



The parish of *St Joseph* *Newport & Spotswood*

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR B

10th MARCH 2024

Parish Office

9 Newcastle Street, Newport
T: 9391 1201

E: newport.spotswood@cam.org.au
www.stjosephs3015.com.au

Mass Time

Tue & Thu – 9.15am, Spotswood
Wed & Fri – 9.15am, Newport
Sat - 5.30pm, Spotswood
Sun - 10.00am, Newport

Reconciliation

Sat 10.00-10.30am, Newport
5.00-5.20pm, Spotswood

Parish Clergy

Father Binh Le PP

Parish Pastoral Council

Katherine Wong
Chairperson

Secretary & Safeguarding Officer

Ivana Toulmin
Tuesday & Friday: 9am – 5pm

Sacramental Co-Ordinators

Sr Lorraine Robinson
Irene Bongetti
Carmel Crawford
Grace Frazzica
Katherine Wong

Sacristans

Irene Bongetti
Maureen Llewellyn
Michael Nardella
Barbara Payne

Choir

Larissa Cairns
Director

Reflection by Rev Mark O'Brien OP

Last Sunday's readings invited us to compare the effects of our sin to the temple that Jesus confronts in John's Gospel; a marketplace of competing self-interests, resistant to any thought of change, awareness of God banished to the periphery of our lives. This Sunday's readings provide some graphic descriptions of the effects of sin, both at the national and the individual level. What is one of the most dangerous temptations for a nation or community? According to the author of Chronicles, it is the temptation to think that we, the majority, are always right. The reading makes the point dramatically by claiming that 'all the heads of the priesthood and the people' rejected 'messenger after messenger' sent by God to warn them of their error and evil ways. Who is the equally dangerous companion of 'majority rule is right'? Again, according to Chronicles it is the 'blame the other' syndrome, directed at its target via ridicule and abuse. In a telling irony, the chronicler notes how each divinely sent messenger is reviled as the one who is disloyal to God and society (e.g., the book of Jeremiah). Books such as Jeremiah indicate there was bitter debate about who was responsible for Israel's descent into exile. In retrospect, Israelite tradition came to accept that the exile showed the majority had been wrong and the lone messenger right.

In our highly individualistic world, we can find it difficult to think of sin and its consequences at a national or universal level. But if we accept that God is involved in our individual lives why not at the national and universal levels? And if we accept that the good things we enjoy are God's blessings, then why shouldn't we associate the bad things in some way with God? Would someone preaching war or climate change as a sign of divine warning or wrath these days motivate us to change or simply irritate and embarrass us? It may be with some relief then that we turn from 'that old stuff' to the Gospel reading that tackles the effect of sin on the individual. Jesus identifies fear as one of its most damaging effects. 'Everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his/her actions should be exposed'. Jesus' insight allows us to see that it is fear that drives individuals to band together as the hostile, ridiculing mob. We hide in a crowd. Both individual and the mob fear the truth about themselves. But it is only when the truth is 'exposed', i.e., when our sins are made known to us and we accept them as the truth about ourselves that we can recognise and accept the antidote – the healing grace of God. The passage from Ephesians offers another angle on the devastating impact of sin, highlighting our ever urgent need for forgiveness and reconciliation. Like the Israelites portrayed in the Chronicles, we tend to think that being hyperactive is a sure sign of life: all the priests and the people made great sport of the messengers, they aped the nations around them and conducted grand liturgies. But, the chronicler would say, echoing Ephesians, Israel was in reality 'dead through its sins'. This devastating comment reminds me of an equally one on London's rush hour in T. S. Eliot's poem *The Wasteland*: 'A crowd flowed over London bridge, so many, I had not thought death had undone so many'. Whether we see ourselves like the mob in Chronicles mocking anyone who dares to challenge our status quo, or like those who hide for fear of being 'exposed' by the Gospel light, or like the walking dead in the letter to the Ephesians, we are ourselves quite incapable of change, of bringing ourselves to true life. It can only come about through God's gift, a gift that thankfully, God is only too eager to bestow on us. Moreover, this gift is unlikely any earthly gift that we can bestow on one another.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY

The Parish of St. Joseph, Newport and Spotswood, acknowledges the Yalukit-willam people of the Bunurong Country who are the traditional owners of the land on which the churches of Sacred Heart and St. Margaret Mary stand.

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.

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Sacred Heart

Principal: Kaylene Carlin
9391 6262
principal@shnewport.catholic.edu.au

St. Margaret Mary's

Principal: Colleen McCambridge
9391 3118
principal@smmspotswood.catholic.edu.au

SAFETY OF YOUNG CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND VULNERABLE ADULTS.

The parish of St Joseph, Newport and Spotswood, holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and all vulnerable people as a central and fundamental responsibility for our community.

THE WORD OF GOD

First reading **Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23**

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, 'Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation.'

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: 'Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up."'

Responsorial Psalm **Ps 136**

R. *Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!*

1. By the rivers of Babylon
there we sat and wept,
remembering Zion:
on the poplars that grew there
we hung our harps. **(R.)**

2. For it was there that they asked us,
our captors, for songs,
our oppressors, for joy.
'Sing to us,' they said,
'one of Zion's songs.' **(R.)**

3. O how could we sing
the song of the Lord
on alien soil?
If I forget you, Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither! **(R.)**

4. O let my tongue
cleave to my mouth
if I remember you not,
if I prize not Jerusalem
above all my joys! **(R.)**

2nd Reading **Ephesians 2:4-10**

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus. This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in

grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son,
that all who believe in him might have eternal life. Praise
to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Gospel **John 3:14-21**

Jesus said to Nicodemus: 'The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life.'

For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God's only Son.

On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.'

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: WE ARE CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS TO LIVE THE GOOD LIFE

This fourth Sunday of Lent is traditionally known as 'Laetare (Rejoice!) Sunday', and our readings today suggest many reasons for rejoicing. The First Reading from Chronicles describes the destruction of Jerusalem and the days of exile. But God, working through the Persian king, Cyrus, not only brings the Jewish people home to where they belong but also helps them rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. St Paul (Second Reading) writes that God, whose nature is Universal Love, brought us back to life in and with Christ Jesus through the gift of his infinite grace. Our good works and our lives lived in all their fullness are a grateful and authentic response to all we have been given by God. The Gospel tells us that the resurrection of Christ Jesus, who was 'lifted up and exalted' on the cross, brings salvation to all who believe in him and in his teachings. Christ's Passion, for all its injustice and brutality, is a glorious revelation of God's love for all of humankind, and the source of our healing. Jesus calls us to live by his truth and light, where we can dwell in the flow of God's energy and love. The Psalm of lament recalls the bitter days of exile in Babylon. For us today, 'Babylon' can stand as a symbol for all that threatens the fullness of human living. Hatred, selfishness, greed, and pride can all take us away from wholeness of life and into exile. This week, we pray for the personal faith and humility to be open to God's infinite be open and receptive to God's life-giving energy.

COMBINED PARISHES STATIONS OF THE CROSS

The Stations of the Cross will be held at various Parishes, on Fridays at 7:00pm as follows:

March 15th Sacred Heart Church, Newport

March 22nd St Leo the Great Church
387 Mason St, Altona North

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Every Sunday at 10.00am Parish Mass, Sacred Heart Church. All children are welcome to attend.



ST JOSEPH'S PARISH FEAST DAY

Sacred Heart church
Sunday 17th March
10.00am Mass, followed by Lunch
in the school hall.



JOIN US TO
CELEBRATE
ST JOSEPH'S
PARISH FEAST
DAY

10 am mass Sunday 17th March
Sacred Heart Church, Newport
Please join us after Mass for lunch
in the Sacred Heart School hall

Dear Parishioners,

For our parish Feast Day of St Joseph, there won't be an evening Mass on Saturday 16th of March. Once a year, our parish feast day provides us with a wonderful opportunity to come together and celebrate as a community.

I encourage you to join other parishioners as we celebrate this significant occasion. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Warm regards,
Fr Binh

PARISH FEAST DAY: VOLUNTEERS WANTED

We require 10 volunteers to help with setting up, serving food and drinks, and tidying up afterwards. If you would like to assist, please contact Tony Nicholson at 0417 307 716 or Ivana at the Parish office on 9391 1201. Thank you for your support.

LENT PROJECT COMPASSION

Memory grew up in a village in southern Malawi with her parents and four siblings. Her parents are subsistence farmers who rely on their crops for survival. Being the eldest child, Memory faced numerous challenges as she had to help with farming, fetching water, cooking, and cleaning while also focusing on her education. Living in the village was tough, especially when farming seasons didn't go well, leading to food insecurity for her family. You can support families like Memory's by donating through Project Compassion boxes and envelopes or by visiting <https://caritas.org.au> or calling 1800 024 413.



OUR SICK

Micheal Conlon, Paul Orfali, Elizabeth Sundanam, Barbara Payne, Kata Duvnjak, Bob Cairns, Kristy Robinson, John, Helen Kelly

ANNIVERSARIES

Blanca Martinez, Raul Morales, Regina Pagagalluan, Luz Gabriel, Maria Pham thi Dieu, Maria D'Urso, Fouad Orfali, Ian Nason Hunter

RECENTLY DECEASED

Maureen Kneviitt

'MERCY MELBOURNE' AT ST MARGARET MARY'S, SPOTSWOOD

When: Tuesday, 19th March 2024

Where: St Margaret Mary's, Spotswood

Time: 7:00pm-9:00pm

Details: An evening of healing, quiet prayer in the presence of the Lord, followed by Mass for the Solemnity of St Joseph, Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

ST MARGARET MARY'S PARISH SCHOOL

Our Grade 5 and 6 students had a blast from the past at Sovereign Hill Ballarat! They embarked on an unforgettable adventure, stepping back in time to explore life in the 1850s. From panning for gold to immersing themselves in Australia's rich history, they forged new friendships and created lasting memories.



PARISH DONATIONS

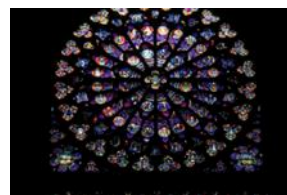
For those of us that do not carry cash, we now have portable smart terminals available at our Mass's for Thanksgiving/Donations.

All you need to do is select the amount or select custom to donate a different amount, tap your card and you are good to go. Thank you for your continued generosity and support of our Parish.



NOTRE-DAME DE PARIS: THE JUNCTION BETWEEN FAITH AND THE ARTS

Art, architecture and music have the power to move hearts and minds and are vital tools in the work of evangelisation. Fr Nicholas Dillon, parish priest of St Philip's in Blackburn North and a classically trained musician, recently attended the concert 'Notre-Dame—A story of ritual, resolution and resurrection' by the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra and Choir. The innovative production not only explored the important place that the Notre-Dame Cathedral occupies in the hearts of the French (whether believers or not) but also



why what we build matters, since 'our architectural and artistic efforts help people to find a home'.

To continue reading, please visit:

<https://melbournecatholic.org/news/notre-dame-de-paris-the-junction-between-faith-and-the-arts>

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you,
we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

PARISH PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We gather as the parish of Saint Joseph as we
welcome all into our community. We celebrate our
faith, share in the Eucharist and Sacraments and
come together to embrace each other's joys,
sorrows, hopes and dreams.

We pray that we will always be a welcoming
community, embracing our future and the
uniqueness of all who come amongst us.

We are led by the example of Christ, the
cornerstone of all we are and all we do. We are
guided by the Spirit to be the heart of God, as we
find grace in each other. We are inspired by the
charism of Mary MacKillop and the work of the
Sisters of St Joseph.

We pray that we will follow St Margaret Mary's
devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Sacred Heart of Jesus, be with us.

St Joseph, pray for us.

St Margaret Mary, pray for us.

St Mary of the Cross, pray for us.

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible
and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only
Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all
ages. God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father; through him all
things were made.

For us men and for our salvation he came down
from heaven,

*and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin
Mary, and became man.*

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius
Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and
rose again on the third day in accordance with the
Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the
right hand of the Father. He will come again in
glory to judge the living and the dead and his
kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and
glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic
Church.

I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

AN ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus,

I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things, and I long for You in
my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.

As though You have already come, I embrace
You and unite myself entirely to You;
never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

WEEKLY COLLECTIONS

1st Collection

Presbytery Offering

2nd Collection

Thanksgiving Offering

To support:

- Parish clergy
- Sick and retired priests
- Priests in needy parishes
- Archbishop & auxiliary bishops

To support:

- Parish running costs
- Parish pastoral initiatives
- Diocesan and various services

If you would like to join parish thanksgiving programme,
please contact the parish office. Thank you.

ST MARGARET MARY ALACOQUE

O St Margaret Mary, through you, Jesus pours
out His abundant graces to all mankind. Help us to
put aside personal interests and abandon
ourselves entirely and lovingly to His Adorable
Heart. May our work, like yours, merit His special
care and favour, through Jesus' Holy Name.

Amen.