



ONE MISSION, TWO PARISHES

Saint Timothy's & Saint Luke the Evangelist
Catholic Parishes, Forest Hill & Blackburn South

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WEEKLY BULLETIN: SUNDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2024

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR B

REACH OUT IN LOVE AND MERCY: MARK 6: 32 - 34



Readings this week: Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18; Ps 115; Romans 8:31-34; Mark 9:2-10.

Gospel Reflection ~ Greg Sunter

Like so many other important events in the Bible, the events of this week's gospel occur on a high mountaintop. Mountaintops were places of special and dramatic encounter with God and the disciples' experience of the transfiguration is clearly no exception! In this instance, the disciples suddenly see Jesus' power fully revealed but they fail to fully understand what is going on. One might think how much more obvious could God be about trying to reveal Jesus' identity to the disciples, but still they don't really catch on. Peter thinks he has caught on to the message. When the great prophets Elijah and Moses appear beside Jesus, Peter understands Jesus to be part of the line of prophets in the Hebrew tradition. He believes he has had a great insight and is so impressed that he wants to remain on the mountaintop – setting up tents in honour of Jesus, Elijah and Moses. In essence, Peter has still only partially understood who Jesus is. He thinks he is the Messiah, but a Messiah in the same mould as the prophets of old, a prophet of the old tradition. He has not understood that Jesus is breaking that mould and creating a new vision, a new tradition – one that is endorsed by the voice of God on the mountaintop. Rather than allowing the disciples to set up tents and remain in the 'high' of this experience, Jesus immediately leads the boys back down the mountain. This is perhaps the greatest message of this passage: that life is not lived on the mountaintop but back down in the valley. Although the mountaintop experience may have provided some new insight and new energy, it is back down in the valley that the world waits; that the real work needs to be done; that the sick and the poor are crying out for God's love and mercy.

Scriptural context – Not quite: Throughout the gospel of Mark, it is important to look at the stories that lie either side of important events to pick up the subtlety of the gospel writer's message. In this instance, the passage that immediately follows the Transfiguration is a story of the disciples trying unsuccessfully to heal a boy and Jesus having to intervene. It reinforces the message of the mountaintop in which the disciples still only partially understand Jesus' purpose and presence. They still haven't fully mastered who Jesus is and so they have not fully mastered the ability to heal.

Have you thought? Mountaintop Moments: Throughout the Bible there are instances of important encounters with God on mountaintops. Even this week's first reading, the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham, occurs on a mountaintop. It is not the potential sacrifice, but the new relationship between God and Abraham that is a mountaintop moment. In modern language, we often speak about 'peak experiences' – moments of exceptional clarity, intense emotion or extraordinary accomplishment. Sometimes, like Peter, we are tempted to try to remain 'in the moment' rather than using the peak experience as a motivator for when we go back down the mountain to our normal (if perhaps changed) existence. **Gospel Focus – A new vision:** Part of Peter's mistake is to see the appearance of Elijah and Moses as a confirmation that Jesus has come to continue the work of the great prophets of the past. Rather than placing Jesus in the old tradition of the prophets, the appearance of Elijah and Moses, together with the voice of God, is to endorse the new direction that Jesus' ministry is taking. Jesus' new vision for the world is informed by the relationships forged between God and the prophets of the past, but it is a vision of a completely different way of relating to God: a much more personal relationship that calls us to respond from the heart to those around us.

REACH OUT IN ...

Whitehorse Deanery
Eastern Region
Archdiocese of Melbourne

T.B.A.

Parish Priest

Sonya O'Farrell

Part-time Parish Secretary

Wednesdays,

Thursdays & Fridays

10.00am – 2.00pm

SUNDAY MASS

ST: & SL: Saturday Vigil @ 6.00pm

Sunday ST: @ 10.30am *Australian*

5.00pm – *Vietnamese*

& SL: @ 8.30am

WEEKDAY MASS & SL: ROSARY

ST: Weds. & Thurs. @ 9.15am

Fri. @ 10.00am

1st Wednesday of the month
@ 10.00am Mass of Anointing.

SL: Tues. @ 5.00pm

Wed., Thurs. & Fri. @ 9.30am

Sat. Mass @ 9.00am

RECONCILIATION

SL: Saturday 9.30am – 10.00am &

5.30pm – 5.50pm

SL: EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed
for Adoration Wednesday

Start: 7.00pm | End: 8.00pm

MACS Catholic Primary School

21 Stevens Road, Vermont, 3133 Vic

Tel: (03) 9878 4188

Ms. Anne Maree Jones **Principal**

Email: principal@sttims.catholic.edu.au

Website: <https://sttims.catholic.edu.au/>

MACS Catholic Primary School

46 Orchard Grove,

Blackburn South Vic 3130

Tel: (03) 9877 4023

Mrs. Clare Ryan: **Principal**

Email: principal@slblackburnstc.catholic.edu.au

Website: slblackburnstc.catholic.edu.au

Prayer to Saint Timothy

O God, who adorned Saint Timothy
with apostolic virtues, grant,
through his intercession that, living
justly and devoutly in this present
age, we may merit to reach our
heavenly homeland. 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. Amen.

Patron Saint of stomach and intestinal
disorders.

Prayer to Saint Luke the Evangelist

O St. Luke, you were chosen to reveal
in preaching and writing God's love
for the poor. Moved by the heavenly
Spirit of Love, you detailed the life of
Jesus, showing His divinity and His
genuine compassion for all human
beings. Help those who already glory
in God's name to persevere in one
heart and one mind and inspire all
people that they may hear the Good
News of Salvation. Amen

Patron Saint of artists, physicians,
surgeons, students and butchers.

WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER this weekend all who are sick, especially
Maura, Kit Bing Fan, Tony Keaney, Kathryn Holmes, Therese O'Donoghue,
Stewart Davis, Mark, Jerry Donoghue, Margaret Hayes, Kevin Bolton and all
those Parishioners unable to be among us this weekend. For all who have died
recently, for the casualties of war in Ukraine, Israel and Gaza and for those
whose anniversaries occur about this time especially Anthony Spiteri,
Geraldine White, Arden Nelson, Albert Johnson, John Cotter, Carol Papillo,
Dorothy Faulkner, Carmel Curtain, Elio Lessio, Peter Waddington, Robert Defina,
Rosemary Cardenti, Aquinaldo Buaquina, Angelita Gonzales, Andrew Yeo,
Ferruccio Cigana and Graham Williams. May they rest in peace.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK: **Lent 2024 ~ Wednesday:**
St Peter Damian, bishop, doctor; **Thursday:** The Chair of St Peter, apostle; **Friday:**
St Polycarp, bishop, martyr; **Masses this weekend:** Preface of First Sunday of
Lent, Eucharistic Prayer I; Eucharistic Acc. No. I.

WELCOME TO REV FR DEAN MATHIESON OFMCAP TO OUR
'ONE MISSION TWO PARISHES' who arrives and joins us this weekend to
serve as a temporary appointment.

LENTEN DEVOTIONS: **ST** Lenten devotions = Stations of the Cross on Friday
mornings at 9.30am throughout Lent; **SL** Lenten devotions = Stations of the
Cross on Friday afternoons at 3.00pm throughout Lent.



PROJECT COMPASSION ~ RONITA'S STORY, PHILIPPINES. You
can help people like Ronita to find work and create a better future
for herself and her loved ones by making a donation through
Project Compassion boxes and envelopes, visiting
www.caritas.org.au/project-compassion or phoning 1800 024 413.

PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES are available in the Church foyer/narthex
for you to please take with you this weekend.

A GENUINE THANKYOU TO YOU, ONE AND ALL for your kind presence
and exceptionally generous presents as well as affirming cards last weekend
at our Sunday Masses and gatherings at **ST & SL** afterwards to exchange our
farewells ~ from you to me and from me to you. We've journeyed together
these more than a few years and it has been a blessing for me to accompany
you. Thankyou also to the Combined Parish Pastoral Council for deciding to do
what we have done together - the ways we have done it and last weekend as
well. May Blessings continue as you embark on this next chapter of the journey,
together, with the accompaniment of your next Pastor. Please remember
always: "Without the Way there is no going, Without the Truth there is no
knowing, without the Life there is no living ... He has made all the difference by
becoming one of us." Thomas A' Kempis. Gentle regards, Fr Gerard

CATHOLIC VOCATIONS: Eight men were accepted into the Seminary of
Corpus Christi College Carlton for the Archdiocese of Melbourne this year:
Chinh Tran, Rohan Prince, Luke Kennedy, Luke Emslie, Tung Phan,
Joseph Maae, Patrick Harris and Mathews Noble. Please continue to keep
them in your prayers.

MELBOURNE CATHOLIC: [From death to life](#)

A VOCATION VIEW: God calls Abraham to be willing to sacrifice all that is
dear to him, even his own son, Isaac. In order to respond to a priestly or religious
vocation, the same call to sacrifice is heard. Are you willing? (Gen. 22:1-2)

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: "'Here I am!' he answered."- Genesis 22:11 It is
easy to say, "Here I am, Lord," when we are kneeling in church. But how easy
is it to say "Here I am, Lord," when a neighbour needs our help, or when we are
invited to join a parish ministry, or when we are asked to provide financial
support? Often times we are called when it's not convenient for us. Discipleship
is not easy, most of the time it will make us uncomfortable and vulnerable.
(ST: Weekly First Collection Presbytery Envelopes: \$144.20; Thanksgiving
Stewardship Envelopes this week: \$125; Vietnamese Donation: \$221.95; SL: Last
week's Church Stewardship Envelopes: \$320; Last week's Presbytery
Stewardship Envelopes: \$258).

MAJELLAN FAMILY MEDIA: [Swap grumbling for grace: What will you fast from?](#)

ACNC COMMUNICATIONS: [Charity news and updates](#)

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS who have
walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge
the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the
ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

WEEKEND PARISH MINISTRY ROSTER

MINISTERS OF THE WORD

SATURDAY	6:00 PM SL	Shirley Prabha
	6:00 PM ST	Rachel Greal
SUNDAY	8:30 AM SL	Peter McKeown
	10:30 AM ST	J Rousetty & S Chin
	5.00PM ST	Ha Cao & Thu Ngo

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

SATURDAY	6:00 PM SL	Godfrey Thong
	6:00 PM ST	Mary Italiano
SUNDAY	8:30 AM SL	Margaret Gearon
	10:30 AM ST	Anico Yee
	5.00PM ST	Hoang Nguyen

SLIDE OPERATORS

SATURDAY	6:00 PM SL	David Prabha
	6:00 PM ST	Volunteer
SUNDAY	8:30 AM SL	Paul Tierney
	10:30 AM ST	Lee Min Yee
	5.00PM ST	Toan Tran

SL WELCOMERS 24/25 FEB

6:00 PM Tony Fernandez
8:30 AM Marie Pekish
10:30 AM Volunteer
HOSPITALITY

THE BASIC LITURGICAL MINISTRY

SL WELCOMERS 2/3 MAR

6:00 PM John Ryan
8:30 AM Margaret Gearon
10:30 AM Volunteer

24 AND 25 FEBRUARY

SL CHURCH CLEANING
 2nd Mar – Bernard's Team
 Bernard O'Malley, Joanne Nolan,
 Melina Barcellona
 & Anne Allsopp

ST CHURCH CLEANING

9th March @ 8am
 Toan Tran, Dao Dinh,
 Hieu Nguyen & Dieu Nguyen

2 AND 3 MARCH

Mia Perang
 Peggy D'Cruz
 Darren McLean
 T. Yee & J. Rousetty
 Tuyet Nguyen & Mai Le

2 AND 3 MARCH

Ian Holmes
 Mary Italiano
 Megan McLean
 Anico Yee
 Hung Dinh

2 AND 3 MARCH

David Prabha
 Volunteer
 Rosemary Donaldson
 Manny Gonzalez
 Toan Tran

SL CHURCH FLOWERS

No flowers during Lent

ST CHURCH FLOWERS

No flowers during Lent

ST COUNTERS

This week Team 3:
 Peter Deayton & Kelvin Chen
 Next week Team 4:
 Mary Choy & Eileen Tam

Love and Mercy: Mark 6: 32 – 34

Parish Groups & Contacts

Lectors, Registrars, Collectors,
 Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist,
 Slide Projector Operator & Rosters

ST: Corrie Quimbo 9412 8499

SL: Margaret Gearon 0409 807 135

Baptism Preparation

ST: Mary Italiano 9412 8499

Vietnamese Community

Hoang Nguyen 0422 400 116

Andy Tran 0422 382 109

Vietnamese Youth

John Dinh 0448 977 037

Parish Collection Preparers

ST: Barry Silvester &

Michael Kawalevski

Stewardship Counters

SL: Dale Dixon - 0433 885 087

Steve Kilroe-Smith - 0404 864 232

Parish Pastoral Council

As we are one Mission now, it has been suggested that we require only one Chair?

Parishes Safeguarding Committee

Theresa Nguyen, Mary Italiano,

Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

Janette Clark - 9877 2292

Fr Gerard - 9877 2292

Parish History

SL: Margaret Gearon - 0409 807 135

Whitehorse Deanery - Fr Gerard

Finance Committee

Bernard Negline

Parish Accountant

SL: Hall Hire

Sonya O'Farrell @ the

Parish Office - 9877 2292

Church Sacristan

ST: Margaret King & Hoang Nguyen

SL: Greg Grant - 0401 644 474

Church Housekeeping

ST: Margaret King 9412 8499

Church Cleaning & Flowers

SL: Megan McLean - 0419 347 693

Church Linen

SL: Beryl Kanagalinggam

Parish Garden Maintenance

ST: Des Connors, Leo Watson,

Anico Yee & Vietnamese Community

SL: Darren McLean - 0417 774 504

Holy Communion to the

housebound - T.B.A.

Parish Choirs

ST: Mary Italiano & Theresa Nguyen

SL: Lina & Maria Mafi

0411 136 043

Parish & School Fete Committee

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

School Advisory Council

ST: Ms. Anne Maree Jones 9878 4188

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

School Parents' Association

ST: Ms. Anne Maree Jones 9878 4188

SL: Mrs. Clare Ryan - 9877 4023

St Vincent de Paul Conference

For Assistance: 1800 305 330

(Freecall: Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)

Parish Contacts:

ST: John McCoy

SL: Tony Lobo &

Steve Kilroe-Smith

THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK: Sr Katherine Stone MGL says all the readings this weekend helps us with our struggle to know God as our loving Father and ourselves as beloved sons and daughters. Mother Hilda says God put little things into our life so that we might just see God saying I love you. Fr Tony Percy says that Jesus is transfigured immediately, not so us, however as we offer ourselves to God, we are slowly, but surely transfigured. Sr Anastasia Reeves OP reminds us that we, too, much practice what we preach, and Fr Antony Jukes says our prayer this week can be: Lord, help me to recognise your infinite love and mercy. Plus, more great music!

ARCHBISHOP COMENSOLI: This Lent, I wish to invite and encourage all parishes in the Archdiocese of Melbourne to participate in '**Mercy Melbourne**' on **Tuesday 19 March (6-9pm)**. Co-ordinated by Fr Dean Mathieson, this evening is an opportunity for all to experience the love that flows from the merciful heart of the Father. **Mercy Melbourne** is an initiative that invites parishes to open their doors in welcome for a special evening of prayer and Confessions. The purpose of this focused event is to highlight the importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and make it as easy as possible for all Catholics to experience the grace of the Sacrament as we prepare for the passion, death and resurrection of Our Lord. The simple format asks participating parishes to open their churches from **6pm-9pm on Tuesday 19 March**, and be available to hear Confessions.

THE ST LUKE'S PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION are running an AFL Footy Tipping Competition again in 2024 and we'd love for you to participate! To be part of it:

1. Please sign up at www.footytips.com.au
2. Find the Competition named: "St Luke's Tipping Comp"
3. Password is: stlukes3130
4. Sign up as a family or individual
5. Please contribute \$25 to the P & F bank account: Name: St Luke the Evangelist Parents Association. BSB: 083347 A/C: 908965814
6. T & C Please see Church noticeboards

SAFETY STATEMENT: We are committed to a safe and nurturing culture for all children and vulnerable persons in our Church. Saint Luke the Evangelist Parish Blackburn South holds the care, safety, wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons as central and fundamental responsibilities of the Church. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

Raise your voices ... Entrance Antiphon: Of you my heart has spoken, Seek his face. It is your face, O Lord, that I seek; hide not your face from me.

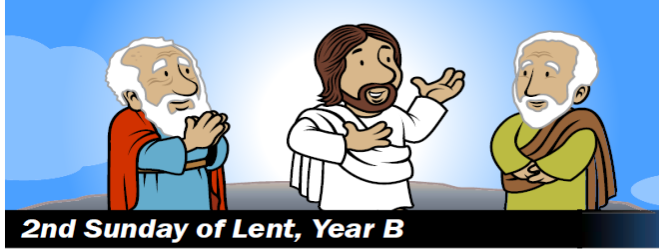
Response to the Psalm: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.

Gospel Acclamation: Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! From the shining cloud, the Father's voice is heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Eucharistic Acclamation: When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.

YEAR OF PRAYER – 2024: & [Vatican issues new resource for Year of Prayer](#)



2nd Sunday of Lent, Year B

This is my Son

The Transfiguration

One day, Jesus took Peter, James and John to the top of a high mountain. They then witnessed Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah and heard the voice of God. Draw a picture of the Transfiguration.



God wants us to listen to Jesus. What are some things that Jesus tells us?

Draw a line from each of the following statements to either Moses or Elijah.

God's law was revealed to him

He challenged King Ahab for worshipping a false god

A great prophet mentioned in the first book of Kings

He rescued God's people from Egypt

Elisha became his successor

He became the leader of the Israelites



Moses



Elijah



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Moses

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A great prophet mentioned in the first book of Kings

He rescued God's people from Egypt

Elisha became his successor

He became the leader of the Israelites



Elijah

SUNDAY READINGS

READ AT HOME

Second Sunday of Lent

Year B

25 February 2024



Collect

O God, who have commanded us
to listen to your beloved Son,
be pleased, we pray,
to nourish us inwardly by your word,
that, with spiritual sight made pure,
we may rejoice to behold your glory.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Readings and Commentaries

In the century or so since Freud published his works on the human psyche, generations of human beings have become accustomed to exploring their inner world of drives, desires and motives. For all who take this habit for granted, the gospels offer frustratingly little insight into the inner life of Jesus. Our questions are not those of the evangelists. All the same it does seem plausible to argue that three moments in the gospel story are decisive for Jesus' identity and mission. His baptism gives birth to his public preaching, his Gethsemane prayer sets the seal on his death, and his transfiguration is confirmation he's on the right path. These three watershed moments are inter-related, as study of the gospel accounts will show. Today's story offers a glimpse of glory even as it calls on us to come down from the mountain.

A reading from the book of Genesis

22:1–2, 9–13, 15–18

God put Abraham to the test. 'Abraham, Abraham' he called. 'Here I am' he replied. 'Take your son,' God said 'your only child Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a burnt offering, on a mountain I will point out to you.'

When they arrived at the place God had pointed out to him, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood. Then he stretched out his hand and seized the knife to kill his son. But the angel of the Lord called to him from heaven, 'Abraham, Abraham' he said. 'I am here' he replied. 'Do not raise your hand against the boy' the angel said. 'Do not harm him, for now I know you fear God. You have not refused me your son, your only son.' Then looking up, Abraham saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. Abraham took the ram and offered it as a burnt-offering in place of his son.

The angel of the Lord called Abraham a second time from heaven. 'I swear by my own self - it is the Lord who speaks - because you have done this, because you have not refused me your son, your only son, I will shower blessings on you, I will make your descendants as many as the stars of heaven and the grains of sand on the seashore. Your descendants shall gain possession of the gates of their enemies. All the nations of the earth shall bless themselves by your descendants, as a reward for your obedience.'

First Reading

This story is often called "The Sacrifice of Isaac," but such a title is misleading. Isaac is spared, not sacrificed. In Jewish and Islamic tradition it's called "The Binding of Isaac," referring to Abraham's tying up of Isaac before placing him on the altar. It might well be named "The Sacrifice of Abraham" since the patriarch is being asked to surrender both his son and his hope of descendants. But "The Testing of Abraham" best captures the essence of the story.

It's one of the most emotionally powerful and dramatic stories of the entire Bible. The growing pathos in God's naming of Isaac as Abraham's "son...your only child...Isaac whom you love" sets the scene for the almost unbearable increase in tension towards the climax of the episode. This is swiftly reached in the abbreviated lectionary text, allowing the longer half of the reading to be enjoyed in peace.

Readers may feel they are themselves caught in a bind. The story of its nature invites them to use their story-telling skills to dramatic effect, yet it also has the potential to offend modern sensibilities with its depiction of a God who asks for a child's sacrifice and a father who is willing to oblige. The happy ending doesn't whitewash these troublesome questions. In the end the reader's responsibility is to do justice to the text as it is, not to protect the assembly from its impact. It's a time-honoured story revered by all three Abrahamic faiths. From New Testament times, Christians have drawn on this story to interpret the sacrifice of Christ (cf. the second reading and Heb 11:17-10).

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 115:10, 15–19

R. I will walk in the presence of the Lord,
in the land of the living.

I trusted, even when I said:
'I am sorely afflicted.'

O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful. **R.**

Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:
I will call on the Lord's name. **R.**

My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people,
in the courts of the house of the Lord,
in your midst, O Jerusalem. **R.**

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 115/116 is a song of thanksgiving offered by one who has been saved from a kind of death. Though it's Isaac who has been spared from being sacrificed in the first reading, the opening words of the first stanza – "I trusted, even when I said: 'I am sorely afflicted'" – sum up the righteous virtue of Abraham.

The verses that form the responsorial psalm have been constructed from different parts of the original. Mention of a "thanksgiving sacrifice" and "vows... before all his people" suggest that the psalmist has responded to his deliverance with a public ritual in the temple.

The sentence – "O precious in the eyes of the Lord is the death of his faithful" – may puzzle the reader with its ambiguity. It is not meant to imply that the Lord takes delight in our death, but that in their dying the faithful remain precious to the Lord.

The response, taken from the verse that precedes the first stanza, is relatively long and will require thoughtful proclamation. It is both an expression of thanksgiving and a pledge to respond faithfully to God's blessing. The verses are deeply personal, yet uttered in the setting of public worship. As always with short lines, readers need to respect the poetic form and not merge the lines into prose statements.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans **8:31–34**

With God on our side who can be against us? Since God did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to benefit us all, we may be certain, after such a gift, that he will not refuse anything he can give. Could anyone accuse those that God has chosen? When God acquits, could anyone condemn? Could Christ Jesus? No! He not only died for us - he rose from the dead, and there at God's right hand he stands and pleads for us.

Second Reading

Before he moves into a lengthy and anguished reflection on the failure of his fellow Jews to find faith in Jesus, Paul brings the first half of Romans to an eloquent close. He assumes the role of a barrister addressing the court in full flight, arguing the case for the surpassing goodness and faithfulness of God.

He poses a series of rhetorical questions, each of which implies a resounding "No!" He's intent on persuading his distant readers that God is on their side. The gift of his Son testifies to God's boundless generosity and mercy. Unlike Isaac who is saved from being sacrificed by Abraham, Jesus is not rescued from death but raised out of death. Above and beyond his saving self-sacrifice, Jesus remains a permanent advocate for us at God's right hand.

This short and exuberant text deserves to be delivered with enthusiasm. It's an energetic endorsement of God's love for us in Christ. Readers can afford to inject a degree of drama in its proclamation, coupled with wisely measured pausing.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark **9:2–10**

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus. Then Peter spoke to Jesus. 'Rabbi,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.' He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.' Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus.

As they came down the mountain he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what 'rising from the dead' could mean.

Gospel

In contrast to his terse report of Jesus' temptations, Mark matches Matthew and Luke with a full account of the transfiguration. All three situate the event soon (ie six or eight days) after Jesus' first attempt to forewarn the disciples about his upcoming passion and death as the Son of Man. This placement suggests that the transfiguration was intended to give the inner trio of the Twelve insight into the divine plan.

The revelation unfolds successively via the mountain-top location (already suggestive of divine encounter), the sight of Jesus' glory, the testimony of Elijah and Moses, the cloud, and the voice from the cloud. Each of these is laden with meaning from the biblical tradition, yet their combined effect still fails to enlighten the disciples, as the rest of Mark's gospel makes clear. Mark has no equivalent to Luke's post-resurrection Emmaus story in which the travellers are rebuked for being "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets spoke" (Lk 24:25). Instead, his gospel ends darkly with the bewildered women afraid and silent (16:8).

For all its apparent ineffectiveness in Jesus' lifetime, the transfiguration story is richly rewarding for those who contemplate it prayerfully. Its links with key moments in the history of Israel and in the earthly life of Jesus, such as his baptism, agony in the garden and resurrection, are an endless source of inspiration. It sheds radiant light on the identity of Jesus as Son of God (1:1) and Son of Man (eg 8:31.38).

An alternative translation of the scripture readings is given here from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). This may be particularly useful for those in parishes which use the NRSV Lectionary.

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

FIRST READING (NRSV)

A reading from the book of Genesis 22:1–2, 9-13, 15-18

God tested Abraham.
God said to him, "Abraham!"
And Abraham said, "Here I am."
God said,
"Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love,
and go to the land of Moriah,
and offer him there as a burnt offering
on one of the mountains that I shall show you."
When Abraham and Isaac came to the place
that God had shown him,
Abraham built an altar there and laid the wood in order.
He bound his son Isaac,
and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood.
Then Abraham reached out his hand
and took the knife to kill his son.
But the angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven,
and said, "Abraham, Abraham!"
And he replied, "Here I am."
The angel said,
"Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him;
for now I know that you fear God,
since you have not withheld your son,
your only son, from me."
Abraham looked up
and saw a ram, caught in a thicket by its horns.
Abraham went and took the ram
and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son.
The angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time from heaven, and said,
"By myself I have sworn, says the Lord:
Because you have done this,
and have not withheld your son, your only son,
I will indeed bless you,
and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven
and as the sand that is on the seashore.
And your offspring shall possess the gate of their enemies,
and by your offspring
shall all the nations of the earth gain blessing for themselves,
because you have obeyed my voice."

SECOND READING (NRSV)

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans 8:31–34

If God is for us, who is against us?
He who did not withhold his own Son,
but gave him up for all of us,
will he not with him also give us everything else?
Who will bring any charge against God's elect?
Is it God who justifies?
Who is to condemn?
Is it Christ Jesus,
who died, and indeed, who was raised,
who is at the right hand of God,
who intercedes for us?

GOSPEL (NRSV)

A reading from the gospel according to Mark

9:2–10

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John,
and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves.
And he was transfigured before them,
and his clothes became dazzling white,
such as no one on earth could bleach them.
And there appeared to them Elijah and Moses,
who were talking with Jesus.
Then Peter said to Jesus,
"Rabbi, it is good for us to be here;
let us make three tents,
one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."
Peter did not know what to say, for they were terrified.
Then a cloud overshadowed them,
and from the cloud there came a voice,
"This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!"
Suddenly when they looked around,
they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.
As they were coming down the mountain,
Jesus ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen,
until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.
So they kept the matter to themselves,
questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.

Concluding Prayer

Prayer over the People (Second Sunday of Lent)

Bless your faithful, we pray, O Lord,
with a blessing that endures for ever,
and keep us faithful
to the Gospel of your Only Begotten Son,
so that we may always desire and at last attain
that glory whose beauty he showed in his own Body,
to the amazement of his Apostles.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

And may the blessing of almighty God,
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
come down on us and remain with us for ever.
Amen.

(Adapted from the Prayer over the People for the Second Sunday of Lent,
Roman Missal p. 252)



We proclaim a crucified Christ

1Cor1.23

13 February 2024

Reverend Gerard Johnson PP
Catholic Presbytery
PO Box 2140
BLACKBURN SOUTH VIC 3130

Dear Father ^{Gerard} Johnson,

Prayerful greetings in the Lord as we prepare for the joy of the risen Lord.

After due consideration, I write to advise that, I have appointed Father Dean Mathieson OFM Cap as Administrator of St Luke the Evangelist Parish, Blackburn South and St Timothy's Parish, Forest Hill.

Father Mathieson will commence his appointment as of 23 February 2024.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

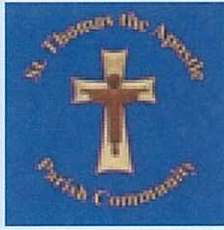
Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

PRAYER IS LIFE



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You are cordially invited to St. Thomas The Apostle Parish & Primary School's 70th anniversary

Past and present parishioners, staff and students, and families –
Join us for a day of celebration and thanksgiving. The day begins with morning mass, followed by lunch and an afternoon of entertainment for all. It's St. Patrick's Day so come with a touch of **green!**

- *School tours*
 - *Kids' activities*
 - *Video presentations*
 - *Roving MC*
-



Event date:

Sunday, 17th March 2024

Location:

St. Thomas The Apostle Parish & Primary School
57 Central Road, Blackburn VIC 3130

Time:

Mass commences at 10:30am
Lunch & activities start at 12:00pm

Please confirm your attendance and number attending for catering purposes by **14th February 2024** at <https://www.trybooking.com/CLTUA> or a sign up sheet has been provided in the narthex.

We look forward to seeing you!



Our Lady of Sion College

TALK AND TOUR MORNINGS

Please visit
our website
to book



APPLICATIONS FOR YEAR 7, 2026

close 16 August 2024

EMBRACE LIFE AT SION

Talk and Tour Mornings for Term 1

MONDAY 26 FEBRUARY, 9.30 AM

FRIDAY 19 APRIL, 9.30 AM

Our Lady of Sion College
Catholic Girls' College Years 7-12
1065 Whitehorse Road, Box Hill 3128

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PROJECT COMPASSION PRAYER 2024



God of all hope,
we pray for our world with all its beauty and need.
We thank you for the love in our lives that is
a mirror of your unending love.

May all creation know your compassion this Lent
and may we take courage to share it, especially with
those who don't have what they need.

In our time, we hear the same words you spoke to Moses:
'I will be with you,' when you ask us to do courageous things.

Through our prayer, fasting and almsgiving,
move us to act in the company of your Spirit,
showing compassion and acting for justice
to renew the face of the Earth,
now and for all future generations.

We ask this in the name of Christ.
Amen.

WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT

Genesis 22:1–2, 9–13, 15–18 | Romans 8:31–34 | Mark 9:2–10

Written by Michael McGirr

When Jesus took his closest friends to the top of a high mountain, they experienced something quite extraordinary. The transfiguration gave them a glimpse of what it meant for Jesus to be the son of God. It is hardly surprising that Peter said, 'it is wonderful for us to be here.' The Gospel also tells us that Jesus' friends were frightened, and this is also easy to understand. They were overwhelmed. Nevertheless, it's not long before Jesus reminds them that he is destined to die. His friends must come down from the mountain and walk with Jesus through all the ordinary and arduous days and weeks that lie ahead.

We can all say 'it is wonderful for us to be here' no matter where that happens to be. Life is full of wonder. That doesn't mean it is always easy. We live in the arms of a very deep mystery. God's love enfolds us.

Throughout Lent, we are called to support Project Compassion, an initiative of Caritas Australia. This year, Project Compassion celebrates 60 years of partnership with some of the most marginal communities in the world. With your help, we have walked alongside literally millions of people in dozens of countries.

This week we encounter the story of Ronita who lives in Quezon City, part of metro Manila in the Philippines. Becoming a mother at a young age meant that her schooling was cut short. Her husband, Lean, leaves for work at 3am and returns at 9pm, earning less than \$US10 per day in a demanding job in waste disposal. On such a small income, Ronita and Lean, along with two young children, are able to rent a room of about 10 square metres.

With your help through Project Compassion, Caritas Australia has been able to support the Faithful Companions of Jesus (FCJ) to run the Alternative Learning System program. This program has meant that Ronita has been able to continue her education. The FCJ sisters provide a safe space for many young people such as Ronita to finish school and find better jobs. Ronita has had the opportunity to change her life.

Caritas Australia believes that the world can be transfigured to become more like the kingdom of God of which Jesus spoke. We can encounter people whom others choose to ignore. When we do so, we discover that here too are children of God. We are asked to listen to them.



Ronita (22) smiles as she holds her sons, Egzy Grey (3) and Clark (5), in their small home in Quezon City, Philippines. Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia



We proclaim a crucified Christ

1Cor1.23

22 February 2024

To the Clergy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne

Dear Bishops, Fathers and Deacons,

My warm and fraternal greetings to you as we journey toward the passion, death and resurrection of our Lord and Saviour.

In two days' time, the difficult second-year anniversary of Ukraine's invasion by Russia will come to be. In these past two years we have kept the people of Ukraine in our hearts and prayers, and sought ways to support those who have found refuge here in Australia – and particularly Victoria.

The words and stories shared by Bishop Mykola Bychok, bishop of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Saints Peter and Paul of Melbourne, deeply resonated with the Australian Bishops, and certainly inspired my own participation last year in a small delegation that visited the cities of Lviv, Kyiv and the neighbouring communities of Irpin and Bucha. During this trip we heard first-hand of both the pain and loss – and of the great courage and hope held by the Ukrainian peoples.

As you know, the Archdiocese of Melbourne launched an Appeal during Advent to raise awareness, and provide some practical relief, for those in need. I am very pleased to say that through this Appeal we had over 1000 donors – with some parishes uniting as one singular contribution. To date, we have received \$131,549.00 - a significant amount. On behalf of the Archdiocese, I will be bring this amount to a total figure of \$150,000.00; offered to Bishop Mykola via the Ukraine Future Limited with the understanding these monies will directly support people who need support in re-establishing their lives and livelihoods after experiences of trauma and displacement.

Please know of my deepest gratitude for the energy and support you have brought to this Appeal through our Parishes and beyond.

May we continue to hold our Ukrainian brothers and sisters in our prayers, and seek the intercession of Our Blessed Mother, Queen of Peace, that her Son, the Prince of Peace, will remain close to those who need it most.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne