

WELCOME TO

# ST BRENDAN'S CATHOLIC PARISH



St Brendan's Parish is a Child Safe community. We promote the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all and a zero tolerance to child abuse.

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year B

10 March 2024

### First Reading 2 Chr 36:14-16. 19-23

*The wrath and the mercy of the Lord are revealed in the exile and liberation of his people.*

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. v.6

*(R.) Let my tongue be silenced, if ever I 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.)

### Second Reading Eph 2:4-10

*When we were dead through sins, he brought us to life.*

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 Jn 3:16

*Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son, that all who believe in him might have eternal life.*

*Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!*

### Gospel Jn 3:14-21

*God sent his Son into the world that we might be saved through him.*

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.'



As the eldest child in a low-income farming family in rural Malawi, Memory faced many barriers to her education.

But, with the support of Caritas Australia, she enrolled in a technical school and became the first female carpenter in her village. Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow for all future generations.

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes by calling 1800 024 413 or visiting

[caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion).

The St Brendan's Parish have so far contributed \$1550, thank you.



### MUSICIANS We are in need of

musicians and singers for the Sunday 8am Mass. If you are interested in helping out, please contact the Parish Office on 5821 2633 or speak with Fr Joe or Fr Jackson.



### Community of the Sons and Daughters of God

Saturday, March 16, 11am Mass at St Brendan's Shepparton. All welcome. Adoration 3 - 4pm.



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# ST BRENDAN'S PARISH NEWS



121 Knight Street, Shepparton  
 Phone: 5821 2633 | Email: shepparton@sandhurst.catholic.org.au  
 Website: sheppartoncatholic.org.au  
 Facebook: sheppartoncatholic  
 Parish Priest: Fr Joe Taylor  
 Priest in Residence: Fr Joseph Kunnackattu  
 Associate Priest: Fr Jackson Saunders  
 Deacon: Francois Baguma  
 Office Manager: Diane Teitzel  
 Child Safe Officer: Jason Giuliani Ph: 5821 2633  
 Office Hours: Mon to Fri 9am - 2pm



*Christ in community ...  
 the heart of our faith*

**Anniversary:** Con and Barbara Zammit, Eugene Curtis, Len Stein, Judy Cobbledick, Shirley Cobbledick and Joe Cobbledick, Rosa Piscioneri, Bernadette Watt, Winifred Kelly.

## Readers & Commentators March 17 & 18 2024

6pm	Sr Bing	K. Hunt
8am	B. Sullivan	D. Teitzel
11am	L. Richardson	P. Richardson

## ST BRENDANS' FEAST DAY

**VOLUNTEERS WANTED:** A Parish Expo and the launch of our new vision statement and logo will be held **Sunday, May 5**, after the 11am Mass. We are looking for a committee of volunteers to help plan and run the events on the day, with stalls of all of our parish groups and food available for lunch. Please contact the Parish Office to join us.



The Parish office will be closed on Monday, March 11. Please email any queries.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We turn our hearts and minds to the people of the Yorta Yorta nation, who have occupied this country for thousands of years. We pay respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and commit to walking alongside Aboriginal Australians in truth and justice.

## PARISH YOUTH WORKER

**Join our team!**

**3yr Contract, 10 hrs/week**

Permanent Part-time (Hours are flexible and can be negotiated, if needed).

Role will be to involve young people in the life and mission of the Catholic Church at St Brendan's Parish.

CLOSES Friday, March 22, 2024.

For enquiries and to obtain a copy of the role description email: shepparton@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

## PRESBYTERY RENOVATIONS

Sanding of floors continue but these should finish in the next week. Next on the agenda is painting. Thank you to for your generous donations towards the project.

## What about the Church?

Alpha is coming again, are you ready? [www.alpha.org.au/try](http://www.alpha.org.au/try)

Enquiries to Marie 0435 899 830



During the season of Lent there will be no recessional hymn. People will be asked to leave the Church in total silence.

## Gluten free Communion.

We have a number of gluten free Communion hosts already consecrated in the tabernacle from recent school Masses.

If you receive gluten free Communion, please speak with Father about this before Mass so that he can give one of these to you during the Mass.

## Candle Bearers for the Passion Play on Good Friday

We are looking for 10 people to be involved. Rehearsal will be held during the afternoon on Palm Sunday. If you are able to assist, please contact Graeme Quinlan 0439 401 357.

New rosters will be prepared shortly.

If you would like to be added or change your current details please email the Parish office (see top of page).



## YOUNG ADULTS

Saturday March 16  
 Mass at 6pm

Fish and Chips at 7pm

Young Adults 18 - 35 are invited

Pre-order your dinner when you RSVP, which will be at your expense

Consultation on the Synod

Discussion on the Church's mission

from 7.30pm - 8.30pm

RSVP 5821 2633 or email [Jackson.Saunders@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:Jackson.Saunders@sandhurst.catholic.org.au)

**Weekend Mass Times**

Saturday Vigil 6pm

Sunday 8am & 11am **PRAYING with CHILDREN**  
SUNDAY LITURGY

Syro Malabar Rite: Wednesday 6.00pm, Saturday 8.30am, Sunday 5.30pm

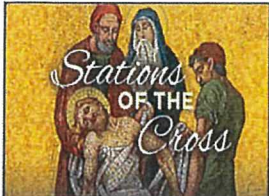
**Rosary**— The Rosary is prayed in the Marian Chapel after weekday Masses and after the 8am Mass on Sunday.

**Holy Hour with Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:** Thursdays 7pm to 8pm and Fridays 5pm to 6pm

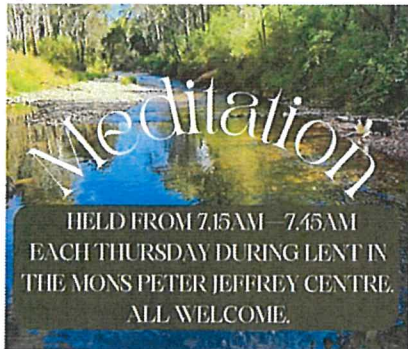
**Weekday Mass Times**

Tuesday to Friday 9.15am

**Reconciliation** Saturday 9.45am to 10.30am (in the Church)

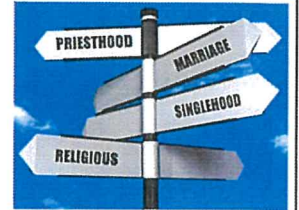


St Brendan's Catholic Church, 6pm, Thursdays: March 14 & 21.



A **VOCATIONS DISCERNMENT** gathering for men will be held on Sunday, May 26 at St Patrick's Catholic Parish, Wangaratta, from 2.30pm.

The gathering will conclude with dinner. The session will be focused on prayer. For details or to RSVP, please reach out to Fr Jackson or Fr Nathan Verallo: 5722 1970.



***St Brendan's Sacramental Program***

Children in Year 3 or higher, baptised or welcomed into the Catholic Church.

During our Masses this weekend and next weekend we will be accepting enrolments into this year's Sacramental Program.

Enrolments **will not** be accepted outside of these Mass times.



Children will be called forward at a time during mass to "lodge" their paperwork and receive a Welcome Pack.

- Saturday, March 9, at 6pm
- Sunday, March 10, at 8am and 11am
- Saturday, March 16, at 6pm
- Sunday, March 17, at 8am and 11am

If you would like to enrol your child in the program but do not have the enrolment pack, please email Jess on shepparton.sacramental@sandhurst.catholic.org.au

Enrolments close after the 11am Mass on Sunday, March 17.

**HOLY WEEK & EASTER TIMETABLE 2024**

SATURDAY, MARCH 23 - SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 2024

**PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 23 & 24**

6:00PM SATURDAY VIGIL (YOUTH MASS)  
8:00AM & 11:00AM SUNDAY



**TUESDAY, MARCH 26**

9:15AM LITURGY OF THE WORD WITH COMMUNION  
11:00AM CHRISM MASS - CATHEDRAL BENDIGO  
6.30 - 7.30PM RECONCILIATION



**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27**

9:15AM DAILY MASS

**HOLY THURSDAY, MARCH 28**

5:30PM MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER



**GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 29**

3:00PM CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S PASSION  
8:00PM STATIONS OF THE CROSS

**HOLY SATURDAY, MARCH 30**

6:00PM EASTER VIGIL 'THE VIGIL OF LIGHT'



**EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 31**

CELEBRATION OF THE RISEN LORD  
8:00AM & 11:00AM EASTER SUNDAY MASS

**ST BRENDAN'S CATHOLIC PARISH**  
SECONDARY SCHOOL SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

THIS PARISH BASED PROGRAM WILL PREPARE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO WISH TO CELEBRATE THEIR FIRST RECONCILIATION, FIRST HOLY COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION.



Enrolments Close March 17  
Program Begins Term 2

For more information or to enrol please contact the Parish Office  
Shepparton.sacramental@sandhurst.catholic.org.au



Teams of Our Lady group for young married couples is launching soon.

Teams of Our Lady is an international Catholic faith movement of married couples, who meet monthly to discuss their lives with other married couples.

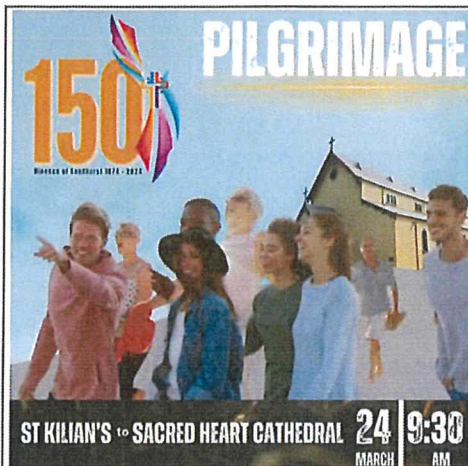
The format of each meeting is some shared prayer, discussion over a meal and the opportunity to share a high/low with each other.

This group will meet **Wednesday, March 20, at 6.30pm.** Please reach out to Fr Jackson, to join the group on email [jackson.saunders@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:jackson.saunders@sandhurst.catholic.org.au).

**Charismatic Prayer Group** Wednesday, March 13 at 1.30 pm In the MacKillop Room. All are welcome.

Enquiries to: Lorelei Goodall 5798 5331.



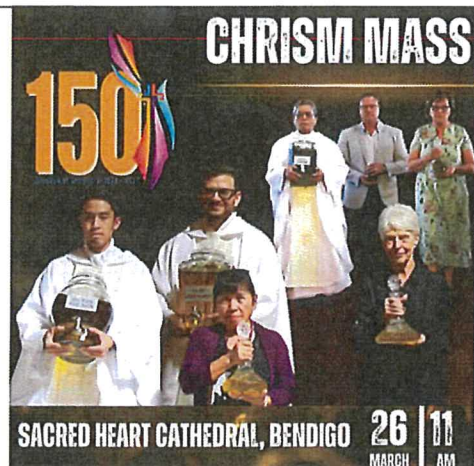


**150** PILGRIMAGE  
 1874 - 2024  
 ST KILIAN'S to SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL  
 24 MARCH 9:30 AM

**PILGRIMAGE TO BENDIGO FOR 150 YEARS CELEBRATION OF THE SANDHURST DIOCESE**

This year marks 150 years since the foundation of the Sandhurst Diocese. Fr Joe is inviting parishioners to join him in Bendigo on Palm Sunday, March 24, for Diocesan celebrations with a pilgrimage from St Kilian's Catholic Church to Sacred Heart Cathedral in Bendigo. The pilgrimage begins at 9.30am at St Kilian's Catholic Church, 161 McCrae Street, Bendigo.

There will then be a leisurely walk through Bendigo to the Cathedral for the 11am Mass with Bishop Shane Mackinlay.



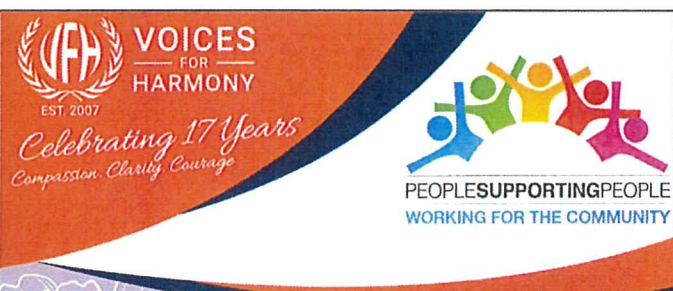
**150** CHRISM MASS  
 SACRED HEART CATHEDRAL, BENDIGO  
 26 MARCH 11 AM

**2024 Synod Consultation**

As the Church prepares for the Second Session of the Synodal Assembly in October 2024, we have been invited to contribute our response to the question: *How can we be a synodal Church in mission?* Please join other parishioners from our Deanery on **March 14, 2024, 5pm – 6.30 pm** in **St Mel's Parish gathering room** to take part in the discussion and consider how our own parish can be more synodal. This will help shape the communications provided to the Second Session of Synod in October in Rome.




**ST BRENDAN'S PARISH YOUTH MASS**  
**Saturday, March 23, at 6.00pm.**  
**Join us for a student led Mass in St Brendan's Church, everyone is welcome.**  
**Food and Games in the Mons Peter Jeffrey Centre after Mass for youth Year 7 and above.**  
**RSVP to [ella.bathman@notredame.vic.edu.au](mailto:ella.bathman@notredame.vic.edu.au) by March 21 for catering purposes.**



**VOICES FOR HARMONY**  
 EST. 2007  
*Celebrating 17 Years*  
*Compassion. Clarity. Courage.*  
**PEOPLESUPPORTINGPEOPLE**  
**WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY**

To celebrate Harmony Day we invite you to a special event with the theme **"Mental Health / Inequalities and Spirituality"**

Very passionate and accomplished speakers will present on the theme

The speakers include:

Coordinator - **Voices for Harmony, Camuran Albanol**  
 2021 Shepparton Citizen of the Year  
 2021 Greater Shepparton Citizen of the Year

**Caleb Francis**  
 Media Adviser to Ms Kim O'Keefe's office

**Keynote Speaker: St Brendan's Parish Priest, Father Joe Taylor**

followed by a Q & A session led by

**MC, Ms Melissa Crosby**  
 Office of Ms Kim O'Keefe

The event, to celebrate Harmony Day will held held on:

**Thursday 21st March 2023**  
**Shepparton Golf Club, 15 Golf Drive, Shepparton**  
**1.45pm for 2.00pm - 3.30pm**

Afternoon tea will be provided.

Enquiries: **Cameron (Camuran) Albanol - 0421 743 699**  
**Melissa Crosby - 0401 171 055**

"Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country."

Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 21.2

**Dignity and Justice For All**



**Hearing Awareness Week:** Hearing loss affects millions of Australians each year. It can be socially isolating for those affected and equally frustrating for their family and friends. This cannot be treated lightly because recent studies suggest that loss of hearing is strongly linked to the development of dementia. The Department of Health's Hearing Services Program (HSP) offers a free one-hour consultation for a hearing check where an audiologist will also answer any questions you may have about hearing aids and loss of hearing. Subsidies are available offering a device at a discounted rate or completely free. The modern hearing aids which are tiny and almost invisible may be suitable for your needs.

The Catholic Women's League will gather for a speaker, reports and discussion at **10.00am, Wednesday, March 13**, in **St Mary's Hall, Tatura**. Mass at noon. BYO lunch. Enquiries to Margaret 5862 1080.




**The Eye Shop**  
 Locally owned business servicing Shepparton for 35 years. For all your eye care needs, you can contact **Ashley and Vanessa Madeira at The Eye Shop.**  
 Phone 5821 0311  
[enquiries@eyeshopshepparton.com.au](mailto:enquiries@eyeshopshepparton.com.au)



# PRAYING *With* CHILDREN

## SUNDAY LITURGY



4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

10 March 2024 - Year B

**“God sent his Son into the world that we might be saved through him.”**

### Something to Think About

God loved the people in the world so much, that he gave his only Son, Jesus, to save them. Think about someone you love... if you could give them anything, what would it be?

### The Story

In this week's gospel, Jesus talks about the never-ending love of God. Jesus says that everyone who believes in God will have eternal life. He assures his listeners that God is not interested in judging people for their mistakes, but instead wants to save them. No matter what we do or where we go, God will be there helping us, loving us, and welcoming us home.

### The Scriptures

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 3:16-17

Jesus told Nicodemus:  
"God loved the people of this world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who has faith in him will have eternal life and never really die. God did not send his Son into the world to condemn its people. He sent him to save them!"

The Gospel of the Lord.  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### Video

Click to watch the video: [God Loves You So Much](#)



## Group Discussion

Because God loves us so much, God has given us gifts to make us happy... but God also wants us to use these gifts to bring life and happiness to other people.

Invite everyone to share some of their gifts, saying how they might use these gifts to bring life and joy to someone this week.

## Praying For Others

*Leader:* Trusting in God's love, we pray for the needs of the world.

*Reader 1:* We pray for all people and for all countries. Lord hear us.

**All: Lord hear our prayer.**

*Reader 2:* We pray for those who are separated from people they love. Lord hear us.

**All: Lord hear our prayer.**

*Reader 3:* We pray for help in doing the right thing. Lord hear us.

**All: Lord hear our prayer.**

*Reader 4:* We pray that our faith in God will continue to grow stronger. Lord hear us.

**All: Lord hear our prayer.**

*Reader 5:* We pray that we will trust in God's never-ending love and forgiveness. Lord hear us.

**All: Lord hear our prayer.**

*Invite the children to pray for their own special intentions.*

**All: Lord hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Loving God, listen to the prayers we make in the name of Jesus.

**All: Amen.**

## Prayer



Dear God,  
Thank you for loving us and for being  
with us wherever we go.  
Save us when we are in trouble.  
Amen.

## Group Activity

### Stained Glass Cross

*You will need: black cross template for each child, clear contact cut into rectangular pieces slightly larger than cross template, coloured 2 cm squares of tissue paper, scissors.*

Lay a piece of clear contact, sticky side up, on the table and then place the black cross template on the contact.

Ask the children to carefully place one piece of coloured tissue paper at a time inside the cross template until it is all covered.

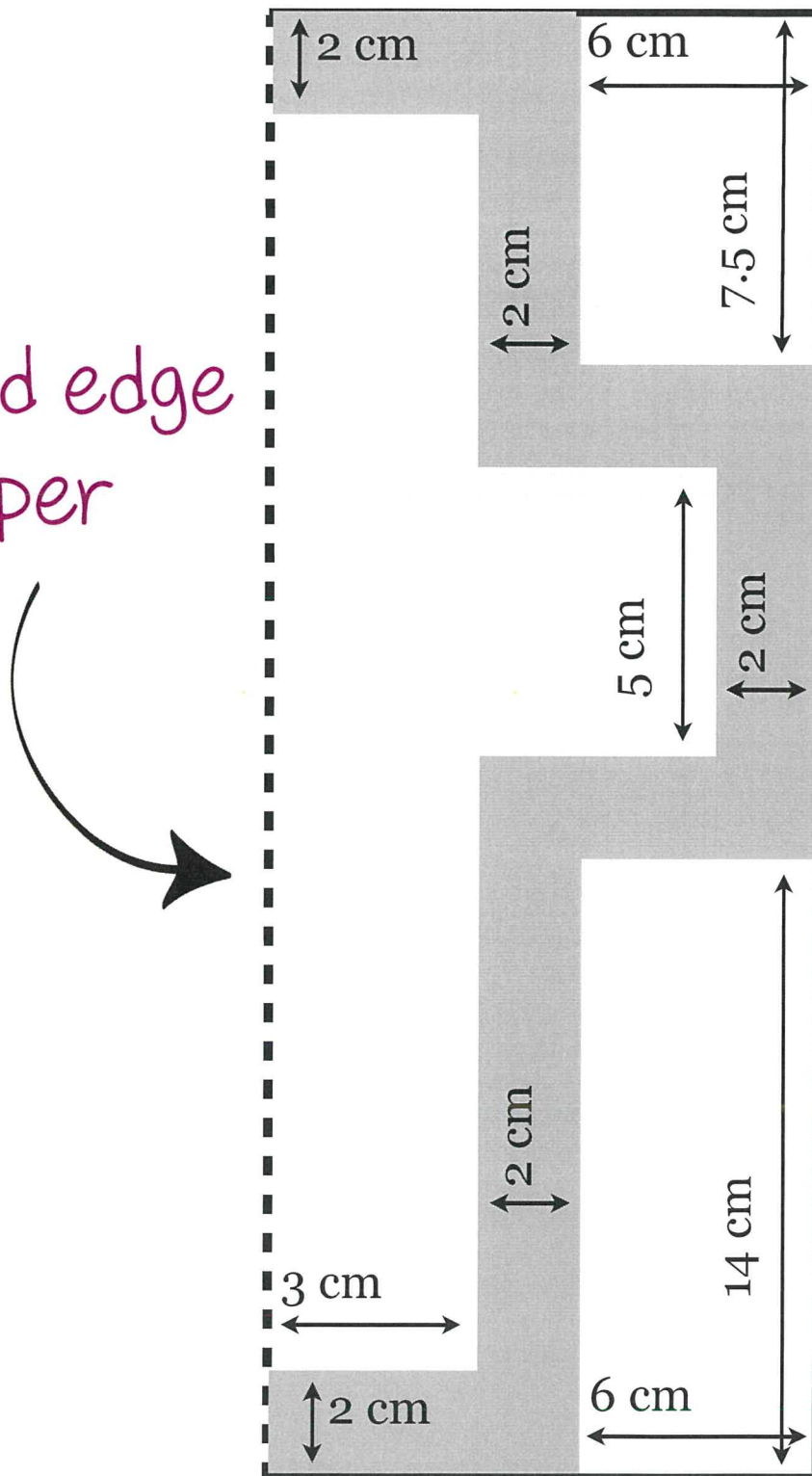
Then place another piece of clear contact, sticky side down, over the top.

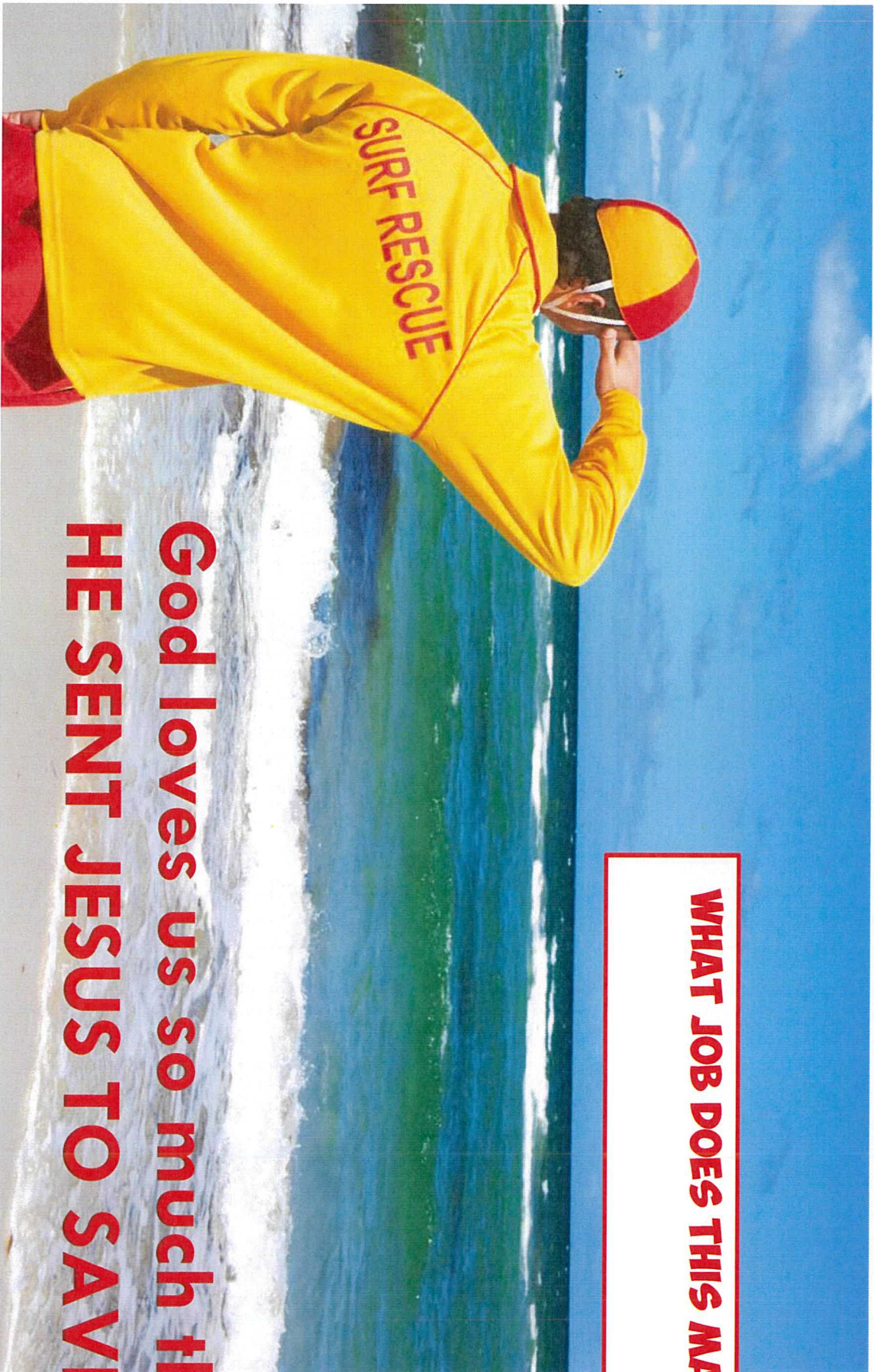
Trim around the sides of the cross. Hang against a window and watch the sun shine through the coloured cross.



Fold a sheet of black construction paper in half.  
Then, follow the measurements and cut along  
the grey lines to create your cross.

Folded edge  
of paper





**WHAT JOB DOES THIS MAN DO?**

**God loves us so much that  
HE SENT JESUS TO SAVE US.**

**WHEN DOES JESUS RESCUE US? \_\_\_\_\_**

**SAY THIS PRAYER OFTEN: "SAVE US, LORD, WHEN WE ARE IN TROUBLE!"**



# Along the track

## Not Lent Again!

Joyce Rupp, in her latest book *Jesus, Companion in My Suffering: Reflections for the Lenten Journey* asks how do you continue to approach Lent with fresh eyes over and over again? It's not a focus on her sinfulness that elicits inner change, she has found, but rather a re-centering on the goodness that is already present, the assurance of the Spirit living and active within.

In an interview she said: *Quite frankly, I'm tired of being reminded at the opening of every Eucharistic liturgy that I am sinful. That's a given. What I, and others in the pews, really need to be reminded of is how much goodness (God-ness) there is in us, our potential to be superb human beings.*

Now that's a challenge. We tend to blame our sinfulness and use it as an excuse - I did this or didn't do that because I am a sinful person. What if we focussed on the free gift of God's grace and goodness, what if this Lent we focussed on the fact that God is with us and has made us gifted, talented. What if we changed the greeting at the start of Mass to: *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit are with all of you"*. Perhaps simply changing that might be a reminder that the goodness of God is alive within us.

Many years ago, when I was studying to be a teacher we had to wade through a large and very boring tome but one thing stuck with me. It was the term 'entering behaviour.' In other words, find out what the students already know and can already do and build on that. Always start with the positive. The same applies to life - we don't get anywhere much by focussing on the negative, on how sinful or inadequate we or others may be but rather on how we have been gifted and blessed, then build on that. During Lent, Joyce Rupp suggests that we do much the same: *So I focus on the fruits of the Spirit and their potential to be deepened and strengthened in my life. This motivation is much more effective for making a change.*

The author of Psalm 139 wrote:

When I was being made in secret, fashioned in the depths of the earth,  
your eyes could see my unformed substance.  
You knit me together in my mother's womb.  
Nothing about me, from beginning to end  
was hidden from your eyes.

For so many marvels I thank you.  
You have made me to be so wonderful.  
I praise you for you fill me with awe. Psalm 139

I wonder whether we actually do see ourselves as being made to be so wonderful, as a 'marvel', blessed by God and gifted with grace, that we are in the mind and heart of God from beginning to end.

In Matthew's Gospel we find the parable of the weeds among the crop. Don't pull them out now, the farmer tells his workers - wait until the harvest time when the crop has fully grown, then pull them out. That is a reminder that we are a mixture of light and darkness, selflessness and selfishness, virtue and vice, grace and sin, we can be sincere as well as two faced. Like the farmer, tend the crop, make it grow to harvest time - in other words focus on the positive, count your blessings, build on them and make them grow. Eventually sincerity will weed out insincerity, selflessness will weed out selfishness, and grace will weed out sin.

The following has been used by many famous people, not the least of them Nelson Mandela.

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light not our darkness that frightens us.

We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are born to manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us. It's in everyone, and, as we let our light shine, we consciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

We do not have to make God present, but to make ourselves present to God, to make ourselves sensitive to the richness of God's grace that is already present and active in our lives if we let it.

Regards  
Jim Quillinan

Email: [jquillinan@dcsi.net.au](mailto:jquillinan@dcsi.net.au)

“Lord, teach us to pray . . .”



FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT 2024  
IN THE WORLDWIDE YEAR OF PRAYER 2024 AND  
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF THE DIOCESE OF SANDHURST.

## From the Readings

**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 ... 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. *Ephesians 2:4-10*

**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 ... light has come into the world ... the one who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what is done is done in God.'

*John 3:14-17, 19-21.*

## Teach us to Pray

### *I: SOLITUDE AND THE JESUS PRAYER*

**SOLITUDE ... is a form of awareness. It's a way of being present and perceptive within all of life. It's having a dimension of reflectiveness in our daily lives that rings with it a sense of gratitude, appreciation, peacefulness, enjoyment, and prayer. It's the sense within ordinary life, that life is precious, sacred and enough.** *Rolheiser, Ronald, Prayer: Our Deepest Longing, 2.*

**How do we foster solitude? ...** How do we begin to lay a foundation for prayer in our lives? The first step is to "put out into the deep" by remaining quietly in God's presence in solitude, in silence, in prayer. If it is your first time doing this, set aside fifteen minutes for prayer. In time, you might be able to manage thirty minutes. ... Remember: your heart is made to rest in God ... count on your restlessness to lead you into deeper prayer – the kind of prayer that leads to profound transformation, the kind of prayer that will not leave you empty-handed. *Rolheiser, Ronald, Prayer: Our Deepest Longing, 2-3.*

**THE JESUS PRAYER** makes life Christ-centred. *Sologren, Per-Olof, The Jesus Prayer, 61.*

**The Jesus Prayer is short.** It can be prayed in a fraction of a second, literally 'in one breath'. ... It can be prayed in the midst of other activity, while you work, whenever you are tempted, even in the middle of a conversation.

*Sologren, Per-Olof, The Jesus Prayer, 81.*

## **The Jesus Prayer lets me pray whenever I need to call upon the Lord.**

Sologren, Per-Olof, *The Jesus Prayer*, 82.

**Praying the Jesus Prayer also helps me to be watchful and open** for Christ's presence in the heart of the other person as well, not just in my own.

Sologren, Per-Olof, *The Jesus Prayer*, 87.

***THERE ARE MANY FORMS OF THE JESUS PRAYER.*** Probably the most common one is: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me. Sometimes, after 'have mercy upon me', 'a sinner' is added. Sometimes the words 'Son of God' are omitted. There are also shorter forms of the prayer. It may be limited to the first part, 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God' or again to the second, 'have mercy on me', though in that case often with the opening word, 'Lord'.

Sologren, Per-Olof, *The Jesus Prayer*, 17.

**Then picture your heart ...** And with your ears listen closely to its beating, beat by beat. When you have got into the way of doing this, begin to fit the words of the Prayer to the beats of the heart one after the other, looking at it all the time. Thus, with the first beat, say or think 'Lord', with the second, 'Jesus', with the third, 'Christ', with the fourth, 'have mercy', and with the fifth, 'on me'. And do it over and over again. ... when you have grown used to what I have just told you about, you must begin bringing the whole Prayer of Jesus into and out of your heart in time with your breathing, as the Fathers taught. Thus, as you draw your breath in, say, or imagine yourself saying, 'Lord Jesus Christ', and as you breathe again, 'have mercy on me'. ... this method is only a means to dispose the whole of our being, body and soul, to prayer. It is a way to practice prayer without ceasing. Sologren, Per-Olof, *The Jesus Prayer*, 54-55.

## ***II: THE OUR FATHER – THE PRAYER THAT JESUS TAUGHT US***

- **Give us this day our daily bread: All of this, in the kingdom of God as recounted to us in the Gospel, happens while we are seated at table.** Jesus uses this image often. The kingdom of God is always a celebration; we are at table, so he gives us something to eat ... The power of God's presence in the world today is precisely at table, in the Eucharist with Jesus. This is why we ask that he feed all of us. Feed us with that spiritual food that strengthens us, at table with the Eucharist, but also feed everyone, in this world in which the reign of hunger is so cruel ... linger a bit over this petition – "give us bread today," to me and to all - and to think about how many people do not have this bread. Pope Francis, *Our Father*, 73.
- **Let us not forget the work of mercy that urges us to feed the hungry. ...** Always someone is hungry and thirsty and needs me. I cannot delegate this to someone else. This poor person needs me, my help, my words, my efforts. We are all in this together. Pope Francis, *Our Father*, 74, 77.

## FOR THINKING AND TALKING

- What words or phrases stand out for you in the readings and insights on prayer?
- What insights might you take with you on your own journey?

## Let Us Pray

Our Father,  
who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

*Give us this day our daily bread,*  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil. Amen.



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