



Brighton Catholic Parishes News

St James & St Joan of Arc



SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER. Year A

19th April, 2020

Services

Regular services suspended. Please contact the office regarding baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Sunday Mass

Sat 6.00pm & Sun 9am at St James Church
Sun 11am & 5.30pm at St Joan of Arc Church.

Weekday Masses

Tues at 6pm & *Thur 9.15am at St James.
Wed & Fri at 9.15am at St Joan of Arc.
*First Thursday of the month at noon, chapel at Cabrini Hospital, Btn.

Weddings & Baptisms

By appointment.

Parish Groups

Parish groups are no longer meeting.

Card Players:

First Thursday of the month in the St Joan of Arc presbytery meeting room from 11.30am.

Meditation:

Mon 10am- presbytery at St Joan of Arc.

Prayer Group:

Thursday at 8pm in St Joan of Arc Church.

Social Justice Group:

Every second Thursday of the month in the presbytery at St Joan of Arc at 7.30 pm

Parish Contacts

Parish Priest:

Fr Martin Dixon

Pastoral Associate:

Carole Cheng

Organist: Mary Taylor

Cantors: Adam Kaczanowski & Marie-France Urruty

Parish Accountant:

Marina Stevenson

Parish Secretary:

Elaine Bolitho

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Message From Fr Martin

Greetings to you once again online.

I was wondering why I liked this week's gospel. Somewhere within me I reckon I see something of Thomas, and I think there's probably a bit of Thomas in all believers. He's a forthright and honest bloke, and in today's passage he reveals, like many of us at times, and particularly at this time, that in the adventures of faith he is not easily convinced. Like us he is concerned about the pursuit of the real and the tangible, mistrusting ideologies that don't tap into our everyday real life experiences.

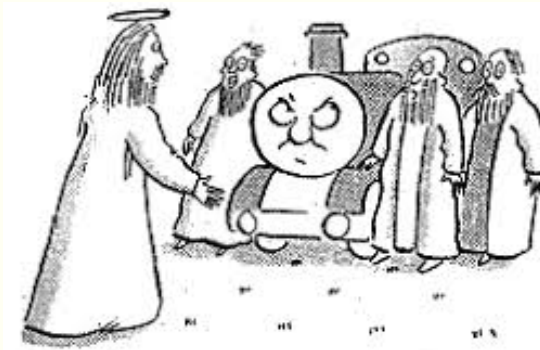
Like Thomas I try, as difficult as it can be at this time, to see the power of the resurrection. Yes, it is heartening that Covid19 is levelling out, but yet and not yet! There are many more months to go. But the amazing thing about our faith is that we can believe in the impossible, and we endeavour to achieve this in our lives and the lives of those around us.

This week the teachers at both our schools, like teachers in all schools around Australia, have opened up their lives, and indeed their homes as well, to ensure our kids' education continues. It's a hard task teaching to a screen, endeavouring to reach through and support each child. Many of our teachers have called in at school to plan their work as a team. I discovered it to be life giving when I listen as they related their experiences. Seemingly an impossible task, yet that didn't hinder them. Something to thank God for.

This effort by our teachers made me realise that our faith is many times real and tangible. Like Thomas, we need the eyes of faith to see it at work among us. The many parents at home trying to work, surrounded by children on computers for their schooling, finding this togetherness a bit strangling and testing the patience of all. Hopefully this testing time will strengthen our family ties as we struggle to make real our faith in death and resurrection.

Let the words of Jesus ring a bell in our hearts: "Doubt no longer but believe!"

Martin



Doubting Thomas

Remember In Our Prayers

Illness:

Kerry Basham, Anne de Rebello, Barbara Gallo, Marta Elena Hinds, Antony LaRive, Tatiana Mansel, Gabrielle Marylees, George McLean, Freddy McGuigan, Margaret McGrath, Kevin Nichollis, Catherine Ryan, Edward Shelley, Rob Smith, Emily Somers, Brian Taylor, Barbara Turner, Robin Turner

Recently Deceased: Pam Meehan

Anniversaries: Kathleen Chatham, Isabel O'Donoghue

READINGS & REFLECTION

BE STILL

Light a candle as a reminder of God's presence.

Take a moment to allow whatever is in your heart to rise, and offer your thoughts to the loving care of the Lord today.

O God, come to our aid.
Lord, make haste to help us.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end.
Amen

OPENING PRAYER

God of life, source of all faith, thru' the waters of baptism you have raised us up in Jesus and give us life that endures. Day by day refine our faith, that we who have not seen the Christ may truly confess him as our Lord and God and share the blessedness of those who believe.

Grant this thru' Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen

FIRST READING:

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles: 2:42-47

The faithful lived together and owned everything in common.

The whole community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers. The many miracles and signs worked through the apostles made a deep impression on everyone. The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common; they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed. They went as a body to the Temple every day but met in their houses for the breaking of bread; they shared their food gladly and generously; they praised God and were looked up to by everyone. Day by day the Lord added to their community those destined to be saved.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

1. Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end.'
Let the sons of Aaron say: 'His love has no end.'
Let those who fear the Lord say: 'His love has no end.' (R.)
2. I was thrust, thrust down and falling but the Lord was my helper.
The Lord is my strength and my song; he was my saviour.
There are shouts of joy and victory in the tents of the just. (R.)
3. The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone.
This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes.
This day was made by the Lord; we rejoice and are glad. (R.)

SECOND READING:

A reading from the first letter of St Peter 1:3-9

He has given us a new birth as his children, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead.

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth as his sons, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead, so that we have a sure hope and the promise of an inheritance that can never be spoilt or soiled and never fade away, because it is being kept for

you in the heavens. Through your faith, God's power will guard you until the salvation which has been prepared is revealed at the end of time. This is a cause of great joy for you, even though you may for a short time have to bear being plagued by all sorts of trials; so that, when Jesus Christ is revealed, your faith will have been tested and proved like gold – only it is more precious than gold, which is corruptible even though it bears testing by fire – and then you will have praise and glory and honour. You did not see him, yet you love him; and still without seeing him, you are already filled with a joy so glorious that it cannot be described, because you believe; and you are sure of the end to which your faith looks forward, that is, the salvation of your souls.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me;

happy those who have not seen me, but still believe!

Alleluia!

GOSPEL:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 20:19-31

After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them.

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you. 'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him: 'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.' There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

PONDER THE WORD

After the first reading, what words or phrases struck you from this passage?

Re-read the Gospel. Take a moment of silence to reflect upon how God is speaking through this text. Noting down responses to the following questions may assist with reflection:

I think about my life:

What is God asking me to listen to?

What does God want me to pay attention to?

What is God prompting, directing, leading and guiding me to in this reading?

I think about my community and the world:

What is God asking of us at this time?

What does God want us to attend to in our community and our world?

If you have children/grandchildren, talk to them about some of these points:

In today's gospel what people did Jesus appear to?
Where were the disciples?
How did they feel when they saw Jesus?
Who did not believe it was Jesus?
Why did Thomas stop doubting?
When can you sense Jesus is with you, even though you do not see him?
How can we recognise Jesus in other people?

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

For our world.....
For our nation.....
For our local community.....
For those who are suffering.....
For those who are bringing healing.....
For those who have died including Pam Meehan

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven.....

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,
graciously grant peace in our days,
that, by the help of your mercy,
we may be always free from sin
and safe from all distress,
as we wait in hope for the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

May the Lord bless us, and keep us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.
Let us go in the peace of the Lord.

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY by Brendan Byrne SJ

It is understandable that the Church should celebrate the octave of Easter by reading each year the episode in the Fourth Gospel where the risen Lord appears to Thomas 'eight days later' (20:19-31).
This is preceded, appropriately enough, by a **First Reading** from the Acts of the Apostles (2:42-47) describing the life of the disciples in the very early days of the Church. The summary gives a rather idealised view of early Church life, one not destined to continue in all its details. What it chiefly communicates is the sense that the power of the Spirit, so evident in the ministry of Jesus and later at Pentecost, continues in the subsequent life of the church.

One sign of the Spirit's presence is the continuing increase in numbers of converts, drawn by the sheer attractiveness of the communal life of believers and the spirit of joy and thanksgiving palpable among them. At one lev-

el they continue to be devout Jews, frequenting the Temple daily. But other practices reflect a new direction: daily instruction from the Apostles and meals shared in common, the climax of each being the eucharistic commemoration of Jesus ('the breaking of the bread').

The sharing of material goods denoted by 'having all things in common' was destined to last in Christianity only in the monastic tradition. But beyond the material sense, we should be aware of an axiom pervasive in Greco-Roman society that 'friends have all things in common'. What is being indicated, then, is that the early disciples were a community of friends. They shared friendship with the Lord Jesus and because of that they were friends with each other. This is the essential meaning of the Greek word *koinōnia* – a difficult word to translate, though 'communion' is preferable to 'fellowship'. *Koinōnia* denotes the bond created between individuals on the basis of a common participation in some other thing (here the friendship of Jesus). This rich idea remains, of course, central to the Church's sense of its own identity.

The attractive **Second Reading** from the beginning of the First Letter of Peter (1:3-9) complements much of this, especially in its sense of a hope held in common. The beautiful expression with reference to Jesus towards the end – 'You did not see him, yet you loved him' – aptly prepares the way for the 'blessing' Jesus will pronounce at the close of today's Gospel on those who 'have not seen, yet believe' (see below).

Gospel (John 20:19-31): Thomas is one of the most clearly defined characters in the Fourth Gospel. Born loser, realist, pessimist, he has missed out on the Easter night appearance of Jesus. He won't believe in the resurrection simply on the other disciples' claim 'we have seen the Lord'. He lays down his explicit, highly 'physical' conditions.

With the divine 'courtesy' that seems to be a feature of the risen Lord in all the appearance stories of the gospels, Jesus is prepared, eight days later, to meet Thomas' conditions exactly. Before the risen Lord in person, however, Thomas abandons them and makes the most exalted act of faith contained in the gospel: 'My Lord and my God!'. The confession takes us back to the Prologue: '... the Word was with God and the Word was God' (1:1); 'No one has ever seen God; it is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known' (1:18). At this climactic moment of the gospel it is Thomas, the late-comer, the obtuse one, the doubter, who proclaims the full identity of Jesus.

But that is not the end. Jesus adds a comment that brings us into the picture too. Thomas has believed because, like Mary Magdalene (20:16) and the other disciples present in the room, he has seen the risen Jesus. Others – succeeding generations of believers – will not see Jesus. Unlike Thomas, they have to believe simply on the report handed down in the Church's preaching: 'We have seen the Lord'. On them – on us, that is – Jesus pronounces a blessing: 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe'. Why 'blessed'? Because from them/from us a faith greater than that of Thomas and the others will be required: the greater the faith the more scope for the power of God.

So the first 'edition' of John's Gospel (chapters 1-20) ends with this solemn assurance that believers of all subsequent generations are in no way at a disadvantage compared to the original disciples who saw and heard and touched the Lord. The written gospel imparts to us all the knowledge necessary for a life-giving encounter with the risen Lord.



A Little Bit of Humour

Not possible at the moment, but still a good one....

“You’re blocking the way, sir,” said the usher to the man sprawled on his back in a cinema aisle, **“please get up.”**

The man didn’t move or reply, so the usher called the manager, who said:

“ I must ask you to move.” The man still didn’t reply, so the manager called the police.

“Get up or I’ll take you in,” said the policeman, **“where do you come from, anyway?”**

The man finally stirred, looked up, groaned and said:

“from the balcony.”

Some Good News

Last Wednesday saw a momentous step forward in the rebuild of St James church. For three years the stone masons have been quietly and almost imperceptibly been doing their work. The renewal of stone work they have accomplished has now led to the next stage. The 12 trusses for the roof were installed. These 1.8 tonne 9 metre beams were delivered before Easter and on Wednesday at 10.00am one by one they were craned into place.

These beams will eventually be clad in timber to appear like the original beams. The original were made from Oregon timber which is practically impossible to get these days. Over the next 2 weeks the trusses will be installed over the side aisles to support the main walls of the church. After this the temporary steel beams which having been internally supporting the walls will be removed. The timber panelling that will support the slate will then be installed and the slate over this.

Another step that is visible was the pinnacle was lifted into place on the bell tower on Thursday morning. The original was salvaged from the fire and refurbished needing just one small piece of bronze at the base. The photos do not do justice to the work carried out.



Financially

As you can imagine by the cancelling of Masses our income has dropped considerably, relying on those who contribute by debit/credit card as our only source of finance.

We are now investigating if and how we qualify for any of the Government assistance packages that are on offer. Our parish staff are all working from home and in justice they need our continued support. We will know more next week.

If you are able to continue your giving during these very difficult times it would be much appreciated. Our bank account details are as follows:

BSB: 083347
Number: 643419112
Account Name: St Joan of Arc Church
Reference: your envelope number

Please note automatic direct payments remain unchanged. You may also leave your giving at the presbytery. Many thanks.

Contact The Parish Team

We are all available to help you during this time. Just email or telephone the parish office. Send in your notices for the bulletin as usual and any other items you would like to share with parishioners.



Message From The Social Justice Group

As there are not likely to be any food donations for the Brigidine Asylum Seeker Project, we were thinking that some people might like to make a donation to BASP online.

The details are:-

**Brigidine Association Asylum Seekers
and Refugee Trust**
BSB: 083004
A/C: 56 924 6603

Please include your LAST NAME as the Reference.

Also, email contact@basp.org.au with name and donation and they will send you a receipt.
Many thanks.

Holy Week At Home

**This beautiful
picture was sent
to us by
Theresa McGarry**



**A special
message
appeared above
Elisabeth &
Louis Jahshan's
house on
Holy Thursday**



Steffie Wallace sent us this photo of an Italian priest who compensated for his empty church in the most innovative of ways!

It's not too late to send in your photos and memories of Holy Week at home. Just a few thoughts jotted down will make great reading for our next parish magazine. It's a year we won't forget!

St Joan of Arc Parish Brighton Centenary 2021



100 YEARS AGO

Next year is a very exciting one for our parish as we plan to celebrate our Centenary. There are three important dates in the history of St Joan of Arc Parish, which are sneaking up on us but are worth remembering.

On **18 April 1920**, Archbishop Mannix laid the **foundation stone for the original St Joan of Arc Church/School**, on the site now entirely incorporated within its present school. At the same time, he dedicated the newly-forming parish to the patronage of Blessed Joan of Arc, whose canonization was to take place four weeks later, on **16 May 1920**.

This was done in the presence of the Parish Priest of St James, Fr Gough, who actually founded the parish, and his assistant, Fr Patrick Gibbons, who was commissioned to be our first Parish Priest.

As **the new school was opened on 1 March 1921**, we can also remind the present children of SJA school that they are truly members of the one-hundredth-year student body at the school and congratulate staff, students, parents and parishioners on being part of this significant landmark.

Dan Whelan (Parishioner since 1970)

Message From Archbishop Peter Comensoli

February 2020

To the Parishioners of the Catholic Parish of Brighton

Dear friends,

It has come to my attention that on 18 April this year, you will be celebrating the Centenary of the Laying of the Foundation Stone by Archbishop Mannix, of the original church-school of St Joan of Arc's Parish in Brighton.

One hundred years is certainly a significant occasion, and I wish to congratulate the Parish on all that has been achieved over the intervening years. It is incredible to think that at this time in 1920, it was only a month away from the canonization of St Joan. The communities of both church and school have grown steadily under her watchful patronage.

I wish to convey my deepest appreciation to the Presentation Sisters who staffed the Parish School for some sixty years, and to the various priests and lay people who have given so generously of their time and energy in the Parish since its inception. I especially offer my sincere gratitude to Fr Martin Dixon who has sustained the community in recent years.

Just as you prepare to celebrate the laying of the foundation stone for your neighbourhood of grace, may we all keep close in our hearts and prayers the foundation stone of Christ's love and mercy that unites us all.

With every grace and blessing I remain,
Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,
Most Rev Peter A Comensoli, Archbishop of Melbourne