and help provide employment and training for First Australians, allowing them to remain on country and keep their culture alive.

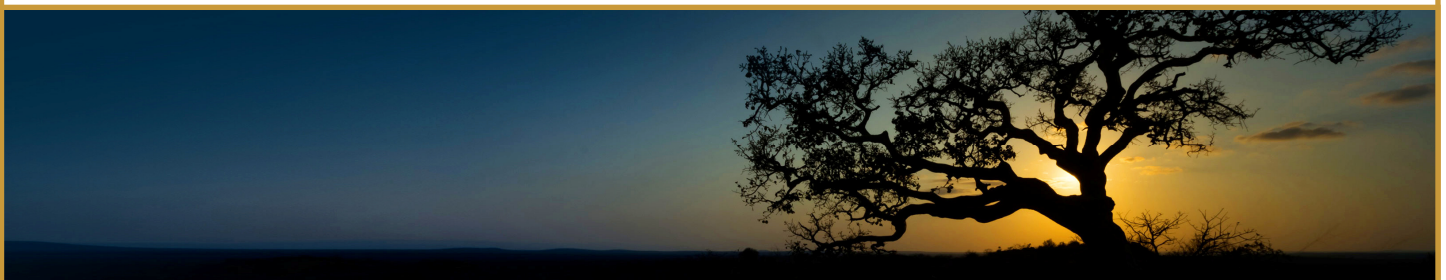


Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow **For All Future Generations**. You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your Parish, by visiting lent.caritas.org.au, or by calling 1800 024 413.

Gospel - Luke 13:1-9

Some people arrived and told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. At this he said to them, 'Do you suppose these Galileans who suffered like that were greater sinners than any other Galileans? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen on whom the tower at Siloam fell and killed them? Do you suppose that they were more guilty than all the other people living in Jerusalem? They were not, I tell you. No; but unless you repent you will all perish as they did.'

He told this parable: 'A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came looking for fruit on it but found none. He said to the man who looked after the vineyard, "Look here, for three years now I have been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and finding none. Cut it down: why should it be taking up the ground?" "Sir," the man replied "leave it one more year and give me time to dig round it and manure it: it may bear fruit next year; if not, then you can cut it down."



Reflection

No other gospel makes mention of the two calamities cited by Luke in today's gospel - a massacre of Galileans by Pilate and multiple deaths caused by a building collapse in Jerusalem. Nor is there any mention of them in other records of the time. But each event is quite plausible and together they serve Jesus' purpose. The gist of his argument is this. If tragedies like that overtake people who were no more sinful than others, then listeners who stubbornly refuse to repent put themselves at risk of final judgement. This part of the gospel echoes the warning that Paul gave to the Corinthians in the second reading.

The ominous thrust of Jesus' words is immediately counterbalanced by his parable on patience. He does not make the connection explicit, but his teaching clearly implies that God is as patient with the sinner as the vineyard owner is with his fruitless fig tree.

The overall intent of this gospel passage is to invite a serious examination of conscience. Jesus makes no specific allegations against the members of his audience. It is left to them to search their hearts, identify what stumbling blocks there are to welcoming the good news, and clear the way for true discipleship. It's a well-timed prompt at this stage of Lent.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE

11 March 2022

Dear Father,

Please find herewith two appeals which you may wish to include in your Parish bulletins over the coming weeks.

FLOOD APPEAL – SOCIETY OF ST VINCENT DE PAUL

The floods in Queensland and New South Wales are having a devastating effect on the people living in these regions of Australia. For those wishing to support the long-term recovery work to be undertaken by St Vincent de Paul Society in Queensland and New South Wales, financial donations can be made either directly to either state through:

www.vinnies.org.au - [Flood appeal - St Vincent de Paul Society - Good Works \(vinnies.org.au\)](http://www.vinnies.org.au)

or by calling - Queensland - (07) 3010 1000 or New South Wales – (02) 9568 0262

CARITAS AUSTRALIA – UKRAINE EMERGENCY APPEAL

The people of Ukraine are living through a crisis that will impact the country for years to come. Caritas Australia has launched an appeal to support Caritas Ukraine and other partners in the region. The appeal will support the provision of clean water, hygiene and food kits to vulnerable families, as well as safe collection centres for families on the move, emergency accommodation and support for distressed children and families.

<https://www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/ukraine/>

or contact 1800 024 413

I commend these two appeals to you and your parish communities.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe Caddy".

Father Joe Caddy AM
VICAR GENERAL

Very Reverend Joseph Caddy AM – Vicar General

St Patrick's Centre, 486 Albert Street, East Melbourne VIC 3002 Australia. PO Box 146, East Melbourne VIC 8002 Australia
Telephone: (03) 9926 5638 | Email: vicar.general@cam.org.au | Website: www.melbournecatholic.org

The Archdiocese is committed to the safety, wellbeing and human dignity of children, young people and adults.