

# 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.



Dear Parishioners and Friends of Our Lady Help of Christians and St Francis Xavier,  
**Happy Easter Season**

I have been reflecting on my experience over the Holy Week celebrations and in particular the Sacred Three Days held at Montmorency & Eltham, and the word that I have settled on is 'Gratitude'. On what turned out to be the coldest Easter holiday weekend on record, with plenty of rain and freezing temperatures - the Catholic communities did not disappoint in their efforts to gather in such large numbers and wholeheartedly dive into the spiritual riches on offer over the Triduum. Naturally, I was amazed and delighted by the efforts of so many people to be together at this time. On so many levels - our faith was on display in very tangible ways, in music and good liturgy, in readers and communion ministry, in those helping behind the scenes through planning and the many participants who willingly and spontaneously helped when needed. Those people who cleaned and prepared the churches for each very different celebration of the Lord's sacred 3 days - just amazing! I know that you are aware of the huge demand that is placed on a few people to organise Holy Week each year, and this year was no exception; we were all rewarded by such planning with the numbers of people who attended and celebrated the church's Easter days. To all of you who had a hand in helping I say: THANKYOU - I am deeply grateful to you for your efforts and participation.

- This weekend at all three Masses we welcome a visiting priest: Fr. Brian Traynor, from the Passionist Community in Templestowe. He has spent many years in New Zealand and is on the provincial council of the Passionist Order. Sounds like a Papal candidate to me! Please make him welcome, while I'm in Deniliquin for a family wedding.
- Two Funerals of wonderful parishioners this coming week in SFX.
  - \* On Monday at 11am the funeral mass for Edna Collins our 'oldest' parishioner.
  - \* On Tuesday at 11am the funeral of Patricia Stoddart.
- Our thoughts and prayers for all people caught up with Tropical Cyclone Ilsa in W.A.

Michael

*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](http://pol.org.au/eltham) or [pol.org.au/montmorency](http://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](mailto:michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au)

#### **Parish Office**

all correspondence to:

86 Mayona Road,  
 Montmorency Vic 3094  
 9435 4742

[eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)  
[montmorency@cam.org.au](mailto:montmorency@cam.org.au)

Kate Kogler:

**Parish Secretary**  
 Tue-Fri 9am-3pm

Peter Williams:

**Child Safety Officer**  
[SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au](mailto:SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au)

Kerry Mash:

**Volunteer**  
 Wed & Fri 10am-3pm

Websites:

[www.pol.org.au/montmorency](http://www.pol.org.au/montmorency)  
[www.pol.org.au/eltham](http://www.pol.org.au/eltham)

Facebook:

[St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency](https://www.facebook.com/StFrancisXavierParishMontmorency)

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

[eltham@cam.org.au](mailto:eltham@cam.org.au)

#### **Schools**

##### St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474  
[principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au](http://www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au)

##### Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888  
[principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au](http://www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au)

##### Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Acting Principal: Mark Pinkerton: 9439 7824  
[school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](mailto:school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)  
[www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au](http://www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au)

### RECONCILIATION

available half an hour before  
 any weekday or weekend Parish Mass.

#### Collections: 26 March & 2 April 2023

	OLHC	SFX
Thanksgiving	\$527.00	\$1,275.00
Presbytery	\$908.35	\$966.15

#### Stewardship Offering

Month	OLHC	SFX	Total
January	\$7,248.10	\$8,760.60	\$16,008.70
February	\$5,345.56	\$8,405.00	\$13,750.56
March	\$5,590.48	\$10,815.00	\$16,405.48

## Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

### Saturday 15

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

### Sunday 16

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

### Monday 17

11:00am Funeral: Edna Collins Montmorency

### Tuesday 18

9:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group Montmorency

11:00am Funeral: Trish Stoddart Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry Eltham

### Wednesday 19

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

10:30am ASRC Food Collection Montmorency

1:00pm Small Church Community Montmorency

7:30pm Small Church Community Montmorency

### Thursday 20

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

### Friday 21

9:30am Mass Eltham

### Saturday 22

12:00pm Baptisms: Lara, Dylan, Samuel & Bonnie Montmorency

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

### Sunday 23

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms: Raphael Eltham

### Tuesday 25 - ANZAC Day

9:30am Mass Montmorency

10:30am ANZAC Day Service Montmorency/Eltham RSL

7:30pm Small Church Community Montmorency

### Wednesday 26

6:30am Meditation Montmorency

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Eltham

10:30am ASRC Food Collection Montmorency

### Thursday 27

9:30am Liturgy of the Word with Communion Montmorency

### Friday 28

9:30am Mass Eltham

### Saturday 29

6:00pm Mass Montmorency

### Sunday 30

8:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Mass Eltham

12:00pm Baptism: Quincy Eltham

### Tuesday 2

9:30am Mass Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl Ministry Eltham

### Wednesday 3

6:30am Meditation 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 the recently deceased:

*Arturo Bacani, Edna Collins*

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

*James Caulfield, Greg, Jackson, Wally Krolikowski*

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Gay, Gayle, Helen, Maurice, Edwinda Bacani, Perly Bacani, Rita Bevanda, Maria Bredle, Kim Brisbane, Feliksa Chwasta, Pat Collins, Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert), Ysabelle Fanlo, Alana Foulds, Bob Fraser, Melanie Lam, Lita Lee, Cindy Morrissey, Anne Pearce (nee Callahan), Andrew Pighin, Agatha Spina*

**Eltham**

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

*Denis Morganti, Mary Wordsworth*

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Violetta, Shannon Donahoo, Jade McAlear, Fiona Rogers, Rosemary Scully, Ian Sturman, James Sutton, Sarah Thompson*

To include an anniversary please contact Parish Office

***A Charismatic Mass***

*will be celebrated on*

*Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> April*

*at St Thomas the Apostle Church,*

*251 Diamond Ck Rd, Nth Greensborough.*

*The evening will commence at 7.30pm with Praise & Worship, followed by Mass and supper.*

*All very welcome. For further details, please contact Emilia 0418 120 902 or Rose 0411 650 339.*

**THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU**

I think we would all agree that the Easter Liturgies we have just shared were amazing in their particular portrayal of the journey of Jesus. From Palm Sunday with Hosanna's and the palms waving His triumphant entry into Jerusalem. Then the gentle evening as we celebrated the Lord's Supper, washing each other's feet as He did, then quietly waiting, watching and praying with Him. Our sombre mood at His painful undignified death on the cross, to the uplifting and glorious celebration of the Resurrection to new Life, his own and ours with Him!

Without the generous gift of our musicians and choirs, along with those who volunteered to take part, these liturgies could not have been so beautiful and inspiring. Thank you to all who helped behind the scenes bringing things together and for every one of you who prayerfully and reflectively participated in the ceremonies. We give abundant thanks for all and raise our voices in joyful ALLELUIA! He is Risen

We thank Fr Michael for an extraordinary effort on his part for taking us all with him, our two Faith Communities, through the Sacred Mysteries with such prayer and presence and an added blessing of a sprinkling of Holy water!

God Bless us all as we go forth together in hope, with joy in our hearts to love and serve all those we meet along the way.

**Prayers of the Faithful for 16 April 2023 - Second Sunday of Easter**

**Leader:** O Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of love to all who call. Give heed, O Lord, to our prayers.

For our Holy Father, Pope Francis: that he continues to have the strength and health required to lead the Church and to inspire us to care for each other and our world. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who profess the Catholic faith: may the power and glory of the Resurrection inspire us to be true disciples and may we be re-awakened to the awe and mystery of the real presence of Christ in our Eucharist. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all who seek truth: it was once said that: 'the truth is so obscured these days that only those who love it will find it'. May our search for the truth lead us to love Jesus who **is** our way, our truth and our life. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all the people of the world: Lord Jesus, grant that the whole world may be saved; bring all people to the knowledge of your truth. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For all those who suffer: through homelessness, natural disasters, the breakdown of relationships, or violence: may we pray for them and may Jesus' compassion be shown through our efforts to support them. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who are suffering from illness, or loneliness, or a sense of disillusionment: may Jesus bring to them his comfort and healing. May he strengthen them through the victory of the Cross. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For those who have died recently, especially *Edna Collins*, and for those whom we remember particularly at this time: *James Caulfield, Greg Jackson, Wally Krolikowski, Denis Morganti & Mary Wordsworth*. May they rest forever, Lord, in the light of your face. *Let us pray to the Lord.* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Leader:** Loving God, you fill the hearts of your people with joy and peace, hear these prayers we have offered and answer all our needs.

**All: Amen**

# Was she there?

There is no mention of the mother of Jesus being present at the Crucifixion in the synoptic gospels. Or have we been misreading the texts describing the group of women followers from Galilee who were at his death and subsequently went to the tomb? / **By Margaret Hebblethwaite**

**Mary** (or Maria/Mariam as I suggested in my article in the 24 March issue) stood at the foot of the Cross. Or did she? The mainstream view in historical-critical biblical scholarship is that she did not. The reasoning is simple. She is only said to be there in the fourth gospel, which is drenched in theological interpretation. Matthew, Mark and Luke (the synoptic gospels) mention other women at the Cross, but do not mention her.

This possibility is unthinkable and we resist it. What would we do without Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*, Michelangelo's *Pietà*, or van der Weyden's fainting Vergin in his *Descent from the Cross*? What would we do without the Fourth Station of the Cross, or the scenes of Mother and the Beloved Disciple flanking the crucified Lord? We have to admit it is indeed odd that she is not mentioned in the synoptics. John makes up for it by giving particular prominence to her at the Crucifixion, with Jesus' dying words addressed to her, "Woman, here is your son," and to the disciple he loved, "here is your mother". Did the evangelist invent this story for theological reasons? Elizabeth A. Johnson summarises the accepted view in *Truly Our Sister*: "What counts against the historicity of this particular Johannine scene of the mother and the beloved disciple is its over symbolism, along with its omission in the other gospels. In particular, the silence of Luke (the most Marian of the gospels) "indicates that she was not there".



Michaelangelo's Pietà

**There has been** no lack of theological explanations of the supposed symbolism: she represents the Christian (Origen); or the New Eve (second century); or a figure of the Church (fourth century); or is presented as the mother of Christians (Gregory VII onwards, the interpretation Catholics are most familiar with). Rudolf Bultmann said she represented "Jewish Christianity"; Raymond Brown linked her with Isaiah's "Lady Zion"; Beverly Roberts Gaventa sees Jesus divesting himself of "those relationships that characterised his earthly existence". In short, these are (in the words of Sandra Schneiders) "two of the most exhaustively exegeted verses in the Gospel, whose full meaning continues to elude fully satisfactory interpretation". With such a wealth of (often conflicting) symbolic interpretations, we might ask what need we have of historical accuracy.

But suppose she was *not* there? That too would be odd. The family went every year to Jerusalem for Passover (Luke 2:41). Since Mariam was indeed in Jerusalem that year, in the Upper Room (Acts 1:14), then she was presumably there at the time of the Passover, when Jesus was crucified. It is inconceivable that a mother would not stay with her son as he was facing death, and the more painful the death the more unlikely it is that she would abandon him. A dead body is always entrusted to the next of kin, so it would be extraordinary if the mother did not go to the tomb. Have we ever heard of a mother not going to her own son's funeral, no matter how distraught she was? Perhaps her name is not specified because it was so obvious that she was there.

So there are oddities on both sides, but they do not stop there. The synoptics tell us that there were women followers from Galilee observing the Crucifixion, and subsequently going to the tomb, and three are named in each gospel, of whom the first in every case is Maria of Magdala. In second place at the Cross we have, in Matthew, "Maria the mother of Jacob and Joseph" (27:56), paralleled in Mark, "Maria the mother of Jacob the Little and Joses" (15:40). ("Joses" is a familiar form of Joseph and "James" is the customary English translation of "Jacob"; "the Little" is often interpreted as "the Younger" or as "the Less".) Luke mentions "the women that followed him from Galilee" at the Cross but delays giving their

names until the next chapter, where he has “Maria the [mother] of Jacob” (24:10). At the tomb, Matthew also has “the other Maria” (27:61; 28:1) while Mark has “Maria the [mother] of Joses” (15:47) followed in the next verse by “Maria the [mother] of Jacob” (16:1). These are all evidently the same person. There is a third woman mentioned in the group of Galileans, a different name in each gospel - “the mother of the sons of Zebedee” in Matthew, “Salome” in Mark, “Joanna” in Luke - but the names of Maria of Magdala and the other Maria are constant.

Who is this other Maria, the mother of Jacob and Joses, who is mentioned almost as prominently as Maria of Magdala, the apostle to the apostles? Richard Bauckham points out that she “appears in all seven of the lists in the passion-resurrection narratives of the synoptics. Obscure as she and her sons are to us, she was evidently a well-known figure for the evangelists and their first readers/hearers.” But she is ignored, and we may have the impression we have not heard of her before.

But have we? In Matthew 13 there is a mother called Mariam with Jacob and Joseph in her family (and also Simon and Jude). In Mark’s parallel chapter also, she is called Maria and the children are Jacob and Joses (and Jude and Simon). (The names Mariam and Maria are used interchangeably in the New Testament.) Note that Matthew uses the form “Joseph” both here and in the passion narrative, while Mark has “Joses” in both places, confirming the impression that it is the same family that is spoken of, or the coincidence would be incredible. And who is this woman? She lives in Nazareth. She is the mother of Jesus! But Catholics have tended to ignore these passages because they raise uncomfortable (though not insuperable) questions about her perpetual virginity.

“Curiouser and curiouser”, as Alice said in Wonderland. If “the other Maria” at the Cross was the mother of Jesus, then why is she is not explicitly identified as such? For the great majority of biblical scholars, she cannot be Jesus’ mother, simply because it does not say so. Bauckham is quite definite: “We may first of all rule out the possibility that she is the mother of Jesus, since it is incredible that Mark, Matthew or pre-Markan tradition should choose this way of referring to the mother of Jesus.” Such a way of referring to Jesus’ mother would be “incredible” (Raymond Brown), “highly odd” (David F. Wright), “extraordinary” (Joel Marcus).

So it is odd all round. It is odd if Jesus’ mother was not at the death and burial. It is odd if there were two Marias in Jesus’ life who were both the mother of Jacob and Joses (common names though they were). But on the other side it is odd if the mother of Jesus was referred to as the mother of Jesus’ “brothers” (leaving aside the thorny question of whether they were step-brothers, half-brothers, or cousins). The bizarreness could perhaps only be explained if Jesus himself had asked that she should not be called his mother. And the amazing fact is that he did just that. His mother comes to see Jesus, together with his brothers and sisters, and Jesus is told “your mother and your siblings are standing outside, wanting to talk to you” (Matthew 12:47). And he replies “Who is my mother? And who are my brothers and sisters?” And he stretches his hand towards his disciples saying, “Look! Here are my mother and my brothers and sisters! For anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister and mother.”

It is a difficult text, but not a garbled account, for it is recorded in all three synoptic gospels, which indicates it was an important part of his teaching. Many have seen it as an insult to his family, implying that neither

his mother nor his siblings were his disciples but were on the contrary opposed to his ministry. I believe that is a misinterpretation. The point is that Jesus was an egalitarian, teaching that no one is to be favoured because of their birth. What matters is not who your human parents were, but whether you live as a child of God. Jesus’ message was this: do not honour Mariam for being my mother, but for her faith and her actions.

It was the custom to identify women by their close male relatives, but in the light of this instruction it was preferable not to identify Mariam as mother of Jesus Christ the Lord, but more modestly of his brothers. They played a major part in the early Christian community so the name of “Maria the mother of Jacob and Joses” easily identified her to the first hearers of the gospels. In a similar way, the author of the letter of Jude identifies himself as “brother of Jacob” (1:1), rather than in the more obvious but boastful manner as brother of Jesus.

**Some scholars** favour the idea that “Maria the mother of Jacob and Joses” was Jesus’ mother. St John Chrysostom was among them, and in the last 50 years we can add John Fenton, Robert Gundry, Hisako Kinukawa, Ched Myers, J. Ramsey Michaels and John-Christian Eurell. If this argument is found persuasive, the agony of the mother at the Cross, and her mandate from her dying son - and indeed her Easter witness to his resurrection - are revealed to be historical events, and not just fictional symbols. After all, the writer of the fourth gospel tells us that his account of what happened at the Cross is indeed historical - an eye-witness account: “He who saw this has testified so that you also may believe. His testimony is true” (John 19:35).

**Margaret Hebblethwaite** is writing a book about the women in the gospels.

# A truly Easter faith

It is in engaging with suffering that Christians are able to say 'My Lord and my God'

LUKE BELL

**Touch the Wounds: On Suffering, Trust & Transformation**

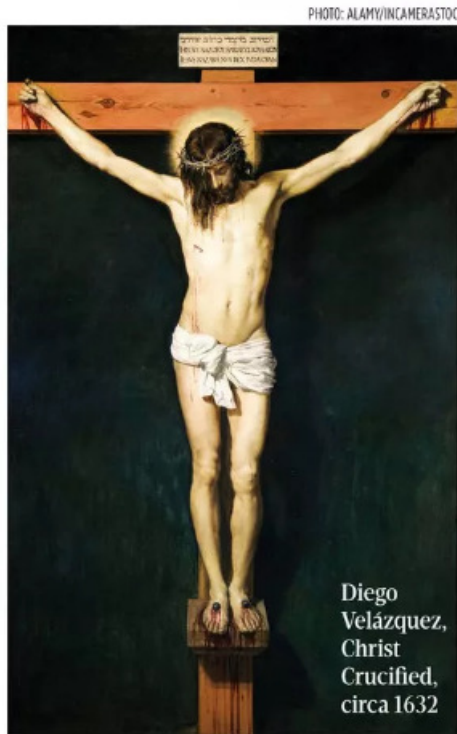
TOMÁŠ HALÍK

(UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME PRESS, 170 PP, £21.99)

**Tomáš Halík** is a priest, university professor and pastor in Prague, and president of the Czech Christian Academy. A veteran of the underground Church in his country, he is a thinker with a record of engagement with public and ecclesiastical life. In this work, translated by Gerald Turner, he meditates on the encounter of his namesake, the Apostle, with Christ, resurrected and wounded. His thesis is, "The painful wounds of our world are Christ's wounds." In other words, they are where we meet God.

It follows from the words of Jesus, "Just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me", that "people on the fringes (and on the fringes of the Church), the needy (not only socially), and wounded (not only physically), are the sure and only path to the Father that cannot be relativised or circumvented". And, he adds, "We can encounter him even in the depths of our own pain." Wounds can violate trust, but they can also take us on "the path to a deeper understanding of meaning". The juxtaposition of Pilate's "Behold the Man" and St Thomas' "My Lord and my God" shows us "the oneness of the crucified and resurrected Jesus", the manifestation of "relationship with us and to us" and "relationship with the Father". His "wounds seen from two points of view elicit two reactions, clothed in two words - man and God". The truth of the Chalcedonian dogma about him being true God and true man "is glimpsed through Jesus' wounds".

**It is important** to keep this in our mind's eye. When the crucifix is removed from the public domain, it is liable to be replaced with something more horrific. Fr Tomáš recounts how there came to his city an exhibition of human bodies stripped of their skin, "faceless and nameless", the "total depersonalisation of the human being". Here death, "maybe the last island of mystery", was absorbed



into "the ubiquitous industry of cheap entertainment". The person of the wounded Christ stands against this. And against untruth. Sharing the weakness of Christ, Fr Tomáš had the courage to tell a politician with whom he had just been debating on television: "You do not realise, don't you, that what you have been declaring to the camera the whole time just isn't the truth?" The mocking response he got, dishonouring the word "truth" and echoing Pilate's questions "What is truth?", was not the last word because "Jesus returned after the night of the Cross and the tomb", bearing truth "entirely outside the realm of power and violence".

The author is right to equate "the atheistic denial of God and the theistic straitjacketing of mystery into unequivocal definitions" and to eschew the attempt "to grasp the essence of God as an abstraction", but he is, too, ready to follow Luther in jettisoning metaphysics. Deep thought can orientate us to the mystery beyond the limitations of mind and matter and give us "openness to the Incomprehensible" by clearing away conceptual obstacles to faith, whatever the academic fashion of the day. It is not enough to say (in the context of

atheistic criticism), "contemporary theology has understood that the mental models of classical metaphysics are really no longer viable", as though our epoch had a corner on wisdom. Strangely, too, he is apparently reluctant to confront the errors of Nietzsche, unlike, for example, Pope Benedict XVI. Yet his timely and outspoken book does point us to the truth, that is to the One who said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life". And it helps to discern imposters, as (according to Sulpicius Severus) St Martin did when confronted with Satan in the guise of Christ. "Where," he asked, "are your wounds?"

**Above all**, it leads us to "a truly Easter faith", one that is "crucified and resurrected". This is faith "in spite of everything" and "regardless". Fr Tomáš characterises it as "wounded, pierced, yet constantly questioning and seeking" and sees its exemplification in the cry of Jesus from the Cross, "Why have you abandoned me?" arguing that the continuation of Jesus' dialogue "with the Father when, in his death throes, he can no longer expect any answer, is in human terms a portent of the Resurrection". The "dawn of the Easter morning" is within "that moment before which, according to the gospels, even the sun hid its face". St John the Evangelist, we are reminded, "rightly portrays the Cross also as a victory, Christ's humiliation as 'exaltation' and instead of the dreadful question of the Abandoned One, he already hears the peace and reconciliation (*shalom*) of the victorious morning that is approaching: It is finished!"

This is reminiscent of St Thérèse of Lisieux's experience of the dark night of the spirit in which fog invaded her soul and the sweet image of her heavenly homeland completely disappeared, the darkness seemingly to mock her with the taunt that nothing awaited her but the night of nothingness. In that she was in the union of faith with her crucified Lord, and so with the wounds of the whole world. And here was hidden the ecstasy that came in the last seconds of her life. Fr Tomáš points us to faith of this order.

Roster for THIS WEEKEND: 15/16 April	
Armstrong, Miranda	H10:00
Azzopardi, Michael	E10:00
Cotter, Anne	W8:30
Davidson, John	W8:30
Dopheide, Marlis	H10:00
Edwards, Elisabeth	E10:00
Iliffe, Yvonne	E10:00
Kulkens, Mark	W6:00
Mallia, Anthony	C10:00
Maynes, Phil	W6:00
Nolan, Kathleen	PRYR
Nolan, Michael	PRYR
Reardon, Kathy	ASE
Reardon, Kathy	E10:00
Reardon, Peter	E10:00
Rigg Family	PRSE
Said, Marie	ASRC
Said, Mike	ASRC
Scully, Helen	ASE
Taylor, Trish	R10:00
Roster for NEXT WEEKEND: 22/23 April	
Davidson, John	PRYR
Dunell, Linda	ASE
French, Jossie	W8:30
Love, Philip	W8:30
McAleer, Peter	ASRC
Rodriguez, Carlos	W6:00
Rough Family	PRSE
Williams, Peter	W6:00
	C10:00
	E10:00
	E10:00
	E10:00
	E10:00
	E10:00
	H10:00
	H10:00
	R10:00
<b>ASE = Altar Society @ Eltham; C = Commentator; E = Euch. Minister;</b> <b>H = Hospitality; PRSE = Pilgrim Rosary Statue @ Eltham;</b> <b>W = Minister of the Word; R = Reader</b>	



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE  
OF MELBOURNE

Easter is upon us—the time of celebrating in a special and joyous way the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Because of the resurrection, we know that ‘love is stronger than Death’ (Song of Songs 8:6), for the God who is love has conquered death.

The Easter Triduum is the highlight of the liturgical year and the culmination of our Lenten journey. At St Patrick’s Cathedral, thousands gathered over the Triduum to be with our Lord and welcome the new light of resurrection. [Take a look at our photo gallery to get a glimpse of the beauty and solemnity of the Easter celebrations.](#)

Also, if you missed Archbishop Peter A Comensoli’s Easter message, reflecting on three important things that flow from Christ’s resurrection, [you can read, or watch, the whole thing here.](#)

This Easter Octave concludes with Divine Mercy Sunday. Someone especially influenced by the message of Divine Mercy is Tommy Canning, a Scotland-born sacred artist who started out making comic books. When a trip of Rome turned into a ‘Damascus experience’, he strove to glorify God through his work and became a world-renowned maker of sacred art. [Tommy shares some of his story with us and his thoughts on the ‘way of beauty’](#) in evangelisation.

Stephen Fernandes is one of the two permanent deacons recently ordained at St Patrick’s Cathedral. Originally from India, Deacon Stephen looks back on how the grace of God has guided him through many turns to reach this point of serving Christ’s Church in such a special way. [Read more about Deacon Stephen and his story here.](#)

On Friday 31 March, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli announced the appointment of Dr Edward Simons as the new Executive Director of Education at Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS). This is a pivotal role in Australia’s largest Catholic education entity. [You can learn more about Dr Simons and read Archbishop Comensoli’s announcement here.](#)

On Wednesday 29 March, residents, staff and invited guests joined Archbishop Peter A Comensoli [to officially open Calvary Health Care’s landmark retirement living, health and aged-care precinct, Calvary Kooyong.](#) With the aim of helping residents and patients to ‘live well’ as they age, or as their care needs change, this was an exciting development in Calvary’s important work.

[Also, this year ACU celebrates 10 years of its annual Prize for Poetry.](#) Reflecting on a decade of the competition, ACU Vice-President Fr Anthony Casamento said, ‘The ACU Prize for Poetry was established 10 years ago to acknowledge that literature, and indeed the arts, is a large contributor to the understanding of the human heart, soul, and mind.’ Entries are now open for this year’s prize, the theme of which is ‘Love’.

We pray this Easter season will be a time for you to experience anew the love and mercy of the risen Jesus, who calls us into his wonderful light.

[www.melbournecatholic.org](http://www.melbournecatholic.org)

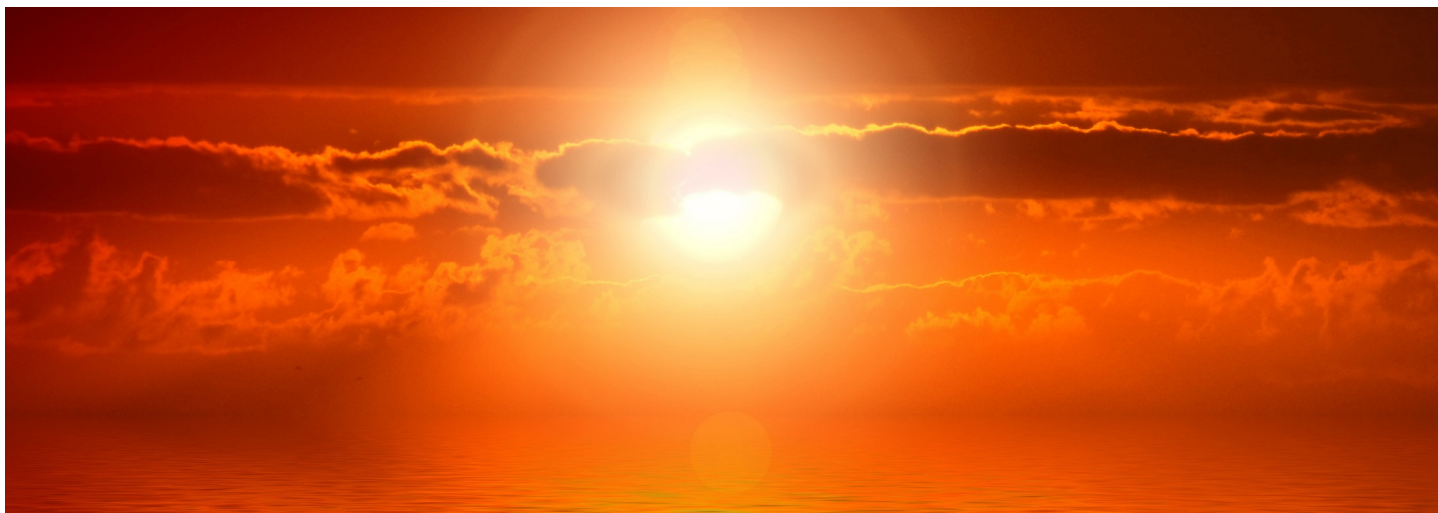
## Gospel: John 20:19-31

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 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.



## Reflection:

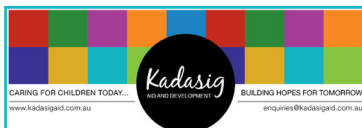
No two gospels recount Jesus' post-resurrection appearances in the same way, but all four are agreed on one thing. Women are the first witnesses and none of them are believed. While this isn't made explicit in John, it's implied in the fear that drove the disciples to meet behind closed doors in spite of Mary Magdalene's testimony (20:18).

Jesus proceeds to bless them with peace. In fact, in this episode Jesus actualizes the many gifts he had spoken about with his disciples in the farewell discourse: the Spirit (14:16-17), peace (14:27), friendship (15:14), joy (16:24), faith (17:8) and mission (17:18). Just as God breathed life into the first human being (Gen 2:7), so Jesus breathes new life into the disciples.

The story of Thomas' transformation from sceptic to enthusiastic believer leads beautifully to the original conclusion to the gospel. Thomas may have had the benefit of seeing the fleshly wounds of Jesus, but John declares that the signs Jesus gave in his earthly life are mediated no less powerfully to succeeding generations by word and sacrament.

We hear this reading every year on this Sunday. It proceeds through four inter-connected acts. Act one is Jesus' appearing and greetings of peace. Act two is his commissioning of the disciples in the Spirit. Act three is Thomas' conversion. Act four is the conclusion. While they flow naturally from one to the other, each act deserves its own time and space. There's plenty of energy in the mix of action and dialogue. One highlight is certainly Thomas' confession of faith, another is the final declaration of the gospel's purpose. Both should captivate the assembly.

**Break Open the Word 2023**



### **KADASIG AID & DEVELOPMENT Inc** **2023 AUTUMN NEWSLETTER** **Reflecting on Christmas & New Year 2022**

Sincere thanks to all our wonderful sponsors & friends who supported our Christmas projects. All children/families & staff received a Christmas Hamper/Bundle of Joy, to allow all to have food for their special celebrations. Extra donations, such as rice, were distributed & gratefully received from sponsors.

Just prior to Christmas there was a large Christmas get together of all Barili sponsor children & their families. Part of the celebrations was for all sponsor children to form a circle; they had to have a name tag around their neck with their name & the name of their sponsor. In the circle they had time to think of their sponsors & to pray for them. It was also lovely that the mothers & some fathers joined in the activities. There was a great deal of love & laughter! Our programs are so very personal & special. Please visit the website to see some photos of this special time, enjoy them! ([www.kadasigaid.com.au](http://www.kadasigaid.com.au))