



Second Sunday in Lent

5 March 2023

Welcome to St Philip's

We acknowledge the Ngambri and Ngunnawal people, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we worship, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present and emerging. We extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who worship with us.

St Philip's COVIDSafe Plan We are asking folk not attend church if they feel unwell, to be aware of their hand hygiene and to be mindful of social distance. Thank you. Masks are available for those who wish to wear one.

Pew sheet & Order of Service: the full Pew sheet with more news and reflections is available on our website. The QR code in the pews will direct you to the current edition, please use your phone/tablet and follow along. Service cards, Pew Bibles and Prayer Books are also available.

Offertory: at the offertory when our gifts are brought forward, there is an opportunity for you to make your contribution. A self-serve Eftpos machine is available in the foyer, you can use it before or after the service. St Philip's EFT details are also available if you would like to make a direct transfer: 702-389 05202512. Giving cards are in the foyer if you wish to place something in the offertory bag after giving electronically.

Communion: if you are baptised you are welcome to receive communion. If you would like to receive a blessing please cross your hands on your chest as you come forward.

If you'd like to volunteer as a reader, sidesperson, welcomer or another role on the Roster, then please email rosters@stphilipsoconnor.org.au

From the Rector

Dear Friends,

We enjoyed a busy and fruitful time together last weekend. Thank you to those of you who attended last weekend's Parish AGM. It was a good meeting and I felt that some very important issues were discussed. I am grateful to those who contributed and to those who offered to serve in formal roles. (See 'News' for details on who has been appointed) We are carrying vacancies for alternate Synod Representatives. If you would like to take on this role please let me know. An alternate rep would represent the Parish at the Diocesan Synod should one of our representatives be unavailable.

One of my roles in Parish Life is as Secretary to the ANU Chaplaincy Board. We meet every month and have responsibility for the provision of Chaplaincy on the ANU Campus. Since the renewal of the main precinct on the Campus we have been striving to be granted space for a Chaplaincy Centre to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse cohort of students and tomorrow (Monday) after a great deal of work and planning the Chaplaincy Board will meet in a new multi-Faith centre which is being developed on the Campus. This is an important development and the ANU faith communities are looking forward to having a facility which meets their needs and which recognises the important place of faith, in all its diversity, in our world.

I hope that in some way we can be involved in this venture.

Every blessing, Martin

rector@stphilipsoconnor.org.au

0478 619 911

Eucharist for the second Sunday in Lent

Setting: St Philip's Eucharist, Colin Forbes

Introit hymn 351 (TiS) (10am)

Refrain: Lift high the cross, the love of Christ proclaim
till all the world adore his sacred name.

Come, people, follow where our captain trod,
our King victorious, Christ the Son of God: *(Refrain)*

All newborn servants of the Crucified
bear on their brow the seal of him who died: *(Refrain)*

From north and south, from east and west they raise
in growing unison their song of praise: *(Refrain)*

O Lord, once lifted on the glorious tree,
draw all to you, let all the nations see: *(Refrain)*

From farthest regions let them homage bring,
and on the cross adore their Saviour King: *(Refrain)*

Michael Robert Newbolt 1874-1956

Entrance antiphon

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

John 3:16

In the name of the Father ✠ and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name,
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, though we have rebelled and wandered far off.

Let us then ask for mercy, confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

**Merciful God, our maker and our judge,
we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
and in what we have failed to do:
we have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves;
we repent, and are sorry for all our sins.
Father, forgive us.
Strengthen us to love and obey you in newness of life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God, who has promised forgiveness to all who turn to him in faith: pardon you ✕ and set you free from all your sins, strengthen you in all goodness and keep you in eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Kyrie (sung at 10am)

**Lord, have mercy
Christ, have mercy
Lord, have mercy**

The image shows a musical score for a voice part. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Voice' and has a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. Below the first staff, there are three parts of lyrics: '1. Lord, have mercy on us.', '2. Christ have mercy on us.', and '3. Lord have mercy on us.'. The second staff continues the melody and has lyrics: 'Lord have mercy on us.', 'Christ have mercy on us.', and 'Lord have mercy on us.'. The lyrics are written in a way that they align with the notes on the staff.

Prayer of the day

Let us pray:
God of mercy,
you are full of tenderness and compassion,
slow to anger, rich in mercy,
and always ready to forgive:
grant us grace to renounce all evil and to cling to Christ,
that in every way we may prove to be your loving children;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Today's readings

A reading from the book of Genesis (12:1-4a)

Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. ²I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.'

⁴ So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills:
but where shall I find help?

**My help comes from the Lord:
who has made heaven and earth.**

He will not suffer your foot to stumble:
and he who watches over you will not sleep.

**Be sure he who has charge of Israel:
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

The Lord himself is your keeper:
the Lord is your defence upon your right hand;

**The sun shall not strike you by day:
nor shall the moon by night.**

The Lord will defend you from all evil:
it is he who will guard your life.

**The Lord will defend your going out and your coming in:
from this time forward for evermore.**

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans (4:1-5, 13-17)

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? ²For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' ⁴Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. ⁵But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

¹³ For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. ¹⁶ For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, ¹⁷as it is written, 'I have made you the father of many nations')—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

The Gradual hymn 335 (TiS) (10am)

To Christ, the Prince of peace,
and Son of God most high,
the Father of the world to come,
we sing with holy joy.

Deep in His heart for us
the wound of love he bore,
that burning love he kindles still
in hearts that him adore.

O Jesus, victim priest,
what else but love so fine
could move you so to welcome us
into your heart divine?

O fount of endless life,
a spring of water clear,

a flame celestial, cleansing all,
who will to you draw near,
hide us within your heart,
for there we all would be,
to live in grace, and after death
gain immortality.

Praise to the Father be,
and sole-begotten Son:
praise, ever holy Paraclete,
while endless ages run.

Anon, Latin from Catholicum Hymnologium Germanicum 1587

The Gradual (8am)

Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory!

Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory!

So must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

John 3:15

Praise to you O Christ, king of eternal glory!

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according John (3:1-17)

Glory to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. ²He came to Jesus by night and said to him, 'Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.' ³Jesus answered him, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.' ⁴Nicodemus said to him, 'How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother's womb and be born?' ⁵Jesus answered, 'Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. ⁶What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not be astonished that I said to you, "You must be born from above." ⁸The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.' ⁹Nicodemus said to him, 'How can these things be?' ¹⁰Jesus answered him, 'Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

¹¹ 'Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. ¹²If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

¹⁶ 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

¹⁷ 'Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

For the Gospel of the Lord,

praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

The Sermon

The Nicene Creed

Let us affirm the faith of the church

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he
suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
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.**

**We 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 worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the
forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
✠ and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Prayers of the people

In our prayers we remember all in need, particularly: Ian, John, Ben, Hugh, Sarah, David, Otto, Bob, Noel, Deborah, Sue, Molly, Katherine, David & Margot, those unable to gather with us, those in hospital or residential care.

We pray for our international mission, the Vanuatu Integrated Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project. We pray especially:

- for the small staff of the Anglican Church of Melanesia and their many volunteers working on this project;
- for the communities whose health will benefit from the project;
- that we will be generous in supporting this important work of our sister Anglican Church in Vanuatu.
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We commend to God the recently departed, those whose anniversaries fall at this time: Merryn Bannerman (5/3/1985), Daphne Hall (5/3/1995), David Gowty (6/3/2013), the victims of war, disaster, pandemic and tragedy, those whose memories are dear to us, and those who have no one to remember them.

Here is our prayer for the parish for use in your daily prayers this month as we engage in our Mission project:

God our Father,
on a hillside in Galilee, your Son Jesus
called us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world.
Give us the strength and wisdom to become
the people of the Beatitudes in our day
so that our words may season the world
with the flavour of the Gospel and
our lives be shining examples of Jesus,

who is the true Light of the world.
We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The greeting of peace

We are the Body of Christ,

his Spirit is with us.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Offertory hymn 499 (TiS) (10am)

Lord Jesus, joy of loving hearts,
true fount of life, our lives sustain,
from any bliss that earth imparts
we turn unfilled to you again.

Your truth unchanged has ever stood,
you save all those who on you call,
to those yet seeking you are good,
to those who find you, all in all.

We taste you, Lord, the living bread,
and long to feast upon you still,
we drink of you, the fountainhead,
and thirst our souls from you to fill.

For you our restless spirits yearn,
whatever comes until the last,
glad when your presence we discern,
blest when our faith can hold you fast.

For ever Jesus, with us stay,
make all our moments calm and bright;
chase the dark night of sin away,
shed on this world your holy light.

Anon Latin, 12th cent

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made. It will become the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation. Through your goodness we have this wine to offer, fruit
of the vine and work of human hands. It will become our spiritual drink.

Blessed be God for ever.

God of our journey,
as we walk with you on your path of obedience,
sustain us on our way and lead us to your glory,
and accept all we offer you this day;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

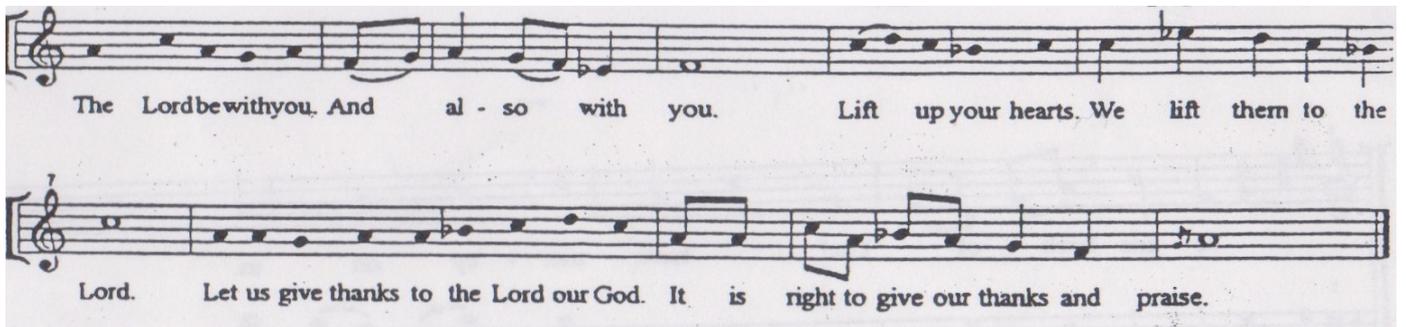
Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Sursum Corda (sung at 10am)



It is indeed right and good
to give you thanks and praise,
almighty God and everlasting Father,
through Jesus Christ your Son.

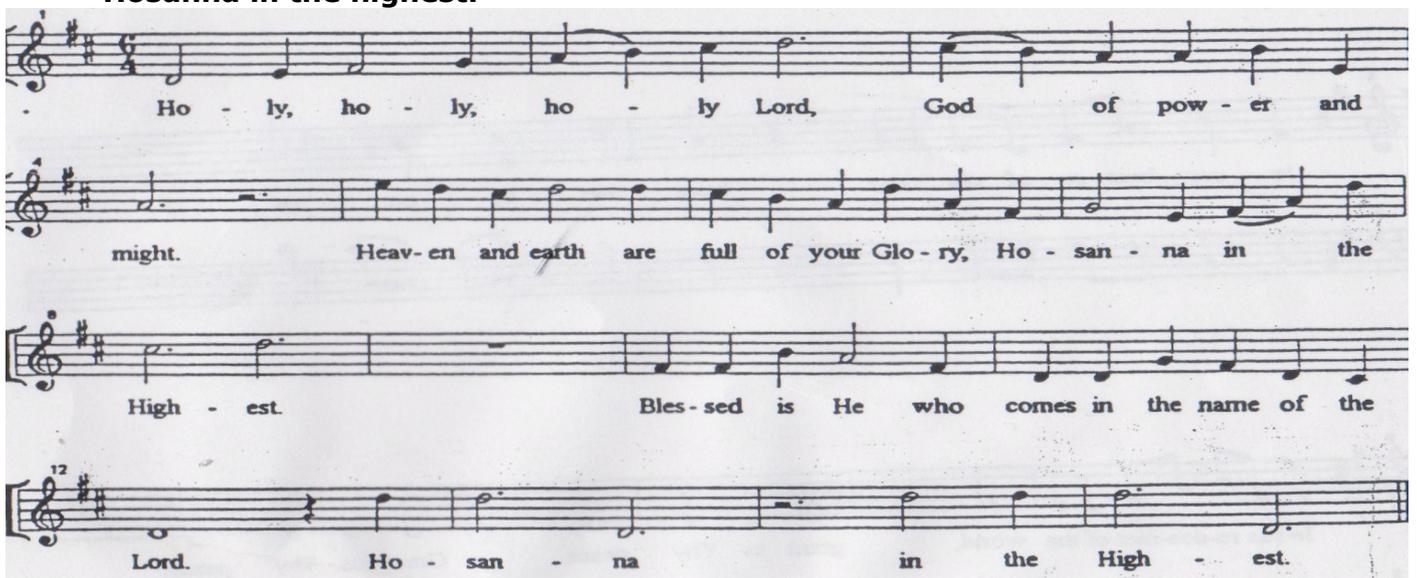
For in these forty days
you lead us into the desert of repentance
that through a pilgrimage of prayer and discipline
we may grow in grace
and learn to be your people once again.

Through fasting, prayer and acts of service
you bring us back to your generous heart.

Through study of your holy word
you open our eyes to your presence in the world
and free our hands to welcome others
into the radiant splendour of your love.

As we prepare to celebrate the Easter feast
with joyful hearts and minds
we bless you for your mercy
and join with saints and angels
for ever praising you and saying/singing:

Sanctus & Benedictus (sung at 10am)
Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.



Merciful God, we thank you
for these gifts of your creation,
this bread and wine,
and we pray that by your word and Holy Spirit,
we who eat and drink them
may be partakers of Christ's body and blood,
and be made one with him and with each other
in peace and love.

On the night he was betrayed Jesus took bread;
and when he had given you thanks
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Take, eat. This is my body given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.'

After supper, he took the cup,
and again giving you thanks
he gave it to his disciples, saying,
'Drink from this all of you.
This is my blood of the new covenant
shed for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do, this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.'

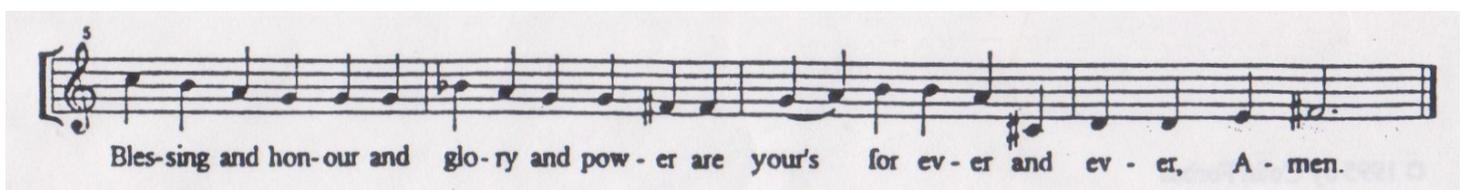
Therefore we do as our Saviour has commanded:
Proclaiming his offering of himself
made once for all upon the cross,
his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension,
and looking for his coming again,
we celebrate with this bread and this cup,
his one perfect and sufficient sacrifice
for the sins of the whole world.

Great is the mystery of faith:
**When we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim your death, Lord Jesus,
until you come in glory.**

As we eat and drink this holy sacrament
renew us by your Spirit,
that we may be united in the body of your Son
and serve you as a royal priesthood
in the joy of your eternal kingdom;

Receive our praises, Father,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom and in whom,
in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
we worship you, Father,
in songs of never-ending praise:

Acclamation (sung at 10am)
**Blessing and honour and glory and power
are yours for ever and ever. Amen.**



As our Saviour Christ has taught us, we are confident to pray,

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

**Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.**

**Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

The breaking of bread and communion

As this broken bread was once many grains,
which have been gathered together and made one bread:

so may your Church be gathered from the ends of the earth into your kingdom.

Agnus Dei (sung at 10am)

Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us your peace.



Je - sus lamb of God have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus bear - er of our sins have mer - cy on us.

Je - sus re - dee - mer of the world, grant us Thy peace. Grant us Thy peace.

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Come let us take this holy sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in remembrance that he died for us, and feed on him in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

Communion antiphon

My help comes from the Lord: who has made heaven and earth.

Psalm 121

The sending out of God's people

Let us pray:

Compassionate and loving God,
through your Son, Jesus Christ you have fed us
and have reconciled us to yourself.

Following his example of fasting and prayer,
may we obey you with willing hearts
and serve one another in holy love.

Most loving God,

you send us into the world you love.

**Give us grace to go thankfully and
with courage in the power of your Spirit.**

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Christ our saviour draw you to himself,
that you may find in him crucified
a sure ground for faith,
a firm support for hope,
and the assurance of sin forgiven
and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, ✠ the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord:

In the name of Christ. Amen.

Recessional hymn 332(TiS) (10am)

The royal banners forward go,
the cross shines forth in mystic glow;
where he in flesh, our flesh who made,
our sentence bore, our ransom paid.

There while he hung, his sacred side
by soldier's spear was opened wide,
to cleanse us in that precious flood,
of water mingled with his blood.

Fulfilled is now that David told
in true prophetic song of old,
how God the nations' king should be:
for God is reigning from the tree.

O tree of glory, tree most fair.
ordained those holy limbs to bear,
how bright in royal robe it stood –
the purple of a Saviour's blood

Upon its arms, like balance true,
he weighed the price for sinners due,
the price which none but he could pay,
and spoiled the spoiler of his prey.

To you, eternal Three in One,
let homage due by all be done:
as by the cross you now restore,
so rule and guide us evermore.

Venantius Fortunatus 530-609

News

At last Sunday's AGM the following folk were appointed or elected to positions in the Parish:

Rector's Warden: Russell McCaskie

People's Wardens: Laura Wood & Leighton Mann

Councillors: Alistair Davidson, Melissa Rath, Kim Begbie, Rebecca Palethorpe

Clergy Appointments Board: Brian MacKinlay, Sarah Gowty, Alison Davidson

Parish Synod Representatives: Ashton Robinson, Ann Munro, Alison Davidson

There were no appointments as Alternate Synod Representatives.

The minutes of the meeting will be made available shortly to those you who would like to review them and for those unable to attend.

From our Webkeeper: Study and Reflection for Lent.

The Rev'd Dr Colin Dundon has written for us *Creation to New Creation* a series of studies on the readings for each Sunday in Lent 2023. You will find each study linked week-by-week on the home page of our website. If you would like a printed copy please let Martin know.

Also on the website is a *Lenten Calendar of Reflections, 2023* — Bible readings, art, music, and a reflection for every day in Lent, compiled by Dr Brian McKinlay.

This Lent I hope you will make use of our website, it is a wonderful resource. You can use it in your own time, at your own pace. Share it with someone outside the parish, use it for discussion around the dinner table.

Our website continues to be an extraordinary resource. Brian has been Webkeeper for many years and is keen to begin a process of succession. If you are interested in this ministry please speak with Brian and he will be happy to talk to you about the website, its history and its future.

The Palm Sunday Rally will once again be held on Palm Sunday – 2 April at 1pm in Garema Place. The rally highlights the plight of refugees in this country and calls for kinder and more compassionate policies towards those who come among us seeking asylum. Speakers at this year's rally will include The Revd Dr Katherine Rainger (Anglican Chaplain at Radford College), Zahra Hashimi Barat (an Iranian refugee who, with her husband and three young children, was detained for five years on Nauru but was evacuated to Australia for medical treatment) and Senator David Pocock (independent senator for the ACT).

Our commitment to supporting **St John's Care** continues. Items needed at present include: UHT Full Cream 1 litre milk, Powdered Milk, Jam/Honey/Vegemite, Tinned Fruit, Cooking Oil, Canned Tuna, School Snacks, Packet Soup, 1kg Rice, Tinned Chunky Soups, Pasta Sauce, Milo (or drinking chocolate) Toothpaste, Shampoo & Conditioner, Coffee - 100gm jar.

The Director of St John Care, Jason Haines reports a significant increase in request for assistance, coupled with a decrease in donations. He said this past week that those seeking assistance were a very different demographic, with differing needs from that which he had experienced in recent times.

The St John's Care website <https://www.stjohnscare.org.au/> provides information on their services and how we can help.

Pandora's Autumn Launch will be held on Saturday 22 April, more details to follow very soon!

Easter will soon be upon us. If you would like to donate towards the cost of **Easter Flowers**, please use one of the envelopes in the foyer. One of the great joys of the season is to see a wonderful floral display on Easter morning.

Reflections

About 26 of us gathered for the first Seminar in our series 'An introduction to a Missional Spirituality.' We began in contemplative mode as is right for any faith endeavour. One of the participants commented: 'It was helpful to me to be reminded of the fact that there is a variety of contemplative prayer "methods" and they are all ways of being with/listening to God. Some methods work better for some people than other methods. I had forgotten the method of centering prayer, and found it very helpful, compared with the *World Community for Christian Meditation* method of the mantra which I always struggle with. I am trying to use this method now.'

The WCCM often speak of a mantra as an aid for meditation, the use of a phrase like 'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.' Centering prayer encourages the use of a word, or even simply concentrating on your breathing, which we were encouraged to do. So we began and ended our seminar in contemplation.

Our discussion was wide ranging but what we were endeavouring to do was re imagine the sacred. At the heart of our faith tradition there are many images of God, we think of the God revealed in the person of Jesus, the God present to us sacramentally, in each other, and in those in need, the God who speaks to us in the Word. These are all important and valid. But we cannot place any limits on God and as we endeavour to look beyond ourselves and our own tradition we need to use our imaginations. There is clearly within many folk a search for a 'spirituality' but often the Church has not been able to fulfil that longing. We do have much to offer but increasingly we live in a world in which Christian spirituality has become foreign. So we were asked to imagine God in different ways and some folk shared their imaginations. For many the idea of God in creation is a powerful one and the beauty, order and sheer immensity of the created order can speak to us of

God. At the other end of the scale one of our number highlighted 'the God in the particular' things that we might consider at first to be insignificant, things we take for granted.

We learnt that it will be important for us to develop this sense, especially if the goal is to think about how we can be "missional". Your experience of God, however wonderful, is not necessarily going to be that of others. Which possibly takes us back to contemplation. The need to listen to God, listen to each other and listen to people "outside" the Church. This calls us to certain practises: reading, reflection and stillness, these are often overlooked in our sometimes frantic lives.

We are looking forward to the second seminar on Saturday 25 March at 2pm. If you missed the first, don't worry you will soon catch up!

Jesus is pretty hard on intellectuals. They are like the rich in that they have a lot of obstacles to overcome to enter into the Kingdom of God. They think things over too much and for too long. The story of Jesus' interaction with Nicodemus in the Scripture readings today really hit home for me. I'm an intellectual. While I don't have his status, credentials, and privileges, in a lot of ways, I am like Nicodemus. Nicodemus was a recognized elite Jewish scholar, a Pharisee, and a member of the Sanhedrin. But something was missing for him. He knew he didn't have all the answers but he was pretty sure that Jesus did. He was smart enough to pick up on how well Jesus knew his stuff. Jesus could answer questions that Nicodemus couldn't and Jesus could really draw in the crowds and hold their attention. And he got a lot of people thinking; even people like Nicodemus who thought they already knew everything.

Nicodemus knew he was way out of his league compared to Jesus and he clearly respected Jesus as one who had divine authority to speak and to heal. That's why he broke rank with the rest of the Pharisees to come quietly to speak to Jesus at night. The rest of the Pharisees would try to publically humiliate Jesus by asking him trick questions. Nicodemus knew that was foolish. He knew Jesus could easily embarrass him in public.

And what did Jesus know? Jesus recognized that Nicodemus knew that something was missing in his life and that Jesus probably knew what he needed. Jesus knew that Nicodemus needed to be born of the Spirit, but Jesus also knew how hard it would be for Nicodemus to grasp what that meant. Nicodemus thought he just needed more religious knowledge.

He thought it was about things on this earth, something he could see and control. So Jesus was pretty hard on him. Jesus challenged Nicodemus' credentials as a teacher because Nicodemus didn't know the basic difference between things on earth and things in heaven. That had to really hurt. But Nicodemus was already hurting, so he took it. I think I know how Nicodemus felt.

So Nicodemus listens and this is what Jesus told him that Jesus tells all of us who are scholars, clergy, bishops, members of church councils, and Sunday school teachers. Religion alone cannot save you or anyone. You have to drop your faith in systems of religious knowledge and rules and draw on salvation from Jesus alone. Being born into a religious family or community is not enough. You have to be reborn from above, through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus teaches us that it is necessary to be reborn to experience the kingdom of God and a new relationship with God. It is not the credentials of this world and human action, but the works of God through the Holy Spirit that saves us. That is difficult for those of us like Nicodemus who like to be in control. We have to recognize that our being in control and our accomplishments can get in the way of our own and others' salvation. We can't use our knowledge to put up barriers. We have to let go of all that and let God work through us and others.

Despite his predicament, Nicodemus did something right. His conscience had been awakened and he overcame his arrogance to seek out Jesus. But his approach was still misguided by a desire for more knowledge, not a quest for wisdom. Jesus set him straight. Nicodemus needed to separate his faith from what he could see and control in the natural world and place it in the spiritual world where God is in control. Jesus reminded him that the working of the Spirit is like the working of the wind. You can't see it and you can't control it. Our works, our efforts, and our knowledge don't make it happen. We can't save ourselves. But by opening ourselves to our shortcomings, we can let the Spirit work in us. That cost Nicodemus his wealth and status, but not his life, in fact, just the opposite, by being born again, he gained his life.

Today I pray a prayer of thanks that even though Jesus is hard on intellectuals, he does not rebuke us in judgment against us, but to show us the greater glory of God. It is a good example of tough love. This story of Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus comes just before the familiar and comforting words, "For this is the way God loved the world, so that everyone who believes in Him may have eternal life. For God sent Jesus into the world not to condemn the world, but that through Jesus the world might be saved." That is really good news to me! Amen!

*Barbara Dilly, Department of Sociology and Anthropology,
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This week @ St Philip's

Today	<i>Second Sunday in Lent</i>	
8am	Eucharist (followed by Breakfast)	
10am	Sung Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)	
Tuesday 7 March	<i>Perpetua & her companions, martyrs at Carthage, (d.203)</i>	
10am-Noon	Men's Group	
Wednesday 8 March	<i>John of God, worker among the sick and poor, Spain (d.1550)</i>	
7pm	Parish Council	
Thursday 9 March	<i>Sr Emma SSA, superior of the Society of the Sacred Advent, Qld (d.1939)</i>	
10am	Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)	
Friday 10 March	<i>Feria of Lent</i>	
10am-Noon	Pandora's sorting & preparation	
Saturday 11 March	<i>Feria of Lent</i>	
10am-1pm	Pandora's - OPEN	
Sunday 12 March	<i>Third Sunday in Lent</i>	
8am	Eucharist (followed by Breakfast)	
10am	Sung Eucharist (followed by Morning tea)	
	<i>Readings: Exodus 17:1-7, Psalm 95, Romans 5:1-11, John 4:5-42</i>	

For your Diary

Saturday 25 March	2-4pm	Missional Spirituality - Seminar 2
Friday 7 April		Good Friday
Sunday 9 April		Easter Day
Saturday 22 April		Pandora's Autumn Launch & St Philips Markets
Sunday 7 May		SS Philip & James – Patronal Festival
Saturday 27 May	2-4pm	Missional Spirituality - Seminar 3

Rosters

		5-Mar-23	12-Mar-23	19-Mar-23	
	Sunday of Month	1st	2nd	3rd	
	Liturgical Season	2nd Sunday in Lent	3rd Sunday in Lent	4th Sunday in Lent	
	Flowers	n/a	n/a	n/a	
8am	Celebrant	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	8am
	Preacher (if different to Celebrant)				
	Sidespeople	Margaret & Russell	Alison & Alistair	Rhonda & Susan	
	Liturgical Assistant	Susan J (server)	Ellie P (Liturgical assistant)	?	
	Audio Visual Operator				
	1st Bible reader - OT	Margaret M	Alison D	Julianne S	
	2nd Bible reader - NT	Russell M	Alistair D	Rebecca P	
10am	Celebrant	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	Rev'd Martin	10am
	Preacher (if different to Celebrant)				
	Sidespeople & Welcomer	Fred A & helper	Helen & Hardy	Jeannette M, Laura W	
	Liturgical Assistant	Leighton (crucifer)	Rebecca K (Lit assistant)	Tim G (server)	
	Audio Visual Operator				
	Musician(s) & Singers/Soloist	Colin F	Colin F	Colin F	
	1st Bible reader - OT	Fred A	Jeanette D	Jos G	
	2nd Bible reader - NT	Laura W	Rev'd Lyn	Liz D	
Morning Tea	Ann & Barbara	Liz D	Jan G		
	<i>Additional details/notes</i>				

St Philips O'Connor, ACT

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