



ONE MISSION, TWO PARISHES

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

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WEEKLY BULLETIN: SUNDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2024

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – YEAR B

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



Readings this week: [Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-66](#); [Psalm 31](#); [1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1](#); [Mark 1:40-45](#).

Gospel Reflection ~ Greg Sunter

It is hard to imagine a person in 1st Century Palestine who would be more of an outcast from society than the leper. Unfortunately, any form of skin disease was categorised as leprosy (known as Hansen's disease today). It was regarded as one of the greatest forms of uncleanness and seen as a physical manifestation of God's punishment on the person.

For a person like this to even approach Jesus is a huge risk and an enormous act of faith. He trusts that Jesus will not reject him like everybody else in his life has done. His request to Jesus is almost a demand; it is certainly filled with an utter conviction of Jesus' ability and good will: 'if you want to, you can cure me'. Jesus' reaction is one of equally strong emotion – he is so moved by this man's plight that he reaches out his hand and touches the man. To touch a person with leprosy was to break every rule of the clean/unclean social structure that dominated Jewish society. In this one action, Jesus challenges the entire basis on which Jewish society is constructed – the purity code. For Jesus to touch this man, according to the purity code, is to become unclean himself. But Jesus ignores these social rules and responds out of love and heals the man with word and action. However, Jesus knows that if the man is to be accepted back into society he needs to conform to the rules that dominate his world. He must present himself to the local priest who is the only one with the authority to declare someone cured of their disease and thus able to become ritually clean and welcome back into worship and back into everyday life.

Historical Context – Leprosy: To be a leper in 1st Century Palestine was to be utterly rejected from society. They were not permitted to engage in religious practice as they were permanently regarded as being ritually unclean and, indeed, unable to become clean as long as their disease lasted. The book of Leviticus, quoted in today's first reading, contains two whole chapters of rules regarding lepers. Lepers were forced to live outside of any village for fear of contamination and even had to call out a warning of 'Unclean! Unclean!' if anyone came near them. They were forced to beg for food and money because no-one would hire them. They were literally on the very edge of society.

Gospel Focus – What's in a word? Verse 41 of this week's reading begins, 'Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand.' This translation is from the Jerusalem Bible but if we were to consider other translations of the Bible we would find other phrases used such as: moved with pity; filled with pity; moved with compassion; filled with compassion; or even, filled with anger. By comparison, 'Feeling sorry for him' seems a weak translation. Jesus' reaction is a fully human one of indignation at what this man is forced to endure. It is a gut-wrenching response from the very core of Jesus' humanity.

Living the Gospel – Who is your leper? There is a story of Francis of Assisi in which he encountered a horribly disfigured leper. Initially, Francis was repulsed by the man but remembered that this man too was a child of God and made in the image and likeness of God. Overcoming his fears, Francis ran forward and embraced the man. Rather than seeing the disease, Francis saw the person. We can ask the question, Who is your leper? Who is the person in your life that you need to embrace rather than reject? Who would benefit from you viewing them with different eyes? Soft eyes! Eyes of compassion!

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. @ 9.00am

RECONCILIATION

SL: Saturday 9.30am – 10.00am &

5.30pm – 5.50pm

SL: Ash Wednesday evening Mass

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@slblackburnst.catholic.edu.au

Website: slblackburnst.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 Kit Bing Fan, Tony Keaney, Penny Pitcher, 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, especially Jerome Chen and Kwong Lung, for the casualties of war in Ukraine, Israel and Gaza and for those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially Ron Johnson, William Mullane, Lina Natoli, Patrick & Marcella O'Reilly, Annamma Mathai, Gwen Cruise, Sister Pauline Hunt, Luisito Natividad, Ann Hilal, Fr Pitts, Tyrone Oosthuizen, Dot Lester, Adrianus Van den Boogaard, Flo Bryan, Mary Deering, John Chapman and Stephen Kelly. May they rest in peace.

LITURGICAL CALENDAR THIS WEEK: **Lent 2024 ~ Wednesday:** Ash Wednesday ~ (*Day of fast and abstinence*); **Saturday:** The Seven Holy Founders of the Servite Order; **Masses this weekend:** Preface VI of the Sundays in Ordinary Time, Eucharistic Prayer III; Eucharistic Acc. No. III.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES & LENTEN DEVOTIONS: **ST** = 9.15AM (*Australian*) & 7.30pm (*Vietnamese*); **SL** = 9.30am & 7.00pm (*Australian*) **ST** Lenten devotions = Stations of the Cross on Friday mornings at 9.30am throughout Lent beginning 16 February; **SL** Lenten devotions = Stations of the Cross on Friday afternoons at 3.00pm throughout Lent beginning 16 February.

SUNDAY 11TH FEBRUARY ~ WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK: The theme chosen for the 2024 observance is from the Book of Genesis, "It is not good that man should be alone." It was subtitled, "**Healing the Sick by Healing Relationships.**"

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T HEARD MY APPOINTMENT AT ST LUKE THE EVANGELIST BLACKBURN SOUTH lapsed on 10th January 2024 and after a long period of prayer, thoughtful discernment and consultation with the Archbishop, I wrote to him to bring this matter to his attention formally. He and I have agreed that I will be moving on as of 23rd February 2024.

During the six years at St Luke's and the two and half years at St Timothy's we have weathered and navigated our way through some significant head winds, especially as we were invited to walk the pilgrim journey of Taking the Way of the Gospel - our Emmaus journey you might say, with a significant and neighbouring Other Parish; Our '*One Mission Two Parishes*'.

Initially it will be a period of rest, reflection and a re-creative wellbeing time, at this milestone of my life. The time for me to decide what comes next as a priest will arrive soon enough - on how I continue to live and live out my priestly vocation. Pope Francis in his [Lenten message](#) for this year urges us to; "*Slow down, then, and "pause! The contemplative dimension of life that Lent helps us to rediscover will release new energies.*"

Thankyou for the opportunity and privilege of accompanying you, your families and our Family of Families in both Parishes on the journey, these past two and half years at St Timothy's and six years at St Luke the Evangelist. May God continue to bless you, one and all. Fr Gerard

ANOTHER TIME OF TRANSITION FOR OUR 'ONE MISSION TWO PARISHES': The Archdiocesan machinery will take time to move for the next Parish Priest to be appointed by the Archbishop. In the meantime, a Temporary Priest will be appointed to serve our *One Mission Two Parishes*. Please make him welcome, assist him to understand how things are done in our respective parishes and any support you might like to offer will be in everyone's best interests.

A VOCATION VIEW: Today's Gospel says that: "Jesus was moved with pity when He saw a leper". Are you moved with love or pity when you see the outcast of today's society? Who will come forward to minister Christ today?

STEWARDSHIP CORNER: "Brothers and sisters, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." *1 Corinthians 10:31* Do a quick check of your priorities. Where does God rank in that list? If He's not first, you have some work to do. Putting God first in everything helps us from putting other "gods" (like our pride, ego, money and possessions) before God. Before making a decision, ask yourself, "Am I doing this for the glory of God or for the glory of me?" (**ST:** Weekly First Collection Presbytery Envelopes: \$137; Thanksgiving Stewardship Envelopes this week: \$185; Vietnamese Donation: \$198.45; **SL:** Last week's Church Stewardship Envelopes: \$433; Last week's Presbytery Stewardship Envelopes: \$292).

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
6:00 PM ST
SUNDAY 8:30 AM SL
10:30 AM ST
5.00PM ST

10 AND 11 FEBRUARY

Melina Barcellona
Volunteer
Margaret Gearon
Geneveive Hemsley
Thuy Vu & Nhat Nguyen

17 AND 18 FEBRUARY

Lucy Ferris
Hubert Lobo
May McKeown
Ryan Yee & Eli Tutor
Youth Group

EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

SATURDAY 6:00 PM SL
6:00 PM ST
SUNDAY 8:30 AM SL
10:30 AM ST
5.00PM ST

10 AND 11 FEBRUARY

Sonya O'Farrell
Volunteer
Volunteer
Volunteer
Hung Dinh

17 AND 18 FEBRUARY

Olive Hammill
Peter Naughtin
Melina Barcellona
Laura Cigana
Youth Group

SLIDE OPERATORS

SATURDAY 6:00 PM SL
6:00 PM ST
SUNDAY 8:30 AM SL
10:30 AM ST
5.00PM ST

10 AND 11 FEBRUARY

Volunteer
Michelle Chen
Volunteer
Lee Min Yee
Toan Tran

17 AND 18 FEBRUARY

Volunteer
Michelle Chen
Volunteer
Manny Gonzalez
Theresa Nguyen

SL WELCOMERS 10/11 FEB

6:00 PM Volunteer
8:30 AM Volunteer
10:30 AM Volunteer

HOSPITALITY THE BASIC LITURGICAL MINISTRY

SL WELCOMERS 17/18 FEB

6:00 PM Volunteer
9:30 AM Volunteer
10:30 AM Volunteer

SL CHURCH CLEANING

17th Feb – Kellie's Team
Kellie McCarthy, Toni Wynne,
Emma Brodawka & Daniella
Manolopoulos

ST CHURCH CLEANING

24th Feb @ 8am
Hoang Nguyen, Anico Yee,
Dzung Vu & Trong Nguyen

SL CHURCH FLOWERS

10th Feb – Nikhita Paul
No flowers during Lent

ST CHURCH FLOWERS

January - Parishioners

ST COUNTERS

This week Team 1:
Owen Grealy & Anthony Yeo
Next week Team 2:
Raj & Violet Fonn

SL LITURGICAL ROSTERS are now available for collection after Mass in our Church Foyer/Narthex this weekend please.

THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK: Fr Mark De Battista says we're invited to trust ourselves to Jesus, ask him; if you want to you can cure me and see what he says to you. Mother Hilda tells how the Word of God always speaks to us in all our circumstances. Fr Tony Percy says that all the healing that we will have in spirit, soul and body, all of it comes from the blood of Christ. We've got two lead-in reflections for the commencement of Lent from Fr Sean Cullen on discipleship and Fr Chris Sarkis giving his tip on how to have a highly successful and satisfying Lenten period. Plus, more great music!

A MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND IS FOR YOU... "Live Your Best Married Life in Love" Every relationship is a journey and the grind of everyday life can easily cause you to lose touch with your spouse. This weekend gives married couples time to nurture your relationship and some tools to keep passion alive in a gentle, supportive environment, away from pressures and distractions of daily living. Every married couple deserves a Marriage Encounter weekend!! The weekend is based around Catholic values and couples of all faiths are welcome. **Please check our website for more details Date: 12-14 April, 2024** in Melbourne **BOOK NOW** Information/Bookings: Phone **Mercy & James 0409 183 676** or Email: vicbookings@wwme.org.au Website: wwme.org.au

ENRICH YOUR MARRIAGE WITH THE MARRIAGE KIT BY SMARTLOVING An enrichment course for married couples wanting a lasting, passionate relationship as God intended. Accessed from the privacy of your home on your own timetable, this online course will energise your relationship, revitalise your passion and equip you with practical tools for every day. To find out more visit: smartloving.org/marriage-kit **Marriage Week Sale** – Ends 29 February. For 50% off use coupon code: **MarriageWeek24**

ACSL NEWSLETTER VOL. 7, ED. 1. FEBRUARY 2024: [CEO's update February 2024](#)

MAJELLAN FAMILY MEDIA: [Lent begins next week](#)

MELBOURNE CATHOLIC: [Called to serve and accompany the sick](#)

HEART OF LIFE: [A Heart of Life welcome to Croydon](#)

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.

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 - Fr Gerard

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

Raise your voices ... Entrance Antiphon: Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

Response to the Psalm: I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people. Alleluia!

Eucharistic Acclamation: Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

Communion Antiphon: They ate and had their fill, and what they craved the Lord gave them; they were not disappointed in what they craved.

YEAR OF PRAYER – 2024 & Daily Scripture Readings and Meditations

YEAR OF PRAYER: [How Do I Know I'm Experiencing God?](#)

Jesus has the power to heal



6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

How were people with leprosy treated in Jesus' time?

What are some things we can do for sick people today?

What did Jesus say to the man after he cured him of leprosy? Use the words below to find out!

Say _____ of this to anyone; but go and _____ yourself to the _____, then make an offering at the _____ as Moses _____, then all will know you are _____.

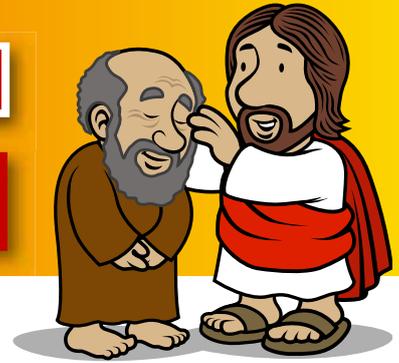


**temple show
commanded
healed nothing
priest**

Jesus showed God's power by healing the leper. Draw a picture from one of the following stories where God's power is shown by what Jesus did.



Jesus has the power to heal



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What are some things we can do for sick people today?

What did Jesus say to the man after he cured him of leprosy? Use the words below to find out!

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**temple show
commanded nothing
healed priest**

Jesus showed God's power by healing the leper. Draw a picture from one of the following stories where God's power is shown by what Jesus did.



SUNDAY READINGS

READ AT HOME

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

11 February 2024



Collect

O God, who teach us that you abide
in hearts that are just and true,
grant that we may be so fashioned by your grace
as to become a dwelling pleasing to you.
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

We can thank the Corinthians' rather chaotic community life, with its factions, charisms and questions, for provoking Paul to write at some length to them. One of the issues he has to reprimand and educate them about was table fellowship. Sadly, much of his teaching on this subject in 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 is never heard on a Sunday. Paul upbraids them for betraying the import of the Lord's Supper. Rivalries abound, wealth and status divide the members, and sharing is shoved aside by selfishness and indulgence. What should have been a powerful display of equality, mutuality and selflessness had become the opposite. The Corinthians are failing to honour the Body of Christ. It didn't take long for the early Church to separate the Lord's Supper from the common meal, and this is what we have inherited. Our issues may be different, but Paul's critique still has bite.

A reading from the book of Leviticus 13:1–2, 44–46

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons.

'The man is leprosy: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean." As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart; he must live outside the camp.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 31:1–2, 5, 11

R. I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble,
and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

Happy the man whose offence is forgiven,
whose sin is remitted.

○ happy the man to whom the Lord
imputes no guilt,
in whose spirit is no guile. **R.**

But now I have acknowledged my sins;
my guilt I did not hide.

I said: 'I will confess
my offence to the Lord.'

And you, Lord, have forgiven
the guilt of my sin. **R.**

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,
exult, you just!

○ come, ring out your joy,
all you upright of heart. **R.**

First Reading

It's safe to say that chapters 11-15 of the book of Leviticus are rarely read for inspiration. They set out regulations about dealing with what is clean and unclean. They cover animals, diseases, sex and birth. Today's reading is a short extract from chapters 13-14 which deal at length and in detail with a wide variety of skin diseases.

Community concern about such diseases was twofold. The first was the risk of spreading infection. The second was the associated problem of ritual impurity. Contact with an infected person made one unclean and thus disqualified from participation in the worship life of the community. As a result, the prescribed measure was to isolate infected persons until their condition had cleared and they could be judged clean by the priests. The underlying issue was maintenance of the boundaries that defined Israel as a people.

The generic term used for skin diseases, both in the Old and New Testaments, was leprosy. This is now understood to mean many more afflictions than leprosy proper. Readers may find this text unappealing, even unpleasant, but it paves the way for the gospel story. They should not shy away from proclaiming it with the authority that befits the Mosaic Law. They will see that there is an awkward transition between the two paragraphs because the reading combines verses from two separate places in the chapter. This is less the case in the NRSV lectionary which also renders the text inclusively.

Responsorial Psalm

The scriptures present a complex picture of the relationship between sickness and sin. Jesus' repudiation of a causal connection (John 9:3) is exceptional. The choice of today's psalm reinforces the more common assumption that sin and sickness are indeed inter-related. The first reading was about the sickness of leprosy. It caused ritual uncleanness but with no suggestion of moral guilt. The psalm however is explicitly about sin, repentance and forgiveness. Its use clearly implies that sickness occurs as a result of sin.

Psalm 31/32 is commonly identified as one of seven psalms that the early Christian Church named "penitential." It's a song of thanksgiving from one who has experienced God's forgiveness of sin. The response, however, is more general. It refers neither to sin nor sickness but to a "time of trouble." It will require careful proclamation, as it is composed of two phrases that make for a lengthy unit. An upward inflexion on the word "trouble" before a moment's pause will alert the assembly that there's more to come. It may help if the reader repeats the response in unison with the congregation.

The selected verses vary in character. The first is a third-person declaration. The second begins as a first-person statement then becomes an address to God. The third is an exhortation addressed to the people. Readers would do well to examine these variations and adjust their style of proclamation accordingly. Of course, whatever the internal variations, all psalms are poem-prayers and should be voiced as such.

The language itself is straightforward enough, though the majority of the lines are short and care needs to be taken not to rush them. The text could be rendered inclusive by replacing "man" with "one".

**A reading from the first letter of St Paul
to the Corinthians 10:31 – 11:1**

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God. Never do anything offensive to anyone - to Jews or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved.

Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

**A reading from the holy Gospel
according to Mark 1:40–45**

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

Second Reading

With today's reading Paul brings to a close his lengthy response to the Corinthians' question about eating meat offered to idols. His practical advice, prior to this passage, is that believers should feel free to eat whatever is set before them, provided this does not offend someone with a more sensitive conscience. "There are no forbidden things," he wrote, "but not everything does good" (10:23). It's a matter of balancing the exercise of one's freedom with the effect this has on others.

He concludes with a general principle. Do everything for the glory of God and don't offend anyone. He then returns to the point he had made earlier in the letter: "I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could" (9:19). He is determined to give priority to others' benefit over his own. Not being shy of offering his own behaviour as a model to be followed, here he sets that counsel in the context of his own imitation of Christ.

Apart from the very first verse, we hear nothing more from chapter 11 of this letter, except on Holy Thursday evening and on the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ when Paul's account of the Lord's Supper is read. He has other things of importance to say about the community's meal practice but they are not to be found in the Sunday lectionary.

Given that Paul is presenting a general conclusion here, the text should be delivered with positive authority and at a moderate pace.

Gospel

The reading from Leviticus has prepared us for this story of Jesus curing a leper. While he noted that Jesus' first healing and exorcism took place on the sabbath, in this case Mark offers no time clue. It's striking, though, that having taken liberties on the sabbath and having risked ritual defilement by touching the leper, Jesus insists, with some vehemence, that the cured man observe the prescriptions of the Law. He must validate his restored health with the priest and make the required offering.

The rather weak translation, "Feeling sorry for him," doesn't do justice to Jesus' depth of feeling at the sight of the man. In fact, Mark's account of the episode could imply that Jesus experienced great anger, perhaps because the man's leprosy was a manifestation of the powers that Jesus had to contend with, or perhaps because the publicity it was sure to generate would mislead the people about his messianic mission. The ironic outcome is that, having restored the man to the community, Jesus is forced into self-exclusion.

As we have come to expect, Mark provides us with an energy-charged report of Jesus' activity. It deserves to be delivered with animation.

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.

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FIRST READING (NRSV)

A reading from the book of Leviticus **13:1–2, 44–46**

The Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying:
"When a person has on the skin of the body
a swelling or an eruption or a spot,
and it turns into a leprous disease on the skin of the body,
that person shall be brought to Aaron the priest
or to one of his sons the priests.

"A person who has the leprous disease shall wear torn clothes
and let the hair of the head be dishevelled
and shall cover the upper lip and cry out,
'Unclean, unclean.'

A person shall remain unclean as long as the disease persists;
and being unclean, that person shall live alone
with a dwelling outside the camp."

SECOND READING (NRSV)

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Corinthians **10:31 – 11:1**

'Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do,
do everything for the glory of God.
Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks
or to the church of God,
just as I try to please everyone in everything I do,
not seeking my own advantage, but that of many,
so that they may be saved.
Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

GOSPEL (NRSV)

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark **1:40–45**

A man with leprosy came to Jesus begging him,
and kneeling said to Jesus,
"If you choose, you can make me clean."
Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him,
and said to him, "I do choose. Be made clean!"
Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean.
After sternly warning him Jesus sent him away at once,
saying to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone;
but go, show yourself to the priest,
and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded,
as a testimony to them."
But the man went out and began to proclaim it freely,
and to spread the word,
and people came to Jesus from every quarter.

Concluding Prayer

Solemn Blessing (Ordinary Time III)

May almighty God bless us in his kindness
and pour out saving wisdom upon us.

Amen.

May he nourish us always with the teachings of the faith
and make us persevere in holy deeds.

Amen.

May he turn our steps towards himself
and show us the path of charity and peace.

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.

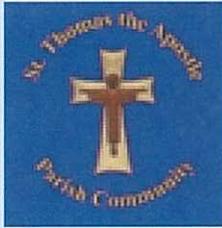
Amen.

(Adapted from the Solemn Blessing for Ordinary Time III, Roman Missal p. 715)

PRAYER IS LIFE



majellan media
family



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:

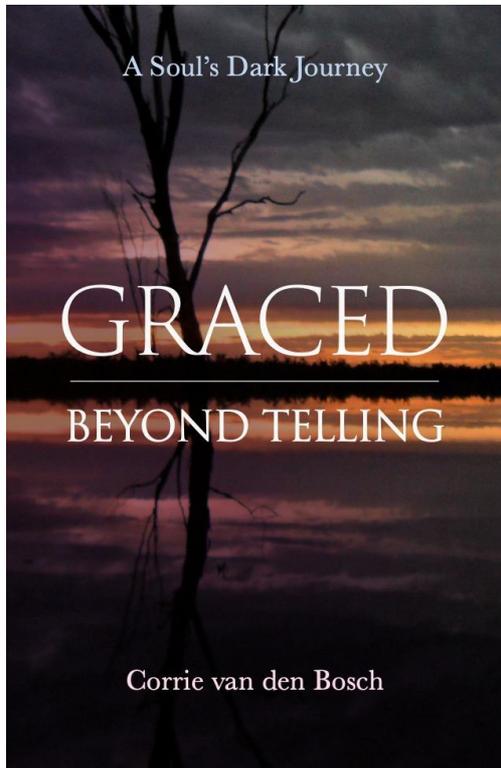
Mass commences at 10:30am
Lunch & activities start at 12:00pm

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!

The Missionary Sisters of Service
are delighted to invite you to the launch of a new book:

Graced Beyond Telling
by Corrie van den Bosch



Date & time: 15 February, 7.00 p.m.

Place: St Thomas the Apostle school hall,
67 Central Road, Blackburn 3130

RSVP: (for catering purposes) by 10 February on
<https://www.trybooking.com/COATA>
OR ring Corrie on 0425 736 747.

“Graced Beyond Telling is a love story of great depth, beauty and honesty as Corrie shares both the outer and inner journey of her life and call. ...It holds together light and darkness, dislocation and connection, adventure and ordinariness, pain and delight, wonder and struggle. Laced through these paradoxes is a resilience of spirit and a profound openness of heart to a God who is always present – even in seeming absence.”

– Madeline Duckett rsm

**2023 also marks 80 years since the founding
of the Missionary Sisters of Service.**

The book launch is the first of our celebrations to mark this anniversary, as we recall the countless ways our congregation has been gifted and blessed through our eighty years. We'd love you to join us.



Graced Beyond Telling will be available at the launch and through the MSS website
<https://missionarysisters.org.au/product-category/books/>

Enquiries: corrie@missionarysisters.org.au



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

P 9890 9097
E info@sion.catholic.edu.au
W sion.catholic.edu.au



**Inviting all “Encountered Couples/Spouses/Priests” to join us in
Celebrating 50 years of WWME in Australia**

Saturday 16 March 2024

At St John’s Parish, Mitcham [Enter via Elizabeth St]

A Formation Day

“Love & Respect: The Love She Most Desires; the Respect He Desperately Longs for”

(A light lunch will be provided)

&

An Evening of celebration starting at 6pm

Catered Spit Roast Dinner **BYO Drinks and a Wedding Photo**

For further details and to register

<https://www.trybooking.com/COSSN>

Or contact Steve & Sue Hollowood

0431 477 556/ 0412 130 845



FOR THE INFORMATION OF PARISHIONERS
LENT 2024

109. *The Lenten season has a twofold character:*

- 1) *it recalls baptism or prepares for it;*
- 2) *it stresses a penitential spirit.*

By these means especially, Lent readies the faithful for celebrating the paschal mystery after a period of closer attention to the Word of God, and more ardent prayer. In the liturgy itself and in the liturgy-centred instructions, these baptismal and penitential themes should be more pronounced. Hence:

- a) *Wider use is to be made of baptismal features proper to the Lenten liturgy.*
- b) *The same approach holds for the penitential elements.*

110. *During Lent, penance should not be only internal and individual but also external and social.*

In any event, let the paschal fast be kept sacred. It should be observed everywhere on Good Friday and, where possible prolonged throughout Holy Saturday, so that the joys of the Sunday of the resurrection may be visited on uplifted and responsive spirits.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Vatican II

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of Fasting and Abstinence from meat.

On all other Fridays, except solemnities, the law of the common practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following:

- (a) **Prayer** - for example, Mass attendance; family prayer; a visit to a church or chapel; reading the Bible; making the Stations of the Cross; praying the Rosary; or in other ways.
 - (b) **Self-Denial** - for example, not eating meat; not eating sweets or dessert; giving up entertainment to spend time with the family; limiting food and drink so as to give to the poor of one's own country or elsewhere; or in other ways. Project Compassion is a major means of expressing our self-denial in Australia.
 - (c) **Helping Others** - for example, special attention to someone who is poor, sick, elderly, lonely or overburdened; or in other ways.
- All who have completed their eighteenth year and have not yet begun their sixtieth year are bound to fast. All who have completed their fourteenth year are bound to abstain (Canon 1252).
 - The Season of Lent is a time of penance. During this season the faithful are exhorted to devote themselves in a special manner to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity, and to deny themselves.
 - Each of the faithful is obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year. This precept must be fulfilled between Ash Wednesday, 14 February 2024 and Trinity Sunday, 26 May 2024 unless for a good reason it is fulfilled at another time during the year.
 - The wonderful gift of the Lord's merciful love is offered in a special way in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Lent is a most appropriate time to receive this Sacrament. All the faithful who have reached the age of discretion are bound faithfully to confess their grave sins at least once a year.

HOLY WEEK - The 2024 Ordo contains instructions for the Rites of Holy Week.

FUNERALS – On Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday all Masses for the Dead, including Funeral Masses, **are forbidden**. Funerals on these days are celebrated with the Liturgy of the Word and without the Eucharistic Sacrifice.

WEDDINGS - Weddings should be discouraged during the Easter Triduum: Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday. Should a couple be particularly insistent on a wedding for one of these days, then please indicate that no decorations (including flowers), no music nor Nuptial Mass will be permitted.



Father Joe Caddy AM
VICAR GENERAL



Ten ways to Celebrate Lent at Home

In the early Church Lent began as a period of intense preparation for those preparing for baptism. Today it is celebrated as a period of repentance and renewal for all Christians as they prepare to celebrate Easter.

1. Talk it over

On Ash Wednesday gather as a family or household for a simple meal (in keeping with the Lenten fast). Table topic: What does Lent mean to you and what practical steps will you take in your Lenten observance this year?

2. Set up a sacred space

Set up a sacred space in a corner of your home. Spread a purple cloth on a small table. Add a bible and a candle, a bean bag or chair nearby. Make it a restful and inviting place where members of your household can go, whether alone or in company, to read the scriptures.

3. Pool family funds

As a family or household adopt a Lenten project. This might be Project Compassion or a particular project such as the building of a hospital or school in an impoverished town. Invite household members to contribute a portion of their income or pocket money each week during Lent towards this cause. Give from your substance not just your surplus.

4. Hold simple meals

Come together for the simplest of meals during the week. Invite a different family member to prepare the meal each week. Discover joy and creativity in plain foods: bread, rice, water. Be mindful of those who hunger. Talk about how your Lenten plans are progressing.

5. Organize a family action

Pool your talents and resources to assist someone in your local neighbourhood. This might involve mowing the lawn of an elderly person or serving meals at a shelter for the homeless.

6. Make Sundays special

Sunday is the Day of the Lord. During Lent make an effort to celebrate it well, uncluttered by work and activities of your regular week. Include rest, prayer, Mass, time for family and friends.

7. Celebrate the saints

Buy a book on the saints (or search the internet) and read a short excerpt each night, perhaps just after dinner and while everyone is still seated at table. This needn't be a long reading, just enough to spark a few thoughts and comments. Close with a short prayer, calling on the chosen saint of that evening to pray with you.

8. Gaze upon the cross

Take a special cross or crucifix (the kind designed for hanging on a wall) and give it in a prominent place in your home. If you don't have such a cross, buy or make a rustic one out of two bits of wood. During Lent stop to touch or look at the cross as you go about your day. At family prayer time, bring it down and pray with it. Use it to bless or commission a member of your family before an important event.

9. Gather your friends

Invite some friends to your home for a couple of hours each week during Lent. Use that time to reflect and pray together. [See also: "Ten Ways to Hold a Lenten Group."]

10. Say sorry

Make forgiveness a natural part of your Lenten journey. Look for everyday ways to say 'sorry'—in word and gesture—for the ways we have hurt one another.

Helpful Hint

Translate terms like 'repentance' and 'renewal' into specific challenges tailored to your life situation. E.g., this Lent you might decide to work at an aspect of your marital relationship or pray each day for a particular intention. A Lenten commitment has more chance of success when it is specific and practical, challenging but achievable.

TeresaPirola.net

Text: Teresa Pirola

Design: Sarann Ryan

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