



Sunday, March 22, 2020

The Fourth Sunday of Lent

OUR VISION:

**"WE ARE CONTINUALLY ATTRACTING PEOPLE TO ST LUKE'S AND EVERYONE WHO COMMITS TO BEING A MEMBER OF OUR COMMUNITY IS TRANSFORMED IN EVERY AREA OF THEIR LIFE BY HAVING A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS."**

**First Reading**

1 Sm 16:1. 6-7. 10-13

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

**Responsorial Psalm**

*The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.*

**Second reading**

Eph 5:8-14

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said: Wake up from your sleep, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

**Gospel Acclamation**

*Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!*

I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.

**Gospel**

Jn 9:1. 6-9. 13-17. 34-38

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So, the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored. His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away. Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

**APOSTLES' Creed**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into

heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

**Reflection:**

Upon reflection, the Gospel of the man born blind is a joyful one. Imagine this man's elation at having his sight restored. As the story develops the all-seeing Pharisees move to spiritual blindness by putting on the blinkers of the law. They cannot recognise Jesus or his works of mercy because of their tunnel vision. Jesus doesn't fit their worldview. Meanwhile the blind beggar, who has sight restored, goes on to gain insight about who Jesus is and the way that God works in the world; he begins to see how shallow and pathetic the Pharisees really are. This Gospel also contains a critical theological lesson: disability and illness do not come from personal sinfulness. It's surprising that we need to keep saying this, but too readily we hear otherwise intelligent and good Christians, for example, telling us that some illnesses have been 'sent' by God as punishment for sins or they wonder what their families have 'done' to deserve disabled children. It's true that God permits us to live in an imperfect world where we are prone to illness and disability. But that same world gives us the freedom to be creative in the face of adversity, to be compassionate with those who are sick or disabled and free to believe that there is a purpose for each human life. God, the source of all love, does not actively send bad things to us, instead, he is our constant companion in dealing with them; giving us the courage and strength to cope with, and sometimes overcome, them. The task of this joyful season is to bring our good humour and compassion to bear on the blind spots in our own lives and be on our guard for the times when we are too confident about who God is, how he works or what he can or cannot do. May it never be said of us that we were so consumed by our own religious vision that we missed God's woods for the trees.

- Fr Richard Leonard SJ

**We welcome this week as our  
Celebrant: Fr Peter Williams**

### OUR COMMUNITY PRAYER

O God, You show us in St Luke, our patron, a person of faith who desired all people to come to know and love you in the community of your Church. Teach us to embrace what St Luke pioneered: discipleship of Jesus Christ. Trusting in your love and grace and nourished by Word and Sacrament may we grow in our relationship with you and together make our Catholic Faith Community a community of communities, a sanctuary where the thirsty come to drink in the midst of their journey, and a center of constant missionary outreach. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

St Luke, pray for us.

St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, pray for us.

Mary, Mother of God, pray for us.

### Positions Vacant

\*Volunteers – Mamre Creche CatholicCare

\*Disability Support Workers (Casual)

CatholicCare

\*Parish Secretary (part-time) - St Madeleine

Sophie Barat Parish, Kenthurst **Applications**

**close 27 March.**

More details [parracatholic.org/employment](http://parracatholic.org/employment)

### Some Family Lenten ideas:

Give up television and the internet for a day.

Genuinely compliment someone who isn't expecting it.

Pray for good things for someone who has been unkind to you.

Plan a simple meal and talk as a family about how to help the hungry.

Pray for people in the RCIA program preparing to enter the Church.

Do a craft, piece of art, or creative project that glorifies the Lord.

Memorise a prayer that you don't already know by heart.

Pray the Rosary, or even just a decade, as a family.

Learn about a saint that your family is unfamiliar with.

Thank someone who has been a good influence on your life.

Clear your mind of other things and sit quietly with God.

Do something to help the Earth.

Read one book of the Bible.

Listen to religious music while doing a task you have been putting off.

Watch a religious movie together as a family.

Pray for world political and religious leaders.

Give up sweets and other snacks for a day.

Surprise someone by doing a task or chore that they normally do.

### Mamre House Relief Volunteer English Teachers

We are needing a few volunteer relief teachers to assist with our English classes for refugee women at CatholicCare Mamre House, St Marys. The classes are on Tuesday or Wednesdays from 10am to 2pm during school terms. There are about 8 women in each class and the lesson is prepared for the teacher. Experience teaching English is not essential. For more information, please contact Sr Janet on 0418 690 487.

### Natural Fertility Services

Natural Fertility Services Parramatta offers couples a NATURAL option to plan their families. Natural Family Planning is for couples wanting to achieve & avoid pregnancy. It is suitable for couples at all stages of life who are looking for an effective, natural option of contraception. For more info or to book an appointment, contact Catherine on 0400 427 605, [catherine.bourne@parracatholic.org](mailto:catherine.bourne@parracatholic.org) or visit [www.parralmf.org.au](http://www.parralmf.org.au).

## COVID-19 UPDATE FROM THE DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA

**Catholics from the Diocese of Parramatta are, from 20 March 2020, dispensed from their Sunday Mass obligation until further notice (Canon 1248 §2 and Catechism 2181.)**

**That is: it is not a sin to miss Sunday Mass at this time.**

### St Luke's Local News

**Mother of Perpetual Help Novena, Stations of the Cross and Lent Retreats Suspended until further notice.**

**Our Sacramental Program for 2020 may need to be postponed. Further details in coming weeks.**

**Youth Corner** ([Saintlukesyg@gmail.com](mailto:Saintlukesyg@gmail.com))



**Our 'Saints-in-Training' youth group is suspended until further notice.**

# MESSAGE FROM DEACON TONY

We live in uncertain times, with almost daily changes to how we interact with each other necessary in order to best cope with the COVID-19 threat.

Despite the need for physical **spacing**, let's not forget that social **connection** is now more than ever vital for us.

We will continue to update our Facebook page as things develop. If you have not already done so, please go to this page ([www.facebook.com/stlukesmarsdenpark](http://www.facebook.com/stlukesmarsdenpark)) and 'like' us so that you get our updates as soon as they occur.

If, as seems likely, we may not be able to gather together for Mass in weeks to come, we can still connect online. Our Diocese is looking at online options that may assist with communities to stay connected, and I hope to be able to provide further details of this soon.

So, regardless of what happens, please keep 10am on Sundays free in your calendar so that we can come together, if not in person, then virtually in prayer.

Annette and I offer you every blessing for health of mind, body and soul at this time.

- Deacon Tony Hoban  
Pastoral Director

### WEEKEND MASS

Sunday 10.00am

St Luke's Catholic College (Enter via Frontier Ave Marsden Park)

Baptisms available most Sundays after Mass. Apply via email.

### CONTACT US

Pastoral Director:

Deacon Tony Hoban

Phone:

(02) 8840 8521

Email:

[marsdenpark@parracatholic.org](mailto:marsdenpark@parracatholic.org)

Website:

[stlukesmarsdenpark.org.au](http://stlukesmarsdenpark.org.au)

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/stlukesmarsdenpark](http://www.facebook.com/stlukesmarsdenpark)

Address:

2 Springdale St, Marsden Park

Postal Address:

PO Box 85, Plumpton NSW 2761

**SCHOOL ENQUIRIES:** 9854 3100

[www.stlukesmarsdenpark.catholic.edu.au](http://www.stlukesmarsdenpark.catholic.edu.au)