Pastoral Liturgy
Formation and Resources for Lectionary-Based Worship

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From the Editor

Moving into the season of Lent could offer us consolation during this time of pandemic as well as deep uncertainty. This is said from a position of hope: hope that we survive this pandemic, hope that our communities will further develop strong ways to help each other, and hope in the resurrection, that we see evidence of the resurrection in all that we do. One of the aspects of uncertainty is the trust in God that is required of us as Christians. This can be a difficult proposition, but God is willing! How our liturgies continue in these difficult times is yet to be seen but hopefully the celebration of Easter in all its glory will not be denied to us.

We are now leading up to the second Assembly of the Plenary Council. The bishops have decided that this must be face to face and if we cannot meet in July as planned it will be postponed until we can meet in Sydney. The first Assembly was fruitful in many ways but very arduous work online for extended times. This all overlaps with the 2023 Synod too which will hopefully be possible as the pandemic becomes less critical. “For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission” is the focus and parishes are asked to consider these questions. By the time this issue is available we hope that many will have made submissions. More things to hope for!

Music for Lent abounds in many collections but for this Lent I was looking for something special. OCP published the complete works of James Quinn SJ in 2017 so I worked through the Lenten selection. Quinn’s texts are very beautiful and I was keen to use “Christ’s Banner Guides Us on Christ’s Way”. It is set to the Gonfalon Royal melody, has 7 verses and would be liturgically useful but the issue is that it cannot be purchased as a music download. In our current copyright climate this is indeed a drawback as parishes wish to purchase material via download to be compliant and respect the composers and publishers.

Another collection that was published in 2015 is “We Contemplate the Mystery” by Michael Joncas. The texts are beautiful and deeply poetic and they are accompanied by commentaries on the Lectionary readings which is appreciated by music leadership groups choosing appropriate music. The melodies are a surprise because they are not the usual fare from Joncas but rather traditional melodies. For example, “The Crowds Who Cried Hosanna” is set to Passion Chorale. Very singable but unusual. Another example is “From Dust We Came, to Dust Return” set to the melody of Old Hundred Seventh. As a further twist, Scott Crandal has set it to his own original music which he describes as ‘giving musical wings to this expansive text’. There is a key change in the middle which lifts it out of predictability but is still very singable. For those parishes who do not use a hymnal but use a variety of works and purchase them as digital downloads this is very accessible.

Our first article in this issue reflects upon Traditionis Custodes. Mary-Anne Lumley is the liturgist for John XXIII College in Perth, Western Australia. The essential message of the latest motu proprio from Pope Francis is a limitation on the use of the Tridentine Mass and Lumley examines the issue with reference to other documents and various opinions. The real question is of unity within the liturgical practice of the Church and respect for the teachings of Vatican II.

Our second article is part 1 or a two-part contribution by a new academic, Samantha Wegner. This is an exceptionally well written and well documented position on the Vigil within the Order of Christian Funerals. Wegner completed this work in part fulfilment of the
requirements for a Master of Theology Studies at the Australian Catholic University. Such a detailed exposition on this aspect of Christian funerals fills a real need. It is extraordinary that the vigil is so rarely used in Catholic funeral culture. Mostly, people are invited to a recitation of the Rosary and yet the vigil offers many possibilities of rich intimacy within the time of preparation for the funeral Mass followed by the interment. My experience of recent funerals has been that the Mass is preceded by lengthy eulogies which are not within the Order of Christian Funerals and which in a recent case took over an hour so by the time the liturgy began people were preparing to leave. This is poor liturgical practice, and the vigil gives wonderful possibilities of many memories being shared in various ways. There is a sense that the funeral industry is taking over the liturgy. This excellent two-part article offers great insights.

Fr Tom Ryan SM offers another meditation, this time from Thomas Merton. This is pastorally useful material with questions following the reflection.

Two book reviews are included in this issue but from very different fields. The first is from Michelle Jones’ book on Ruth Burrows. This book is very valuable as a source of spiritual material and can be read through or dipped into as required or desired. It is beautiful and challenging material from the Carmelite nun also known as Sr Rachel. The second review is of a book full of rich ideas and theologies from women about motherhood. The theologies that are developed from many different aspects of motherhood from many different authors abound in richness and contribute in a new and practical way to the theology and spirituality of parenthood.

Our liturgical resources once again provide you with material for the Sundays and feasts from Ash Wednesday until the Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ. One aspect that I have found fascinating and most worthwhile is Gerard Moore’s commentaries on the Collects. The way in which he provides historical background and theological understanding of these much-neglected prayers has changed my understanding and appreciation. I now read the Collects with a different frame of mind. They are succinct and powerful.

May the coming Lent and Eastertide be rich and joyful for you all and may you remain safe and able to celebrate these beautiful seasons.

Peace to you all

Dr Angela McCarthy
That all may be one: on being guardians of the Sacrament of Unity
By Mary-Anne Lumley

I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one.

John 17:20-23

An aggiornamento, a bringing up to date of the Church in the modern world, was the vision of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 1962-1965. This year marks the sixtieth anniversary of the opening of the council, which was convoked by Pope John XXIII, although arguably the seed was already sown during the papacy of his predecessor. Worldwide, the Church has begun a synodal journey. According to Archbishop Mark Coleridge of Brisbane, the synodal path is ‘from the heart of Vatican II’s understanding of the Church as the pilgrim people of God’ who are called to share in responsibility for mission.\(^1\) In Australia, the Plenary Council process interweaves with that of the synod; both call the baptised into holiness and communion. Pope Francis has iterated that his spirituality is formed by the Second Vatican Council and when he issued the motu proprio, Traditionis Custodes in July 2021, he emphasised that the Roman Missal reformed by Vatican II and promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1970 is the ‘unique expression of the lex orandi of the Roman Rite’.\(^2\) This paper seeks to outline some of the articles of Traditionis Custodes and why Pope Francis has deemed it necessary at this time. There is reference to reasons why some Catholics might be drawn to the Tridentine Mass and some pastoral considerations and responses. The intent in this discussion is to avoid polemics and to propose, for the whole Church, a renewed and deeper engagement with the teaching of Vatican II.

THE VITALITY OF THE ROMAN RITE

For many centuries Christian communities have been nourished by the Mass of the Roman Rite, the liturgy as reformed by mandate of Vatican II.\(^3\) During this time it has evolved in many disparate contexts from the early Church to the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century. Keith Pecklers has documented some of these varied circumstances which include: the Latin language taking over from Greek in the third and fourth centuries; early texts composed by bishops and priests being collated, copied and shared; more formal structures being integrated into the liturgy, in addition to flourishes from other societies in Europe and beyond; the lack of theological understanding, liturgical abuses and even superstitious practices resulting from a growing separation of the papacy and local church communities, compounded by lack of training for priests.\(^4\) Hence, the Council of Trent sought to formalise the Mass to be universally recognisable.

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Pecklers proposes the view that the Roman Rite has ‘endured to our own day precisely because of its capacity to adapt and be shaped by the distinct cultures where it has been celebrated’. In the mid-twentieth century, the reformed Missale Romanum was one of the fruits of the Vatican II, with the constitution Sacrosanctum Concilium having mandated that the ‘substantial unity of the Roman Rite [be] preserved’. The Roman Rite embraces the ‘soberness’ of continuity with its origins, yet the ‘sense’ of being animated and shaped in varying cultural circumstances. It is incumbent on the Church, according to Pecklers, to continue to be proactive and intentional in ‘contextualising and incarnating that Roman Rite within the diverse cultural contexts in which it is lived and celebrated.’

**TRADITIONIS CUSTODES & VATICAN II**

Translated as ‘Guardians of the Tradition’, Traditionis Custodes is addressed to bishops who, as Cardinal Blaise Cupich of Chicago elaborates, ‘share responsibility for the whole Church’ as custodians of the teaching passed on from the apostles. At the heart of Traditionis Custodes, Summorum Pontificum and Ecclesia Dei, issued respectively by Pope Francis, Pope Benedict and Pope John Paul, is a desire for ecclesial unity, a unity that is made manifest through the celebration of the Eucharist and articulated in the documents of Vatican II, including Lumen Gentium. Lumen Gentium affirms that by ‘sharing in the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with him and with one another’. Martos argues that the conciliar revisions of the Mass, inviting ‘greater congregational participation’, were directed towards a deeper understanding of the Eucharist as a ‘sign of Christian unity’. Citing Lumen Gentium, he observes that unity is the most frequently occurring theme in discussion of the Eucharist. Solari asserts that such unity is more than a vague feeling of ‘togetherness'; more accurately ‘the Church is … communion itself’. Surely this is the unity for which Jesus prayed during the Last Supper discourse (John 17: 20-26). The Church is Christ’s body and, in celebrating the Liturgy of the Church, the faithful ‘should be drawn day by day into ever more perfect union with God and with each other, so that finally God may be all in all’.

In Traditionis Custodes and its accompanying letter, Pope Francis expresses the commitment to ‘press on ever more in the constant search for ecclesial communion’. He calls on each local bishop – in his competence as ‘moderator, promoter, and guardian of the whole liturgical life of the particular Church entrusted to him’ – to cooperate in referring to the authority of the teachings of Vatican II with the Missale Romanum mandated in 1970.
Significantly, the Pope expresses concern at the lack of unity expressed through the ‘rejection not only of the liturgical reform, but of the Vatican Council II itself’. Indeed, in 1976, this desire for unity was also fostered by Pope Paul VI in addressing newly appointed cardinals. Pope Paul called upon all Catholic communities ‘to celebrate the renewed Liturgy in dignity and fervour’, as people who are ‘congregavit nos in unum Christi amor’.


Traditionis Custodes places certain restrictions on how and where the pre-Vatican Mass may be celebrated. The directive also places some limits on who may preside at a Tridentine Mass. As custodians of the tradition, local bishops will seek to uphold the ecclesial unity requested by Traditionis Custodes. As shepherds they will continue to tend to the people of God in their care – to lead, guide and form them in all their diversity. Traditionis Custodes allows for the provision of the Tridentine Mass for existing congregations, with the strongest proviso that these groups do not deny the ‘validity and the legitimacy of the liturgical reform, dictated by Vatican Council II’. However, bishops are ‘not to authorise the establishment of new groups’. Most critical is the choice of priest who requires authorisation from the local bishop and then, as the bishop’s delegate, has responsibility for the congregation. (For newly ordained priests, the diocesan bishop will need to seek approval from the Holy See). The motu proprio states that not only should the priest be competent in Latin and the rubrics of the preconciliar Mass, he must also ‘be animated by a lively pastoral charity and by a sense of ecclesial communion’ and give priority to ‘the pastoral and spiritual care of the faithful’. The issue of formation of clergy was further elaborated by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in the responsa ad dubia issued to bishops in November 2021. Formateurs are encouraged to accompany seminarians towards ‘understanding and experiencing … the richness of the liturgical reform … [which] … has enhanced every element of the Roman Rite and has fostered … the full, conscious and active participation of the entire People of God in the liturgy’. Clearly the pre-Vatican II Mass may not replace other parish liturgies, nor may it be advertised. In the letter accompanying the motu proprio, Pope Francis expects that dioceses will ‘return in due time to the Roman Rite promulgated by Saints Paul VI and John Paul II’.

While the three popes – Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI – have successively made concessions with regard to the use of the Tridentine Mass, in order to achieve unity, Traditionis Custodes is more urgent in its insistence on remaining true to the teaching of the council. In the first article of Traditionis Custodes, Pope Francis’ unequivocally states that the Missals promulgated by Popes Paul and John Paul II are the singular form of the Roman
Rite. This contrasts with the pronouncement of Pope Benedict in *Summorum Pontificum*. Pope Benedict names the Missal of 1970 the ‘ordinary form’ and also allows for the 1962 Missal as an ‘extraordinary expression of the same lex orandi of the Church and duly honoured for its venerable and ancient usage’.27 Over several centuries, this axiom of *lex orandi lex credendi* – as we pray, so we believe – has been used. The symbols, actions, words, song, gestures and art of the liturgy cannot but reflect the beliefs of those gathered in celebration. This alignment of prayer and belief is central to the gathering of the people of God in the Eucharist and is underscored in *Traditionis Custodes*. Similarly, to reject the post-Vatican II Mass is to reject the authority of the council and break communion with the Church.

*Traditionis Custodes* refers to all the council’s reforms of the liturgy, not just the change to the vernacular from Latin. The changes made in the Mass, in accordance with *Sacrosanctum Concilium* were to assist the faithful to participate devoutly and actively and to more clearly reveal the ‘intrinsic nature and purpose’ of the ‘several parts’ of the liturgy as well as ‘the connection between them’.28 Furthermore, through a ‘good understanding of the rites and prayers’ the faithful should be able to participate in the liturgy ‘conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration’.29 Interestingly, Martos suggests that pastoral necessity was not the only reason.30 Throughout the twentieth century liturgical scholars had been drawing on patristic and scriptural sources, in seeking a continuity with earlier forms of celebrating the Eucharist and expanding on the scholastic and Tridentine understanding. It became apparent that although the Tridentine Mass had been ‘firmly fixed’ for four centuries, from earliest times the Roman Rite had seen many other adaptations. It was discovered that the Eucharist had been celebrated in languages other than Latin and that in the early Church lay people had taken on ‘an active role in Eucharistic worship’.31 Martos reflects that the fruit of these findings, was some ‘modest’ reform in the decade preceding the Council.32

It is worth noting that the Latin language, of itself, is not the issue. In the Roman Rite, Latin is the original ‘ur-text’, from which each successive *editio typica* of the *Missale Romanum* (including the post-Vatican II Missals) is translated.33, 34 While *Sacrosanctum Concilium* notes the ‘great advantage to the people’ of using their own language in the liturgy, it also encourages the continued use of Latin and proposes that ‘the faithful may also be able to say or to sing together in Latin those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass which pertain to them’.35, 36 There is, therefore, scope for selective use of sung Latin in parish masses, for example in the Gloria, the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei) or other chants. At the same time, an especially pastoral section of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* teaches that the Church ‘earnestly desires’ that the faithful ‘should not be there as strangers or silent spectators’.37 Further, Christ’s faithful are to be led to a ‘good understanding of the rites and prayers’ and ‘be instructed by God's word’.38 *Traditionis Custodes* mandates that readings in all Masses are to be proclaimed in the vernacular, ‘using translations of the Sacred Scripture approved for

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27 Benedict XVI, *Summorum Pontificum*, Motu proprio, Vatican website, July 7, 2007, art. 1, 
28 SC, sec.50.
29 SC, sec.48.
30 Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 262.
31 Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 260.
32 Martos, *Doors to the Sacred*, 260.
34 James T. Keane, “Explainer: What is the history of the Latin Mass?”, *America Magazine*, 16 July 2021, 
https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2021/07/16/latin-mass-pope-francis-restrict-summorum-pontificium-benedict-2410607fbclid=ljar1Q0NC2aEv12sYZe2La3lox5zoWHOTh_byInmxNhSEaWqLLYQMdNWegb4.
35 SC, sec.36 #2.
36 SC, sec.54.
37 SC, sec.48.
38 SC, sec.48.
liturgical use’.\textsuperscript{39} Solari emphasises the importance for the Church to listen to the Word so that it ‘becomes’ Church: it is actually God’s Word that is actively bringing the Church into unity.\textsuperscript{40}

**TRIDENTINE MASS CONGREGATIONS**

Those who gather for the Tridentine Mass are a diverse group, with varying backgrounds and political orientation, according to Daniel McGlone who regularly attends a pre-Vatican II Mass in Ballarat.\textsuperscript{41} Many may be seeking a deeper and more reverent way of praying or ‘the extraordinary mysticism that the Catholic tradition had to offer’.\textsuperscript{42} Pope Benedict, in his 2007 letter accompanying the motu proprio, Summorum Pontificum, refers to the younger generations who ‘have discovered [the Tridentine Mass], felt its attraction and found in it a form of encounter … particularly suited to them’.\textsuperscript{43} McGlone concurs, and mentions the high number of young families who are part of the Latin Mass congregation he attends.\textsuperscript{44} Predictably, congregations also include older baby boomers or those who lived through World War II, for whom the Tridentine rite was their earliest memory of the Mass. It was from a sense of compassion for older Catholics that Pope Paul VI issued the 1971 Instruction that ‘provided for the celebration of Mass in the ancient form, with the authorisation of the ordinary, only for elderly or sick priests’ who pray the Mass without others in attendance.\textsuperscript{45} Since the promulgation of the reformed Missal in 1970 Catholics will have shared an enormous range of liturgical experiences. Frequently renewal was implemented with great enthusiasm, creativity and attempts at encouraging participation, however some of the faithful have looked for an alternative in the pre-Vatican II Mass.

**PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Commonly heard criticisms of post-Vatican II Eucharistic celebrations are lack of reverence, wordiness, lack of quality music and over-enthusiastic flourishes. Unsurprisingly Pope Francis, in continuity with his predecessor, is critical of the ‘abuses in the celebration of the liturgy’ and calls for bishops to ‘be vigilant in ensuring that every liturgy be celebrated with decorum and fidelity … without the eccentricities that can easily degenerate’.\textsuperscript{46} Pecklers has surveyed some of the issues which hinder proper celebration of the Eucharist. He identifies some key focus areas, in particular greater attention to the transcendent in the liturgy.\textsuperscript{47} Pecklers is at pains to emphasise that ‘the conciliar principle of full, active and conscious liturgical participation’ and attention to ‘a sense of mystery within worship’ are not ‘mutually exclusive’.\textsuperscript{48} He calls for increased focus on: liturgical formation; appropriate balance between immanence and transcendence; attention to the non-verbal, and attention to ‘the custody of words’.\textsuperscript{49}

Pecklers echoes the oft-heard lament that, immediately after Vatican II, there was insufficient catechesis on the reformed Mass, which sometimes led to well-meaning but inappropriate innovations.\textsuperscript{50} Writing during the advent of the third editio typica, Pecklers refers to the

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\textsuperscript{39} Francis, Traditionis Custodes, Art. 3.

\textsuperscript{40} Solari, "Nostalgia for the past can no longer serve a pastoral model".


\textsuperscript{42} McGlone, "In Defence of the Traditional Latin Mass".


\textsuperscript{44} McGlone, "In Defence of the Traditional Latin Mass".

\textsuperscript{45} Paul VI, Secret Consistory of the Holy Father Paul VI for the Appointment of Twenty Cardinals, sec. 2a

\textsuperscript{46} Francis, *Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the bishops of the whole world*.

\textsuperscript{47} Pecklers, *The Genius of the Roman Rite*, 42.

\textsuperscript{48} Pecklers, *The Genius of the Roman Rite*, 43.

\textsuperscript{49} Pecklers, *The Genius of the Roman Rite*, 43.

\textsuperscript{50} Pecklers, *The Genius of the Roman Rite*, 42-44.
publication of excellent new catechetical resources. In reality, many (both clergy and laity) were disaffected by the 2002 Missale Romanum and/or the process of translation, and consequently eschewed catechetical opportunities and, tragically, another chance for liturgical catechesis and formation could not be fully exploited. Pecklers stresses the imperative of more and deeper formation – not only about the new Missal and its translation, but the ‘ecclesiological and missiological dimension’ of the Vatican II liturgy and ‘what our liturgical participation actually demands of us if we take it seriously’. Has Pope Francis offered yet another opportunity? In a letter to the clergy of Melbourne, Archbishop Peter Comensoli invited them to examine their consciences and ‘use this moment to better exercise the ars celebrandi’ and refresh their ‘conformity to the third typical edition of the Missale Romanum’. While addressed to clergy, it could also be a call to all God’s people to grow in understanding of celebrating and living according to the mission and ecclesiology taught through Vatican II.

As with his predecessors, Francis is sensitive to the pastoral needs of Catholics who are attached to more traditional prayer forms. Hence the provision to continue, with appropriate guidance from clergy. Another source of nourishment for those faithful who are attracted to a more traditional form of prayer, may be popular devotions. The use of popular devotions is ‘warmly commended’ according to Sacrosanctum Concilium, ‘provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church’. Devotions such as the rosary – which may even be recited in Latin – may be easily facilitated in parishes without making additional demands on clergy. Adoration and Benediction are already on offer in many parishes and may ‘provide for the good of those who are rooted in the previous form of celebration’ but who are not rejecting the reforms of Vatican II. Parish priests may enlist the assistance of a deacon for Benediction – and, where possible, even a small choir to lead the chants.

A PILGRIM PEOPLE

Traditionis Custodes, Guardians of the Tradition: the motu proprio is directed to ‘the bishops in communion with the Bishop of Rome’. Might it be considered, additionally, as a new challenge to the people of God throughout the world – to be taken on in the spirit of humility that Pope Francis demands of the Church? Father Tom Elich, Director of Liturgy Brisbane, calls for renewed opportunities for the people of God ‘to understand the Vatican Council reforms and to experience the liturgy in its power’. Likewise, Cardinal Cupich notes that Pope Francis is calling on all Catholics to recognise the ‘authentic actions of the Holy Spirit’ in the work of the council and to recognise that this work of the Spirit is ‘in continuity with the tradition of the Church’. The Australian Church, on its interweaving synodal and Plenary Council pathways, continues to listen for the Holy Spirit ‘who alone can lead us to the place where God wants us to be’ and who helps the faithful seek with more ‘intentionality’ the unity that only God can bring about.

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52 This was author’s observation of commentary and anecdotes from colleagues as well as parish and other contacts in the context of the new translation of the Roman Missal in Australia, 2011.
53 Pecklers, The Genius of the Roman Rite, 44.
55 SC, sec.13.
56 Francis, Letter of the Holy Father Francis to the bishops of the whole world.
57 Francis, Traditionis Custodes.
58 Elich, “Celebrating the Traditional Mass”, 8.
59 Cupich, “Pope Francis’ Latin Mass reforms are necessary to secure Vatican II’s legacy”.
60 Coleridge, “Homily at the Launch of Synod 2021-23”.
61 Pecklers, The Genius of the Roman Rite, 45.
The Eucharist is both a sign and source of the unity of God with humanity and of humans with one another. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* states that ‘in the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy’. Referring to the Catechism, that the liturgy is ‘the work of God’, Rita Thiron calls congregations to remember that they are ‘part of a greater whole’ and that they are ‘[i]n communion with other assemblies around the world and with the heavenly hosts.’ In a preparatory paper for the Plenary Council, Father Noel Connolly outlines the emphasis that Vatican II gave to the entire people of God who are on mission: pope, bishops, priests and laity journeying in unity. Connolly elaborates that this unity is God’s work: ‘[w]e are collaborating in something much larger than ourselves: God’s life and mission in the world’. It is this understanding of unity, according to Connolly, that leads to enthusiasm, energy and hope. Could this anniversary year be an invitation for a pilgrim people to more deeply engage with the vision of Vatican II?

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62 SC, sec.8.
66 Connolly, “Realising the Dream of Vatican II”.
67 Connolly, “Realising the Dream of Vatican II”.
This article is peer reviewed

Part 1

This article is presented in two parts. In this first instalment, the human act of caring for the dead is placed in socio-cultural context. The meaning of Christian vigil is defined and a brief history of the Christian vigil for the dead is charted from the early Church through to the current Order of Christian Funerals. The second instalment investigates the liturgical theology of the rite, its nexus with modern multidisciplinary death studies and asks some critical questions about the ecological and ethical questions raised for Christians by their care for the dead and by the performance of the Vigil in contemporary Australia.

Preface

Jesus of Nazareth, knowing he was to die and leave his closest bereft, gave precise instructions for his memorialisation. He knew that in death, he and his memory would be transformed. He offered a way to those closest to him, what he knew to be the best way, to make himself ever present to them through ritual.

Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'
And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, 'This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.' (Luke 22:19-20, NRSV)

When we ritualise the death of a Christian we are of course, participating in this paschal mystery. In order that this participation is full, conscious and active,¹ we too need to plan for death.

Introduction

The pascal mystery is the essence of the Christian faith, it is the mystery around which we wrap our ever evolving, rational minds, and to which we bow our physical bodies in the liturgy. The mystery of the life, mission and death of Jesus of Nazareth and his resurrection and recognition as Jesus the Christ, is the seemingly absurd proposition on which our hope rests. The first Easter Vigil is the time and space in which the embryonic Church began to grapple with the problems of this particular death and began to take the first steps towards making cosmic, universal, ethical, spiritual and religious meaning from it. Catholic liturgical practices surrounding death then, are perhaps the most profound expressions of our understanding of ourselves as an ‘Easter people’. In facing death, we are facing the universal human experience of ultimate mystery, and also a particular moment in our lives as Christians. The first Easter Vigil is the vigil upon which all other Christian vigils are based, and towards which, all the Church’s thankful and hopeful liturgical action points. This research focuses on the human act of keeping vigil for the dead, ritualised within the

https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html; This quotation from Sacrosanctum Concilium is the touchstone for liturgy done well in the post-conciliar period.

https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/pastoral-liturgy/vol52/iss2/30
DOI: 10.59405/2653-7834.1105
Catholic Christian liturgy in the *Vigil and Related Rites and Prayers*, and most particularly the *Vigil for the Deceased* (hereafter the Vigil), from the *Order of Christian Funerals* (hereafter OCF). The research is concerned not only with the Vigil as liturgical action and ecclesial necessity, but also with its potential as an ethical and healing act of worship, a panacea for all the participants.

Elizabeth Harrington notes that ‘Vigils are not very common in Australia, which is a pity. Many of the personal things that are added on to the public funeral liturgy belong at the vigil’. This research hopes to open a discussion in relation to some of the local, social, economic, logistical, theological and ecclesial factors which may be influencing the underperformance of the Vigil, and the possibilities provided by improved ‘death literacy’, (broadly defined as a willingness to engage with discussions and planning around death, both our own, and of others close to us) and ‘home death care’ (in this context, caring for the body of the deceased at home or in a non-commercial space), to work in concert with liturgical awareness, to improve the performance and efficacy of the Vigil.

Following Ernest Becker’s thesis that humanity does inevitably deny death in most respects of their existence, and acknowledging that this is done for logical biological and social reasons, a fundamental part of the Christian life is to overcome the fear which feeds that denial, and embrace the fullness of eternal life. In respect of the Vigil, it could be argued that the human unwillingness to engage with the existential questions raised by our mortality, leads to an unwillingness to address the body of the deceased, and as a consequence, results in the handing over of many of the elements of care of the body after death to commercial providers. In doing this, we are forfeiting the opportunity to spend a prolonged period of this liminal time in an intimate Christian liturgical experience of gathering, praying, remembering, lamenting and beginning the process of healing from loss. Thus, Christians mourning the death of another Christian, and indeed all who mourn for a Christian who has died, by eschewing the Vigil, may be missing the opportunity to intimately ritualise this time and to move deeper into the eschatological mystery.


Becker’s foundational work has been taken up more recently by scholars across a number of fields including clinical psychology, sociology and studies of religion. Foremost among these in recent years are Professors Greenberg, Solomon and Pyszczynski beginning with their Terror Management Theory and subsequent experiments demonstrating the relationship between self-esteem and death anxiety. See: Jeff Greenberg, Tom Pyszczynski and Sheldon Solomon, ‘The Causes and Consequences of a Need for Self-Esteem: A Terror Management Theory’ in, *Public Self and Private Self*, ed. Roy F. Baumeister (New York, NY: Springer New York, 1986).

This work went on to inform the work of many other scholars and whilst there is not space in the present paper to investigate the work of these scholars subsequent to Becker, further research is planned in which these scholars are brought into conversation with liturgical theology and praxis in relation to the Christian rites surrounding death. Australian psychologists Professor Ross Menzies and Dr Rachel Menzies have recently released an accessible overview of much of the scholarly work in the field in: Rachel E. Menzies and Ross G. Menzies, *Mortals: How the Fear of Death Shaped Human Society* (Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 2021).
The research will investigate the Catholic Christian ritualising of the period between the moment of death and the funeral liturgy or if there is no funeral liturgy, the interment of the body. In its current form the OCF provides for this period of time with the various rites under the heading Vigil and Related Rites and Prayers, and these rites are anecdotally, the most underutilised of the Catholic liturgical celebrations surrounding death.\(^5\) In the emotionally charged atmosphere immediately after death, it is proposed that the ritual space provided by the Vigil for the Deceased, for gathering, prayer, care of the body of the deceased, remembrance and grief, offers a ritual container in which to hold the mourners while farewelling the deceased. In addition, there are some ecological implications related to the care of bodies after death which need to be considered as a part of the Christian responsibility to care for our common home.\(^6\) It is proposed that the participation in this ritual offers a space for ethical human healing, an opportunity for the Body of Christ to come together to pray for the deceased and for those who mourn, and a ritual format which is flexible enough to accommodate the types of remembrance which have currency in our approaches to memorialising death in Australia today.

**What is the Vigil?**

Burial of the dead and indeed, rituals surrounding the immediate aftermath of death are estimated by some anthropologists to date to the Palaeolithic period.\(^7\) Whilst it is very difficult to assess the type and extent of mortuary practice from the Palaeolithic archaeological record, the human action of intentional burial is perhaps more reliably inferred from the bone placement of a group of Neanderthal skeletons found in the ‘Shanidar 4’ cave in Iraq.\(^8\) This act of intentional burial of humans by their community has become the archaeological marker of what we now recognise to be our earliest modern humans. Riel-Salvatore and Clark, recognise that although intentional burial can only be implicit in the Palaeolithic archaeological record, this action is ‘deeply embedded in the controversy of the origins of modern humans’,\(^9\) both in terms of determination of relative cognitive capacities, and for what it can tell us about the social characteristics of these populations.

So, the question of what we do with our dead, and the way in which we do it, is of such central importance to who we are as humans, that we can rightly assume that continuing questions in relation to these practices will both illuminate as well as determine, our trajectory as a species. The period of time covered by the Vigil is sometimes referred to as the wake. The term wake derives historically from the period during which the mourners

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\(^8\) Ibid, 23.

remained awake and attentive for any signs of life in the deceased, as well as to guard the corpse and attend to its washing and shrouding or dressing.\textsuperscript{10}

Dealing with the death of a member of the community is described by Malinowski as a disintegrating experience, and the ‘development of practices surrounding disposal of the corpse served to reintegrate the community by allowing members to assert some manner of control over the society's relationship with death and the dead’.\textsuperscript{11} These practices and rituals surrounding the care of and disposition of the body, and the time period in which these events occur, have become important in all societies, but as Moore and Williamson note ‘These practices were subject to an infinite degree of variation, but in all cases they served a similar underlying purpose: bringing what was once an incomprehensible horror within the realm of an ordered understanding of the role of death in the human experience’.\textsuperscript{12}

This investigation will follow Ernest Becker’s thesis from his seminal text \textit{The Denial of Death}, that humanity does inevitably deny death in most respects of their existence,\textsuperscript{13} in order to avoid the incomprehensible horror noted above. Becker identifies the human behaviours that death anxiety generates during the course of life as ‘hero projects’.\textsuperscript{14} Hero projects describe all of the ways that humans mark their existence, both in the physical world and in the social body. These range widely across cultures but can be exemplified by the legacy of a public career, particularly in the realm of politics, the building of structures and leaving behind a large number of children. We can see that these so called ‘hero projects’ exist on a continuum. The building of a house can be for basic shelter, but the building of a palace or pyramid functions as a method by which the commissioner seeks to remain physically present in the world after death. Similarly in modern society, a successful career can make an enormous contribution to the wider society or can slip into workaholism, self-interest and avoidance of social responsibilities. Becker asks the question, where do we all sit on this continuum? He proposes that we remain vigilant in examining our attitudes to our own mortality, so that we might avoid the tendency to ignore it. He suggests constructively interrogating the hero projects by which we might attempt to outrun it.

In the same way that death anxieties drive hero projects, they can produce a terror of that most tangible evidence of human mortality, the dead human body.\textsuperscript{15} The ways in which we ritualise human interactions with the dead human body, or corpse, illuminate in more precise ways our abilities to deal with human mortality. By the term ritualising, reference is made to the ways in which biological or psychological imperatives drive human behaviours, which then become settled into agreed upon forms of human activity, variously becoming

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standardised and regulated by rules and laws. These ritualisations have varied enormously over cultures and historical time periods. As the focus of this investigation is the current Catholic Christian Vigil, a reasonable starting point for an historical analysis is the worldview of the ancient Near Eastern peoples, including the Israelites who produced the Hebrew Bible.

The ancient Near Eastern people, among whom the Israelites formed a distinct group, had diverse attitudes to death and afterlife, with particular considerations, rituals and texts which pertained to the liminal space between death and interment or disposal of the body. In relation to the afterlife, the Egyptian peoples of the ancient Near East were concerned primarily with the perpetuation of lineages, through the birth of sons, to perpetuate the family lineage and also to as a duty to the ancestors. Walton notes that for the majority of ancient Near Eastern peoples, any concept of the afterlife relied heavily on concepts of continuity with the present world. Walton notes that Egyptian and Mesopotamian ideas of the afterlife (Mesopotamian ideas being those which went on to inform Israelite conceptions of the afterlife) are substantially divergent and that ‘it is very difficult to synthesize a consistent picture and hazardous to do so given the nature of the sources’. The Egyptians concerned themselves with the disintegration at death of the interior elements of the person (ba – mind/self and ka – essence/personality/vital force) from the body, and the complex processes of mummification and preservation were necessary to reintegrate those elements in the afterlife.

Israelite Mesopotamian ideas, however, diverge from this status-quo model of afterlife, and ‘has an expectation for a future that has never before existed, even in the time of the prototypical messiah, David’. This future was not that of Christianity, where the eschaton comes at the end of history, but was for the Israelites, an integral part of the covenant. Walton suggests that the evidence from Mesopotamia and the Levant indicates that these peoples were more concerned with the preservation of the social community (ie: the family, tribe and religious group) than the internal community (the ba and ka) that preoccupied the Egyptians. So too, the Israelites concerned themselves with the continuum of the social community of the living and the dead, but with no particular expectations of attaining presence with God, a ‘sociological continuum without theological significance’.

How do these views of the afterlife impact upon the rituals surrounding death and the care of the body prior to interment? Our concerns are with the ancient Israelite-Christian continuity (and discontinuity) in understanding the current Vigil and its operation. The idea of the cult as applied to ancient Near Eastern peoples included the immediate funeral rituals and those mortuary rituals which continued over time, including ancestor worship and regular meals to which the dead were invited. In ancient Judaism, the corpse is the source of


ritual uncleanness par excellence. Hence, the rituals surrounding the care of the body between death and burial are ‘an elaboration of meticulous behavioural rules designed to protect the living from contamination at the same time as they carry out the serious obligation on all Jews to participate in the burial procedures’. In general, ancient Jewish practices around care for the corpse and interment appear to have been similar to the surrounding cultures, with appropriate burial of the dead being paramount and the law being primarily concerned with aspects of ritual purity associated with contact with the corpse.

The earliest Christians did not depart in any meaningful way from the prevailing cultural practices of the era relating to the preparation of the corpse. The role of women in the rituals immediately surrounding death was paramount, as it was across the ancient world at that time and was, as Kathleen Corley notes ‘a major centre for women’s religious activity’. Women in both ancient Rome and Greece ‘customarily washed and anointed the dead (the laying out of the body or prothesis) as well as being chiefly responsible for ritual lamentations for the dead. In Roman antiquity, with family gathered at the death bed, the final breath of the dying person might be caught by the nearest relative and eyes and mouth closed, after a coin had been deposited in the mouth for the purpose of paying Charon, the ferryman over the river Styx, which was traversed from the world of the living to the world of the dead. This custom was taken from the Greeks.

Roman funerary customs included the important practice of the refrigerium. The refrigerium was a funerary banquet, as its name suggests, to ‘refresh’, in this case both the mourners and the deceased person, and was held at the gravesite. The refrigerium became over time, associated with the Christian celebration of death but originated as a pagan tradition. Pagan refrigera, ‘as all ancient banquets, were stereotyped as occasions for drunkenness and sexual license’. They were often raucous affairs characterised by drinking, overindulgence, and sexual immorality. The earliest Christians did not depart in any meaningful way from the prevailing cultural practices of the era in relation to care of the corpse however, they added the celebration of the eucharist at the tombs and gravesites, to the refrigerium.

Early Church authorities eventually discouraged the refrigerium in recognition of the tendencies for overindulgence and raucous or licentious behaviour.

History has much to reveal to us in relation to funerary practices around burial, as many lasting monuments and their inscriptions survive. There is not nearly so much in the archaeological record in relation to the activities and ritualisation of time between death and the celebration of the funeral. This is an area which generates little documentation or lasting ephemera and as we have seen, was largely the work of women and thereby in the ancient world, undocumented. Looking further, it is of interest in relation to later liturgical practice, to determine what sacred scripture can tell us about the Vigil. How does this motif operate in the biblical canon? Both the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament have examples of vigiling which can illuminate our modern approaches to liturgical Vigil.

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It was God who first kept vigil over his chosen people in their flight from Egypt. At the end of four hundred thirty years, on that very day, all the companies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. That was for the Lord a night of vigil, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. That same night is a vigil to be kept for the Lord by all the Israelites throughout their generations (Exodus 12:41-42). So here we see that liturgical vigils celebrated both for the purpose of keeping in right relation with God and community in Eucharistic worship, as well as in vigiling for the dead, are modelled on the God of deliverance's own vigil for his covenant people, the Israelites. This vigil of the Lord for his people constitutes a part of the narrative of the institution of the Passover. The Passover is then taken up by the authors of the Gospels in their passion narratives, during which they tell the story of the institution of another commemorative meal by Jesus. Keeping watch becomes the essence of the Christian's idea of themselves as Easter people.

The first Easter Vigil and its resolution is the eye of the storm of the passion narratives in all four Gospels, Matthew 26:30–27:66, Mark 14:26–15:47, Luke 22:39–23:56, and John 18:1–19:42. Corley sees these passion-resurrection texts as displaying a legacy of the female lament tradition of antiquity and its function in ‘funerary rituals, eucharistic meals and mortuary laments’. Saul Olyan investigates a comprehensive range of examples of mourning behaviour and ritual from biblical sources. The four types of biblical mourning he identifies are mourning over the dead, petitionary mourning, non-petitionary mourning at a time of calamity, and mourning by a person afflicted with skin disease. It is an unusual typology to identify from biblical texts however, Olyan argues that ‘mourning over the dead is the form of mourning upon which all other types are modelled, and that all mourning shares debasement in common’. Interestingly, Olyan identifies the relative proximity of ritual rejoicing to ritual mourning (ie: how many rituals of purification need to be undergone in order to bring a mourner back to a state of ritual purity, such that a ritual stance of rejoicing can again be taken) to be a key identifying factor in categorising biblical mourning. Olyan argues that ‘The mixing of mourning and rejoicing is both emblem and cause of the ritual order’s destruction’. The ritually impure state of mourning, therefore is not to be mixed with the stance of rejoicing (exemplified in temple sacrifice), which requires the participant to be in a ritually pure state. The ritual order is at risk of destruction by such mixing, and when biblical texts contain such mixing of ritual states, they are emblematic of the breakdown of the ritual order.

This contentious issue of the mixing of mourning and rejoicing, key to the laws of the Israelite covenant and exemplified in purity laws, becomes key to understanding the Christian attitudes to death that go on to form the rituals that will eventually become the OCF. We shall go on now, to investigate the manner in which the ritual texts have developed and evolved.


29. Corley, Maranatha, foreword John Dominic Crossan, xi.


31. Olyan, Biblical Mourning, 137.

32. Olyan, Biblical Mourning, 137.

33. Olyan, Biblical Mourning, 145. Olyan uses the examples of Jer. 41: 4–5 and Amos 8: 3 as they describe ritual behaviour in relation to the destruction of a temple.
The Ritual structure – a journey through forms and reforms
The funeral Vigil, along with Eucharist and Baptism, is a preeminent example of the pascal mystery in liturgical expression. Odo Casel identifies all liturgical action in the Church as ‘sacred mystery rites’ in that all of the liturgy is an experience of the Paschal mystery. This idea of sacred mystery has implications for the liturgical performance of the funeral Vigil and its function as a key reflection of the primal mystery of Jesus Christ, the Paschal mystery. The way the Rite has been crafted over millennia in differing cultural milieus, has sought to express the Pascal Mystery in its encounter with ultimate human biological mystery, death.

Early Christianity – The Apostolic era
The earliest Christians were liturgically still attached to Jewish temple worship, and indeed the earliest Christians remained hopeful that all of Israel would join in their New Covenant. Over successive generations, and ultimately with the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 CE, a definitive split was made with the cultic practices of ancient Israel. The writings of the New Testament in addition to the Didache (or the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles) are the main sources of information in relation to the liturgical practices of this first century of Christianity. The Didache appears to date from the second century but according to Metzger, contains older traditions. The Jewish funerary rite, Tzidduk Ha-din or ‘Justification of Judgement’ dates from the ninth century, but is also believed to be reflective of Jewish liturgical practice in the early Christian era.

Bradshaw refers to the ‘continuing enigma’ of the discovery, dating, attribution and inferred influence of the early Church literature, or Church orders. It is beyond the scope of this article to pursue these investigations, suffice to say that it is from these ancient orders that our limited understanding of early Christian liturgy is based. The Didache noted above is the earliest and is followed in the East by the Didascalia (c. 230 CE, Syria), the Apostolic Church Order, (300 CE, Egypt) the Apostolic Constitutions (c. 380 CE, Syria) and in the West by the Apostolic Tradition (c. 215 CE, possibly Rome).

It seems reasonable to assume in relation to the rituals surrounding death, that there was a mix of these Jewish liturgical traditions, Eucharistic celebrations and other customs obtained from the variety of prevailing pagan cultures. In the New Testament texts which do speak of death, themes of paradise, peace, eternal rest, light and refreshment, as well as the bosom of Abraham, the first resurrection and the heavenly Jerusalem, all appear in relation to death and the afterlife, frequently as described by Jesus. While they are not necessarily indicative of liturgical practice at that time, these are the New Testament themes which go on to inform the creation of Christian funeral liturgy. Perhaps the most significant shift during this period is the move from expectation of the imminent return of Christ, and its accompanying joyful liturgical acclamation ‘Maranatha’ (Aramaic, meaning Come, Lord,

come) to a lessening of that expectation and the necessary changes to eschatological thinking which resulted from the delayed Parousia.

The Church of the Martyrs

‘Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him.’ (Acts 8:2). This is the sum of knowledge that we have in relation to the rituals surrounding the death of Stephen, the first martyr of the Church. The Church of the Martyrs refers to the period after the death of the Apostles but prior to the conversion of Constantine, for the purposes of investigating the funeral Vigil as practiced by Christians, this period offers up a similar scarcity of documented liturgy to the Apostolic era.

While specifics relating to the liturgies for the dead are largely undocumented, evolving eucharistic celebrations are certainly documented, and there are suggestions that those celebrations were likely to have accompanied the funeral meals celebrated at the graveside (refrigerium), which were later documented in the fourth and fifth centuries. Tertullian does speak of an ‘appointed office’ for the dead in his work *de Anima*, but no detail in relation to the liturgy is given. Rowell identifies an apocryphal narrative of the funeral of Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, by Bishop Serapion which suggests that the prescribed singing of psalms is intended to contrast with the pagan customs of weeping and lamentation, particularly that provided by professional mourners. Cyprian insists that in addition to mourning, a note of joy must accompany the death of a Christian, ‘Let us show that this is what we believe so that we may not mourn the death even of our dear ones, and when the day of our own summons come, without hesitation but with gladness we may come to the Lord at His call’.

Also, important to consider in this era, annual remembrances of the death of the Martyrs of the Church were represented in liturgical celebrations. *The Martyrdom of Polycarp* is the first record of a meeting for a martyr’s anniversary. The *Didascalia* also mentions ritual remembrances on the anniversaries of other deceased members of the community, interestingly this is in the context of a rebuke to the Jewish purity laws related to cemeteries and corpses;

You…shall be assembled even in the cemeteries, and read the holy Scriptures, and without observance [of ritual purity] complete your services and intercessions to God and offer an acceptable eucharist, the likeness of the body of the kingdom of Christ, in your cemeteries and on the departures of them that sleep among you….. On this account then do you approach without restraint to those who rest, and you shall not declare them unclean…(26, 243-244).

What is interesting in terms of the Christian rituals involving the corpse, is this insistence that Jewish purity laws do not determine the manner in which the liturgical celebrations are carried out. Mourning and rejoicing are no longer segregated, they are actively brought into communion.

43. Sheppy, *Death Liturgy and Ritual.*, 90.
47. Metzger, 59.
The Church of the Empire through to 1968

313 AD marks the turning point from the Church of the Martyrs to the Church of Empire, a very different proposition to the Christian minorities which existed prior.\(^4^8\) This appears to be an unwieldy sweep of history. However, in charting Christian funeral rites, it makes reasonable sense to treat this period from the first detailed records of funeral liturgy, through to the threshold of the present Rite, as a lengthy, gradual codification and movement towards homogenisation of the rites surrounding death.

The *Apostolic Constitutions* (c. 380 CE, Syria) provide the first detailed information in respect of funeral liturgy. Book VI clearly indicates that the Eucharist was celebrated at funerals, after the reading of scriptures and the offering of prayers, and Book VIII offers some prayers for the dead. Deacons were instructed to pray for the forgiveness of the deceased and for them to be received ‘into the bosom of Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob…’.\(^4^9\) There are many variants in the documentation according to the status of the deceased (age, gender, lay or ordained) but there appears to be a basic structure which is followed, comprising an introductory section in the home, followed by a procession to the church, a service of prayers, a procession to the place of burial, and burial. Each of these sections is variously comprised of prayers, psalmody, chants, reading from scripture and ritual gestures.\(^5^0\) The introductory section in the home is of particular interest in respect of the conduct of a funeral vigil, and it is reasonable to assume that this time would include preparation of the body for burial whilst conducting prayers, responses, and psalmody. Here we have the beginnings of our documentation of Christian funeral vigil.

The later Syrian document the *Ecclesial Hierarchy* asks those present to pray for ‘an ultimate happiness in Christ’ and the body of the deceased is kissed by the bishop and congregation, there is anointing with oil and then burial.\(^5^1\) We can see that the focus on the worship of God and reception of the deceased into communion with God in a heavenly realm are reflective of the Christian stance that death is a transformation or transition, not an ending.

The period between Constantine and the end of the Middle Ages consisted of very many political upheavals in the Church as well as the formulation and distribution of liturgical books throughout Christendom.\(^5^2\) After the fall of the Roman Empire, the lands formerly occupied by Rome in the West became a series of smaller territories ruled by local chieftains.\(^5^3\) The Church solidified its power by filling the void left after the civil institutions of the Roman Empire collapsed. Upon the commencement of the rule of Charlemagne in 768, the Churches of East and West continued to move further from each other liturgically and politically, and throughout the medieval period, the clerical monopoly on liturgical activity gradually increased. This was not the case prior to the Middle Ages, and when we come to consider the celebration of the current Vigil and Related Rites from the OCF, we will observe the reversion to a far less strict clerical monopoly.

Charlemagne’s interests were in political and religious unification of his Empire and the liturgy was called into service of that aim. Charlemagne requested a Roman sacramentary from Pope Hadrian to serve as the model upon which all sacramentaries throughout

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\(^{48}\) Richard P McBrien, *Catholicism* (North Blackburn, Vic. CollinsDove, 1994);

\(^{49}\) Sheppy, *Death Liturgy and Ritual*, 91.

\(^{50}\) Sheppy, 92-93.

\(^{51}\) Sheppy, 92-93.

\(^{52}\) Metzger, *History of the Liturgy*, 113-121.

\(^{53}\) Metzger, 112.
Charlemagne’s empire were modelled. This became known as the Gregorian Sacramentary, and it is at this point in liturgical history that we begin to see what thereafter became the norm, uniformity over diversity, with all subsequent missals prior to Vatican II reflective of the Gregorian Sacramentary in various ways. Rutherford explains in relation to the documents from this era,

Orders of funeral service survive from the ninth century. They reveal a pattern of prayerful preparation of the corpse (washing, clothing), vigil or wake with psalms, hymns and Scripture readings, a procession with the body to the church complex for burial to the accompaniment of psalms and prayers. Gradually, the celebration of Mass, associated with Christian death from the beginning, became a formal part of the funeral rites themselves and the church, the focal point of the liturgy.

Metzger observes that by the eighth century the essential aspects and core structure of the liturgy had been established and the innovations which followed were secondary and more in relation to utilisation and understanding of the liturgy than in relation to its structure and core defining features. The historical gap in this article between the turmoil of the Carolingian era and the beginnings of the liturgical reform movement of the 20th century is reflective of the liturgical unity that Metzger refers to as an ‘ecclesiological principle’, beginning as early as the 11th century and the liturgical rites for the dead were no exception.

Metzger identifies the rites as consisting of Mass formularies as well as the chanting of antiphons from the Liturgy of the Hours. In addition to the initial funeral rite, where there was an exaggerated emphasis on solemnity of the ritual in performance and aesthetics, there developed also, an emphasis on the repeated celebration of Masses for the Dead. The most famous liturgical addition perhaps was the Dies irae in the thirteenth century, positioned before the gospel. Whist it is outside the scope of this article, it is hopeful that future research further delving into archival material from various traditions to ascertain chronological and regional variants in liturgical practice which undoubtedly occurred during this long period, even amid the broad uniformity, might reveal some interesting material to inform this area of investigation into the Vigil even further.

Of particular interest however, in relation to funeral liturgy, is how this uniformity operated in respect of the Church’s pastoral role in the remembrance of the deceased and the comfort of those who mourn. As a core tenet of Jesus’ teaching, the comfort of mourners is a sign of the Kingdom (Matt 5:4), and how well that is achieved by the universal Church must be a yardstick by which its success is measured. The liturgical movement of the 20th century, begun by Abbott Prosper Guéranger in his Benedictine monasteries was directed at an increased liturgical piety by reuniting the rites with a fuller understanding of the theologies which underpinned them. Dom Guéranger and his protégé Dom Lambert Beauduin were the prime movers in the debate, and their theories were given the imprimatur of Pius X and ultimately Pius XII in Mediator Dei in 1947 gave the papal seal to the movement.

In relation to the funeral liturgy, Reid quotes Beauduin in La Piété de L’Église (Liturgy: the Life of the Church) who proposes the following, ‘the Restoration of the Liturgy of the Dead to a place of honour, observance of the custom of Vigils and Lauds, giving greater solemnity to

54. Metzger, 116-117.
the funeral services, and getting the faithful to assist thereat, thus efficaciously combating the dechristianising of the rite of the dead'.

The Second Vatican Council took a special interest in upholding and advancing the pastoral nature of the liturgy, and the reforms of Vatican II were above all, directed towards this aim. The Council was the forum in which the liturgical movement of the 20th century was actualised.

The current Order of Christian Funerals
The Second Vatican Council gave priority to the reform of the Rite of Funerals because of the 'importance and urgency' of the creation of a new Rite. Study group 23 was responsible for the reform of the rite, and they began with a consideration of paragraph 81 of Sacrosanctum Concilium which suggested that the Rite of Funerals ‘should express more clearly the paschal character of Christian death and should correspond more closely to the circumstances and traditions of various regions’.

Prior to the Second Vatican Council, the Rite of Funerals had, over the course of time, become too narrowly focussed on the doctrines of judgement and purgatory, at the expense of the theologies of the overarching mercy of God, resurrection, and eternal life in the Trinity. Considering the importance and urgency noted above, it is perhaps surprising that the funeral liturgy receives only two lines in the document:

81. The rite for the burial of the dead should express more clearly the paschal character of Christian death, and should correspond more closely to the circumstances and traditions found in various regions. This holds good also for the liturgical color to be used.
82. The rite for the burial of infants is to be revised, and a special Mass for the occasion should be provided.

These lines, however, constitute merely a jumping off point, and it was the flavour of SC in its entirety that was to influence the reform of the Rite. Driscoll examines SC at its fiftieth anniversary and identifies the three core messages in relation to liturgy which SC communicates, the foundational nature of the Pascal Mystery to all liturgy, redemption as communicated through the liturgy, and that which they identify as a leitmotif throughout the entire document, the active participation of all in the liturgy.

61. Bugnini, 771.
63. SC, 81-82.
The imperatives stated in the opening paragraph of SC are the most useful to guide an analysis of the reform in the context of the Vigil:

1. This sacred Council has several aims in view: it desires to impart an ever increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful; to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church. The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy.  

The Vigil is the first of three principal ritual moments in the Order of Christian Funerals. The second being the Funeral Liturgy and third being the Rite of Committal. The introductory material for the Vigil for the Deceased in the OCF, states the following:

55. The vigil may be celebrated in the home of the deceased, in the funeral home, parlour or chapel of rest, or in some other suitable place. ... Adaptations of the vigil will often be suggested by the place in which the celebration occurs.

Then the following suggestion is made:

A celebration in the home of the deceased, for example, may be simplified and shortened.

I would argue that, on the contrary, a Vigil conducted at home is an opportunity for an unrushed, full expression of the Rite, with ample opportunity before and after, for personalised remembrances of the deceased and for social interactions of family and friends.

In exploring the current liturgical practices of the Vigil, it is useful to reflect upon the dynamism of the funeral rituals of the early Church, which shaped the ‘oral core of the passion narrative’ and established in Christian communities, the continuity between the living and the dead. The cult of the dead and ritual lamentations were a significant part of the religious life of the early Church, particularly of women. Richard Rutherford’s *The Death of a Christian: The Order of Christian Funerals* is perhaps the preeminent text exploring both the history and the current reformed rite of the funeral liturgy. In it, Rutherford observes:

In Christian Antiquity, vigils were far more dynamic than one might think today. They were certainly not merely peaceful, reflective occasions for contemplation and growth in holiness. On the contrary, they were highly charged activities

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65. SC, 1.
66. OCF, 23.
67. OCF, 23.
68. OCF, 23.
70. Corley, 1.
71. Corley, 22-23.
involving the whole assembly. In the crucible of the vigil, the assembly forged roots of gospel tradition.\textsuperscript{73}

Rutherford investigates in depth the ideas of Christian community and ecclesial life which the OCF presupposes. The exercise of liturgical ministries in the Vigil makes it most unique in the stable of Catholic liturgical rites. The OCF provides that:

14. Priests, as teachers of faith and ministers of comfort, preside at the funeral rites, especially the Mass\textsuperscript{74}

However:

When no priest or deacon is available for the vigil and related rites or the rite of committal, a lay person presides\textsuperscript{75}

And:

15. Family members should be encouraged to take an active part in these ministries, but they should not be asked to assume any role that in their grief or sense of loss may be too burdensome\textsuperscript{76}

The Rite takes two forms, the Vigil for the Deceased and the Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church. In this part of the OCF, in addition to these two ritual forms are included, Related Rites and Prayers to be used in the period soon after death. These three brief rites are Prayers after Death, Gathering in the Presence of the Body and Transfer of the body to the Church or to the Place of Committal. The rituals from the Office for the Dead from the Liturgy of the Hours may also be used by lay people in the period after death, having been previously reserved to religious. The Office for the Dead is a much more complex ritual and as a result, is still utilised mostly after the death of a religious.

It is the first form of the Rite, the \textit{Vigil for the Deceased}, on which I will focus my investigations here, as it allows for a celebration in the home and for the preparation of the body before or after the Rite. The structure of the Rite is simple and consists of Introductory Rites, Liturgy of the Word, Prayer of Intercession and Concluding Rite. In this simplicity however, the Vigil provides the opportunity to create a meaningful, personal, intimate and unrushed ritual after the death of a Christian. As with all post-conciliar sacraments and sacramental celebrations, the range of readings from scripture in the Vigil vastly widened and there is a great deal of flexibility in the choice of scripture as well the Greeting, Invitation to Prayer, Opening Prayer and Concluding Prayer and Blessing. Music is left the discretion of the participants. Importantly, it is noted;

\textbf{67. As needs require, and especially if the funeral liturgy or rite of committal is not to take place for a few days, the vigil may be celebrated more than once and should be adapted to each occasion.}\textsuperscript{77}

This allowance means that there are opportunities for the gathering of different groups according to need, and that each ritual can be adapted accordingly.

\textsuperscript{73} Rutherford, \textit{The Death of a Christian}, 8.
\textsuperscript{74} OCF, 5
\textsuperscript{75} OCF, 5.
\textsuperscript{76} OCF, 5.
\textsuperscript{77} OCF, 944.
Bruce Morrill, in his work *Divine Worship and Human Healing: Liturgical Theology at the Margins of Death and Life* offers a reflective case study in which he describes the funeral of a young colleague. He notes of the mourners, ‘they struck me as not being at home not only in the space of the funeral parlour, but also that of the church’s rites’. Given the percentages of Catholics who participate in the liturgy, this is hardly surprising. Rather than considering the situation an intractable problem, it might be regarded as an opportunity to interrogate the way death is approached on a societal level, in order to ensure an authentic and contemporary liturgical experience in the Vigil. Rutherford notes the acknowledgement in secular bereavement literature of the value of ‘the way in which the religious community cares for its dead’. There is certainly a sense that the rituals retained by the Church have a significant and appropriate role to play in contemporary approaches to death.

Margaret Smith has produced several works as pastoral guides to the OCF and describes the Vigil as ‘the best-kept secret’ of the Christian funeral. Richard Rutherford’s pastoral guide to the OCF also acknowledges that ‘the funeral liturgy does not stand alone. Rather it participates in the much larger context of pastoral care that accompanies the events of sickness and death in our community’. This ‘much larger context’ is where I see the Vigil as a natural partner to some of the contemporary approaches to home death and grassroots ‘death positive’ movements.

The second instalment of this article will go on to investigate the liturgical theology of the rite, its nexus with modern multidisciplinary death studies and ask some critical questions about the ecological and ethical questions raised for Christians by their care for the dead and by the performance of the Vigil in contemporary Australia.

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At worship with Thomas Merton
Tom Ryan sm

In Louisville, Kentucky, at the corner of Fourth and Walnut Streets, in the centre of the shopping district, stands a sign.

The words on it are in bold and gold print. They run:

A REVELATION
Merton had a sudden insight at this corner Mar. 18, 1958, that led him to redefine his monastic identity with greater involvement in social justice issues. He was ‘suddenly overwhelmed with the realization that I loved all these people…’ He found them ‘walking around shining like the sun’.

Prior to these words he speaks of his solidarity with humanity:

…that we could not be alien to one another even though we were total strangers…. I have the immense joy of being man, a member of a race in which God Himself became incarnate’.1

This epiphany moment of Merton’s is often quoted. It summed up a growing sense for Merton that living as a monk, in solitude and contemplation, was not meant to be one of isolation, lived out in a special domain.

He was called, not to be ‘apart’ from, but ‘part of’ our world. His monastic call was for the sake of a better world—one of justice and peace. This led to his involvement with anti-war and disarmament movements in the final decade of his life.

How does this awareness of solidarity with humanity relate to Merton’s attitude to worship, specially to the celebration of the Eucharist?

Its roots are found at the experiential level for Merton; specific times when he was profoundly moved by the celebration of Mass—prior to his conversion, as a new Catholic and later with his ordination at a priest. It was one of feeling profoundly loved by a God.

For instance, in celebrating Mass after his ordination, he speaks of ‘the greatest personal gift that can come to anyone is to share in the infinite act by which God’s love is poured upon all.’2

Merton was deeply convinced that the Eucharist is a love-laden reality; it both transforms each person at the individual level but also in our various relationships. For this reason, Merton felt an ongoing responsibility to share the Mass he celebrated with others (especially his friends), to let them know he would remember them. The Eucharist was the gift beyond measure in which he, with them, participated in the love of God.


Years later, the moment of revelation in the shopping district of Louisville led Merton to turn his gaze to the world; he could not help but see Christ in his fellow human beings. This is the impulse urging Merton to write on issues of justice.

But he was also drawn to get involved in dialogue with a wide range variety of people. He came to view dialogue as being at the very core of the Christian life. In a letter written in 1959, he describes how dialogue has its roots in the Eucharist:

> For, you see, when I enter into a dialogue with you and each of us knows who is speaking, it turns out that we are both Christ. This, being seen in a very simple and ‘natural’ light, is the beginning and almost the fullness of everything. Everything is in it somewhere. But it makes most sense in the light of Mass and the Eucharist.3

A refusal to engage in dialogue with others, adopting a posture that is unbending, defensive, and negative especially ‘with adversaries and those with differing beliefs’ is not really an option for ‘those of us called to unite and to see others as Christ himself sees them’. 4

As Hillis sums it up:

> It must start with respect for persons in their beauty and worth who merit being given a hearing even when their positions are opposed to our own. To do otherwise is to be guilty of what Merton calls the ‘heresy of individualism,’ which is nothing else but the very sin of which Adam was guilty and which results only in fragmentation.5

But there is more to Merton’s views about dialogue.

In 1967 (the year before his death), Merton writes of how the good news of Jesus’ truth and love ‘in our time…speaks out in strange places’:

> I have learned to rejoice that Jesus is in the world in people who know Him not, that He is at work in them when they think themselves far from Him…6

Over half a century later, such people can be viewed as amongst those acknowledged by the Church in its official worship when it prays:

> Therefore, Lord, remember now… those who take part in this offering, those gathered here before you, your entire people, and all who seek you with a sincere heart. 7

This brings us to a final comment—taking a lead from Hillis.

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4 Merton, *Conjectures*, 198.


7 Eucharistic Prayer IV.
When we consider the scope of the Eucharist and its place in worship for Merton, he was, in many ways, anticipating what Pope Benedict XVI was to write in 2007, some forty years later:

The Eucharist is the sacrament of communion between brothers and sisters who allow themselves to be reconciled in Christ, who made of Jews and pagans one people, tearing down the wall of hostility which divided them. Only this constant impulse towards reconciliation enables us to partake worthily of the Body and Blood of Christ. In the memorial of his sacrifice, the Lord strengthens our fraternal communion and, in a particular way, urges those in conflict to hasten their reconciliation by opening themselves to dialogue and a commitment to justice.8

For Reflection

1. What aspect stood out for you about Merton’s ‘epiphany’ moment in the shopping district of Louisville?

2. Can you think of times when you found yourself changed in some way by attending Mass? How did it influence your behaviour?

3. People ‘who merit being given a hearing even when their positions are opposed to our own’. What is your response to that sentence?

4. ‘…opening themselves to dialogue and a commitment to justice’. If we consider that phrase in relation to receiving the Body and Blood of Christ, what difference does it make do you think?

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Book Review
By Angela McCarthy


Parenting as Spiritual Practice and Source for Theology: Mothering Matters offers parents a wealth of different experiences opening avenues of understanding and meaning making. Contemporary writing about mothering is a complex minefield and can be less helpful than contentious! When surveying the effect of social media on who are the good mothers and who are the bad mothers, poorly considered criticism and distortions can become destructive. This book offers a real alternative for mothers and a practical theological response to the eternal issues that confront us. Many of the readers of this journal will have faced the experiences that are outlined.

Bischoff, O'Donnell Gandolfo and Hardison-Moody have pulled together a group of authors to speak on issues rarely considered in theological circles: miscarriage, body knowledge, recovery from maternal loss, parenting elders as a woman, mental health and mothering, motherhood and theodicy. Each of the authors approaches their topic with practical examples and real knowledge of the experience. These are not extrapolated from third person research and number crunching; they come from an experience of suffering and mothering and a deep desire to find theological attributes that can be of practical assistance.

Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore notes in the forward that gender studies in contemporary research investigate mothering but ignore religion, while religious studies include gender but ignore mothering, and so a very large ‘swath of human experience and practice is evaded’ (x). The act of motherhood is one of self-sacrifice and when imaged through the kenosis of Jesus Christ on the cross, it can assist a deeply formative exploration of what it means to be mother. One sacrifices self in a particular way which includes blood, flesh, spirit, energy, and in some instances life itself. This book is not only for those in academe but offers a great wealth of thought and reflection for all parents and could form the basis of valuable material for parish groups.

It is not possible to review every chapter in a worthwhile way, so I have selected two to give the flavour of what this book offers. Chapter four, ‘And the “Hall Was Burned to the Ground”: Mothers and Theological Body Knowledge’ (59-85), tells the story of Antoinette Brown, the first woman ordained in the USA. We take it for granted that in the 21st Century women in many countries are allowed to speak publicly; this is only a recent phenomenon and not a universal experience. The title refers to a hall that was burned to the ground in 1838 in Pennsylvania because it was where some women political activists had spoken out in support of abolition and women’s rights (59). That would not happen today perhaps, but the realities of women’s existence are still not fully expressed in our faith traditions. Nettie Brown wrote theological works as well as works in the field of science. She ‘effectively challenged biblical and scientific modes of knowing by using “the very language… used against women to support them”’. The chapter then develops the impact of biological mothering; it matters that women give birth and her argument does not diminish in any way women who are unable or choose not to give birth. Miller-McLemore presents the argument that the ‘physical not only gains meaning within culture, but it also influences meaning and shapes thought’ (75). Being a mother, having physically experienced childbirth and all the suffering and sacrifice that it entails, does not disappear in one’s development of thought and self.
Incarnation is a central belief for a Christian and our physical bodies matter in how we construct theology around it. Chapter twelve, ‘Parenting Elders: Finitude, Gratitude, and Grace’, is by Mary Elizabeth Moore. There are many women whose lives are dominated by the people in their care and Moore writes from a personal perspective and how that has affected her and why that is so. Her experience as a senior academic, wife, mother and daughter is profoundly grounding for her as a theologian and in the difficulties that she faced, particularly in the end-of-life care for her parents where she seeks theological meaning. The way in which she refines her experience through theological consideration is very valuable for those in our community who have similar responsibilities. Moore develops spiritual practices from the theological themes of finitude, gratitude and grace. By accepting the finitude of life and finding things to be grateful for in the experience, we become open to the grace that God offers through these duties of caring. A very powerful sentence is a unique description of grace: ‘Grace is God’s heartbeat throbbing in the world, and our encounters with finitude force us to still ourselves and attune to the Divine beat’ (232). That image can be used to guide and elevate our spiritual practices. Centring on precious moments cultivates an appreciation for them and lifts the spirit to focus on the care of others in a different way. Choosing thankfulness allows the carer to accept the difficulties presented and relish all that is good. Receiving grace from unlikely sources is one of the joys of life and appreciating them as we recognise them sustains us.

In a world where the conflicts over mothering abound, this book offers richness of theological thought and support. It is written by women for women and men who wish to deepen their appreciation of how parenting is a spiritual practice and a source of powerful theology.

Occasionally a book comes to you that has to be read slowly and Jones' work on Ruth Burrows is one such book. Ruth Burrows, otherwise known as Sr Rachel OCD, was the focus of Michelle Jones’ PhD thesis. Jones is a consecrated woman living in southern Western Australia, who is affiliated with the Carmelite Monastery at Quidenham, England. She has visited the monastery and met with Sr Rachel.

The reason for the slow reading is that the material is very dense and requires the reader to stop and consider the implications of what is possible to absorb into one’s own life and spirituality. It is also possible to simply dip into the text and retrieve a paragraph or two for quiet thought and sustenance and in that sense, there are many different ways to move through the book.

Sr Rachel left home at 18 years of age to join the Carmelite sisters in the early 1940s, turning down an offer to attend Oxford University. Jones explains how she was an oversensitive child born into a family of eight children and as a result ‘suffered from profound and relentless anxiety’ (4). Within the confines of a Carmelite convent that suffered from poor leadership, her suffering continued but it is through the suffering that her insights into life emerged. By world standards her life is a failure, she achieved nothing, and yet through her profound writings one becomes aware that she was able to enter into a state of total emptiness in Jesus, ‘surrendering her poverty to God in trust’ (5).

Jones explores the writings of Sr Rachel and offers five interrelated themes for consideration. ‘First, the Christian life is about the transformation of the ego into the very life of Jesus’ (10). Secondly, the mystical life is precisely the transformation of the ego from egocentricity into the self-emptying life of Jesus. The third theme is the transformation of our self-centredness and of every aspect of our lives into Jesus’s receptivity to God’s love. The fourth theme ‘is that our being taken into Jesus’s life of love is a collaboration between human effort and God’s grace’ (11). The final theme emphasises that the cultivation of openness to God’s gift of love is through faith and trust. When Sr Rachel speaks of this deep trust she is taking us beyond our usual level of understanding what it means!

The material that Jones presents from Sr Rachel’s writings provides a structured insight into these themes and the way in which she has learnt to move towards an encounter with God where she can receive God’s total self-gift. Two of the sources are not published but all of the remaining material belongs to the published works of Sr Rachel. Jones’ selection and placement of material within the chapters in this book point to two things: Jones’ has a deep and comprehensive understanding of Sr Rachel’s work and, therefore, she has been able to construct a pathway through the writings in such a way that we can journey with increasing understanding. Jones begins each chapter with a brief outline and background and then leads to the assembled excerpts from Sr Rachel’s own writings.

Chapter one offers an insight into her beginnings and understanding of herself and her family: ‘I was born into this world with a tortured sensitivity’ (15). She describes her conversion, but this does not seem like a joyful experience. It was a radical change but from then on, the path lay in a deep darkness. It is through this darkness and her persistent way
of life in prayer that she understood with great humility her place in a poverty of spirit. Her prayer became deeply anchored in the gospels and her prayer took on a Trinitarian form which was also connected to daily Liturgy. The autobiographical aspects of this early section of the book give necessary insight to her development as a person and her growth in self-knowledge.

Chapter two onwards develops her spiritual thought through selected passages that Jones has carefully structured in a way that leads to a rich understanding of Sr Rachel’s spiritual growth. This small book encompasses a lifetime of prayer, thought and self-emptying aided by a rejection of the world and all its empty promises. The works of St Thérèse of Lisieux, St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross are instrumental in her search as well as the advice of trusted spiritual leaders and companions. Through Jones’ careful guidance these chapters release their gifts and that is why the reading is slow. Some sections need to be read a number of times to grasp Sr Rachel’s depth of thought and response to gospel texts. The result in one’s own response to God can echo her pain but lead to a cognisance of what is needed to depth spiritual life. For many of us it is not possible, except for small pockets of time in retreat, to live completely separate from the world but it can be done in short bursts within the daily routine. Jones’s book offers many treasures for retreat explorations.
Introduction

In more usual times Australian Catholics have had a melange of ‘ashen’ customs and have even discovered some in indigenous life. There are mardi gras traditions, Shrove Tuesday practices, ashes from the family hearth, ashes in the old backyard incinerator, ashes from the passing bushfires that regenerated the flora. As second peoples we have built a greater appreciation for the smoking ceremonies of indigenous Australians, with their theology of purification, clothing in smoke, and a hint of healing eucalyptus.

But these are not usual times. Our bushfires no longer burn and pass through. They incinerate and leave destruction. The ash that remains has little of regeneration, rather is the final resting of plants, trees, insects and wildlife. It is the detritus of homes and farms and lives destroyed in a way we have never witnessed previously, and which we will continue to experience in the future.

With the giving of the ashes there is also the reminder that we are dust. So much dust blows across our continent due to poor practice exacerbated by changing climate. The more the topsoil is scattered and blown the closer we are to starvation. There is a chilling sense that the dust that fills our skies presages that we too are in danger of being turned to dust because we are unable to produce food.

There must be, and indeed there is, a catholic response, a Christian rejoinder. Pope Francis offers a fresh Lenten discipline in Laudato Si. He is insistent that we take notice that graced creation is endangered by human action, by our actions and our decisions collectively and individually. He is fully conscious that the regeneration of our planet entails a new discipline, a reckoning with how we treat creation, and a faith fuelled imagination that brings grace and life to the fore. This is a Lent prayed with fires, floods, unimagined temperatures, and a pandemic in mind.

There are some factors which bring comfort in this. The origins of the word ‘lent’ are in the old English and old German languages where the word signifies the ‘lengthening’ of the days. The word lent signifies hope in the end of winter, the coming of spring, the growth of crops, the arrival of the new-born animals. Lent heralds hope. As well, it is a time of ‘penance’, however we have been led to mistake penance for pain. There is a real element of truth in this, but the Latin roots of the word penance do not speak of endurance but of conversion of heart. A penitential period is a time of conversion. The dust itself can be a sign of our interconnection with all things. Australian theologian Denis Edwards reminds us that we are made from stardust! And finally, the prayers of the Roman tradition speak of the joy of
fasting! As unusual as this sounds to us, this refresh, this reset, speaks hope and renewal.

This year we are not just entering a post-COVID Lent but a time to take up a new conversion and a deeper appreciation of the grace of creation and our creaturely role in this grace.

**Penitential Act**

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came so that we could repent deeply from our heart.
Lord, have mercy.

You teach us to pray without hypocrisy.
Christ, have mercy.

You teach us to fast with joy.
Lord, have mercy.

**First Reading**

*Joel 2:12-18*

The prophet reminds the people of the fidelity of God, who in mercy abandons neither the land nor the people.

**Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 51: 3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14,14*

*Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.*

This psalm is used many times throughout the year in the Liturgy of the Hours as well as the readings for Mass. It speaks very poignantly of our need for mercy but does not speak from an introspective point of view but rather of the amazing power of God’s forgiveness. God will create a pure heart in us and give us the joy of God’s help.

**Second Reading**

*2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2*

In Christ all things are reconciled to God, and we are transformed into the divine life.
Gospel Reading
Matthew 6:1-6; 16-18
Our good deeds, our fasting and our discipline are richest when done in God’s sight rather than paraded in the sight of all.

Reflection
Our reading from Joel has an interesting set of dynamics. It begins with the prophet speaking on behalf of the Lord, who invites the people to repent. The initiative is God’s: it is the Lord who wishes for the people to move from their current state and return.

Yet the ‘voice’ then changes to that of the prophet and his urging the people. As a prophet he holds out that God is merciful and may offer forgiveness. There is a tension between how God is inviting the people, and an anxiety amongst the people that this means punishment. The prophet reminds of the mercy of God.

But the return must be marked by action: prayer, fasting, a single will amongst the whole community, offerings and priestly prayers. To return to the Lord is a visible and tangible set of actions.

With these actions is a particular theology, one easily overlooked. The petition of the priests is that God be glorified, and in particular be glorified in faithfully restoring the people. How would God be seen by other nations if the divinity abandoned the chosen people? It is an interesting argument, but seemingly persuasive. Our passage closes with God stirred to concern for this special land and to pity for the people.

We have with Joel a lively passage and a call to action. Perhaps it is time, with this Lent, to call the assembly and be actively mindful of God’s concern for the land. How are we to respond to this concern?

Paul calls for reconciliation with God, and brings to centre stage his theology of sin overcome in Christ. He speaks of our sins as individuals, and in various passages sets this within the sinfulness of humanity and its effects on creation. With this comes an urgency: ‘now’ is the time. There is an apocalyptic streak in Paul, and in the early Christian communities, that Christ’s return was imminent. The cry to be ‘ready’ is a reminder that each day could be the day of salvation so we should live accordingly.

There is certainly a sense in Laudato Si! that now is the day, and that there is an urgency in our response to the effects of sin around us. With Paul there is a larger sense of reconciliation at play: reconciliation with all creation, and in that reconciliation with God.

We cannot let Lent be a time for considering our personal sins only, but place ourselves within the necessary reconciliation of all things.

From Matthew’s Gospel we have an inspiring admonition to keep our efforts hidden so that we are more sure that our purification and penance are for the right motives –
to be seen by God rather than to be seen by others. There is a wonderful self-effacement in this, which itself is an act of inner conversion. The point that Matthew is making does not need a lot of clarification!

So then, how do we enter Lent? Our readings offer some direction if we are to take seriously the ecological conversion to which Pope Francis is calling us. The prophet Joel offers action, and behind this is the unwavering commitment of God to the 'land', to creation itself. Paul speaks of sin, but his context is the reconciliation of all things in Christ, and the immediacy of living a reconciled life. We are challenged here to live as creatures amongst creation within the sacramentality of Christ’s creation and his taking flesh. The Gospel calls for ongoing inner conversion of heart, for taking up the practices of penitential discipline and the invitation they offer to our ongoing interior purification.

Perhaps we should close with the words of Pope Francis:

This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her. We have come to see ourselves as her lords and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she 'groans in travail' (Rom 8:22). We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters. (Laudato Si 2)
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
In this special celebration of joyful penitence, we turn to our God with the needs of the Church, the world and our community.

Petitions
We pray for the leaders of our Church, both ordained and lay. May they lead us in joyful fasting and abundant trust in God’s mercy so that we may all offer a visible sign of God’s presence in the world.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the members of the Plenary Council. May they be strengthened in their efforts in this period between the two Assemblies as they prepare material for the future of our Church.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for leaders throughout the world that they may continue to work together to deal with the current pandemic and find solutions for peaceful interactions.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those suffering from an inability to forgive that is driving them to bitterness. May our witness to the forgiveness of God be a catalyst for them to change and find a better balance in their lives.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for ourselves that God will create in us a new heart so that we will follow Jesus’ way of peace and love with renewed vigour.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray that our community will increase in its spirit of self-denial and therefore extend our efforts in helping others in their need.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our world community that we may learn to respect the earth and listen to Pope Francis’ cry to change our ways of using the gifts of creation.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
We stand before our merciful God with these needs in the sure knowledge that they will be answered through God’s profound mercy. We make our prayer in the name of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
A new heart for a new world. T Watts/M O'Brien. 438
Ashes. T Conry. 209
Grant to us, O Lord. L Deiss. 303
Hosea. G Norbet. 213
Return to God. M Haugen. 304
Though the mountains may fall. D Schutte. 453
Tree of life. M Haugen. 307
Yes, I shall arise. L. Deiss. 214

AOV1
A new heart for a new world. T Watts/M O'Brien. 158
Be reconciled as one. C Willcock SJ. 162
Hosea. G Norbet. 30
God of my salvation. G Norbet. 68
Though the mountains may fall. D Schutte. 182

AOV2
Ashes. T Conry. 16
Heal me, O God. G Norbet. 52

AOV4Kids
We want to live like you, Jesus. S Wolf. 32

CWB
Create in me. Marty Haugen. 664
Forgive our sins as we forgive. Rosamund E. Herklots. 680
God of mercy and compassion. Michael Hodgetts. 692
Grant to us, O Lord, a heart renewed. Lucien Deiss. 698
Hosea. Gregory Norbet OSB. 715
Lord Jesus, as we turn from sin. Ralph Wright OSB. 735
May this Lenten discipline. James Phillip McAuley. 746
O Father, I know I can count on your mercy. Kathleen Boschetti MSC. 762
O God, creator of us all. Stanbrook Abbey. 764
Our Father, we have wandered. Kevin Nichols. 784
The glory of these forty days. Gregory the Great, tr. Maurice F. Bell. 825

CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
Again we keep this solemn fast. Ascr. Gregory the Great, tr. Peter J. Scagnelli. 285
Bring us back to you, O Lord our God. Jean-Paul Lécoat and Sr Lucia Fay. 287
Forty days and forty nights. George Hunt Smyttan, alt. Francis Pott. 288
From ashes to the living font. Alan J. Hommerding. 289 (vv. 1, 2, 4)
Grant to us, O Lord. Lucien Deiss CSSp. 291
Hear us, almighty Lord/Attende Domine. Tr. Ralph Wright, OSB. 292
Return to God. Marty Haugen. 298
The glory of these forty days. Gregory the Great, tr. Maurice F. Bell. 301
Additional selections by Chris deSilva
Forgive our sins as we forgive. Rosamond E. Herklots. 120
Lord Jesus, as we turn from sin. Ralph Wright OSB. 294
May this Lenten discipline. James Phillip McAuley. 295
Create a clean heart in me, O God. The Grail/ICEL. 478

S&S1
Be merciful, O Lord. Steve Angrisano. 66

S&S2
Be merciful, O Lord. Jeff Thomas. 257
Create a clean heart. Cyprian Consiglio. 302
40 days. Matt Maher. 310

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 50: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.
Psalm 50: Douglas Mews. CWB 202
Psalm 51: Be merciful, O Lord: Christopher Willcock. GA 41
Psalm 51 (50): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 28
Be merciful, O Lord: Paul Mason. PM pg. 41
Be merciful, O Lord: Marty Haugen. LPFS pg. 20

Seasonal Psalms for Lent Selected by Chris deSilva
Psalm 50: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.
Be Merciful, O Lord. Douglas Mews. CWB 202
Psalm 51: Be Merciful, O Lord/Create a Clean Heart. The Grail. GA 41
Psalm 51 (50): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 28
Be Merciful, O Lord. Paul Mason. PM pg. 41

Psalm 90: Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.
Be With Me Lord. C. Alexander Peloquin/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 203
Be With Me, Lord. Paul Mason. PM pg. 64

Psalm 129: With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.
With The Lord There Is Mercy. J. Robert Carroll/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 204
Psalm 130: With the Lord There Is Mercy. The Grail. GA 76
Psalm 130: With the Lord There Is Mercy. The Grail. GA 77
With the Lord There Is Mercy. Paul Mason. PM pg. 100
Psalm 130 (129): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 36

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Out of ashes (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Distribution of Ashes]
Create a new heart (FWS) Based on Ps 50/51 [Gathering, Gifts, Recessional]
Be merciful, O Lord (LCC) Ps 50 (51) Children’s Lectionary Translation
This is the time (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]
Lenten acclamation (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]
Lenten gospel acclamation – Mass Jubilee (MJC) [Gospel Acclamation]
Turn back to God (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]
6 March 2022
First Sunday of Lent
Reflection by Gerard Moore

Introduction
Our Gospel places us in the front row as we watch the devil tempt Jesus. The reading is a meditation on the humanity of Jesus and his fidelity to God’s will. This matches well the first reading which underpins our ongoing thanksgiving for all that God has wrought. We open into Lent uncovering the faithfulness of God and seeking to be clear about our own response

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came so that we could resist temptation in all its guises. Lord, have mercy.

You help us to know God in a new way. Christ, have mercy.

You show us how to deny ourselves. Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.

Commentary
This prayer is first encountered in the tradition as a sixth to seventh century oration for the first Sunday of Lent, a place it retains to this day. This opening collect for the season establishes a framework for pursuing the discipline of the season. In this it states the commonplace yet seeks that this discipline become more and more an established part of the Christian life. Lent is a ‘holy’ time. While this holiness is from the penitential emphasis the season lends to the celebration of Sunday itself, more so it is because its reference is the resurrection. The yearly observances are not an
end in themselves but serve to heighten our receptivity for the mysteries that God has worked amongst creation. Consequently, the aim of our observances is not simply self-control. Rather it is towards our growth in being able to stand under the paschal mystery and becoming more receptive to the riches wrought by Christ. The annual nature of the cycle is a reminder of our need for ongoing transformation into richer believers, more completely taken up and remade in Christ. Growth in understanding is necessarily complemented by right action. Again, this is more than obedience. Our worthy conduct brings out the effects of the riches hidden in Christ. These are acts of building the reign of God. Their orientation is towards our growth in love.

First Reading
Deuteronomy 26:4-10
We live in the land that God has given us.

Responsorial Psalm
Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.
This psalm is one that, when learnt by heart, can be a constant prayer in times of need. Musical settings enable memorisation and place the psalm in the heart. The psalmist gives us the words to cry out to God, the one who always hears our prayer.

Second Reading
Romans 10:8-13
With confessing lips and believing hearts, we call upon the name of the Lord.

Gospel Reading
The temptations of Jesus are a reminder of his humanity, and his life lived under the guidance of the Spirit.

Reflection
Our first reading on the first Sunday of Lent sets before us one of the most foundational readings in the Hebrew bible, a reading that underpins our theology of Eucharist. Yes, it is that central!

It is bookended by two instructions about Israelite worship concerning the first fruits. We will come back to them. The central part of the reading concerns salvation from
slavery. Behind it is that most potent of words in Jewish and Christian theology: ‘remember’. Notice how the text works. It begins with the ancestors, recounting a story from the past: “My father was a wandering Aramean … he became nation great, strong and numerous”. As the narrative is told, however, a change comes on the text. The tense moves from the past – my father – to the present. All of a sudden we are in the story – the Egyptians maltreated ‘us’ … ‘we’ cried to the Lord. This is not historical narrative. The story being told here is almost 1000 years in the past for the writer and readers of the Book of Deuteronomy. Rather, it is an action of liturgical memory. The faithful in worship recall that the salvation that operated in Egypt, freeing the people from slavery, is still operative here and now, freeing us from slavery. This is the meaning that Jesus brings to the Last Supper, where he charges to Christian community to ‘remember’ him in the blessing and consuming of bread and wine.

Our Lenten worship, then, opens with the admonition that we are saved in Christ, a central aspect of every Eucharist.

What are the first fruits? We no longer live in agrarian times when the first of the harvest was gifted to the Lord of the harvest. But we do live in times when the harvest itself is being put at risk, and our ‘dominion’ over the earth is setting in danger the meaning of creation itself. Our Deuteronomy text, with its rich eucharistic and liberation imperatives also carries a reminder that the fruits of the earth are not only for humanity.

For Paul, conversion is all encompassing. It is of word and deed, mouth and heart. It is both change of heart and confession of faith as an integrated action. There is a more radical edge to this as well. The Apostle will let no human barriers or cultural differences, or division sully this integration of faith and life. When he writes it is equally so for Jew and Greek, Paul is proclaiming a radical equality before God: the life of faith is a discipleship of equals.

In this, our profession of faith in salvation through the death and resurrection of Christ is a commitment to the radical equality of all before God. For Christians this is the abolition of racism, discrimination against the poor, gender inequity, and the offer of a freedom for all to live fully in Christ. Pope Francis brings a contemporary poignancy to this. We who profess Christ in word and action, in confession and conversion, are challenged by the connection between ecological degradation and poverty, by the unequal distribution of the goods of the earth, and by the cost of this to our planet itself. It is a sobering Lenten meditation and a humbling invitation to call upon the name of the Lord.

We now turn to the Gospel. With every temptation finished, the devil retreats. The first battle is lost, but there are others to come. The final lines of the passage are chilling in their intent, and evil and temptation will reappear within the crucifixion narrative at the death just as they are here at his preparation for ministry. Yet the temptation should be read in light of the opening sentence: Jesus was filled with the Spirit. To bring this full circle, at the Ascension that same Spirit is promised the Church (Lk 24:49). The context for the temptations is the presence of the Spirit.
This does not make the temptations any less easy to resist: power, authority, divinity all applied to meeting Jesus’ needs rather than those of his mission. Jesus’ mission requires fasting, trueness of purpose, trust in God not testing God. The mission is always within the context of the presence of the Spirit.

Again, it is worth retrieving the wisdom of *Laudato Si*! The pope quotes his predecessor in a text that fits well with our understanding of the dedication of Jesus to the mission of God rather than his own interests and advancement. The text reads:

> Benedict urged us to realize that creation is harmed “where we ourselves have the final word, where everything is simply our property and we use it for ourselves alone. The misuse of creation begins when we no longer recognize any higher instance than ourselves, when we see nothing else but ourselves” (*Laudato Si* 6).

Where do we set the final word?
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

As we journey in this time of reflection, prayer, and fasting, let us present our needs to the Father so that the Spirit will guide and strengthen us through this period.

Petitions

We pray for the leaders of the Church, especially for Pope Francis, that they will be strengthened and rejuvenated by the Holy Spirit to continue to announce the love of God for the world.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the members of the Plenary Council and for the Universal Church as we prepare for the Synod on Synodality. May they be strengthened through their Lenten practices and lead the Church to a vibrant renewal.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the secular leaders of the countries around the world that the Holy Spirit will continue to guide them in their service to uphold human rights, protect the vulnerable, and to care for our environment. We pray particularly that the distribution of vaccines for the pandemic will become more just.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the all the RCIA candidates and catechumens, that in this Rite of Election they may be enlightened by God’s love as the Church embraces them and welcomes them into the faith community.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for ourselves gathered around the Lord’s table. Through our prayer, and our praise, and by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, may we be strengthened and nourished in our mission to be witnesses of Christ’s love throughout this Lenten season.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Father, we praise and thank you and we know that you listen to us. Grant us these needs through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Ashes. T Conry. 209
Be not afraid. B. Dufford SJ. 449
Be with me, Lord. G Cox. 52
Be with me, Lord. M Haugen. 53
Blest be the Lord. D Schutte. 458
God of mercy and compassion. M. Hodgetts/ P Jones. 302
Grant to us, O Lord. L Deiss. 303
O God, our help in ages past. I Watts/ W Croft. 459
O Sun of Justice, fill our hearts. F C Quinn OP/ E Miller. 2
On eagle’s wings. M Joncas. 452
Return to God. M Haugen. 304
Tree of life. M Haugen. 307

AOV1
Be not afraid. B. Dufford SJ. 114
Be with me, Lord. M Joncas. 116
Blest be the Lord. D Schutte. 179
On eagle’s wings. M Joncas. 153
O God, our help in ages past. I Watts/ W Croft. 175

AOV2
Ashes. T Conry. 16

AOV4Kids
For the faces that I know. K Bates SM. 137

CWB
Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble. Marty Haugen. 627
Grant to us, O Lord, a heart renewed. Lucien Deiss. 698
Hosea. Gregory Norbet OSB. 715
May this Lenten discipline. James Phillip McAuley. 746
O God, creator of us all. Stanbrook Abbey. 764
The glory of these forty days. Gregory the Great, tr. Maurice F. Bell. 825

CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
Again we keep this solemn fast. Ascr. Gregory the Great, tr. Peter J. Scagnelli. 285
Be with me, Lord. Marty Haugen. 286
Forty days and forty nights. George Hunt Smyttan, alt. Francis Pott. 288
From ashes to the living font. Alan J. Hommerding. 289
Grant to us, O Lord. Lucien Deiss CSSp. 291
May this Lenten discipline. James Phillip McAuley. 295
O God, creator of us all. Stanbrook Abbey. 296
The glory of these forty days. Gregory the Great, tr. Maurice F. Bell. 301
Additional selection by Chris deSilva
On eagle’s wings. Michael Joncas. 654
S&S1
Be with me. Bob Hurd. 72

S&S2
Be with me, Lord. Bobby Fisher, Greg Lee and Donnie Henrickson. 266
Be with me, Lord. Ken Canedo. 267
40 days. Matt Maher. 310

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 90: Be with me, Lord, when I am in trouble.
Psalm 90: C. Alexander Peloquin/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 203
Psalm 91 (90): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 26
Be with me, Lord: Paul Mason. PM pg. 64
Be with me, Lord: Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 34

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Be with us (FWS) Based on Ps 90/91 [Gathering, Gifts]
Create a new heart (FWS) Based on Ps 50/51 [Gathering, Gifts, Recessional]
This is the time (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]
Lenten acclamation (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]
Lenten Gospel acclamation – Mass Jubilee (MJC) [Gospel Acclamation]
Turn back to God (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]
Introduction
This series of Lenten readings focuses on who we are in God and what we can become. We are invited to ground our penitential practices in our identity as God sees it. The lections offer a meditation on being chosen, on living as imitators of Christ, and on being transformed. The self-discipline of Lent is a step towards conversion of heart and community, and fulfillment in Christ.

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you showed us your glory as God the Son so that we might believe.  
Lord, have mercy.

You open the way to the Father.  
Christ, have mercy.

You show us God’s mercy through the power of the Spirit.  
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
O God, who have commanded us to listen to your beloved Son,  
be pleased, we pray,  
to nourish us inwardly by your word,  
that, with spiritual sight made pure,  
we may rejoice to behold your glory.

Commentary
The initial focus of the opening collect for the second Sunday in Lent is upon the discipline of listening. If Christ is the Word incarnate, we his followers are essentially listeners, hearers of the word. Interestingly, in the midst of the seasonal fast God is not named in this seventh century Spanish prayer as one who desires us to be hungry, but rather as one who has commanded us to listen. Our Lenten discipline ought to make us more receptive to the word. From this foundation the prayer sets a

13 March 2022
Second Sunday of Lent
Reflection by Gerard Moore
number of images at play. Having called up our sense of hearing, the oration introduces our sense of hunger: we are to be nourished by the divine word and seek the grace to sharpen our appetite for this word. Our hunger and hearing are then related to our sight. Fed by the word, our spiritual sense of sight is healthier, and we are more fully able to rejoice as we see God’s glory. The Lenten discipline of the senses results in sharper hearing, a healthier appetite and more pure sight for the joy of beholding the divine glory.

First Reading

Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
The promise to Abram opens up a new imagination of what it means to live within the presence of a gracious God.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 27: 1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14

The Lord is my light and my salvation.

This psalm is often used at funerals because of the sense of hope that is expressed through the imagery of light and the strength of God. During the Lenten season we seek to be purified by word and sacrament and by our Lenten practices.

Second Reading

Philippians 3:17— 4:1
We are transformed into our true selves as we model ourselves on Christ.

Gospel Reading

The silence that follows upon the realisation of Jesus’ transfiguration is the first step in our hearing Christ and obeying.

Reflection

Our Lenten disciplines are focused on the possibilities of life in God, a vista opened up by our first reading. The unlikely Abram is offered an unlikely future by God, one greatly cherished by the ancients whose fortune was measured in descendants as much as in riches. Offspring meant security in old age, a measure of peace in the marketplace, and protection against enemies. Family ensured life. This invitation from God has some aspects that would have left Abram somewhat bemused. He has no offspring, and he had no great hopes in a promising future. He is right to be a bit sceptical. Yet God has had Abram in mind. The divine one has kept track of him, indeed brought the shepherd from his homeland in Ur to the present site. The wanderings of Abram have not been without divine direction.
As with the greatest Hebrew bible figures (think here Moses) Abram is not without cunning. This message that God has directed his path is not considered a guarantee. Abram bargains for more certainty: how am I to know that I will possess it? God strikes a covenant with this chosen agent of faith. It is a terrifying experience for Abram, and he emerges chastened, somewhat unscathed, but bonded to God. A covenant, to be clear, is not a contract between equals. Rather it is an agreement between a far superior power and an inferior one. It is a way that greater powers forge agreements with weaker peoples and nations, offering protection to the weak while building an empire. God responds to Abram’s scepticism by setting him within the protection of the Mighty One and promising that protection across his descendants. It is a great show of faith in Abram, and a bargain beyond imagining for the shepherd.

Perhaps it is not quite what we would expect from a Lenten reading, however it is set in place to accompany the Gospel. In this we have some clues to the seasonal message. Our Lenten discipline is framed within the promise of salvation in God. Here it is manifested in Abram, and our reading from Romans will place that for us within our hope in Christ. As we know, Abram’s faith will be tested and with this his identity changed – he becomes Abraham. This change of name is in part a change in who he is and how he understands himself. Two other Lenten themes are present. Firstly, God is behind the peregrinations of Abram: it is God who brought him to this place. For us, there is always the mystery of the present, and how God has been with us on our journeys, despite their paths and their troubles. Secondly, there is the promise. To be in God is to live in the promise: for Abram it is land and progeny. We are invited to seek the promise of life lived in Christ.

The expansive promise to Abram, of lands covering a vast area between two fertile rivers, has consequences for how we think around the environment. The peoples of the time and of later millennium did not hear in the promise that Abram owned these lands and could do with them as he liked. As a herdsman he had from God a right of use. He did not have dominion. These lands were shared, and within that cooperative arrangement Abram had a stake. The inclusion of the rivers, untamed and the guarantee of fertility, gives the forces of the environment a stake as well. This was well understood by the peoples of ancient and not so ancient times, yet it has become obscured in our different age. Yet some things remain clear. The land belongs to the creator and should be held with the divine purpose clearly in mind. With this, our belonging on the land and claims over land are not about dominion but about relationship.

In the passage from the Letter to the Philippians, Paul holds out the promise of transformation, a promise taken up in the Gospel. It has a number of features, not all set out systematically. Transformation requires imitation of Christ, here and now, standing firm and in alignment with Jesus’ death. Paul even puts himself up as a model! With this, there is a vision of the future: Paul eschews the earthly existence for the heavenly one, mindful of his own understanding of the eminent return of the Lord – Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus. There is reason in his stark opposition between the two realms, however within this there is also continuity. All things are subject to Christ, in whom all things were made. The contrast is drawn strongly as a way of emphasising his point about diametrically opposite behaviours: minds
occupied with earthly things as opposed to citizenship of heaven. Both are lived out in the present and offer us a Lenten meditation. Our fasting, prayer, almsgiving and good works should be bringing depth to our citizenship of heaven rather than feeding our stomachs.

There is also a *Laudato si'* reflection operative here. Paul's tempered eschatology allows us to reflect on larger issues of our use of the earth, mindful that all things belong to Christ. Our transformation as creatures and as a society cannot take place if we are voracious in our treatment of the earth, the plants, the animals, any creatures. Much of our ecological behaviour has the feel of Paul writing ‘Their God is their stomach; their glory is in their “shame”.’ Perhaps this Lent we are invited to stand firm for what is the Lord’s.

The transfiguration presents a wonderful scene. Jesus is revealed as in glory. The figures of Moses and Elijah, both prophets who witnessed the glory of God, are here to witness the same glory in Jesus. These two were the greatest of the prophets of old, and for the early Christian communities the pair confirm that Jesus is the greatest prophet of all: he is the glory of God.

The passage has all the hallmarks expected by a Jewish audience of a revelation of divine glory. It takes place on a mountain, there is the presence of the cloud, God’s voice is clear, and they are all bathed in God’s glory though it is Jesus who is glorified. Jesus' transformation leaves them in silence. Yet it also leaves them aware of the fulfillment of all things in him.

From a Lenten perspective, this Gospel passage opens upon the context for the fast. Our self-denial is in the context of our glorification. There is a trace here of Irenaeus (b. 130 approx.) and his famous saying that ‘the glory of God is the human person fully alive’. This was an astounding statement of confidence in creation given that his opponents, the Gnostics, were anti-body and firmly dismissive of material creation. In our present world, where the religious imagination is seeking ways to re-connect with creation as a whole, we might run alongside Pope Francis and offer that the glory of God is creation fully appreciated. This places ecological conversion at the heart of our Lenten discipline. As we take in the depth of this transformation, we are held silent before the mystery of God revealed.

*Laudato si’* reflects our Lenten call for transformation:

> Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others. Since the world has been given to us, we can no longer view reality in a purely utilitarian way, in which efficiency and productivity are entirely geared to our individual benefit. Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us. The Portuguese bishops have called upon us to acknowledge this obligation of justice: ‘The environment is part of a logic of receptivity. It is on loan to each generation, which must then hand it on to the next’. An integral ecology is marked by this broader vision. (*Laudato Si* 159).
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Mindful of our calling to be united as brothers and sisters, let us ask the Lord for the needs of our world and our community that we now place trustfully before the Father.

Petitions
We pray for Pope Francis and our Church leaders in the clergy and the laity. Inspire them as we move towards the Synod on Synodality and may they consistently and continuously seek guidance and direction from the Holy Spirit.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Plenary Council members during this period between the two Assemblies. May the work continue with openness to the prompting of the Spirit.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those preparing to become Catholics at Easter time; may they be strengthened by the examples of the congregation.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our community that we may be enriched during this time of Lent with deeds of caring, kindness and inner reflection. May all we meet in our daily lives know by our actions that we are all one family in faith.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our community, particularly for those who have lost their faith, are sick, lonely and fearful. In their time of suffering may they be encouraged to hold firm, continue to be hopeful and remain faithful in the Lord.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray that all those involved in Pastoral work will authentically bring ??? peace? healing? purpose? to those who are struggling to find meaning to life.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Father, as the descendants of Abraham we are your servants who trust in you, even in the midst of affliction, so hear this prayer that we make through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Christ, be our light. B. Farrell. 404
Eye has not seen. M. Haugen. 466
O Sun of Justice, fill our hearts. F C Quinn OP/ E Miller. 2
Praise to you, O Christ, our saviour. B Farrell. 407
Seek, O seek, the Lord. J McAuley/ R Connolly. 211
Tree of life. M Haugen. 307
We remember. M Haugen. 446

AOV1
Eye has not seen. M. Haugen. 466
I will lift up my eyes. T. Conry. 84
Open my eyes. J. Manibusan. 166
Praise to you, O Christ, our saviour. B Farrell. 28
We remember. M Haugen 81

AOV2
Christ, be our light. B. Farrell. 3

AOV4Kids
For the faces that I know. K Bates SM. 137

CWB
Glorious in majesty. Jeff Cothran. 688
God, your glory we have seen. Didier Rimaud. 695
The glory of these forty days. Gregory the Great, tr. Maurice F. Bell. 825
The Lord is my light and my salvation. Marty Haugen. 828
There is one thing I ask of the Lord. The Grail. 837

CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
From ashes to the living font. Alan J. Hommerding. 289
The glory of these forty days. Gregory the Great, tr. Maurice F. Bell. 301
Jesus on the mountain peak. Brian Wren. 433
O raise your eyes on high and see. Ralph Wright OSB. 434
Tis good, Lord, to be here. Joseph Armitage Robinson. 435
Additional selection by Chris deSilva
Glorious in majesty. Jeff Cothran. 374

S&S1
The Lord is my light. Christopher Walker. 61

S&S2
The Lord is my light. Angus McDonell. 252
The Lord is my light and my salvation. Jesse Manibusan. 253
Transfigure us, O Lord. Bob Hurd. 309
Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 26: *The Lord is my light and my salvation.*
Psalm 26: Noel Ancell. CWB 63 (stanzas 1, 3, 4, 5)
Psalm 27 (26): Jenny O'Brien. JOBC pg. 28
The Lord is my light: Tony Alonso LPC pg. 38

Music selections by Michael Mangan

You are the light (FWS) *Based on Ps 26/27* [Gathering, Gifts]
Be with us (FWS) *Based on Ps 90/91* [Gathering, Gifts]
Create a new heart (FWS) *Based on Ps 50/51* [Gathering, Gifts, Recessional]
The Lord is my light (LCC) *Ps 26 (27)* Children’s Lectionary Translation
This is the time (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]
Lenten acclamation (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]
Lenten Gospel acclamation – Mass Jubilee (MJC) [Gospel Acclamation]
Turn back to God (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]
Pastoral Note: Third Sunday of Lent – First Scrutiny

by Vincent Glynn

For those parishes who have candidates for the RCIA, this is the first Sunday of the three Scrutinies. These three Scrutinies are ‘rites for self-searching and repentance and have above all a spiritual purpose’ (RCIA 128).

The Scrutiny is celebrated after the homily in which the celebrant is encouraged to explain the meaning of the first scrutiny in the light of the Lenten liturgy and to encourage the elect that through the exorcism ‘their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the living water’. This image is found in the gospel of the Samaritan woman (Year A) which can be proclaimed on this Sunday (RCIA 130).

In parish communities where the elect for the RCIA are taking part in the Lenten scrutinies, it is pastorally appropriate to read the gospel from Year A.

During this Third Week of Lent the elect are also presented with the Creed. The presentation takes place within a Mass celebrated in the presence of a community of faithful’ (RCIA 144).

Introduction

The Gospel of the Samaritan woman at the well matches the theme of water in the first reading, and opens onto conversion, forgiveness of sin, discipleship, water and baptism. As Lenten fare the readings encourage our ongoing conversion and appreciation of the forgiveness of God wrought in Christ, a forgiveness extended to the sinful and the outcast: there is no one excluded from its reach.

Penitential Act

Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came to heal all sinners.
Lord, have mercy.

You lead us to repentance.
Christ, have mercy.

You bring us home to the Father.
Lord, have mercy.
Collect
The oration
O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving
have shown us a remedy for sin,
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,
may always be lifted up by your mercy.

Commentary
To stand before God is inevitably to 'confess our lowliness'! The opening oration from the most ancient layers of Lenten prayers is one of the most compelling collects in the missal, hope filled, meditative and true to our nature. The invocation offers the rationale for Christian penitence. God is named as author of all mercy and all goodness. The sense of authorship should not be underplayed. In the prayer tradition the ‘authoring’ of God implies continued upholding, sustaining and completion. What God begins; the divine does not abandon. Our penitential practices, intensified in Lent but belonging to the Christian life as a whole, are fasting, prayer and almsgiving. Following longstanding Christian belief, they are a remedy for sin. We, for our part, caught up in this mercy and goodness, express who we are. In conscience we stand bowed, 'confessing our lowliness'. This beautiful sixth century expression captures our humility as sinners yet our confidence as believers. We who are bowed low know that in mercy and goodness we are able to be lifted. Even to feel the extent of our lowliness is a gift from the author of every mercy and all goodness. It is a fitting prayer for the first scrutiny of the catechumens.

First Reading
Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15
The meeting God arranges with Moses at the burning bush reveals the promise of God to be present, to liberate and to bring to a new land.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 103: 1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8,11
The Lord is kind and merciful.
This psalm is echoed in the words of the Collect. To stand before God is to know justice, mercy and the one who is slow to anger and rich in mercy. Beautiful images of our God to whom we must return in humility over and over again.

Second Reading
1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
For the Apostle Paul, whoever thinks they are standing secure should take care not to fall.
Gospel Reading

Jesus the master gardener cultivates us so that we may bear fruit.

Reflection

Our opening lection from the Book of Exodus is perhaps the single most central passage in the entire Old Testament. That may well be verging on an overstatement, but the story of the burning bush contains the heart of the covenant:

God does not abandon the chosen people. This divine fidelity is the basis of faith, the font of Baptism, the food of the Eucharist, the meaning of Christianity and Judaism. It is on display across Laudato Si! It is the cause of our thanksgiving.

I would like to draw attention to the dynamic of the dialogue between God and Moses. There are multiple other colourings of the text: the holy mountain, the mysterious burning, the holy ground. These will be left aside for this reflection to take us to an essential foundation.

To take up the exchange we need to be mindful that God is the all holy divine one and Moses is a murderer in hiding, a renegade from the royal court, unwanted in his now lost home, and unwanted by his people of origin.

God announces his intention. The Holy One will relieve the sufferings of the people of Israel, will unburden them from slavery and bring them to freedom. Yet the wily Moses does not respond as expected. He seeks the ‘name’ of God. Moses does not trust the apparition, as appealing as the message may be. In the ancient world, to have the ‘name’ of someone was to have power over them, particularly a god. Moses wants power over God as a guarantee of the success of the mission. The Holy One knows the herdsman’s strategy and ignores it. God speaks a phrase that is not a name, and in effect means that the name of God belongs to God alone, and no human can contemplate authority and power over God. It is a sharp disruption of Moses’ plan, but not without comfort. In withholding the divine name, God sets out the divine promise. God will be with the people, God will free the people, God will bring the people to another land. If these things do not happen, then the people have every right to abandon belief in this God. In effect, God pledges fidelity to the people, a fidelity of presence, freedom and salvation. This is the foundation of the faith of Israel. Looking to our season, this is the meaning that Christ fulfills in the Spirit: presence, liberation and salvation. While there is no revelation of the divine name, there is complete revelation of the fidelity and the heart of God, who hears the people and saves them. This message sits fittingly at the midpoint of Lent.

Paul takes the Corinthian community on a mini-history lesson. His is a somewhat unconventional reading of the Exodus story. Normally a story of the triumph of the fidelity of God, here it is a cautionary tale delivered to a group that Paul considers far from perfect. As a Lenten text the main point is in the final sentence. Our security is from God, not from ourselves, and so use the opportunity that Lent brings to tame our sinful inclinations and embrace the love of God and the security it promises.
This Gospel passage has foreground and background, and both have lessons for us. The foreground is the theology of sin. At the time of Jesus, suffering in life was understood as a result of sin. We still have remnants of this most primordial thinking in our refrain ‘what did I do to deserve this’. The teacher’s point is to move away from this concept towards one of conversion and repentance. The followers are using despicable actions and unfortunate events – the perishing of others – as a distraction from their own self-reflection. This section of the passage is a call for Lenten conversion.

It is well matched with the image of the gardener who tends the fig tree. The fig tree garners our attention, but it is the gardener who is key to the narrative. The poor return from the fruiting tree is met with further care that seeks to shape a different future, one in line with the nature of the tree itself. Here we have the divine care that is on offer to us as we take up the sharpish directive for renewal. Together the plight of the fig and the response of the gardener are timely reminders for us in the middle of our period of Lenten discipline.

There are background events that have a bearing on the story. The narrative references the terrible violence and sacrilege of Pilate. We will soon enough in this season meet the violence and sacrilege of Pilate, now meted out to Jesus himself. Yet the reporting of this event to Jesus would have stung. He is a Galilean. This is another episode of the ongoing violence in his home region, the desperation of his own people, and the cruelty of the punishment exacted. Here the story is used as a prop for a discussion of the theology of sin and the place of conversion and repentance, but the effect on Jesus is unknown, yet would be a reminder of the oppression of the people and the danger of his own position. Ultimately Jesus’ death and resurrection show up the violence of the Roman leadership. There is an opportunity here for us to think that our ongoing conversion cannot be complete without attention to the injustices among our people, and beyond.

This breadth of our compassion is brought further to the fore with the accident in Siloam. The tower fell and those beneath it tragically were killed. Again, the incident is used as a frame for a discussion of sin and conversion, but there is also something of developing a more adequate way of understanding tragedy and responding to it. Australians are good at this, generous to a fault. There are values here in the background that are well at home in the Australian culture and social fabric. This Lent is an opportunity to affirm and strengthen these.

Finally, to the underperforming Fig! There is an ecological message here that does not need to be laboured. What is our relationship to the earth: we are gardeners who are charged with care for the earth, not dominion over it. Taking up Pope Francis: ‘The creation accounts in the book of Genesis contain, in their own symbolic and narrative language, profound teachings about human existence and its historical reality. They suggest that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself.’ (*Laudato Si!* 66)
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
In Luke’s Gospel we are called to repentance. With open minds and humble hearts, we now offer our needs to the Father.

Petitions
We pray for Pope Francis, and all leaders in the Church as they prepare for the Synod in 2023. May they conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. No matter what disruptions, frustrations or difficulties arise may they respond with a Christlike attitude.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are preparing documents for the members of the Plenary Council and preparing for the second Assembly in July. May they be guided by the Spirit in their preparations so that the needs of the Church can be met, and Australian Catholics be guided towards a better Christ-centred future.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the world and its leaders during this pandemic that they will continue to act justly and humbly so that all people are vaccinated according to their need.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the RCIA Candidates and Catechumens that the Holy Spirit, who searches every heart, may help them to overcome their weakness and strengthen them to full conversion through the Sacraments of Initiation.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the needs of our families and community, especially when we are feeling disillusioned by our own weaknesses, that we can overcome our iniquities by prayer, fasting and works of mercy.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those suffering from grief. May they be gently comforted by those around them and may those who have died be resting in eternal peace.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Father you are kind and merciful. As we continue to seek a change of heart and mind, we ask you to hear the prayers we place before you through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Christ our Lord.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Christ is made the sure foundation. J M Neale/ H Purcell. 482
God of mercy and compassion. M. Hodgetts/ P Jones. 302
Grant to us, O Lord. L Deiss. 303
Here I am, Lord. D. Schutte. 496
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ R V Williams. 468
Jesus, in your heart we find. J P McAuley/R Connolly. 464
Return to God. M Haugen. 304
Tree of life. M Haugen. 307
When I survey the wondrous cross. I Watts/ E Miller. 330

AOV1
Here I am, Lord. D. Schutte. 90
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ R V Williams. 54

CWB
God of mercy and compassion. Michael Hodgetts. 692
Grant to us, O Lord, a heart renewed. Lucien Deiss. 698
O bless the Lord, my soul. James Montgomery. 757
There’s a wideness in God’s mercy. Frederick William Faber. 838

CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
God of mercy and compassion. Edmund Vaughan CssR/Paul Bird CssR. 290
Grant to us, O Lord. Lucien Deiss CSSp. 291
From ashes to the living font. Alan J. Hommerding. 289
Sing praise to the Lord all our days. John Moloney. 602
There’s a wideness in God’s mercy. Frederick William Faber. 624

Additional selection by Chris deSilva
Return to God. Marty Haugen. 298

S&S1
The Lord is kind and merciful. Rick Modlin. 77

S&S2
The Lord is kind and merciful. Tom Booth. 274

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 102: The Lord is kind and merciful.
Psalm 102: Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 216
Psalm 103 (102): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 30
The Lord is kind and merciful. Marty Haugen LPC pg. 41

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Create a new heart (FWS) Based on Ps 50/51 [Gathering, Gifts, Recessional]
Be with us (FWS) Based on Ps 90/91 [Gathering, Gifts]
This is the time (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]
Lenten acclamation (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]
Lenten gospel acclamation – Mass Jubilee (MJC) [Gospel Acclamation]
Turn back to God (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]
Pastoral Note: Fourth Sunday of Lent – Second Scrutiny
by Vincent Glynn

The second Scrutiny is celebrated after the homily during which the celebrant is encouraged to explain the meaning of the scrutiny in the light of the Lenten liturgy and to encourage the elect that through the prayer of exorcism ‘their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is light of the world’. This is found in the gospel of the man born blind which can be proclaimed on this Sunday (RCIA 130).

Pastoral Note: In parish communities where the elect for the RCIA are taking part in the Lenten scrutinies it is appropriate to read the gospel from Year A.

Introduction

As we worship at the midpoint of Lent, we hear a story to which the needy, sinful and outcast are attracted, while the religious leaders are repelled. What will be our response? Ultimately the audience who turn away cause Jesus’ death: the leaders of faith are central to Jesus’ trial and condemnation. Ironically, the story of the brother who was ‘dead’ and came to ‘life’ will soon be celebrated afresh! Again, we are invited into the immensity of the reconciliation of God, this time through the parable of the forgiving father.

Penitential Act

Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came to show us the compassion of the Father. 
Lord, have mercy.

You teach us the delights of God’s love.
Christ, have mercy.

You show us the joy of forgiveness.
Lord, have mercy.
Collect

The oration
O God, who through your Word
reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way,
grant, we pray,
that with prompt devotion and eager faith
the Christian people may hasten
toward the solemn celebrations to come.

Commentary

With the penitential season past the halfway mark, our Mass and collect reflect a
lightened mood. The rubrics indicate that rose vestments may be used, instrumental
music is permitted, and the altar decorated with flowers. In harmony with this, the
opening prayer is replete with wonder, haste and eagerness. Already in view are the
great celebrations of the Paschal Mystery, the solemn celebrations for which we are
prepared by Lent. The invocation of God names in wonderment the central tenet of
Christian belief: that through the Word all humanity is reconciled to God. The petition
seeks the grace that we will respond. Corresponding to God’s reconciling initiative,
we ask that the Christian people may ‘hasten’ towards the celebration of humanity’s
redemption. The sense of forward and speedy movement mirrors the constant
liturgical vocabulary of ‘running’ towards what God has offered. It also has a sense of
Peter’s excited venturing to the empty tomb. But it is not careless haste. Rather we
are seeking a heart that is keen for the Easter feast, and a faith that is lively to its
promise. In part this eager commitment is not simply because the faithful are saved,
but because together with everyone across the pages of history, all humanity has
been reconciled to God. This is the wonder of the divine reconciliation. The prayer
was especially created for the Missal of Paul VI to bring this sense to contemporary
believers in that it is pieced together from two ancient sources: a petition from the
writings of Pope Leo the Great grafted onto an invocation from an ancient Roman
Lenten prayer.

First Reading

Joshua 5:9a, 10-12

The entry of the people to the promised land is a constant reminder of the care of
God and the freedom they have been given.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

This psalm is used often in Sunday liturgies. We come to receive the body and blood
of Christ and to receive the Word of God in order to be nourished. This idea is well
expressed in Psalm 34 as it is a psalm that praises God for bestowing such
goodness on the righteous. This is the Lord who is near to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.

Second Reading
2 Cor 5:17-21
We are ambassadors for Christ, who has given us a ministry for reconciliation.

Gospel Reading
Lk 15:1-3, 11-32
The unbounded forgiveness of God is proclaimed to tax collectors and sinners who draw near to God while the religious leaders turn away.

Reflection

The opening sentence of the reading from the Hebrew bible places the wandering people of Israel in the promised land. The reproach of Egypt has been removed through their journey from slavery, across Red Sea waters and thirsty desert expanses, to a land of milk and honey. God has shown the promised fidelity, accompanied the people on the journey and laid before them a new land as their own. This celebration of the Passover was to be their last dependent of God’s direct providence: from now on their given land would feed them. There was no longer need for manna.

Entering the fourth week of Lent, the readings are pointing towards the Triduum. The Passover reference takes us to the Last Supper, and the completion of the journey has a sense of being well on the way in our Lenten pilgrimage. The attainment of the land and its abundance speaks of the resurrection and the fulfillment of all things in Christ.

The lection has other features which speak into some themes of an ecological lent. The land is abundant: God has placed us within an astounding creation that feeds and sustains, and we are obliged to maintain this bounty, not destroy it. As well, beneath the surface of this reading, and of the Book of Joshua, is another ‘text’, another narrative. The mention of Jericho is a reminder that this new land belongs to other people. The wandering Israelites can be described as either refugees or invaders. There will be war over land, and at stake is survival and prosperity. There are also strands of peaceful coexistence: the arrival of Israel and their settling into the land has many layers. For our meditation, the ecological crisis is causing dispute over lands and their management. The management of fire in Australia is one instance. The melting of the Arctic ice is arousing territorial disputes amongst nations with polar regions. There are more difficult tensions in continents where rivers are shared between nations. Our Lenten reflections should include some time spent on whether we are maintaining a lifestyle that allows for land to remain fertile, and its riches shared rather than disputed.
Our Pauline reading carries the profound message of our reconciliation in God. It brings us well prepared to the proclamation of today’s Gospel, and for the events and meaning of Good Friday.

From the actions of God, a new creation emerges, one at home in Christ and freed from sin. For Paul it is not enough to enjoy this peace and freedom. We are also called to be ministers of reconciliation, ambassadors of Christ. What Christ has done, we too take up, proclaim, and bring about. We have a ministry of reconciliation.

Reconciliation is a theme of particular importance in Australia. So many families migrated to this country, or found their way here by more hazardous routes, to escape violence and turmoil. The nation became a place where reconciliation could be hoped for and often achieved. Yet this welcoming and reconciling needs to be supplemented by a more careful reconciliation with the land, its fauna and flora, its rivers and oceans, its micro-climates and diverse natural forms. And any reconciliation cannot be taken seriously unless there is reconciliation and justice for the first peoples. As Catholics we cannot be ambassadors for reconciliation without addressing the violent history, current racism and prejudice and systemic injustice that we allow to be the status quo for indigenous Australians.

In the words of Pope Francis

> I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation which includes everyone, since the environmental challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all. The worldwide ecological movement has already made considerable progress and led to the establishment of numerous organizations committed to raising awareness of these challenges. … We require a new and universal solidarity. As the bishops of Southern Africa have stated: “Everyone’s talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God’s creation”. All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents. (Laudato Si! 14)

The Gospel story is so well known that it does not bear retelling here, however there are some features that inform our Lenten fare.

The opening sentence sets the context. As Jesus preaches, the needy and sinful and outcast are drawn near, while the religious leaders turn away. This will cause Jesus’ death: the leaders of faith are central to Jesus’ trial and condemnation. Ironically, the story of the brother who was ‘dead’ and came to ‘life’ will soon be celebrated afresh! The parable is misnamed. The focus of the narrative falls to the forgiving father, while too often our focus is on the son and his journey of repentance. The son expects little, while the father’s response is deep from the heart of a saddened parent: nothing is to be spared to welcome back the one who was lost to the family yet was always loved and always missed. The older brother has misunderstood the meaning of the celebration. The father’s love for the prodigal does not endanger his status or place in the household or reputation as steadfast.
Divine love is not a calculation, but rather a reservoir without limit. There is ample room in the heart of the father for both of his sons to be loved.

The younger son committed heinous crimes: he debased his father, split the family inheritance, destabilized the family, squandered the future. This takes us back to the setting of the Gospel passage: the sinners are drawn to God; the leaders turn away. We are to be ambassadors of this divine reconciliation.

*Jesus welcomed sinners and ate with them.*
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
God is revealed to us as the Bread of Life, and so we turn now during this season of Lent with our petitions and the knowledge that our needs will be answered.

Petitions
We pray for the leaders of the Church, especially Pope Francis and the bishops, that through the Spirit they may possess the wisdom and grace to lead the Church and its people into the Synod in 2023 with willingness to do God’s will.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of our world that they will work together wherever possible to alleviate the pressure from climate change on our created world.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the members of the Plenary Council as they work in preparation for the second Assembly in July. May their efforts truly reflect the needs of the People of God and help us grow as a Church.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who feel shame or exclusion due to their frailty. May God’s loving kindness and forgiveness be brought to them through the Holy Spirit so they feel accepted, loved and valued by those around them and those who care for them.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who do not recognise Christ as the Messiah, that in this coming season his goodness and divinity will be revealed to them so that they may know that they are saved.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who need refuge and those who are unable to get home because of the pandemic. May God who brought the Israelites from Egypt, carry them safely to the place they have been promised.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Father, all these petitions have been brought to you by your faithful children. Grant them through the power of the Spirit and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

**GA**
Amazing grace. J Newton. 437
A new heart for a new world. T Watts/ M O’Brien. 438
Bless the Lord my soul. M. Haugen. 84
God of mercy and compassion. M. Hodgetts/ P Jones. 302
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ R V Williams. 468
Love divine, all loves excelling. C Wesley/ R Prichard. 463
Love is his word. L Connaughton/ A Milner. 462
Praise to the holiest in the height. J H Newman/ S Webbe. 410
Return to God. M Haugen. 304
Taste and see God’s love. D. Browne/ J Wood. 203
Tree of life. M Haugen. 307
Yes, I shall arise. L. Deiss. 214

**AOV1**
Amazing grace. J Newton. 29
A new heart for a new world. T Watts/ M O’Brien. 158
Be reconciled as one. C Willcock SJ. 162
Gather us together. O. Alstott. 111
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ R V Williams. 54
Strong and constant. Frank Andersen MSC. 110

**AOV2**
Table of plenty. D. Schutte. 20

**AOV4Kids**
Rejoice in the Lord. Traditional melody. 75

**CWB**
Bring us back to you, O Lord our God. Jean-Paul Lécot and Sr Lucia Fay. 629
God of mercy and compassion. Michael Hodgetts. 692
O Father, I know I can count on your mercy. Kathleen Boschetti MSC. 762
Our Father, we have wandered. Kevin Nichols. 784
Strong and constant. Frank Andersen MSC. 812
There’s a wideness in God’s mercy. Frederick Wiliam Faber. 838
Yes, I shall arise. Lucien Deiss. 867

**CWBII**
*Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions*
Bring us back to you, O Lord our God. Jean-Paul Lécot and Sr Lucia Fay. 287
God of mercy and compassion. Edmund VaughanCssR/Paul Bird CssR. 290
Our Father, we have wandered. Kevin Nichols. 297
A new heart for a new world. Trisha Watts and Monica O’Brien. 477
There’s a wideness in God’s mercy. Ferederick William Faber. 624
Yes, I shall arise. Lucien Deiss, CSSp. 648

*Additional selection by Chris deSilva*
Return to God. Marty Haugen. 298
S&S2
Taste and see. Steve Angrisano. 254

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 33: *Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.*
Psalm 33: Richard Proulx. CWB 332 (stanzas 1-3)
Psalm 33: Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 595 (stanzas 1-3)
Psalm 34: Taste and see: Christopher Willcock. GA 33 (verses 1-3)
Psalm 34: Taste and see: Stephen Dean. GA 34 (verses 1-3)
Psalm 34: Taste and see: Jane Wood. GA 35 (verses 1-3)
Psalm 34 (33): Jenny O'Brien. JOBC pg. 32
Taste and see: Paul Mason. PM pg. 32 (verses 1, 2, 3)
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord. Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 44

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Create a new heart (FWS) *Based on Ps 50/51* [Gathering, Gifts, Recessional]
Be with us (FWS) *Based on Ps 90/91* [Gathering, Gifts]
This is the time (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]
Taste and see *Based on Ps 33/34* [Gifts, Communion]
Lenten acclamation (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]
Lenten gospel acclamation – Mass Jubilee (MJC) [Gospel Acclamation]
Turn back to God (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]
Pastoral Note: Fifth Sunday of Lent – Third Scrutiny

by Vincent Glynn

The third scrutiny is celebrated after the homily during which the celebrant is encouraged to explain the meaning of the scrutiny in the light of the Lenten liturgy and to encourage the elect that through the prayer of exorcism ‘their spirit is filled with Christ the Redeemer, who is the resurrection and the life’ as found in the gospel account of Lazarus can be proclaimed on this Sunday (RCIA 130).

In parish communities where there are the elect for the RCIA taking part in the Lenten scrutinies it is pastorally appropriate to read the gospel from Year A.

During this Fifth Week of Lent the elect are also presented with the Lord’s Prayer. The presentation takes place within a Mass celebrated in the presence of a community of faithful (RCIA 165).

Introduction

Our three readings bring us closer to the spirit of Lent, preparing us to celebrate Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum. They remind us of the wonders of God in our midst and of the importance of striving towards them. With this comes a Gospel that stretches us to the depth of God’s forgiveness while giving insight into the meanings of sin itself.

Penitential Act

Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you came to show us your Father’s mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

You came to give hope to the sinner.
Christ, have mercy.

You came to bring salvation to the world.
Lord, have mercy.

The Collect

The oration
By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death.

Commentary
With the rites for holy week and the celebration of the Triduum drawing near, this collect from the ancient Spanish liturgy invites the faithful to contemplate the self-emptying of Jesus. The theological heart of the prayer is the struggle between death and love. The divine Son challenges the power of death. In this oration ‘death’ is the result of sin at all levels of life and society. The Christ allows sin and evil to have its way: he suffers abandonment by his leaders, his priests, his people, his friends and is killed by the colonial overlords. His ‘world’ betrays him. Yet his love encompasses all reality, the totality of all ‘worlds’. It is love that motivates Jesus’ willingness to be subject to the forces of death. The prayer’s petition is equally confronting. We seek from God to have the same quality and depth of love. We do not seek it begrudgingly, but eagerly. This is an active charity: we ‘walk’ in the selfsame love of Christ. As we journey, we desire to travel as Christ, effectively countering ‘death’ where we meet it.

First Reading
Isaiah 43:16-21
The prophet reminds us of the extraordinary wonders that are already being worked before us.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 126: 1-2, 2-3,4-5,6.
The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

This is another psalm that is used often in Sunday liturgies. The imagery used by the psalmist calls us to see good in all that happens to us, to be grateful for what God has done and to be a light for the world to see.

Second Reading
Philippians 3:8-14
We pursue the prize of life in Christ, even as Christ has already embraced us.

Gospel Reading
John 8:1-11
The wise prophet Jesus invites religious leaders, hearers and sinners to experience the forgiveness of God, yet few are willing to embrace the largesse of divine love.
Reflection

Our three readings bring us closer to the spirit of Lent, preparing us to celebrate Holy Week and the Sacred Triduum.

The poet Isaiah invites us into an extraordinary play of the imagination. The pivot is found in his verse: “Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new!” This runs against all the key tenets of Israelite theology, which is built around the theology of remembering the mighty deeds of God as the God of those deeds remains active amongst us today. This theological profundity underpins the Passover rituals and the Last Supper narrative. The prophet springboards from it to a revised position: the wonders of the past are secondary because God is doing even more now. The true wonders are in the present and the immediate future. Now God is doing something new! It is a bold theological stroke, and for our Lenten journey there is a reference here to the Incarnation and Resurrection. Coming as it does in the fifth Sunday of the season, the reading calls us to be refreshed in the salvation that has been achieved in Christ and is being wrought in our time.

In the poem the new memory is not too different from the Exodus memory. It is couched in much the same terms: straight paths, wasteland fed by rivers, water to quench thirst, wild beasts tamed. Here we can open up a Lenten environmental theme. Creation is God’s, all of it works to a purpose whether it be deserts, wilderness, wild beasts, rivers. They do not work to our purpose however, but to God’s purpose. This integrity of creation outside of the uses of human activity has not been so easy for our society to accept. Pope Francis puts it as follows, taking up the words of Patriarch Bartholomew: As Christians, we are also called “to accept the world as a sacrament of communion, as a way of sharing with God and our neighbours on a global scale. It is our humble conviction that the divine and the human meet in the slightest detail in the seamless garment of God’s creation, in the last speck of dust of our planet” (Laudato Si! 9)

As the reading from Isaiah prepares us for things new, beyond our former thinking, the passage from Paul focuses our attention onto Christ. This is his pursuit, his goal, to be in Christ Jesus. The sense of pursuit matches our Lenten discipline, with its straining for what lies ahead. Yet what lies ahead is already present. We have been taken into possession by Christ, and our striving is intended to realise what that means and bring it to fruition. The theological backdrop to Paul’s meditation is the Paschal Mystery: to know the power of his resurrection and be conformed to his sufferings. It is a passage well suited to reminding us of the upcoming Holy Week and Triduum, and keep us steady on our Lenten fasting, almsgiving, prayer and good works.

This Gospel is one of the great Jesus stories, and perhaps one of the most controversial. It begins with Jesus coming down from the Mount of Olives. In our Lenten season we know that all too soon he will return to that place! The narrative has an obvious centre piece, but beneath that are fascinating insights into the depth of Jesus, his courage and authority, and the challenge he offered to the early
Christian communities. We will begin with the centre piece in which the woman who is a sinner is accepted by Jesus and forgiven. She is shamed, paraded, humiliated and under the sentence of death. Jesus pronounces a sentence of life and ongoing conversion. The focus of Christian reconciliation is the sinner not the sin. Jesus risks the wrath of the Law, the religious leaders, the hearers, to free the unnamed woman, and he does so within the Temple itself.

This itself is a powerful narrative, but there are further layers to explore. The woman is not the only sinner, nor perhaps the most sinful of the sinners present. The scribes and the pharisees have much to atone for. Their interest is not the Law or justice or the woman. Their intention is to trap Jesus. They craft a devious plan. They test Jesus’ fidelity to the Law under three most trying circumstances for the Galilean teacher. They make the test around obedience to the divine Law. They set the test within the grounds of the Temple, the sacred place of the holy commandments. They take his audience of hearers as hostages: these have come to hear a new teaching and they will be forced to see that with Jesus there is nothing too new or extraordinary. Once this level of the story is appreciated, then the poor sinning woman is equivalent to roadkill, a mere casualty in a greater struggle. And it is an uneven struggle, with the Law, the Temple, the symbols of faith and the needs of a people hungry for good news all used against Jesus. This is a clear example of systemic sin, of a systematic use of God’s gifts to pervert God’s love.

Jesus opts for the poor, shamed, sinful woman, and he loses everything. He takes the risk of love. The religious officials will soon have his death. The Temple and the Law will be witnesses against him. His hearers also desert him: they do not seem to want to take in any more of his teachings. The woman is freed. Scribes, pharisees and hearers had an opportunity to embrace the freedom and reconciliation God offers in Jesus, but only the adulteress takes up the offer.

There is more to this text, a further level of scandal and surprise. Our passage is found in the Gospel of John, but exegetes have been uneasy about this. The style is not Johannine, nor the language. Exegetically it is a set piece that has been placed in the manuscripts of John’s Gospel but does not originate there. There is evidence that it was in very early manuscripts of Matthew’s Gospel, but it does not remain there. This bouncing around within the textual tradition allows for two thoughts. One is that the story was so controversial for the early Christians that they did not know how to deal with it. It portrays forgiveness that was seen as too easy! Jesus was too forgiving! On the other hand, the narrative was persistently remembered and kept alive within the tradition, finally finding a home within the fourth Gospel. This indicates that as scandalous as it was to the early Christians, it was perhaps an authentic action of Jesus, or so close to Jesus’ own actions that it could not be discarded. The early Church did not find all the teachings of Jesus so much to its liking! Just as Jesus challenged the scribes, the pharisees, the hearers and the condemned woman, so he continues to challenge us. We are challenged to forgive; perhaps we are also challenged to recognise and confront systemic sin and systematic wrongdoing. This is a profound Lenten lesson.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

In your goodness Father, you have shown yourself to be full of compassion and love and so we bring to you our petitions for our community and the world.

Petitions

We pray for Pope Francis and all those who have been given the responsibility of leading the Church, both clergy and lay people. May they show through their lives that they are open to the Holy Spirit as they journey towards the Synod of 2023.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for members of the Plenary Council. May they rely on the Holy Spirit to guide them in all their efforts as we move towards the second Assembly.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of our world that they will seek justice and peace for all within the context of climate change and the pandemic.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for everyone gathered here, that in this season of Lent they will strive for peace, love and joy within their hearts and extend this to everyone they meet.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are living with extreme wealth that they will use their monetary assets to serve the community and help those in need.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who feel lost and without direction, that they will be guided through the darkness into an understanding of God’s presence in their lives.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those suffering in the pandemic and all those frontline workers who care for them. May they be strengthened in their need and bring us all to good health.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Father, all these petitions have been brought to you by those who love you. Grant them in your love, in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, through the power of the Spirit.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
A new commandment. Unknown/ L Bartlett. 318
Be not afraid. B. Dufford SJ. 449
Bless the Lord my soul. M. Haugen. 84
Create in me. J. O’Brien. 40
Grant to us, O Lord. L Deiss. 303
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ R V Williams. 468
Love divine, all loves excelling. C Wesley/ R Prichard. 463
When I survey the wondrous cross. I Watts/ E Miller. 330
Tree of life. M Haugen. 307
Yes, I shall arise. L. Deiss. 214

AOV1
Be not afraid. B. Dufford SJ. 114
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ R V Williams. 54
In perfect charity. R. De Bruyn. 142

AOV2
Great is thy faithfulness. W M Runyon. 127

CWB
Forgive our sins as we forgive. Rosamund E. Herklots. 680
God of mercy and compassion. Michael Hodgetts. 692
O bless the Lord, my soul. James Montgomery. 757
O Father, I know I can count on your mercy. Kathleen Boschetti MSC. 762
There’s a wideness in God’s mercy. Frederick William Faber. 838

CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
Forgive our sins as we forgive. Rosamond E. Herklots. 120
O Father, I know I can count on your mercy. Kathleen T. Boschetti. 122
Hear us, almighty Lord/Attende Domine. Tr. Ralph Wright, OSB. 292
Sing praise to the Lord all our days. John Moloney. 602
Additional selections by Chris deSilva
God of mercy and compassion. Edmund Vaughan CssR/Paul Bird CssR. 290
Return to God. Marty Haugen. 298

S&S1
The Lord is kind and merciful. Rick Modlin. 77

S&S2
The Lord is kind and merciful. Tom Booth. 274
Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 125: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.
Psalm 125: Noel Ancell. CWB 177
Psalm 126: The Lord has done great things for us. Noel Ancell. GA
Psalm 126 (125): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 34
The Lord has done great things for us. Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 8

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Create a new heart (FWS) Based on Ps 50/51 [Gathering, Gifts, Recessional]
Be with us (FWS) Based on Ps 90/91 [Gathering, Gifts]
This is the time (TT) [Gathering, Recessional]
Lenten acclamation (TT) [Gospel Acclamation]
Lenten gospel acclamation – Mass Jubilee (MJC) [Gospel Acclamation]
Turn back to God (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Gathering, Recessional]
Introduction
Today we begin Holy Week with a two-part liturgical movement. The first focuses on Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem where we proclaim, ‘blessing to the king’. The second part features an extended reading of the Passion of the Lord where we come to see what sort of king Jesus actually is; one who lays down his life for all humanity.

Procession Reading
Jesus enters Jerusalem in the manner predicted by the prophet Zechariah; a king triumphant and victorious, yet humbly riding on a colt.

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the face of divine compassion.
Lord, have mercy.

You died for the sake of the whole world.
Christ, have mercy.

You rose to bring to life the new creation.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
Almighty ever-living God,
who as an example of humility for the human race to follow
caused our Saviour to take flesh and submit to the Cross,
graciously grant that we may heed his lesson of patient suffering
and so merit a share in his Resurrection.

Commentary
This Sunday signals an intensification of the Lenten journey. It celebrates the entry of the Lord into Jerusalem and heralds the upcoming Passion. It operates as the
climactic Sunday of Lent and as the introduction to Holy Week. In this, the collect is extremely interesting. It establishes the paschal mystery as a unified whole: the incarnation, the death and the resurrection are one of a piece. There is no atomisation of the singular mystery of salvation. The incarnation and the cross are intertwined as the ultimate exemplars of the self-emptying of Christ under the will of God. The presupposition is that the way to resurrection is to follow the will of God, the God who holds all power and does not fall under the sway of death. The response of the Saviour to the divine will is patient suffering. Similarly patient suffering is recommended as our response too, especially as the seasonal fast increases in intensity. Further the self-abasement of Christ is an example of humility for all humanity. However, suffering and humility are not the endpoint of the prayer, rather the aim of the whole is participation in the resurrection.

First Reading
Isaiah 50:4-7
Isaiah provides an image of the ‘Suffering Servant’; one who does not shy away from trials that come with doing the will of God.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 22(21):8-9, 17-20, 23-24
My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? (v. 2)
The famous Psalm that calls out to God from a sense of unjust abandonment. In Mark’s Gospel these words appear on Jesus’ lips as he endures the cross.

Second Reading
Philippians 2:6-11
The essence of Jesus’ life and mission is captured in this proclamation of the early Christian community. Even though Christ was one with God, Christ emptied himself of this equality to be completely like us.

Gospel Reading
Luke’s account of the Passion of the Lord includes some distinct features. One is that in Luke’s account, Jesus goes to his death with others around him including Simon of Cyrene, the thieves on either side of Jesus on the cross, and many who had followed from Galilee who stood at a distance and watched. We join with them in contemplating and responding to the profound events captured in the Passion narrative.
Reflection

Today’s liturgical celebration has two parts. The opening part focussing on Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem which features the palms, and the second which features an extended reading of the Passion of the Lord. Though they might be seen as separate, they are very interconnected elements and speak to each other.

The first connection between the two parts is the well stated understanding that a crowd that worships Jesus as coming in God’s name at one point is quick to turn against him soon after. This illustration of the fickleness of human nature does bear reflection. It is a warning to us that simply proclaiming outwardly something that does not match penetrating conviction will be found out.

But there is more to draw on here too. As we hold on to our palms and take them home with us, they remind us as to what we hope Jesus to be, how we hope God operates as a saving victor that brings all we need, a ‘king’ who commands the world we live in. Yet, as we follow Jesus’ story, we see that this king does not simply manipulate existence to match expectation, whether that be mine, yours, or any number of people through the ages. Jesus is about one thing, doing the will of the Father. In the many scenes found in the Passion is the Agony in the Garden (found in the longer version of the Gospel). There we see the iconic moment where Jesus asks God the Father that “this cup be taken away”, but immediately surrenders his will to the Father’s; “let your will be done, not mine” (Lk 22:42). This is not only a profound Christological moment but is also part of the call for Jesus’ followers to take up their cross and follow. Earlier in Luke’s gospel Jesus makes the point that:

If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. (Luke 9:23-24)

There are many ways we are called to follow Jesus’ example and ‘lay down our lives’. When we acknowledge the Passion of the Lord, we also acknowledge those great men and women who walk with Jesus in something of a more literal sense. Fortunately, most of us are not called to such sacrificial situations. However, we are all called to follow. To not seek our own will that is the easier way out, but God’s.

It is easy to proclaim God’s glory when God’s activity is clear and matches our expectation. There are a multitude of followers that praise God “for all the mighty works they had seen” (Lk 19:37) in the Palm Sunday procession reading. As we follow the Passion, those followers disappear. Famously even Jesus’ closest followers, the Twelve and Peter most prominently among them, struggle with Jesus’ movements on the way to the cross. The unfathomable is happening and they, quite understandably, are struggling to make sense of it. God is no longer obviously matching their expectation.

There is a scene in today’s Gospel reading that is unique to Luke and speaks to this sentiment. When Jesus is sent off by Pilate to Herod to be dealt with, Herod is said to be delighted to see Jesus. Herod does not immediately want to join in the condemnation coming from those who had arrested Jesus. Rather, Herod is excited
and eagerly wants to meet Jesus. This is so because Herod himself has heard of Jesus’ greatness and wanted to see for himself some “great miracle” (23:8). When Herod questions Jesus, Jesus remains silent. There is no sign or great miracle given. Jesus is not an entertainer, a performer of magic on demand. Jesus is about the will of God. The will of God here is silence.

Herod’s excitement is dashed, and he soon joins with his guards in treating Jesus with contempt and mocking him. Later, while on the cross, a similar theme is seen. As crowds stand by watching, leaders mock Jesus, “he saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!” (23:35). If you are God, then act how I think God should act. Please me and my sensibilities. Do what I want you to do. Act in keeping with how I think God should act. From Peter to Herod, from the crowd of excited disciples to those gathered at the foot of the cross. All in their own way fall to the same fault; not your will be done God, but mine.

As we hold our palms, we proclaim a God who does great works, but also a God who enters the darkness of human sin, who seems silent in the face of injustice and despair. When it is hardest of all to see how God is working, we are then called to follow on a deeper and lasting level; not my will God, but yours be done. Not my way of understanding God, but yours. Not faith in how I think faith should work, but faith in you God. This is one of many prayers that come forth in this holiest of weeks.

There is one final note to make here. If the story of the Passion is anything to go by, we all will fail to surrender our will to God’s at some point and in some way. This is the reason why God has entered into our reality, to meet us as we are. The great prayer of the Second Reading taken from Philippians reminds us of what is going on here. It is a foundational guide to our faith. God does not hold God’s self over and against us. God, in the person of Jesus, empties God’s self and enters into humanity, to the point of death on a cross. Not to remain there and wallow with us in our failing, but to rise up and draw broken humanity to God’s very being. That does not necessarily make the difficult and silent times any easier. It does, however, provide us with a vision, a hope, a way we can navigate what seems unnavigable. Thus, in the good times and the bad, what whatever faith we have, we place in our Lord God.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

Father, we come to you with the needs of our community. As we heard in the Psalm, we know that you will not abandon us and we will sing of your glory.

Petitions

We pray for Pope Francis that he continues to lead the People of God in truth and love, guided by the Holy Spirit, into the Synod in 2023. May he remain healthy and strong to fulfil his goals for the Church.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the members of the Plenary Council and the committees that support them as we journey towards the second Assembly in July. May all the information that has been collected from the People of God faithfully inform the decisions about the future of our Church in Australia.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of nations during this time of climate change and the pandemic. May they be inspired by the Spirit to implement equitable and just policies that meet the needs of the poor and those living on the fringes of society.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are persecuted for their Christian faith that they be strengthened in their belief in Christ who is the triumphant King.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our parish community that the works of charity, self-sacrifice and prayerfulness continue so that our relationship with God in faith grows.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who have neglected their faith that they may find the strength to come back through the prayers and active compassion of our Church.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are suffering with mental illness because of the pandemic. May they be strengthened through the care and love of those around them.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Father, we thank you for your great love and know that our needs are heard as we pray through the Spirit and in the name of Christ our King

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA

Entrance Antiphon:
Hosanna to the Son of David. P Jones/E Rayson. 311
Hosanna to the Son of David. J Wood. 312

Entrance Procession:
All, glory, praise and honour. J M Neale/ J S Bach. 309
Hail, Redeemer, King divine! P Brennan/ W Flood. 390

Other Hymns for the Liturgy:
Behold the wood. D Schutte. 333
O sacred head, surrounded. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux/ J S Bach. 335
When the Son of God was dying. J Bell. 510
Were you there? African American Spiritual. 336

AOV1

Blessings on the king. M Lynch. 104
Behold the cross. B Hurd. 105
Were you there? African American Spiritual. 103

AOV2

See his hands. S Sears. 48

AOV4Kids

Sing it! Hosanna. M Mangan. 73

CWB

Entrance Procession
All glory, praise and honour. Theodulph of Orleans. 229
Hail, redeemer, king divine. Patrick Brennan CSsR. 703

Other hymns for the Liturgy
My loving Saviour, how have you offended. Johann Heermann. 749
O sacred head, surrounded. St Bernard of Clairvaux. 776
When I survey the wondrous cross. Isaac Watts. 862

CWBII

Entrance Antiphon
Hosanna to the Son of David. ICEL. 302

Entrance Procession
All glory, laud and honour. Theodulph of Orleans, tr. John Mason Neale. 303
Hail, redeemer, king divine! Patrick Brennan CSsR. 400

Other hymns for the Liturgy
Tree of life. Marty Haugen. 300
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? African-American Spiritual. 328
When I survey the wondrous cross. Isaac Watts. 329
Jesus, remember me. Taizé Community. 526

S&S1
Behold the Cross. Bob Hurd. 172
My God, My God. Timothy R. Smith. 58

S&S2
My God, My God. Janèt Sullivan Whitaker. 249
O sacred head. Bernard of Clairvaux/Bob Hurd. 314
Wondrous love. Timothy R. Smith. 317

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 21: My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?
Psalm 21: Kathleen Boschetti MSC. CWB 233
Psalm 22: My God, My God. Christopher Willcock. GA 22
Psalm 22 (21): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 36
My God, My God: Paul Mason. PM pg. 10
My God, My God: Paul Mason. PM pg. 14
My God, my God: Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 48

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Sing it, hosanna (TT/SYJ) [CHILDREN: Procession with Palms]
Where have you gone? (FWS) Based on Ps 21/22
Hearts on fire (Vs 2 & 3) (SHOF) [Recessional]
RITE FOR RECEIVING THE HOLY OILS

The Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday

Preparation

In the sanctuary or near the baptismal font should be a place visible to those assembled where the Holy Oils will be placed.

1. The oils ideally should be in containers that allow the Holy Oil to be seen. The quality of the container should speak of the importance of the contents.
2. Each Oil should have a suitable coloured ribbon or marker to identify it.
3. The Holy Oils should be carried one by one to the sanctuary by members of the parish community.

The Rite for the Procession of the Holy Oils

Commentator:

United with all the faithful of our diocese the Archbishop/Bishop blessed and consecrated the holy chrism and blessed the oils for use in the celebration of Sacraments throughout the year.

On this night, Holy Thursday, before we celebrate the Eucharist, we will receive these holy oils as a symbolic reminder of our unity with the bishop and all the faithful of our diocese at the beginning of the Easter Triduum.

Soft music as all the containers of oil are carried one by one to the sanctuary by members of the parish community.

The Oil of the Sick

Commentator:

The container with the red ribbon contains the oil of the sick. It is carried by N………. representing those in our parish community who are sick or elderly.

Behold the oil of the sick blessed by our Bishop and sent to us to be used to celebrate Christ’s healing power and consolation to those sick in mind and spirit.

Container of oil is held high and then placed on the stand

ALL: We praise and thank God for the oil of the sick.
The Oil of Catechumens

Commentator:
The container with the blue ribbon on it contains the oil of catechumens. It is carried by N………… representing those in our parish community who will receive the Sacraments of Initiation this Easter and those will be baptised throughout the year.

Behold the oil of the catechumens blessed by our Bishop and sent to us to signify Christ’s strength for those preparing to accept the responsibilities of living the Christian faith through the Sacrament of Baptism.

Container of Oil is held high and then placed on the stand

ALL: We praise and thank God for the oil of the catechumens.

The Sacred Oil of Chrism

Commentator:
The container with yellow ribbon on it contains the sacred oil of chrism. It is carried by N………. representing those in our parish community who will be strengthened by the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation this year.

Behold the sacred chrism oil mixed with sweet perfume blessed by our Bishop and sent to us a sign and source of the gift of the Holy Spirit, to confirm Christians in their likeness to Christ and encourage their witness of faith and to preserve those who are anointed with as sharers in the priesthood of Christ.

Container of Oil is held high and then placed on the stand

ALL: We praise and thank God for the oil of sacred chrism.

Suggested Music:
Hymn: From ‘O Redeemer’
Text: James Quinn SJ and Stephen Somerville, Tune: Christopher Willcock.

This Rite has been adapted by Vincent Glynn from texts by Jayne Newton Ahearn from The Year of Years: The Paschal Mystery celebrated in Christian Worship. Pastoral Liturgy Publications, 1997 and the Centre for Liturgy, Archdiocese of Perth, Chrism Mass Booklet and Text, 2014.

Alternative Rite for the Procession of the Oils

Preparations are the same as for the above but the procession with each of the containers of holy oil takes place from the back of the church to the sanctuary while the congregation sings the hymn, ‘Praise our God, Creator’. Those carrying the holy oils walk down the aisle at the appropriate verse, enter the sanctuary, face the congregation and hold the oil high, then place it on the stand that has been
prepared. Verse one is the introduction. Verse two is for presentation of the oil of the sick. Verse three is for the presentation of oil of catechumens. Verse four is for the oil of chrism.

The music of the hymn is to the tune NOEL NOUVELET.
Use the text below by Angela McCarthy with appropriate acknowledgement.

Praise our God, Creator, Praise the Redeeming Son
Praise the Holy Spirit, Triune God in one.
Glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ
He is our salvation, we are saved and free.

From the fruit of olive trees God has given oil
As with wheat and grapes in Christ we are all made well.
The oil of anointing, brought to us tonight,
Blessed by our (Arch) Bishop to show us God’s delight.

There are those among us who seek to be baptised
Strengthened on their journey ready for Easter night.
Oil of catechumens, brought for us to share
Blessed by our (Arch) Bishop to show God’s love and care.

We bring the oil of Chrism, precious in our sight
To baptise and confirm them on the night of nights
Perfumed oil of chrism, blessed to sanctify
Sent by our (Arch) Bishop to bless our parish life.
Introduction
Tonight we begin to remember in a powerful way the events that are central to our faith. We hear and remember the Passover of the angel of death, and Jesus bringing the New Covenant into focus through his emphasis on service.

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you shared yourself as food for us.
Lord, have mercy.

You are the Bread of Life.
Christ, have mercy.

You are the Wine of Compassion.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
O God, who have called us to participate in this most sacred Supper, in which your Only Begotten Son, when about to hand himself over to death, entrusted to the Church a sacrifice new for all eternity, the banquet of his love, grant, we pray, that we may draw from so great a mystery, the fullness of charity and of life.

Commentary
Our collect was newly composed for the Missal as it was revised following the Second Vatican Council. The oration inextricably links two essential strands of Eucharistic thought: that of sacrifice and of meal. The ‘sacrifice new for all eternity’ is understood as the very ‘banquet of love’. This integration of sacrifice and meal is common throughout the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, a text composed at much the same time. The setting of the collect at the beginning of the celebration of the Passion highlights the sense of sacrifice, the pivotal power of the meal, and the unfathomable depths of the love of God. It is this mystery that establishes the grounds for the petition that the divine One grant us the fullness of love and life. Clearly our love is ‘full’ when marked by self-emptying, sacrifice and the implications of table fellowship. This is ‘life’ for the Christian.
The prayer has one unusual, if unfortunate, aspect. God is named as the one who has called us to ‘participate’ in the supper. Yet, if the Eucharist is related to the Last Supper, it is not through direct participation in it. If anything our celebration is the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, not the supper itself.

**First Reading**
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14

Around 3000 years ago Moses and Aaron showed the people how to protect themselves from the angel of death by the blood of the lamb. It is in our Jewish roots that we find God’s way of being present and remembering our needs.

**Responsorial Psalm**
Psalm 115(116):12-13, 15-18

*Our blessing cup is a communion with the Blood of Christ.*

The refrain for this psalm is taken from 1 Corinthians 10:16. This is a moment where the text from St Paul’s letter melds perfectly with the psalm written many hundreds of years earlier. That the relationship between God and humankind has been so deeply expressed in song all of that time and until our own time indeed brings us into careful, prayerful interaction. It flows perfectly into the Second Reading.

**Second Reading**
1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Paul gives us the oldest recollection of the action of Jesus on the night before he died. After the resurrection this action becomes the way we express the paschal mystery in the Eucharist.

**Gospel Reading**
John 13:1-15

Following their Jewish tradition, Jesus and his disciples gather to celebrate the Passover. Jesus uses this opportunity to change the way they are to behave in the world, not like masters, but as servants to each other and the world.

**Reflection**

The scripture speaks of sacrifice: of the slaughter of a year-old lamb or kid, so that its blood, representative of life itself, might serve to preserve the lives of the
Israelites when the Lord passed through the land of Egypt, striking down the firstborn of the Egyptians.

This would be the last, the most dramatic, of the ten plagues inflicted by God upon the Egyptians. Over and over, as the story goes, the Lord had displayed his power and might for all, Egyptian as well as Israelite, to behold. Through frogs and gnats and flies, through diseases afflicting livestock and human beings, through thunder and hail and water turned to blood, the peoples of the land were able to see that this God is God. Pharaoh’s heart alone remained hardened. Hardened, it seems in the end, by God himself.

As the narrator recounts the first five of the plagues, as well as the seventh, we learn that the end result of each is that ‘pharaoh’s heart is hardened,’ or that ‘pharaoh hardened his heart.’ But in the accounts of the sixth, the eighth and the ninth plagues, and explicitly again in the announcement of the tenth and final plague, we’re told that it’s God who hardens pharaoh’s heart, in order that God’s wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

Was God angry that pharaoh had refused six times to heed the warning of the plagues, and let the people of Israel go free? Was God incapable of forgiving a seventh time—the number that Simon Peter would suggest to Jesus as the most that could be expected of a person? What are we to make of a God who himself hardens the heart of the ruler of the land, and then punishes, not only the king, but his people as well?

The story of Israel’s passage from slavery to freedom is one that has lifted up men and women living under the yoke of oppression, and inspired liberation movements in different places and at different moments in history. But elements of the story do disturb.

The Jewish community living in Alexandria just before the birth of Jesus seems to have found the depiction of God as one who hardens pharaoh’s heart and then punishes him—and his people—rather disquieting. The Book of Wisdom retells the story of the plagues in a way that makes clear that God is not the type to harden anyone’s heart. Rather, through the plagues, God tries to speak to the heart of pharaoh and his people. If the Egyptians worshiped animals and forces of nature, then God would try to speak to them through those very elements of his creation: through frogs and locusts and thunder and hail.

A later generation of Jews, also disturbed that one nation’s freedom meant disaster for another, produced the midrash according to which, when the people of Israel emerged dry-shod from the sea, but the Egyptians were drowned with their horses, the angels of God began to sing in joy and thanksgiving. But God silenced them, asking them how it was possible to sing when his children were drowning in the sea. The midrash makes it clear that God’s loving care extends even to those who had made his chosen ones suffer.

A similar quandary exists for the peoples of the land of Israel today, who struggle to find a way forward together when atsma’ut or independence for Israelis has meant nakba or catastrophe for Palestinians.
This is the problem, in fact, that is posed by the way ‘sacrifice’ is often conceived. This is the problem that lies at the heart of the mystery we celebrate in these days of awe: how is it that life for some, or for the many, comes at the expense of others, or of another? Is life itself just a zero-sum game in which some get ahead at others’ expense? And are the gods or God responsible for creating such a world worthy of our worship?

These are not questions that can be answered in a short homily. They should be the object of our reflection as we enter into the silence of this night that will conclude only with the A-word that we will sing together during the Great Vigil on Saturday night. I’ll be reflecting further on these issues in our liturgies together tomorrow and Saturday. But I would be remiss if I didn’t provide some indication now of what the Christian response to these questions is.

In the way that the Last Supper is crafted in the Gospel of John, Jesus shows us the way out of the zero-sum game, out of the trap in which life for me necessitates the death of someone else, in which happiness for me entails a life of sorrow for someone else, in which my life as master means that someone else is slave. Jesus does that, of course, by turning the logic of the exchange on its head: he, the Teacher and Master, assumes the identity of a servant, performs the work of a slave. And he does it willingly: ‘No one takes my life from me; I lay it down of my own accord.’ He does it out of love: ‘Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.’

In the tradition of the Orthodox churches, the gospel readings chosen for the great feasts of the Church are seldom the ones we might expect. In the Catholic tradition, on Christmas, we read the story of Jesus’ birth as recounted in Matthew and Luke; on Epiphany, we read the story of the visit by the Magi; on Easter Sunday, we read from the gospels’ resurrection accounts. In the Eastern Orthodox churches, by contrast, the story read on Christmas Day is the account of the visit by the Magi in Matthew 2; on Epiphany, what’s proclaimed is the story of Jesus’ baptism in Matthew 3; and on Easter Sunday, it’s the prologue of John’s Gospel that is sung: In the beginning was the Word…the Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory…

Tonight, we Catholics and other Christians from the churches of the West are like Orthodox Christians in choosing the gospel text that gets to the heart of the mystery, rather than one that recounts the history. The Jesus who washes the feet of his disciples turns the history of the world upside down; destroys the logic of the zero-sum game; and offers us a glimpse into the very heart of God.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
As we remember Jesus’ Last Supper with his friends, we turn to God in faith with the needs of our world and our community.

Petitions
We pray for the Church, and especially Pope Francis, that the example of humble service will mirror the actions of our Lord Jesus Christ in the world today.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our governments around the world that their responses to the pandemic and climate change will be just and productive for all of their people.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those burdened by the faults of others. May they receive the grace of God so that they may nurture love for their enemies.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those living in financial difficulties, particularly because of the pandemic. May the hearts of God’s people be moved so that they see the sufferings of their neighbours and give charitably.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our local community, especially for families broken by betrayal. May they have the humility to accept their faults and the same love Christ had for those who betrayed him.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our community gathered here to celebrate the Eucharist on this special night. May it always hold a prominent place in our lives so that we are a light to the world.

Conclusion
Father, we offer you these needs of our world and our community in the sure hope that you answer our prayers through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus, your Son.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Hymns for the Washing of the Feet:
A new commandment. Unknown/ L Bartlett. 318
This is my will, my one command. J Quinn/SJ/ Gregorian Chant. 465

Offertory Hymn:
Ubi caritas et amor/ Where true love and charity are found. Gregorian Chant. 319
Ubi caritas. Taize. 324
Where there is charity and love. R Connolly. 323

Transfer of the Blessed Sacrament:
Hail our Saviour’s glorious body/Pange Lingua. St Thomas Aquinas (tr. J Quinn SJ)/
Gregorian Chant. 320

Other Hymns for the Liturgy:
An upper room did our Lord prepare. F P Green. 187
Bread of life and cup of blessing. D Dufner OSB/ R Bonighton. 196
Christians, let us love one another. A Nigro SJ and M Foltz SNJM/ French melody.
206
Love is his word. L Connaughton/ A Milner. 462
No greater love. M Joncas. 460
Song of the Lord’s supper. M Joncas. 322
The servant song. R Gillard. 487
The song of the supper. J Bell. 385
This body will be given for you. C Willcock SJ. 387
We remember. M Haugen. 446

AOV1
In the breaking of the bread. B Hurd. 58
Bread for the world broken. C Walker. 60
We remember. M Haugen. 81

AOV2
Bread broken, wine shared. R Horner. 155
The servant song. R Gillard. 169

AOV4Kids
Take and eat. M Russell. 114
To live like Jesus. M O’Brien/D Pudney. 160
We give thanks. M O’Brien/T Watts. 105
We live and love by your word. K Bates. 118

Entrance Song
AOVNG
I am the bread of life. Tom Kaczmarek. 72
Jesus, bread of life. Amanda McKenna. 80
CWB
I am the bread of life. Suzanne Toolan. 718
CWBII
I am the bread of life. Suzanne Toolan RSM. 509
Song of the Lord’s supper. Michael Joncas. 311

Washing of Feet
CWB
Where there is charity and love. Richard Connolly. 863

CWBII
At the supper, Christ the Lord. David Mowbray. 313
This is my commandment. John 15. 312
Ubi caritas et amor (Setting II). Taizé Community. 633
Where there is charity and love. Richard Connolly. 638

S&S2
Ubi caritas. Bob Hurd. 367

Offertory Processional
CWB
A new commandment. Anon. 615
An upper room did our Lord prepare. Frederick Pratt Green. 620

CWBII
A new commandment. Anon. 443
An upper room. Fred Pratt Green. 309
Stay with me, remain here with me. Taizé Community. 317

Communion Processional
CWB
By your priestly power, O risen Lord. James Phillip McAuley. 634

CWBII
By your priestly power, O risen Lord. James Phillip McAuley. 462
Eat this bread, drink this cup. Taizé Community. 484
Servant song. Richard Gillard. 461
Take and eat. James Quinn, SJ/Michael Joncas. 608
The glory of the cross we sing. John Ainslie. 310

S&S2
Glory in the cross. Dan Schutte. 313

Transfer of the Holy Eucharist
CWB
Hail our Saviour's glorious body. St Thomas Aquinas, tr. James Quinn SJ. 700
Sing my tongue the Saviour's glory. St Thomas Aquinas, tr. Edward Caswall. 252
Sing my tongue the Saviour's glory. St Thomas Aquinas, tr. Edward Caswall. 806

CWBII
Sing, my tongue, the Saviour's glory. St. Thomas Aquinas, tr. Edward Caswall. 314
Sing, my tongue, the Saviour's glory. St. Thomas Aquinas, tr. Edward Caswall. 315
Pange lingua gloriosi. St. Thomas Aquinas, tr. James Quinn, SJ. 320
Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 115: Our blessing-cup is a communion with the blood of Christ.
Psalm 115: Douglas Mews. CWB 245
Psalm 116: Our blessing cup. Rosalie Bonighton. GA 69
Responsorial Psalm for Holy Thursday: Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 7
Our blessing cup is a communion: Paul Mason. PM pg. 88
Our blessing cup is a communion: Marty Haugen. LPSF pg. 26

Music selections by Michael Mangan

In memory of me (LCC) [CHILDREN: Communion]
The bread of life (SHOF) [Communion]
In the body of Christ (LCC) [Communion]
We remember you (LCC) [Communion]
15 April 2022
Good Friday of the Lord’s Passion
Reflection by Russ McDougall

Pastoral Note
Today’s liturgy begins simply and in silence, with no introductory rites prior to the opening prayer.

Introduction
Today we continue the great Triduum, the seamless act of remembering. Last night we left without a dismissal, today there is no greeting and we continue the story of our faith as we will leave without a dismissal. We recall today the final hours of Jesus’s earthly life.

Collect
Option one
Remember your mercies, O Lord, and with your eternal protection sanctify your servants, for whom Christ your Son, by the shedding of his Blood, established the Paschal Mystery.
Commentary
This ancient Roman prayer is first found as a collect for a Monday Mass in Holy Week. It is now one of two options for the opening prayer during the celebration of the Lord’s Passion. It sets the paschal mystery within the mercy of God, a mercy which is said to offer an eternal protection which not only keeps safe but transforms us in holiness. The focus on Jesus’ blood evokes the Passover images of the blood sprinkled on the lintels of the Israelites which protected them from the angel of death (Ex 12:12-21). It also opens onto the glory of the triumphant Lamb in the Book of Revelation. As with the freeing of the Israelites from slavery, the mystery is enacted entirely by God to bring us to salvation. In our case, it is Jesus who passes through death.
Option two
O God, who by the Passion of Christ your Son, our Lord, abolished the death inherited from ancient sin by every succeeding generation, grant that just as, being conformed to him, we have borne by the law of nature
the image of the man of earth,
so by the sanctification of grace
we may bear the image of the Man of heaven.

Commentary
In the ancient Roman liturgy for Good Friday this prayer was prayed between the
readings that preceded the recitation of the Passion. It has a strong Pauline flavour,
though a convoluted execution and unnecessary exclusive language. There are a
range of strands interwoven. Sin is death, and in his death Christ has overcome
these. The first ‘Adam’ bears the stamp of the earth. However, under the law of
grace we are remade in the image of the second Adam and as creatures now bear
the stamp of the heavenly. There is a sense in that as Christ was conformed to the
law of nature in his incarnation so we through his Passion now seek to be conformed
to him in his divinity. It is unclear what reading this prayer accompanied in the
ancient sources and remains unfortunate that there is no passage from Paul in the
current liturgy.

First Reading
Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12
In this reading from one of the four Songs of the Servant, we see the power of non-
violent resistance to evil. This can awaken the evil doer to a sense of justice.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 30(31):2,6,12-13,15-17,25 Response Luke 23.46
Father, I put my life in your hands.
This poignant psalm on this particular day has to move one’s heart and soul. It
follows so naturally from the words of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah and prepares
us for the reading of the gospel in a deeply moving way.

Second Reading
Hebrews 4:4-16, 5:7-9
The psalm that precedes this reading, Psalm 30, draws us into the heart of the
Suffering Servant. The letter to the Hebrews tells us that Jesus Christ, through his
suffering was made perfect and therefore becomes for us the source of eternal
salvation.
Gospel Reading

John 18:1 – 19:42

John’s account begins with the events after the Last supper as Jesus is betrayed. It then recounts his encounter with the Roman authorities and how he was deserted by all his followers except his mother, the beloved disciple and some other women. After his death he is laid in a tomb.

Reflection

The question that I raised yesterday about the zero-sum game is really a question about how we understand the redemption—the atonement—that Jesus has accomplished. Thinking this through in light of the Scriptures requires some history, some exegesis. It requires some work, but it’s an important question, a crucial question, so I hope you’ll bear with me.

Christian tradition, whether we’re talking about the Western or the Eastern churches, has to a large extent understood the redemption that Jesus accomplishes as a work of substitution. In the Eastern churches, the substitution is a ransom that Jesus supplies on our behalf. By sinning, human beings basically sold themselves to the devil. Satan, in other words, had possession of us. As the Word-made-flesh, the life of Jesus is worth infinitely more than all other human life put together, so by dying, Jesus paid the ransom that we were incapable of paying on our own. And so he set us free. (Cf. Orthodox icons of the resurrection.)

In the West, theology of the atonement is also largely substitutionary, but more legalistic than in the East. In the West we tend to read the Scriptures through the lenses supplied by Augustine of Canterbury, whose thought on the atonement goes something like this: by our sin, human beings have offended God, whose dignity is infinite. God’s infinite justice demands infinite restitution—something that human beings are incapable of supplying. Only a human being who is also divine is capable of offering the necessary restitution. That person is Jesus Christ, whose death on the cross accrues infinite worth, which more than redeems humankind.

There are certainly plenty of passages in the New Testament that would support a theology that understands the atonement as an exchange or substitution in which Jesus takes on the punishment that is our debt, and so sets us free:

- ‘The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.’ (Mk 10:45 and parallels)
- ‘God made him who knew no sin to be sin, that in him we might become the righteousness of God.’ (2 Cor 5:21)
- ‘They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’ (Rev 7:14)
- ‘Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away [or removes] the sins of the world.’ (John 1:29)
The issue, for us, is how to understand these texts in light of mainstream Jewish thought about atonement, because the idea of ‘substitution’ does not predominate, at least at any stage of Jewish history I’m familiar with. A sacrifice doesn’t ‘take away’ my sin. If I wrong my neighbour in some way, the only way to achieve reconciliation is to go to my neighbour and try to work things out between us: by asking for forgiveness, possibly making restitution in some way so that the neighbour’s heart is opened up to offering forgiveness to me. A sacrifice doesn’t enter into that process as some sort of exchange or substitution. That’s why Jesus tells his disciples that if they’re on their way to the temple to offer sacrifice and remember that their neighbour has something against them, they should first go and be reconciled with their neighbour.

If I sin against God in some way, then the way of dealing with that is by reforming my life. If I am someone that is constantly breaking the rules of Sabbath observance, for example, what needs to happen is for me to think seriously about what the laws are there for: to create space and time for me to nurture relationship with God, as well as to spend quality time with my family. The only way to ‘take away’ that sin is to remove it from my life by starting to take Sabbath observance seriously.

What the sacrificial cult does accomplish, in Jewish thought, is to remove the defilement that our sins, especially the sins we’re not even aware of, brings upon the land and upon the temple. It doesn’t effect forgiveness. That can happen only in relationship with our neighbour and with God, by admitting wrongdoing and taking concrete steps to reform our lives. The sacrificial meal that is shared by those who offer the sacrifice also serves to build communion: with God, with one another, and with the broader community of Israel represented by the priests.

You may object: Russ, you haven’t listened very closely to our first reading from the prophet Isaiah. Didn’t you hear the prophet’s words?

‘He was pierced for our offences, crushed for our sins; upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole; by his stripes we were healed.’

We’d have to settle our dispute by taking a look at what the Hebrew text says:

*hu mecholal mippesha’ēnu, medukka’ mē’avontēinu;*  
*musar shlomēnu ‘alav, uvachavurato nirpā’ lanu.*

He was pierced, or wounded, *mippesha’ēnu*—usually translated as ‘for our sins or transgressions.’ But the preposition that’s used is *min*. In Arabic the preposition is the same in both languages, and the basic meaning is ‘from.’ If the meaning were ‘for’ our sins, classical Hebrew would have used the preposition *‘al*—or possibly *le*—but not *min*. ‘For’ our sins indicates finality, a goal: ‘for our sins’ would mean that the servant’s suffering has some goal with respect to our sins.

But the Hebrew doesn’t use *‘al*, it uses *min*. *Min* doesn’t indicate finality or goal; it indicates origin, or cause. So what the Hebrew text is saying is not ‘he was pierced
for our transgressions,’ but ‘he was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities.’

So what’s going on here in this text?

In this Holy Week all of the four Songs of the Servant from the prophet Isaiah are proclaimed. In the second Song, from Isaiah 49, which was the first reading on Tuesday, the Servant is explicitly identified as the people of Israel: ‘You are my servant, Israel, in whom I will be glorified.’ In the fourth Song, which we’ve heard today, the servant is seen as someone who is despised, rejected:

‘We held him of no account...we accounted him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was wounded because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities. Upon him was the chastisement that brought wholeness to us, and in his bruises there is healing for us.’

Who is the ‘we’ speaking in the text?

If the servant is to be understood as the people of Israel, the ‘we’ must be the nations. What the prophet is envisioning is a confession on the part of the nations who have made Israel suffer—through military defeat; through carrying captives off into slavery; through exile. At different points in its history the people of Israel were made to suffer in one way or another by just about all of their neighbours. And what the prophet is capturing in this passage is a moment of compunction, a moment in which some people take notice of the bruises they’ve inflicted on their neighbour, and they ask themselves: what have we done? What have I done?

In this particular context, the prophet sees the people of Israel as playing a role in pricking the conscience of their neighbours. He sees Israel as playing a role in awakening the conscience of their oppressors to a sense of justice. In effect, he sees Israel’s suffering as having the possibility of turning their gentile neighbours around—leading them to repentance, teshuvah.

What I’m suggesting is that the prophet’s vision in these Songs of the Servant is getting at what Gandhi and Martin Luther King understood as truth-force, the power of non-violent resistance to evil. Both men argued that we have a duty to resist evil, but not by doing harm to evildoers. Speak the truth, they said, but be ready to accept (and absorb) the anger that will come your way, and the possible violence as well, from people who feel threatened by the truth. By refraining from violence, those who practice non-violent resistance to evil leave open the possibility that those they confront may actually be converted, rather than destroyed.

The Songs of the Servant suggest that the people of Israel, through their endurance of suffering, have opened up the possibility that at least some of their neighbours might be awakened to a sense of justice, that their lives might be turned around, in the right direction. And in this way Israel becomes a light to the nations.

What I would also suggest is that this is the way that God deals with us, in Christ. Our God isn’t a monster demanding infinite payment for an infinite debt. Through the use of truth-force, non-violent resistance to evil, God seeks to draw us, through Christ and in the Spirit, into God’s own divine life of love. Previously I spoke about
the way the Gospel of John portrays the moving encounters Jesus has with men and women, leading them to the truth, drawing them into friendship with himself, and with God. He’s not successful with everyone, as we see with Pilate, who ultimately closes his heart to the truth that stands, incarnate, before him.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away our sins by opening our hearts to the truth and setting us on the right path. Turning to him is just the beginning. As we were reminded in our Lenten journey, those who wish to come after him must take up their cross daily and follow. Jesus has turned our lives around; he invites us now to share in his mission: to engage our neighbours, those whom God sends into our lives, and help to lead them toward the truth, and to living the truth in justice and in love.

**Prayer of the Faithful**

On Good Friday the prayer of the faithful is replaced by the solemn intercessions from the Roman Missal.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

**GA**
Procession of the Cross:
This is the wood of the cross. P Jones. 328

People’s Veneration of the Cross:
O my people. D Lundy/ C Walker. 329

Other Hymns for the Liturgy:
Adoramus te, Christe. M Haugen. 305
All you who pass this way. J Berthier. 331
At the cross her station keeping. A Petti/ Mainz Gesangbuch. 332
Behold the wood. D Schutte. 333
Jesus, remember me. J Berthier. 308
O Jesus crucified. J McAuley/ R Connolly. 334
O sacred head, surrounded. Saint Bernard of Clairvaux/ J S Bach. 335
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? African American Spiritual. 336
When I survey the wondrous cross. I Watts/ E Miller. 330

**AOV1**
Behold the cross. B Hurd. 105
Jesus, remember me. J Berthier. 152
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? African American Spiritual. 103

**AOV2**
See his hands. S Sears. 48

**Veneration of the Cross: Antiphon and response**

**CWB**
Showing the cross. 259

**CWBII**
Behold, the wood of the Cross. ICEL 319
Behold, behold the wood of the cross. Dan Schutte 320

**Songs during veneration**

**AOVNG**
See him. Keith Duke. 108
See his love. Tom Lockley. 109
Song of the cross. Ana DaCosta and Susan Hoekong-Taylor. 116

**CWB**
At the cross her vigil keeping. Jacopone da Todi. 624
My people, my people, Joseph Wise. 750
O Jesus crucified, for us you suffered. James Phillip McAuley. 770
When I survey the wondrous cross. Isaac Watts. 862

**CWBII**
At the cross her vigil keeping. Jacopone da Todi, tr. Anthony G. Petti. 318
Faithful cross the Saints rely on. Venantius Fortunatus. 321
O Jesus crucified. James Phillip McAuley. 326
The Reproaches. Joseph Wise. 322
The Reproaches. ICEL. 323
When I survey the wondrous cross. Isaac Watts. 329

S&S2
Glory in the cross. Dan Schutte. 313
Wondrous love. Timothy E. Smith. 317

Communion Song

CWB
My loving Saviour, how have you offended. Johann Heermann. 749
O sacred head, surrounded. St Bernard of Clairvaux. 776
Praise to the Holiest in the height. John Henry Newman. 791

CWBII
Jesus, remember me. Taizé Community. 526
My song is love unknown. Samuel Crossman. 325
O sacred head, surrounded. St. Bernard of Clairvaux. 330
The Lord is now exalted. Pamela D. Stotter. 324
The royal banners forward go. Venantius Fortunatus. 327
Were you there when they crucified my Lord? African-American spiritual. 328

S&S2
O sacred head. St Bernard of Clairvaux/Bob Hurd. 314

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 30: Father, I put my life in your hands.
Psalm 30: Douglas Mews. CWB 256
Psalm 31: I put my life in your hands. Rosalie Bonighton. GA 30
Psalm 31 (30): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 8
Father, I put my life in your hands: Paul Mason. PM pg. 28
Father, Into Your Hands: Marty Haugen. LPSF. Pg. 29

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Look at the cross (TT/SYJ) [Veneration of the Cross]
That we might live (TWML) [Veneration of the Cross]
Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation

by Vincent Glynn

The usual and most appropriate time for the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation is the Easter Vigil. ‘The third step in the Christian Initiation of Adults is the celebration of the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist. Through this final step the elect, receiving pardon for their sins, are admitted into the people of God. They are graced with adoption as children of God and are led by the Holy Spirit into the promised fullness of time begun in Christ and, as they share in the Eucharistic sacrifice and meal, even to a foretaste of the kingdom of God’ (RCIA 23, 198, 199).

Those who have been fully initiated are now called neophytes. They will enter the final period of the RCIA, the period of post baptismal catechesis or mystagogy. (RCIA 234)

Introduction

The Easter Proclamation announces that ‘This is the night!’ We begin in darkness like the tomb in the garden and then we celebrate in the light of the Easter Candle as we proclaim Jesus who is the Light, who has come into the world and has conquered death.

Collect

The oration

Let us pray.

O God, who make this most sacred night radiant
with the glory of the Lord’s Resurrection,
stir up in your Church a spirit of adoption,
so that, renewed in body and mind,
we may render you undivided service.

Commentary

This wonderful collect can only suffer from over commentary. It is truly a vigil prayer, since in the ‘radiant night’ we see the dark give way to light. The glory of the
resurrection is such that it overcomes all things, and even makes the night sacred. The light is here and now, and we are in its midst! The petition we seek is that God arouse us, stir us up. What follows is a theology of baptism, since it is the consequences of baptism that God is petitioned to bring to the fore. At the centre of the petition is the ‘spirit of adoption’: the baptised are the adopted daughters and sons of God (Rom 8:17). In this, the oration addresses both those about to be baptised, and those who are to renew their baptismal vows. As adopted in the Spirit, our entire selves are renewed, bodily and spiritually. Our response is simple: undivided service in worship and action. The renewal of creation has begun! Indeed, ‘this is the night’.

A selection of the Old Testament readings for the Vigil follows. They are named according to the Roman Missal.

**First Reading**

**Genesis 1:1 – 2:4a**

According to an ancient Midrash, a rabbinic commentary on this story of creation, when God said, ‘Let us make humanity in our image,’ Truth spoke up and protested. ‘Human beings will use their tongues to lie, and trample truth underfoot.’ Then Peace also objected: ‘Why should this creature, so full of strife and contention, appear on the earth to disturb the peace and harmony of creation?’ Then the soft voice of Love was heard: ‘Sovereign of the Universe, if you create human beings in your image, they will be noble creatures striving to imitate your attributes. Endowed with your Spirit, they will seek out those who are distressed to comfort them, raising up those who are bowed down in spirit, speaking peace to the heart of the widow, and giving shelter to orphans.’ The Creator approved the voice of Love and called humankind into being.

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 104:1-2a, 5-6, 10 and 12, 13-14 and 35c**

*Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.*

**Third Reading** *(This reading is obligatory)*

**Exodus 14:15 – 15:1**

Many of the ancient sages were uncomfortable with this song, even though it celebrates God’s victory, because it seems to rejoice in the death of others. And so they imagined different endings to the story. According to Rabbi Yohanan, when the sea fell upon the Egyptians, the angels who ministered before God’s throne began to sing for joy. But the Holy One rebuked them, saying: ‘The work of my hands is being drowned in the sea, and would you sing me songs?’ Rabbi Nehuniyah taught that the death of the Egyptians finally moved Pharaoh’s heart to repentance. He had scoffed at God, asking Moses: ‘Who is the Lord, that I should heed his voice?’ But when he saw the destruction he had brought on his own people, Pharaoh joins in the song of...
Moses and Miriam, expressing his repentance in words similar to those with which he had sinned: ‘Who is like you, O Lord, among the mighty? Who is like you, awesome in splendour, worker of wonders?’

These midrashim are reminders to us that the saints among God’s people have long understood that what God desires is not the destruction of those perceived as enemies, but their conversion.

**Responsorial Canticle**

*Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18*

*Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.*

**Fifth Reading**

*Isaiah 55:1-11*

In Jewish tradition the water that quenches thirst, gives life to the earth, and does not fail in the purpose for which God sends it, is the Torah, the Word of God. We believe that Word became flesh in Jesus. During the feast of Tabernacles, Sukkot, at which prayers for rain were offered, Jesus stood in the temple and cried out, ‘Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink,’ for from his heart rivers of living water flow.

**Responsorial Canticle**

*Isaiah 12:2-6*

*You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.*

**Seventh Reading**

*Ezekiel 36:16-28*

All that is has come into being because God is love. Neither the sinfulness and disobedience of our past, nor the violence and tribulations of the present, not the experience of exile or even death itself, can separate us from that love. As Ezekiel reminds us, redemption comes to us not because of anything we’ve done, but because of who God is. From God’s point of view, creation and redemption are one action, because the gift that God gives, and gives again, is life.

**Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 41:3, 5; 42:3,4*

*Like a deer that longs for running streams, my soul longs for you, my God.*
Epistle (Introduction by Joe Tedesco)

Romans 6:3-11

Paul reminds all Christians that our baptism is an enjoining with Christ in the paschal mystery; as we enter into the tomb with Christ we also, necessarily, join Christ in the resurrection.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 118(117):1-2, 16-17, 22-23

This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. (v. 24)

The Lord’s love has no end. Even that which appears abandoned and dead becomes the ‘cornerstone’ and a marvel to our eyes.

Gospel Reading

Luke 24:1-12

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

On this blessed night, we rejoice that over the forces of sin and death, God’s love shows itself yet more powerful and enduring.

As the Scriptures have reminded us, it was God’s love that called us into being, and has remained steadfast through the ages—

- though we have indeed used our tongues to lie, as Truth anticipated;
- though strife seems second nature to us, as Peace foresaw.

We know that at our worst we human beings are violent, spiteful, small-minded. Yet, even so, the Eternal One has desired our friendship;

- has pursued us relentlessly through the ages;
- and has rejoiced when hearts have opened up in response to that invitation—
  - the hearts of men and women like Abraham and Moses, Hannah and Ruth, Mary and Joseph; and the heart of Jesus, the Beloved Son, the Christ.

On this holy night, we rejoice that this Beloved Son is risen to new life that can and does include us,

- life into which we’re drawn through our baptism,
- life which is deepened as we open our hearts more and more to the Love that moves the sun and the stars,
- life that we’re invited to share with others, loving generously, as we’ve been loved, because in the heart of God, who doesn’t think in terms of zero-sums, there is room for us all.

If the life of Jesus really does offer us a glimpse into the very heart of God, then we may suspect that his heavenly Father, our heavenly Father, won’t rest content until
he has won over the heart of every one of his sons and daughters, every living creature—and each one of us makes of our life what only each one of us can offer: a gift, given in love to God, a gift given for the sake of our fellow men and women. That’s the only sacrifice God hopes for.

On this joyful night we join together in blessing the One who has loved us from all eternity, and who overcomes every death-dealing power to draw us to himself.

Alleluia! Christ is risen! He is risen indeed. Alleluia!

We ask God to pour out the Holy Spirit on the newly baptised.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

With exultation and joy we proclaim that Christ is risen, and that through him we can now offer our prayers to the Father as so we pray:

Petitions

We pray for the Church, joyful witness to the resurrection of the Lord. For Pope Francis, other leaders of our Church both clergy and lay, and for all Christians who gather in celebration and wonder on this night.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for peace and reconciliation among all peoples and nations, and for those who have experienced natural disasters.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those baptised this night throughout the Church; for those received into full communion in the Catholic Church and confirmed with the gift of the Spirit.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all Christians who this night celebrate the triumph of life over death; may we announce the victory of Christ over evil as the women did after Jesus said, ‘Do not be afraid.’

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those whose lives have been deeply disturbed by the pandemic, particularly those who rely on religious tourism as in Jerusalem and Bethlehem. May they find support through the generosity of others.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who suffer persecution as Christians. May they find strength in the resurrection to truly live their faith.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

Father, you have already granted us more than we can ask for in the resurrection of Christ. As you answer our prayers through the power of the Spirit, make us ever more faithful to him who is Lord forever and ever.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Sprinkling of Holy Water:
Song over the waters. 435
Come to the feast. M Haugen. 400
Water of life. S Dean. 176

Other Hymns for the Liturgy:
All you nations. L Deiss. 353
Alleluia No. 1. D Fishel. 360
By your kingly power, O risen Lord. J McAuley/R Connolly. 352
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. P Stotter/ M Vulpius. 365
Christ, be our light. B Farrell. 404
Christ is here. C Walker. 351
Easter Alleluia. M Haugen. 358
Keep in mind. L Deiss. 391
Lift up your hearts. R O’Connor SJ. 416
Make us new. M Coleridge/J Wood. 436
Morning has broken. E Farjeon. Gaelic Melody 537
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 364
O sons and daughters. J M Neale/ Gregorian Chant. 359
Out of darkness. C Walker. 504
Sing to the mountains. B Dufford SJ. 362

AOV1
Sprinkling of Holy Water:
Come to the feast. M Haugen. 151
Come to the water. F Andersen. 74

Other Hymns for the Liturgy:
Alleluia No. 1. D Fishel. 15
I have seen the Lord. B Hurd. 98
Keep in mind. L Deiss. 180
Morning has broken. E Farjeon/ Gaelic Melody. 135
Out of darkness. C Walker. 134
Sing to the Lord. O Alstott. 46
Sing to the mountains. B Dufford SJ. 92

AOV2
Christ, be our light. B Farrell. 3
Easter people. D Light. 147
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 131

AOV4Kids
Come into God’s presence singing. Traditional. 33
Sing new songs of joy. M Mangan. 57
Living in the light. L Good. 66
Rejoice in the Lord. Traditional melody. 75
Easter Alleluia. M Mangan. 80
Liturgy of Baptism: Processional antiphon
CWB
We come to you, Lord Jesus. Ralph Verdi CPPS. 279a
We come to you, Lord Jesus. Arthur Hutchings. 279b

Litany of the Saints
CWB
Litany of the saints. Chant, arr. Percy Jones. 280
CWBII
Litany of the saints. ICEL. 131

Blessing of water
CWB
Springs of water. Percy Jones. 282a
Springs of water. ICEL. 282b
CWBII
Springs of water, bless the Lord. ICEL. 104
Springs of water, bless the Lord. ICEL. 337
Springs of water, bless the Lord. ICEL. 338

Acclamations after baptisms
CWB
Blessed be God, who chose you. Arthur Hutchings. 283a
Blessed be God, who chose you. Christopher Willcock SJ. 283b
You have put on Christ. Howard Hughes SM. 283c
You have put on Christ. Percy Jones. 283d
You are God's work of art. Christopher Willcock SJ. 283e
Rejoice, you newly baptized. Arthur Hutchings. 283f
CWBII
You have put on Christ. ICEL. 105

Renewal of baptismal promises
CWB
This is our faith. Arthur Hutchings. 286c
CWBII
This is our faith. ICEL. 109

Sprinkling of Holy Water
CWB
Cleanse us, Lord. Douglas Mews. 543
Cleanse us, Lord. Ralph C. Verdi CPPS. 544
CWBII
I saw water flowing. ICEL. 29
If we have died to ourselves in Jesus. Marty Haugen. 30
You springs and all that moves. The Grail. 31
Springs of living water. Bernard Kirkpatrick. 32

Offertory Processional
CWB
Now the green blade rises. John M. C. Crum. 756
Now the green blade rises. John M. C. Crum. 363
Surrexit Christus, alleluia! Taizé Community. 365

Communion Processional

By your kingly power. James Phillip McAuley. 633
By your kingly power, O risen Lord. James Phillip McAuley. 352
Through the Red Sea brought at last. Ronald Arbuthnot Knox. 342

Dismissal

Go in the peace of Christ. 288
Easter dismissal. ICEL. 339/340

Recessional Song

Jesus is risen. Monica O'Brien. 82
Christ the Lord is risen again. Michael Wiesse. 646
Easter glory fills the sky. James Quinn SJ. 671
Christ the Lord is ris’n again. Michael Wiesse. 354
Easter glory fills the sky. James Quinn SJ. 358
Jesus Christ is ris’n today. Charles Wesley et al. 360
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu’ring Son. Edmond Louis Budry. 368
This day was made by the Lord. Christopher Walker. 369

Glory in the cross. Dan Schutte. 313
Join in the dance. Dan Schutte. 321

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

The Easter Vigil, First Reading
Psalm 103: Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth. Percy Jones. CWB 267
Psalm 104: Lord, send out your spirit. Roger Heagney. GA 63
Psalm 104(103): Jenny O'Brien. JOBF pg. 12
Lord, send out your spirit: Paul Mason. PM pg. 82
Lord, send out your Spirit: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg. 32

The Easter Vigil, First Reading (alternate psalm)
Psalm 32: The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord. Roger Heagney. CWB 268
The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg. 36

The Easter Vigil, Second Reading
Psalm 15: Keep me safe, O God; you are my hope.
Psalm 15: Douglas Mews. CWB 269
Psalm 16 (15): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 14
You are my inheritance: Tony Alonso. LPSF pg. 38

The Easter Vigil, Third Reading
Exodus 15: Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself with glory.
Exodus 15: Douglas Mews. CWB 270
Response to the third reading: Douglas Mews. GA 340
Exodus 15: Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 16
Let us sing to the Lord: Paul Mason. PM pg. 112
Let us sing to the Lord: Marty Haugen. LPSF pg. 42

The Easter Vigil, Fourth Reading
Psalm 29: I will praise you, Lord, for you have rescued me.
Psalm 29: Douglas Mews. CWB 271
Psalm 30: I will praise you, Lord: Jenny O’Brien. GA 29
Psalm 30 (29): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 18
I will praise you Lord: Marty Haugen. LPSF pg. 46

The Easter Vigil, Fifth Reading
Isaiah 12: You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.
Isaiah 12: Robert J. Batastini/Ernest Rayson SSS. CWB 272
Isaiah 12: Kathleen Boschetti MSC. CWB 603
Response to the fifth reading: Paul Inwood. GA 341
Isaiah 12:2-6: Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 20
You will draw water joyfully: Marty Haugen LPSF pg. 49

The Easter Vigil, Sixth Reading
Psalm 18: Lord, you have the words of everlasting life.
Psalm 18: C. Alexander Peloquin. CWB 273
Psalm 19 (18): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 22
Lord, you have the words: Paul Mason. PM pg. 6
Lord, you have the words of everlasting life: Tony Alonso LPSF pg. 52

The Easter Vigil, Seventh Reading
Psalm 41: Like a deer that longs for running streams, my soul longs for you, my God.
Psalms 41/42: Kathleen Boschetti MSC. CWB 274
Psalm 42 (41): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 24
Like a deer that longs for running streams: Marty Haugen LPSF pg. 54
Easter Vigil, Seventh Reading (alternate psalm)
Psalm 50: Create a clean heart in me, O Lord.
Psalm 50: Kathleen Boschetti MSC. CWB 275
Psalm 50 (51): Frank Schoen. CWB 596b
Psalm 51 (50): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 26
Create a clean heart in me: Paul Mason. PM pg. 44
Create a clean heart in me, O God: Marty Haugen LPSF pg. 58

The Easter Vigil, Gospel Acclamation
Psalm 117: Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!
Psalm 117: Gregorian Chant/ Percy Jones. CWB 277

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Psalm 118: This is the day: Christopher Willcock. GA 70
Psalm 118 (117): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 28
This is the day: Paul Mason. PM pg. 92

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Live in the light (TWB) [Procession of the Paschal Candle]
This is the day that the Lord has made (LCC) *Ps 117 (118)* Children’s Lectionary translation
At the tomb (TWML) [Gifts]
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Recessional]
This is the day (FWS) *Based on Ps 117/118* [Recessional]
17 April 2022
Easter Sunday
Reflection by Joe Tedesco

Introduction
Today completes the Paschal Triduum and launches the season of Easter. The high point of our Christian faith is experienced in Christ who has conquered death and continues to be experienced among us.

Penitential Act
The sprinkling with water from the Easter Vigil would be an appropriate introductory rite unless this takes place with the renewal of baptismal promises. The introductory rites should not be penitential in tone. (ORDO)

Alternatively, use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are risen!
Lord, have mercy.

You draw us to the Father.
Christ, have mercy.

You have conquered death!
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
O God, who on this day,
Through your Only Begotten Son,
have conquered death
and unlocked for us the path to eternity,
grant, we pray, that we who keep
the solemnity of the Lord’s Resurrection
may, through the renewal brought by your Spirit,
rise up in the light of life.
Commentary
The Easter day collect echoes the Exultet refrain in situating the prayer ‘on this day’. Yet with this is a profound sacramentality. Just as the moment of the incarnation placed the divine within matter, time and flesh, so the feast of the resurrection marks the definitive defeat of death. Interestingly, the reference to ‘on this day’ is an addition to the ancient prayer, one that effectively aligns it more closely with the Easter proclamation. The prayer is replete with the resurrection vocabulary, strung together to evoke the mystery being celebrated. Death, the blockage on our path to life eternal, has been conquered. This is an ancient layer of theology, with parallels in the Holy Saturday reading of the descent of Christ into the underworld to break open its gates. The path to eternity is now an ascent into the light of life: just as light replaces the night, so life displaces death. This is an ongoing work, under the power of the Spirit. Here we have a reminder of baptism, as well as a celebration of the constant presence of the Spirit, the gift of the resurrected Lord to the Church (Jn 20:22).

First Reading
Acts 10:34, 37-43
Today we begin a series of readings from the Acts of the Apostles. Their teaching is surmised by Peter in today’s reading. Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, led by God the Father has done great works. Moreover, Jesus has been experienced as risen and the salvation offered is an ongoing reality; all can have their “sins forgiven through his name”.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 118(117):1-2, 16-17, 22-23
This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad. (v. 24)
The Lord’s love has no end. Even that which appears abandoned and dead becomes the ‘cornerstone’ and a marvel to our eyes.

Second Reading
Colossians 3:1-4
Following Christ’s own death and resurrection, we have been brought “back to true life”. Such a life draws us to seek what is above.

Or
1 Corinthians 5:6-8
Yeast is a small thing that becomes lost in dough yet impacts it significantly. So is it with evil that, even if small and invisible, has significant impact. The resurrection is an opportunity for us to realise our true selves, lives that are free of the effects of evil.
Gospel Reading

John 20:1-9*

While it was still dark, followers of Jesus have their first experiences of the empty tomb. Through their witness, we are encouraged to also seek the risen Christ. As we do so, we too journey from darkness to light.


Reflection

The Gospel reading speaks of those who first experienced the risen Christ. However, it is not quite in the form we might expect. In John’s reading used for today as well as the alternatives taken from the Easter Vigil, all the Gospel accounts in their own way speak first of experiencing an empty tomb. That all the accounts of Jesus’ resurrection start with an empty tomb rather than moving straight to physical encounters with the risen Christ is telling. The first movement is not a direct encounter with Christ but an absence and, initially at least, confusion.

In John’s account, Mary of Magdala first sees the entrance to Jesus’ tomb disturbed and open. She assumes that someone has robbed the grave and, being alarmed at such an event, runs to Peter and the ‘beloved disciple’. Mary is expressing a form of doubt. The stone had been moved away and John’s use of the passive tense and the perspective of our faith tradition implies that the stone has been rolled away by God. However, Mary does not consider that. The alarm, the dash away from the tomb and the subsequent distress found in the scene following the reading from John here today (Jn 20:11 ff.) tell us that Mary, initially at least, simply could not make sense of the situation.

Her reaction is quite understandable and, in many respects, represents many of us as we attempt to make sense of the empty tomb. John’s account makes a point of expressing that ‘it was still dark’. Not simply a scene setter for John who regularly uses light and dark as symbols of coming from doubt to faith, from being lost to being found and from death to life. Death and darkness are all consuming, but something has happened to those fundamental concepts of destruction and chaos. Something has disturbed them, the stone has been rolled away. But that is more confusing than helpful to Mary. There is an expectation of how things are meant to go, and they have not gone that way.

However, Mary, and us along with her, are being asked to shift our vision. To look beyond what we think is death is to the wonderful gift of Easter that is before us. To journey from the dark to the light. To somehow see as the ‘beloved disciple’ who, unlike Mary, went toward the tomb not away, and after entering “saw and believed” (20:8). Of course, Mary herself comes to a point of faith in the risen Christ too in the story as it unfolds. We are not privy to that in this reading. Her ongoing story is for another time. In this instance, it seems a clear contrast is presented in the two figures. Something changes in the beloved disciple that, to that point, does not in Mary.
We are given little data as to what causes the reaction in one and not the other. What little information we have seems to revolve around the burial cloths. This attention unique to John is curious and, especially given its double mention is, again, not simply a passing reference - something to fill the scene for the sake of it. One long held understanding is that the carefully folded and placed linen was proof that the scene was not a robbery. Jesus has risen and the state of the burial cloths is an illustration of God’s intentionality, control and accomplishment. Is that enough to instigate a belief in the risen Christ? Perhaps.

Others have noted that there seems an intentional contrast here between Christ and the earlier scene with the rising of Lazarus from the dead (a scene also unique to John’s Gospel). When Lazarus is raised, he is said to come out entirely wrapped in his burial linen and needed to be unbound from them (11:44). Lazarus does not need the burial garbs at that time but will need them again at some point – like all of us, Lazarus would have eventually passed into physical death. Jesus, on the other hand, is completely done with them. Death is symbolically and actually finished with in the person of the risen Christ. Has ‘the beloved disciple’ noticed that and, thus, believed?

We don’t really know the full answer. What we know is that there are three reactions in the relatively short Gospel scene. Mary who sees a disturbance, something that is not right and is drawn to sorrow. Peter, who has a subtle part in this scene, who sees the cloths too, but whose response is left unsaid. That he along with the other disciples return home saying nothing to the others (20:10, the verse that immediately follows this reading is not included in the lectionary) suggests that his movement from darkness to light is not quite complete yet. Then there is ‘the other disciple’ who sees the same scene and believes.

We might be anywhere on that spectrum of three responses. We may be hopeful, but fundamentally confused and in doubt on the one hand. Or, on the other, we might be completely assured of the presence of the living Christ who is risen. Perhaps we are somewhere in the middle, with Peter who also sees something, but is not quite sure what to do with it yet.

Wherever we are, the Gospel narrative is drawing us to experience something special. To move in a direction toward faith. As is a common theme in John’s Gospel, encouragement is often given to see with eyes of faith. To let our hope guide our vision, to look for signs that Christ is alive among us, that God is active in the world pulling it from darkness to light, from death to life.

One of the second readings offered starts with such a call; “look to the things that are in heaven …. Set your thoughts on heavenly things” (Col 3:1;2). This is not a simple fix or instant solution. It is a journey that we are invited to. This is why this Easter Sunday is actually the start of a season. We will have fifty days to consider this mystery, to be honest with ourselves if we doubt but, also, drawn to ponder the very foundation of our faith that God is the victor over all that would separate us from the fullness of life.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Let us place our needs before God our Father, rejoicing because Christ has triumphed over death and entered into glory.

Petitions
We pray for the Holy Father, Pope Francis, that, like Saint Peter and Saint Mary Magdalene he may continue to lead the Church in witnessing to the joyful truth of the resurrection.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those in power in the world. May they learn that humility and sacrifice are true signs of leadership.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who have dedicated their lives to God, that they may never fail to understand the teaching of Scripture and be Christ’s witnesses in the world.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are working towards the conclusion of the Plenary Council and the beginning of the Synod in 2023, may they follow the promptings of the Spirit.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the family of God, away on holiday or gathered here in Easter joy, that we may bear witness to the risen Christ and reflect him in our lives.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who mourn that they may be comforted in the knowledge of the resurrection of those who have died.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Father, your beloved son has risen from the dead as he promised. In peace and joy we present our prayers to you, through the power of the Spirit and the same risen Lord, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA

The Sequence:
O flock of Christ. (The Sequence of Easter). J Quinn SJ/ M Vulpius. 357

Sprinkling of Holy Water:
By your kingly power, O risen Lord. J McAuley/R Connolly. 352
Come to the feast. M Haugen. 400
Song over the waters. 435
Water of life. S Dean. 176

Other hymns for the Liturgy:
All you nations. L Deiss. 353
Alleluia No. 1. D Fishel. 360
By your kingly power, O risen Lord. J McAuley/R Connolly. 352
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. P Stotter/ M Vulpius. 365
Christ is here. C Walker. 351
Easter Alleluia. M Haugen. 358
Easter glory fills the sky. J Quinn SJ/ J Jones 366
Jesus Christ is risen today. C Wesley/ Lyra Davidica. 361
Keep in mind. L Deiss. 391
Lift up your hearts. R O’Connor SJ. 416
Make us new. M Coleridge/J Wood. 436
Morning has broken. E Farjeon. Gaelic Melody 537
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 364
O sons and daughters. J M Neale/ Gregorian Chant. 359
Out of darkness. C Walker. 504
Sing to the mountains. B Dufford SJ. 362
This day was made by the Lord. C Walker. 356

AOV1

Sprinkling of Holy Water:
Come to the feast. M Haugen. 151
Come to the water. F Andersen. 74

Other Hymns for the Liturgy:
Alleluia No. 1. D Fishel. 15
I have seen the Lord. B Hurd. 98
Keep in mind. L Deiss. 180
Morning has broken. E Farjeon. 135
Out of darkness. C Walker. 134
Sing to the Lord. O Alstott. 46
Sing to the mountains. B Dufford SJ. 92
This day was made by the Lord. C Walker. 183
AOV2
All creation sings. C Reid. 45
Easter people. D Light. 147
Jesus lives! C Walker. 29
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 131

AOV4Kids
Alive, alive. Traditional melody. 79
Arise ‘n’ shine. G Holmes. 78
Easter people. D Light. 88
Easter Alleluia. M Mangan. 80
Singing Hallelujah! L Good. 77
Rejoice in the Lord. Traditional melody. 75
This is the day. Traditional melody. 159

AOVNG
Jesus is risen. Monica O’Brien. 82

CWB
O flock of Christ. Wipo of Burgundy. 290
Cleanse us, Lord. Douglas Mews. 543
Cleanse us, Lord. Ralph C. Verdi CPPS. 544
Bring, all you dear-bought nations, bring. Attr. Wipo of Burgundy, tr. Walter Kirkham Blunt. 630
By your kingly power. James Phillip McAuley. 633
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. Pamela Stotter. 639
Christ the Lord is risen again. Michael Wiesse. 646
Christ the Lord is ris’n today, alleluia. Charles Wesley. 647
Easter glory fills the sky. James Quinn SJ. 671
Easter song. Sr Miriam Therese Winter. 672
Now the green blade rises. John M.C.Crum. 756
O sons and daughters. Jean Tisserand, tr. John Mason Neale. 778
This joyful Eastertide. George Ratcliffe Woodward. 845

CWBII
O flock of Christ. Attr. Wipo of Burgundy, tr. James Quinn SJ. 345
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! O sons and daughters, let us sing! Jean Tisserand, tr. John Mason Neale. 349
Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord. Donald L. Fishel. 350
By your kingly power, O risen Lord. James Phillip McAuley. 352
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. Pamela Stotter. 353
Christ the Lord is ris’n again. Michael Wiesse, tr. Catherine Winkworth. 354
Come, God’s people, sing for joy. Keith David Pearson. 356
Easter glory fills the sky. James Quinn SJ. 358
Jesus lives. Jesus lives today. Christopher Walker. 361
Now the green blade rises. John M.C.Crum. 363
The Easter joy of Christ. Jennifer O’Brien. 364
Surrexit Christus, alleluia! Taizé Community. 65
This day was made by the Lord. Christopher Walker. 369
**S&S2**
Glory in the cross. Dan Schutte. 313
Join in the dance. Dan Schutte. 321

**Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy**
Psalm 117: *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad./Alleluia.*
Psalm 117: Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 289a
Psalm 117: Robert Twynham. CWB 269b
Psalm 118: This is the day. Christopher Willcock. GA 70
Psalm 118: Let us rejoice. Marty Haugen. GA 71
Psalm 118 (117): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 39
Psalm 118 (117): Jenny O’Brien. JOBF pg. 29
This is the day: Paul Mason. PM pg. 92
This is the day: Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 52

**Seasonal Psalms for Easter Selected by Chris deSilva**
Psalm 117: *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad./Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.*
This is the day. Christoper Willcock SJ. CWB 289a
Psalm 117. Robert Twyham. CWB 289b
Psalm 118: This Is the Day. The Grail. GA 70
Psalm 118: Let Us Rejoice. Marty Haugen. GA 71
Psalm 118 (117): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 41
This is the Day. Paul Mason. PM pg. 92

*Psalm 65: Let all the earth cry out to God with joy. Alleluia!*
Let All The Earth. Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 308
Psalm 66: Let All The Earth Cry Out. The Grail. GA 45
Psalm 66 (65): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 48
Let All The Earth Cry Out. Paul Mason. PM pg. 52

**Music selections by Michael Mangan**
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
This is the day (FWS) Based on Ps 117/118 [Gathering, Recessional]
This is the day that the Lord has made (LCC) Ps 117 (118) Children’s Lectionary
translation
At the tomb (TWML) [Gifts]
24 April 2022
Second Sunday of Easter
Divine Mercy Sunday

Reflection by Joe Tedesco

Introduction
The readings from the Second Sunday of Easter feature a common theme: together, gathered and connected to each other the followers of Jesus begin to experience the risen Christ and to also make Christ present to the world. The reading from Revelation presents an overarching foundation for such a calling; Christ is the beginning and the end of all existence and Christ holds the keys to death. It no longer is something which binds us, mercy is offered to all.

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you rose from the dead that we might have life.
Lord, have mercy.

You show us the glory of the Father.
Christ, have mercy.

You breathe new life into the world.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
God of everlasting mercy,
who in the very recurrence of the paschal feast
kindle the faith of the people you have made your own,
increase, we pray, the grace you have bestowed,
that all may grasp and rightly understand
in what font they have been washed,
by whose Spirit they have been reborn,
by whose Blood they have been redeemed.
Commentary
This ancient prayer is brought into the Roman missal from the related liturgical families of the gallican regions. It places the worshipper in the recurring Easter cycle of festivities rather than ‘in the day’ of the previous Sunday. It is replete with baptismal inferences, allowing the oration to address directly the newly baptised as well rekindle the faith of long-standing believers. In English the prayer closes with a strong rhetorical flourish. It petitions the merciful one that the faithful may be right minded about the power of the resurrection. This is followed by three key metaphors of salvation. The image of being washed clean from sin is followed by one of rebirth in the Spirit, both immediately related to baptism. Redemption by the blood of Christ relates biblically to the sacrifice of Isaac as well as the passing of the angel of death over the blooded doorposts of the enslaved Israelites on that first Passover night (Ex 12:21-32). Both themes are present in the readings of the Easter vigil. In a form of liturgical serendipity, the entire prayer is based upon faith in the everlasting mercy of God, and so forms a bridge with the recent secondary affirmation of the day as also the Sunday for the celebration of a Christological interpretation of divine Mercy.

First Reading
Acts 5:12–16
The power of the risen Christ continues to be experienced in his followers. Together they provide teaching, care, and healing to all in need. The mercy of God is flowing and will continue to do so in the life of the Church.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 118(117):2–4, 13–15, 22–24
Give thanks for the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting. (v. 1)
The Psalm used on the First Sunday of Easter is returned to again today; It proclaims joyously the endless love of God that is the light of our lives.

Second Reading
Revelation 1:9–11a, 12–13, 17–19
John speaks as an intimate brother to his fellow Christians. He speaks of Christ who has conquered death.

Gospel Reading
John 20:19–31
The risen Christ comes and stands among the disciples, offers them peace, and sends them as Christ himself was sent by the Father. Thomas is not present for this encounter and proclaims that he will only believe if he himself can touch Jesus.
Reflection

The Second Sunday of Easter features the same Gospel Reading regardless of what year cycle we happen to be in. The account taken from John’s Gospel features Thomas’ encounter with Jesus and is a relatively well-known story – at least a certain feature of the story is well known. The common saying ‘doubting Thomas’ is of course founded on the encounter between Thomas, one of the Twelve, and his fellow disciples and then, with Christ. The striking words of Jesus to physically touch his wounds is arresting and certainly adds to the narrative’s ability to stick in the memory of listeners. This intense encounter is functional on two levels.

Firstly, it attests to the physical nature of the resurrection; that Christ is actually risen, not simply some ghostly image. This is so despite the fact that, according to John’s account, Jesus came in and stood among them even though the doors were closed. It is a profound juxtaposition placed by John; making the point that Jesus “came in” while there was no way to get in, something that seems physically impossible. At the same time, the Christ and his wounds are really present, he is seen, heard and invites Thomas to touch him too. It is unlikely this is acting as a ‘proof’ that Christ is risen in the narrow sense of the term. Rather, it is premising that an encounter with Christ is not dependent on limitations that we might perceive. Like much of the John’s Gospel, it is asking us to see in a certain way, with eyes of faith. This, as we will see, is not a simplistic ‘blind faith’, a deadening of the mind. Rather, it is the opposite, it is an opening up to possibilities, an attentiveness to what has gone before and what is in our midst.

This brings us to the second dimension that comes through Christ’s words to Thomas. Jesus responds directly to Thomas’ conditions of believing, however, on encountering Jesus, Thomas’ demands fade. He never actually touches Jesus’ wounds yet comes to a profound moment of faith.

Expanding on this a touch, we can start by noting that ‘doubting Thomas’ is a poor moniker. After all, as just stated, Thomas finally does believe, offering the most profound statements of faith only found in this Gospel – a powerful affirming statement of discrete recognition of Jesus’ divinity. So, Thomas is not really doubting Thomas but rather, ‘doubting then believing Thomas’. It is unlikely that would ever catch on and supplant the truncated and popular form, but that is the truth of the matter.

Moreover, the title of ‘doubting Thomas’ does not actually reflect Thomas’ original state. Thomas does not doubt as such. Rather, Thomas ‘refuses to believe’. Are they the same thing? They are close, but there is an important difference.

Thomas refuses to believe the testimony of his fellow disciples. He has walked with Jesus, as have they. Moments of doubt have abounded throughout the Gospel narratives. We saw in last week’s Gospel reading the resurrection itself begins with doubt and confusion in Mary of Magdala. This is another one of those moments but has a particular twist. Thomas doubts but adds a layer to his hesitation to believe. It is an active rejection of what is being said and witnessed. Further, the criteria that needs to be met to change this rejection is entirely ‘Thomas’. His conditions need to
be met and it is closing him off to the evidence before him – that is, the disciples themselves and their joyous experience (cf. Jn 20:20).

Of course, as we hear, Jesus does appear and responds directly to Thomas’ conditions. However, Thomas never actually enacts his conditions of belief. He too, like the others before him, encounters the risen Christ and believes. Then the important disclaimer, that the truly blessed and happy are those who do not see yet believe. There is an important caveat to this statement that can be easily missed. Blessed are they who do not see, yet they are not called to believe entirely without evidence. We have seen before in John’s Gospel that there is a difference between being blind (not able to see) and seeing with eyes of faith. The story of the healing of the blind man in chapter 9 is a prominent example (especially vv. 35-41). So, Jesus is not saying blessed are those who do not perceive at all but, rather, those who are able to see in a particular way.

Returning to the Gospel reading today, and to put it simply, John is saying blessed are they who will be open to the possibility that this testimony offers. That there is a profound joy to be found in hearing the proclamation from Mary of Magdala and the other disciples mentioned today in this reading as well as the testimony of those found in the rest of the Scripture and, through that, come to believe.

However, what this joyous faith is based on extends further still to those who have continued to embody Christ and proclaim good news in word and deed through the ages. This image of the embodiment of Christ’s saving activity found in the first reading in particular points to this. Thus, the living Church, the Body of Christ as the ‘people of God’ also offers us the means to move from doubt to faith.

Despite the simplistic inference that might be gathered from today’s Gospel reading, we are not called to ‘blind faith’. Rather, we are called to listen to the testimony of our Scriptures, ponder the lives of those who have gone before and be open to the experience of Christ found in those around us. Doubt comes, it is part of the journey of faith. The Gospel points to reality that we cannot see as Thomas was able to, but we can listen to the truth found in their encounter as well as to the joy found in the many men and women who have come to experience Christ in their own way through the journey. Importantly, we can also continue to gather as those first followers did, trusting that we too will encounter the living Christ among us.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
As people of faith, we come with our needs in the complete belief that they will be answered according to God’s will.

Petitions
We pray for Pope Francis and all the leaders of our Church; lay, clergy and religious. May their faith and belief in the gospel continue to hold them as beacons for the People of God and for the world.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the members of the Plenary Council and the committees who support this important work of the Church in Australia. May they be filled with courage and joy in the journey towards a better, Christ-centred community.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of the world that they will encourage those of faith by protecting the rights of all who believe and practise religious life.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are burdened and suffering due to the pandemic or climate change. May they find support in the community around them and in just policies from their leaders.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who build our environment in cities and towns. May they always take into consideration the needs of our earth and the needs of the people so that they can live in a sustainable and equitable way.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are ill and for all the frontline health workers who support them. May they all be given the strength and care that is necessary for healing and full recovery.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Although Thomas originally did not believe what the disciples said, he came to believe profoundly in the nature of the Risen Christ. In that belief we offer these prayers and those only in our hearts through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Be not afraid. B Dufford SJ. 449
Church of God. P Stotter/ M Daly. 480
Easter glory fills the sky. J Quinn SJ/ J Jones. 366
Eye has not seen. M Haugen. 466
Glory and praise to our God. D Schutte. 417
God with hidden majesty. St Thomas Aquinas/ Gregorian Chant. 388
Love is his word. L Connaughton/ A Milner. 462
O sons and daughters. J M Neale/ Gregorian Chant. 359
Sing to the mountains. B Dufford SJ. 362
Take and eat. J Quinn SJ/ M Joncas. 198
The Spirit of God. L Deiss. 185
We remember. M Haugen. 446
We walk by faith. M Haugen. 447

AOV1
Be not afraid. B Dufford SJ. 114
Eye has not seen. M Haugen. 146
Glory and praise to our God. D Schutte. 16
In the breaking of the bread. B. Hurd. 58
Sing to the mountains. B Dufford SJ. 92
We remember. M Haugen. 81
We walk by faith. M Haugen. 63

AOV4Kids
Sing Alleluia. S E Page. 76
Easter people. D Light. 88

AOVNG
The peace of the Lord. Judy Bailey. 129

CWB
Bread of the world in mercy broken. Reginald Heber. 631
Godhead here in hiding, whom I do adore. Tr. Gerard Manley Hopkins. 696
O Father, I know I can count on your mercy. Kathleen Boschetti MSC. 762
O sons and daughters. Jean Tisserand, tr. John Mason Neale. 778
Peace I leave with you. Gregory Norbet OSB. 785

CWBII

Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia! O sons and daughters, let us sing. Jean Tisserand, tr. John Mason Neale. 349
That Easter day with joy was bright. Tr. John Mason Neale. 366
Thine be the glory, risen, conqu'ring Son. Edmond Louis Budry, tr. Richard Birch Holye. 368
We walk by faith. Henry Alford. 641
Additional selections by Chris deSilva
A trusting psalm. Kevin Bates. 293
My peace be upon you for ever, The Grail (England)/Christopher Willcock SJ. 558
My soul is longing for your peace. Lucien Deiss, CSSp. 559
Peace with the Father. James Quinn SJ. 591

S&S1
Thank God for he is good. Jeffrey Roscoe. 80

S&S2
Give thanks to the Lord. Steve Angrisano/Brian Green. 276

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 117: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, his love is everlasting./Alleluia.
Psalm 117: Kathleen Boschetti MSC. CWB 298 (stanzas 1, 4, 5)
Psalm 118 (117): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 40
Give thanks to the Lord: Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 54

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
This is the day (FWS) Based on Ps 117/118 [Gathering, Recessional]
This is the day that the Lord has made (LCC) Ps 117 (118) Children’s Lectionary translation
Hearts on fire (Vs 2 & 3) (SHOF) [Recessional]
Introduction

ANZAC day is a national holiday that commemorates the landings of Australian and New Zealander soldiers at Gallipoli in 1915. It has since grown and become a day where the service and sacrifice of many people over many wars are acknowledged. The liturgy speaks to these virtues exemplified perfectly in the sacrifice of Jesus who gave his life for all humanity. With the gift of the Holy Spirit in our midst, we too are inspired to follow suit, exercising courageous sacrifice wherever God’s love is needed.

Penitential Act

Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus you came to bring us your Word so that we could love you.
Lord, have mercy.

You sent your Spirit to remind us of your love.
Christ, have mercy.

You came to give us your peace so that the world could not take it away.
Lord, have mercy.

First Reading

Wisdom 3:1-9

Those who serve God, even when it comes at great cost, are never forgotten by our Lord. Even when all seems lost, we are assured that the virtuous are in the hands of God.

Or

Isaiah 9:1-6

The weight of oppression, struggle and war will be taken away by our Lord. God’s promise is of a ‘Prince of Peace’, a ‘Wonder-Counsellor’ who offers a peace that has no end.
**Responsorial Psalm**

Psalm 116(114):5-6; (117)10-11, 15-16.

*I will walk in the presence of the Lord, in the land of the living.*

All the afflicted are held as precious by the Lord.

**Second Reading**

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

The language of the cross is illogical. Yet, in this apparent image of weakness, God’s strength is shown in a power to save.

Or

Ephesians 2:13-18

The letter to the Ephesians was speaking to an early Church impacted by hostility between Gentiles and Jews. The reading reminds us that Jesus is the one who truly brings peace, destroying in his own person such hostility between people.

**Gospel Reading**

John 12:23-28

A grain that remains a grain is a potential never realised. The grain that falls to the earth and dies, on the other hand, becomes a rich harvest.

Or

John 14:23-29

Jesus offers us peace, a peace that cannot be found apart from God but one that, nonetheless, we are invited to participate in.

**Reflection**

Like many ANZAC days before this one, today will be marked with ceremonies, parades, speeches and ritual acknowledgement of those who have served in the Australian and New Zealand armed forces. These ANZAC Day rituals will be full of pointers that ask us to think of that which has come before and the lives that were put at risk and lost as men and women served the nation in all sorts of situations.

Of course, at its best, ANZAC day is not a celebration of conflict itself. It does not necessarily glorify war. Particularly as we take in the liturgical readings which have been set for this celebration, ANZAC Day can allow us to recognise the broken world we live in that, whether we wish for it or not, has led to conflict. Even if we are fortunate enough to live in a situation where significant human conflict is avoided, where war is something seen in the news feed or on the nightly news rather than experienced first-hand, we all face adversity and will be called to respond to it
virtuously; with courage, resolutely and, perhaps most of all, to hold on to hope even when things seem lost. It is into this space that the liturgical celebration is able to bring something of true worth.

Firstly, and perhaps most obviously, we are reminded in our readings that this life we experience here is part of a bigger reality. Especially when we consider those who have lost their lives prematurely as wars are wont to cause, we are encouraged to draw on the hope of our faith. As indicated in the first of the readings offered for today from the Book of Wisdom, what appears as a disastrous end is the beginning of a peaceful existence with our saviour in heaven.

Similarly, for those who are innocent victims of wars, those non-combatants who nevertheless pay the cost. It is particularly distressing to our sensibilities that human conflict at its worst not only fails to spare the innocent but makes them particularly vulnerable. There are many parents, carers and children who have to exhibit extreme courage to look after their families in the most trying of circumstances who, nevertheless, lose their own lives and the lives of loved ones to brutality around them. It is this which perhaps represents the most significant fog of darkness that descends upon humanity during times of war. Though it is justifiably troubling, we reach out in faith that, as the prophet Isaiah proclaims, those people “who walk in darkness has seen a great light” (9:2), those who have had to walk in lands of “deep shadow” will find the light of rejoicing in the presence of God.

It certainly takes eyes of faith to hold to such a promise. As Paul attests in one of the second readings to the Corinthians, the language of the cross may be illogical, but it is the pathway to salvation.

Finally, we are reminded in our readings that conflict and war is never God’s desire. Even if it can bring forth virtues such as courage and perseverance from those who choose to serve and those who have no choice having simply been caught in the wrong place at the wrong time, God’s intent, both the end and the means to it, is peace. Returning to the reading from Isaiah, it speaks of a God who wishes to take the burden off the shoulders of the oppressed. In the Lord’s dominion, “peace has no end” (Isa 9:7). There is a particularly interesting line at the end of that verse. In the lectionary translation it reads as “the jealous love of the Lord of Hosts will do this”. It reads a little strangely because the Hebrew does not have a clear direct translation. More common translations use ‘zeal’ in place of ‘jealous love’ in this reference. The actual Hebrew root word qinʾâ basically represents strong passion and emotion for something, almost to the point of being uncontrollable. Thus, in a human setting it can be both a good and bad thing depending on the object and context. In this case, it is used by Isaiah to remind us just how passionate the Lord is about notions of justice, righteousness and peace for God’s people.

As the Gospel readings state, this zeal of God is not simply a passive sentiment. God is about actually bringing this world to peace and vitality. God cannot help but do so, it is in God’s very nature and this is found most prominently in the person of Jesus. The archetypical image of sacrificing for the good is captured in Christ who is like the “wheat grain that falls on the ground and dies” that allows “yields of great harvest” (Jn 12:24).
Moreover, and the Gospel readings point to this in particular, we are invited to be party to God’s passionate desire for peace. We are to be agents of peace, a peace that we cannot create on our own, a peace “the world cannot give” (Jn 14:27). This is why we need the Advocate mentioned in the same Gospel reading; the Holy Spirit, God’s ongoing presence offered to all so we can be encouraged and animated to bring peace into a world that often finds itself working against and despite each other rather than with and for each other.

Sacrifice and courage feature on ANZAC day, and also feature in the Christian call to bring God’s will to bear in our world. It takes courage and it takes sacrifice to be a peacemaker, to be true to God’s will for the world and to follow Jesus in not repaying evil with more evil but, rather, responding with sacrificial love. Sometimes this call can seem impossible, even folly. So, we pray that we are led by the Holy Spirit, focus on Jesus’ words and receive the Advocate so we do what we can to bring our broken world closer to what God intends.

God’s love has no end.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
The psalmist reminds us that we are all precious in God’s sight and therefore we have the courage offer the needs of our world and home community.

Petitions
We pray for Pope Francis and our Church leaders; clergy, lay and religious. May they allow themselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit in all things.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they will lead with integrity and honesty and bring peace to the world and recognise that war does not solve problems.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our community, that we will courageously live our lives as witnesses to God’s saving power particularly on this ANZAC day. May our actions speak of peace and harmony to our world.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who have died, particularly those in wars or who have given their lives for the sake of another. We ask that they may one day see the face of God.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those who still suffer the long-lasting effects of war: refugees, returned service personnel, asylum seekers and disenchanted Australians. May they all find the peace of Christ.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for ourselves as we gather to share the Eucharist and remember those who have given themselves in sacrifice. May we, nourished at this table, be the face of peace to those in need.

(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
God of peace, we offer these prayers and those unspoken in our hearts with the sure hope that they will be answered through the power of the Spirit and in the name of Jesus Christ.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
God of peace. A Kelly CSsR/ C Willcock SJ. 553
For the healing of the nations. F Kaan/ H Purcell. 513
Make me a channel of your peace. S Temple. 490
My peace be upon you. C Willcock SJ. 518
No greater love. M Joncas. 460
O God, our help in ages past. I Watts/ W Croft. 459
Peace I leave with you my friends. G Norbet. 517

AOV1
Let there be peace on earth. S Miller/ J Jackson. 190
O God, our help in ages past. I Watts/ W Croft. 175

AOV2
Abide with me. H F Lyte/ W H Monk. 128
God of peace. A Kelly CSsR/ C Willcock SJ. 138
Make me a channel of your peace. S Temple. 126
My peace be upon you. C Willcock SJ. 96
Nearer, my God, to thee. S Adams/L Mason. 154

CWB
Help of Christians, guard this land. Richard Connolly. 711
Peace I leave with you. Gregory Norbet OSB. 785

CWBII
Advance Australia fair. Peter Dodds McCormack. 656
A blessing hymn for Australia. Michael Herry FMS. 655
For Australia. Michael Rayner & Honor Thwaites. 545
God of peace. Anthony Kelly CSSR. 546
Help of Christians, guard this land. James Phillip McAuley. 429

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 71: Justice shall flourish in his time, and fullness of peace for ever.
Psalm 71: Noel Ancell. CWB 175
Psalm 72 (71): Jenny O’Brien. JOBA pg. 10
Psalm 114/115: I will walk in the presence of the Lord in the land of the living.
Psalm 114/115: Noel Ancell. CWB 152a

Music selections by Michael Mangan
No greater love (SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
One body in Christ (Esp V1) (TWB) [Communion]
Peace for all time (TCS) [Communion, Recessional]
Introduction
We continue to be immersed in Easter joy. Our readings today tell us something of the power behind this joy. A group of frightened apostles who had returned to their boats after the resurrection of Jesus soon have the courage to stand up to the High Priest. What gives them this courage? Their encounter with the Risen Jesus. Does our encounter with the Risen Jesus give us courage to stand up before the world?

Penitential Act
Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you revealed yourself to your disciples.  
Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you are the sacrificial lamb that takes our sins away.  
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you fill us with your gift of peace.  
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
*The oration*
May your people exult for ever, O God,  
in renewed youthfulness of spirit,  
so that, rejoicing now in the restored glory of our adoption,  
we may look forward in confident hope  
to the rejoicing of the day of resurrection.

Commentary
It is now the third week of Easter, and the collect maintains an exuberance and vigor where some waning in enthusiasm might be expected. It also presages a further dimension to resurrection faith. The vitality of the prayer is conveyed in the energy of the vocabulary: exultation, youthfulness of spirit, rejoicing. The cause for this lies in the renewal of spirit and the restoration of the relationship between humanity and the
divine that has been achieved in the resurrection of Christ and is currently being felt by the faithful. The effect on the believer is a confident hope in the future resurrection of the dead.

This turn towards the resurrection of all believers is a little unusual in Easter prayers, though perhaps welcome. It is a modern addition. The collect has been formed by combining two ancient Roman prayers: the opening petition from an Easter mass set and the closing petition from a mass for the deceased. The reference to baptism as ‘adoption’ is a contemporary insertion used to join the two parts.

**First Reading**

**Acts 5:27-32, 40-41**

Our Easter Season reading of Acts of the Apostles continues. This Sunday, we read of the encounter between the apostles and the High Priest, with Peter assuring the High Priest that they will always obey God’s law over any human law.

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Psalm 29:2. 4-6. 11-13. R. v. 2**

*I will praise you Lord, for you have rescued me.*

Today’s Responsorial Psalm is a prayer of thanksgiving for deliverance. As always, the thanksgiving for the blessings received from the Lord – in this case deliverance from enemies – leads the psalmist to renew their trust in the Lord who turns mourning into dancing.

**Second Reading**

**Apocalypse 5:11-14**

This Sunday’s reading from the Book of the Apocalypse is one of the Hymns of the Lamb, with the whole of creation singing in praise of the Lamb and the One sitting on the throne.

**Gospel Reading**

**John 21:1-19**

This Sunday’s Gospel Reading is from one of the post-resurrection appearances of Jesus as he appears to the disciples who have gone back to their fishing nets. Jesus eats and drinks with them, showing that the One risen from the dead is the One who was crucified.
Reflection

The season of Easter is unique in the Church’s calendar. For it is different to the rest of the liturgical seasons. Advent has the two-fold role of preparing us for the coming of Christ at Christmas, and for the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time. Lent is our preparation for the yearly celebration of Easter.

But the season of Easter is different. For the Easter season is not the preparation for a solemn feast. Rather, it is the prolonging, the extension of our celebration of the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. Our joy at the resurrection of Jesus from the dead is so great that it cannot be contained in one day. Rather, it flows out into the next fifty days. And these fifty days from Easter Sunday to Pentecost are celebrated in joyful exultation as one feast day or better as one great Sunday. That is why we must avoid any temptation to think that Easter is over. That we are getting back to normal.

I wonder if that is what dominates Peter’s thought in today’s Gospel Reading. It is hard to know. Because at the beginning of the gospel, we read, “Simon Peter said, ‘I’m going fishing.’” This sounds strangely like the words of one, who after the events of Easter, wants to return to the things he knew. One who, after the sad and confusing death of Jesus, followed by the exhilarating event of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead, wanted to get back to what was familiar. Get back to what he knew. After all, most of us are more comfortable with what we know.

Peter should have known better. Peter should have known that following the resurrection of Jesus nothing could ever be the same again.

Because even though he returns to his fishing boat, Simon Peter has no success: “They went out and got into the boat but caught nothing.” But then, Jesus stands on the shore, and calls to them. And he tells them to cast their nets out on the other side. Already, the author of the Fourth Gospel is giving us a heap of clues that nothing is the same again. At Jesus’ command, they do throw out their nets to starboard “and there were so many fish that they could not haul it in.”

And then John recognises Jesus: “It is the Lord.” And Peter jumps into the water and goes to Jesus. Nothing is the same again.

Jesus then meets his disciple-fishermen on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. And they share a meal of barbequed fish and bread. The breakfast scene is a simple, ordinary scene but one which points to a much deeper reality. For we cannot help but see in this simple meal an image of the Eucharist: “Jesus then stepped forward, took the bread and gave it to them, and the same with the fish.” And the author of the Fourth Gospel tells us that “This was the third time that Jesus showed himself to the disciples after rising from the dead.” Nothing is the same again.

Jesus then questions Peter three times about his readiness to love. Peter gets quite upset by this threefold questioning. We can hear his plaintive cry: “Lord, you know everything; you know I love you.” Jesus’ threefold command to Peter is clear: “Feed my sheep.” We cannot help but see in the three questions which Jesus puts to Peter, a counterpart to the three times Peter denies Jesus during his Passion. Jesus then foreshadows the way in which Peter was to die and so give glory to God.
The Gospel concludes with the simple words: “After this he said, ‘Follow me.’” In many ways, today’s Gospel reading is the story of the Church in miniature. It is the story of our discipleship of Jesus. In the midst of the ordinary, we catch nothing. But then, we recognise Jesus. And in recognising Jesus risen from the dead, we find that nothing is the same again.

We find a huge haul not of fish, but of all who believe in Christ. And no matter what size the haul of believers, the net of the Church is never broken. No matter what sort of believers, there is room for all of us in the Church’s net.

It does not matter who they are, who they love, with what they struggle, with what we’ve got wrong, there is room for all of us in the Church’s net. And being caught up in the net of God’s love, we are fed and we are nourished with the bread of the Eucharist, given to us by the Risen Lord. We are invited to break our fast, and feast on the food of eternal life which Jesus gives us. And finally, Jesus entrusts us to the care and protection of Peter. Jesus is not concerned with whether Peter acknowledges his doctrine, or says the right prayers, makes the right novenas, or whether he desires to become a fisherman again. Rather, Jesus is only concerned with whether Peter loves him. And whether, with that same love, he will tend the flock of Christ. And then Jesus says to us, “Follow me.”

Nothing is the same again.

They recognised Jesus in the breaking of the bread.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
As we gather here today, we know that even after the blackest of nights, joy comes to us through the Spirit offering replenishment and renewal; and so, in faith we now present our needs to God.

Petitions
We pray for all leaders of the Church and the members of the Plenary Council, that their discussions assist the future of the Church in Australia to be missionary and Christ-centred.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the leaders of all nations, that they can resolve their differences guided by God’s wisdom and compassion, for the benefit of all peoples of the world.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those with disabilities, whether physical or intellectual, that they feel welcome in our community, and that Christ’s love fills those who care for them with tenderness and compassion.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who seek employment or a change of career, that they may feel the Lord’s strength and guidance, as they embark on new beginnings.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray that our community can be inspired by God’s grace and encouragement, particularly during this Easter season, to develop new relationships with our neighbours from other faiths.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who are suffering from the effects of the pandemic or from climate change. May their their cries for help be heard by others and may they be given the help and solace they need, graced with compassion.

(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Loving Father, as we are replenished and renewed with your grace today, we are confident that our prayers will be blessed through the guidance of the Spirit, in the name of Christ our Lord.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
All you nations. L Deiss. 353
Alleluia No. 1. D Fishel. 360
Alleluia, sing to Jesus. W Dix/ R Prichard. 371
Bread of life, hope of the world. 199
Centre of my life. P. Inwood. 444
Easter glory fills the sky. J Quinn SJ/ J Jones 366
Easter Alleluia. M Haugen. 358 (Verse 3)
Forth in the peace of Christ we go. J Quinn SJ. 495
Gift of finest wheat. O Westendorf/ R E Kreutz 191
God with hidden majesty/ Adoro Te. St Thomas Aquinas/ Gregorian Chant. 388
Keep in mind. L Deiss. 391
Lift up your hearts. R O’Connor SJ. 416
Psalm 66: Let all the earth. M Haugen. 45
The summons. J Bell. 502
We walk by faith. M. Haugen. 447

AOV1
Alleluia No. 1. D Fishel. 15
Alleluia, sing to Jesus. W Dix/R H Pritchard. 191
Bread of life, hope of the world. 164
In the breaking of the bread. B Hurd. 58
Keep in mind. L Deiss. 180
Praise, my soul, the king of Heaven. H Lyte/ J Goss. 78
When we eat this bread. M Joncas. 99
Sing to the Lord. O. Alstott. 46
We walk by faith. M. Haugen. 63

AOV2
Bread broken, wine shared. R Horner. 155
Centre of my life. P. Inwood. 170
Easter people. D Light. 147
May we come to know the Lord. D Gagnon. 19
Table of plenty. D. Schutte. 20

AOVNG
Will you come and follow me/The summons. Graham Maule and John I. Bell. 149

CWB
All you nations, sing out your joy. Lucien Deiss. 616
Christ is the King! O friends rejoice. George K. A. Bell. 641
Easter glory fills the sky. James Quinn SJ. 671

CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
At the Lamb’s high feast we sing. Tr. Robert Campbell. 341
All you nations, sing out your joy to the Lord. Lucien Deiss CSSp. 347
Easter glory fills the sky. James Quinn SJ. 358
This is the feast of victory. Richard Hillert. 371
Be not afraid. Bob Dufford SJ. 652
Additional selections by Chris deSilva
God has chosen me. Bernadette Farrell. 495
Unless a grain of wheat. Bernadette Farrell. 635
The summons. John L. Bell and Graham Maule. 645

S&SI
The summons. John L. Bell. 137

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 29: I will praise you. Lord, for you have rescued me./Alleluia.
Psalm 29: Douglas Mews. CWB 271
Psalm 30: I will praise you, Lord. Jenny O’Brien. GA 29
Psalm 30 (29): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 42
I will praise you, Lord: Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 58

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Sing out with joy (FWS) Based on Ps 65/66 [Gathering]Easter Alleluia (TT/SYJ)
[Gathering, Recessional]
This is the day (FWS) Based on Ps 117/118 [Gathering, Recessional]
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
Introduction
The Fourth Sunday of Easter is known as Good Shepherd Sunday, and on this Good Shepherd Sunday, our readings are rich in images of God as Shepherd: calling to us, caring for us, protecting us, nurturing us. Are we ready to be cared for by our Good Shepherd?

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you are the good shepherd who lays down his life.
Lord, have mercy.

You gather your scattered children into one flock.
Christ, have mercy.

You have lavished us with gifts of love.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
Almighty ever-living God,
lead us to a share in the joys of heaven,
so that the humble flock may reach
where the brave Shepherd has gone before.

Commentary by Gerard Moore
There are reminders in this prayer back to the ‘lamb’ imagery in the Easter Triduum, however with significant transposition of meaning. The shepherd has overcome death and in resurrection is one with God in heaven. The sense of shepherd is more of one who blazes a path than of the tender carer of the animals in his charge. The collect seeks that God lead the flock into that same place of joy, offering a sense of the Church as ever under the watchful presence of the divine. The note of humility tempers any Christian boasting or self-aggrandizement in relation to the power of the resurrection. The collect witnesses a broadening of the usual Easter images, and an
enlargement of the range of meanings applied to Christ as shepherd. In part this may arise from the origins of the prayer as a collect during an ancient paschaltide service of evening prayer, where it was possibly prayed in conjunction with a shepherd psalm. Unfortunately, the current version has omitted a reference to the Holy Spirit and baptism that was in the earliest manuscript tradition.

**First Reading**

*Acts 13:14, 43-52*

This Sunday we find the apostles Paul and Barnabas continuing to preach the Good News, this time in Antioch. While many heard this message with rejoicing and thanksgiving, not all were so receptive. Shaking the dust from their feet, Paul and Barnabas move on to further mission fields.

**Responsorial Psalm**

*Psalm 99:1-3. 5. R v. 3*

_We are his people, the sheep of his flock._

This psalm of thanksgiving opens with an invitation to praise God and continues with the reasons why we should praise God: the Lord’s goodness to us, for we are God’s people, ‘the sheep of his flock.’

**Second Reading**

*Apocalypse 7:9, 14-17*

This Sunday’s reading from the Book of the Apocalypse finds a great multitude of the elect gathered around the throne of the Lamb. In a paradox of images, the Lamb itself is the shepherd of the elect, leading the elect to springs of living water.

**Gospel Reading**

*John 10:27-30*

We are the sheep of the flock of Jesus. As such, we will never be lost, and nothing can take us away from the care and protection of Jesus and the Father.
Reflection

During the Easter season, our First Reading is always taken from the Acts of the Apostles. And these First Readings have been telling us the story of the beginnings of the Church. How the Apostles were the witnesses to the Good News of the Resurrection. And then, how these Apostles proclaimed that Good News to the people of Jerusalem – the Jews.

Today’s First Reading marks something of a watershed. After preaching to the Jews in the synagogue in Antioch in Pisidia, many of them decided to become followers of Christ: ‘To remain faithful to the grace God had given them.’

Now, Paul and Barnabas faced opposition to their preaching. In response to the opposition they faced, Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and proclaimed that they were doing what the Lord had commanded them to do. And quoting the prophet Isaiah, they proclaim, ‘I have made you a light to the nations, says the Lord, so that my salvation may reach the ends of the earth.’

In the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, the Lord utters these words to the Suffering Servant. And the task given to the Suffering Servant is to make the saving acts of God known to all the world. By quoting this verse from the prophet Isaiah, Paul and Barnabas are placing themselves in the line of tradition. They, too, are making the saving acts of God known to all the world. They are proclaiming to all the world the Good News that Jesus Christ has been risen from the dead by the Father.

This is the watershed. Because from now on, the Acts of the Apostles will not be concerned with the proclamation of this Good News in one small corner of the world. No. From now on, the story in the Acts of the Apostles will follow Paul as he preaches the Good News on his missionary journeys all over the known world. Preaching the Good News of the Resurrection of Jesus to Gentiles of every race and nation. These journeys of Paul will eventually lead him to proclaim the Good News in Rome – the capital of the known world in his time. There he will witness to this Good News with his life. Just as Peter would also do. Give witness to the Good News of Jesus by giving his life.

The preaching of the Good News to the Gentiles is not just some accident. The Good News is preached to all the world not just because Paul and Barnabas faced opposition in Antioch. To make the saving acts of God known to all peoples and races and nations is part of God’s plan. Just as it was in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah, so it is in the Acts of the Apostles.

Why do we get excited about this? Why is this so important for us? Well, quite simply, we are in the inheritors of this tradition. Because when the Good News was proclaimed to the Gentiles in Rome and Malta, and Egypt and Iraq, and Greece and India and Ireland, it was preached to our forebears. These in turn proclaimed it to their children, and their children, and their children. And it is proclaimed this very day to us. The fact that we gather in a church on the other side of the world, two thousand years after the preaching of Paul and Barnabas first started preaching to the Gentiles is testament to the fact that this same preaching is part of God’s plan.
And it remains part of God’s plan to this very day. Today, the Fourth Sunday of Easter is known as Good Shepherd Sunday and it is a day when, as a Church, we pray for vocations to the Priesthood. So that more men may answer the call to be a light to the nations and proclaim the saving acts of God to the world in this day and age.

So, in a special way, we need to pray earnestly and seriously that many men may respond to God’s call to the priesthood. To preach the Good News to all the world. It is easy to become discouraged by the prospect of the future. For all change is frightening and uncertain. And to be called to ministry in these times can a bit frightening and uncertain. But we must always remember: the power of the resurrection of Jesus is indeed the power to change the world. We share in this gift through the Holy Spirit which is given to us at our Baptism and Confirmation.

And the gifts we have, we are given to share.

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
We rejoice, O Lord, that we are your people and the sheep of your flock. Trusting in the wonder of your goodness, we bring you our needs.

Petitions
We pray as your countless people, standing with Francis our Pope and all the leaders of our Church; clergy, lay and religious. May we rejoice in your resurrection and bring into being the reign of God, to your praise and glory.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the members of the Plenary Council and the committees and workers who support them. As we come together to respond to the vision of the future Church, give us a more profound faith, greater courage, deeper spirituality and the ability to discern clearly the direction of the Holy Spirit.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray that all world leaders will hear your voice and listen; that their hearts will be turned to compassion for those they govern, understanding that ultimately all is yours to be justly distributed.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those gathered here as your people. Fill us with your Holy Spirit and shepherd us to serve each other and the world around us.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for members of our community, and others known to us, who are suffering any sort of adversity particularly due to the pandemic. Keep their hearts fixed on you. May they know your presence and love in their pain and in the caring hands of others.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray on this World Day for Vocations, that we all will acknowledge the need for lives dedicated to our baptismal vocation to be Christ to all we meet. May we each see that our Christian vocation requires us to be unafraid to live a faithful life and to declare ourselves as followers of Christ.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Father, we know that you spread your tent over us that in you we may live and move and have our being. In gratitude we present our petitions through the power of the Spirit and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
All people that on earth do dwell. W Kethe/ Genevan Psalter. 533
All the earth proclaim the Lord. L. Deiss. 534
Baptised in water. M Saward/ Gaelic Melody. 179
Christ is made the sure foundation. J M Neale/ H Purcell. 482
Come to me. G Norbert. 228
Easter Alleluia. M Haugen. 358
Eye has not seen. M Haugen. 466
Gift of finest wheat. O Westendorf/ R E Kreutz. 191
Hail, Redeemer, King divine! P Brennan/ W Flood. 390
Like a shepherd. B Dufford SJ. 467
O Christ, the great foundation. T Lew/ S Wesley. 483
O flock of Christ. J Quinn SJ/ M Vulpius. 357
One bread, one body. J Foley SJ. 193
Shepherd me, O God. M Haugen. 24
Take and eat. M Joncas. 198
The Church's one foundation. S Stone/ S Wesley. 484
The Lord is my shepherd. B Boniwell. 506
The Lord's my shepherd. (Crimond). J. Irvine. 473

AOV1
All people that on earth do dwell. W Kethe/ 'Genevan Psalter. 25
All the earth proclaim the Lord. L. Deiss. 184
Because the Lord is my shepherd. C Walker. 66
Come to me. G Norbert. 37
Come to the water. F Andersen MSC. 74
Eye has not seen. M Haugen. 146
Like a shepherd. B Dufford SJ. 160
One bread, one body. J Foley SJ. 129
Shepherd me, O God. M Haugen. 33
The Lord is my shepherd. B Boniwell. 26
The Lord's my shepherd. (Crimond). J. Irvine. 144

AOV4Kids
O how good is Christ the Lord. Traditional. 84

AOVNG
The Lord is my shepherd. Joshua Blakesley. 127

CWB
Shepherd of souls, in love, come feed us. J. Clifford Evers. 804
The Lord my shepherd rules my life. Christopher Idle. 829
The Lord is my shepherd. Brian Boniwell. 830
The Lord is my shepherd, my shield. Joseph Wise. 831
The Lord's my shepherd. Scottish Psalter. 833
CWBII

Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
O flock of Christ. Attr. Wipo of Burgundy, tr. James Quinn SJ. 345
Good shepherd, you know us. Christopher M. Idle. 357
Shepherd of souls, in love, come feed us. Omer Westendorf. 596
Shepherd me, O God. Marty Haugen. 597
The Lord is my shepherd. Brian Boniwell. 619
Additional selections by Chris deSilva
The Lord’s my shepherd. Scottish Psalter. 620

S&S1
Shepherd me, O God. Marty Haugen. 59
We are God’s people. Jeffrey Roscoe.76

S&S2
The Lord is my shepherd. Joshua Blakesley. 250
We are his people. Greg Walton. 273

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 99: We are his people: the sheep of his flock./Alleluia.
Psalm 99: Christopher Willcock SJ. CWB 335 (stanzas 1, 2, 4)
Psalm 100 (99): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 45
We are his people: Paul Mason. PM pg. 75
We are his people: Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 61

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
Shout out with joy (LCC) Based on Ps 100 [Gathering]
You are my shepherd (FWS) Based on Ps 23 [GIFTS]
One body in Christ (Esp V1) (TWB) [Communion]
15 May 2022
Fifth Sunday of Easter
Reflection by Joe Tedesco

Introduction
This and next week’s Gospel readings are taken from Jesus’ Last Supper discourse. Jesus is about to die and is preparing his disciples who are struggling to make sense of this coming event. The teaching is also a proclamation to the Church which comes after, to our present age. We are to be Christ to our world by loving as Christ loves us. It is the marker of what makes one a follower of Christ, that we love sacrificially and with the genuine good of the other in view.

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus you are the ultimate gift of love.
Lord, have mercy.

You loved us first so that we can love others.
Christ, have mercy.

You became human so that we can be your disciples.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
Almighty ever-living God,
constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us,
that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism
may, under your protective care, bear much fruit
and come to the joys of life eternal.

Commentary by Gerard Moore
This prayer is new to the Fifth Sunday in Easter, previously appearing in the revised missal as the collect for the Saturday of Easter Week IV: it has been promoted by a day. The text is from the liturgical books of Milan, though it was newly formed for the post Vatican II revisions by combining two ancient Milanese orations. The prayer begins immediately with the petition that God transform us constantly through the paschal mystery. In this sense it implores God that we bear the resurrection in our lives here and now and have its power shine forth in our actions. The grounds for
this are baptism, in which we were made anew. The reference is as salutary for the long baptised as it is for those newly baptised at the Easter vigil. Three further points are found in the prayer. Firstly, the unceasing care of the divine one is a requirement: all our efforts are only possible in grace, while the guarantee of God’s fidelity is in the paschal mystery. Secondly, as Easter people we are called to bear fruit. Our lives in the paschal mystery work to bring forth the reign of God. Finally, a fruitful life lived in the paschal mystery is consonant with knowing the joys of heaven and celebrating them in eternity.

First Reading
Acts 14:21–27

The reading from Acts talks of how Paul and Barnabas, key leaders of the infant Church, revisit their established communities, continuing to proclaim all that God was doing through them.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 145(144):8–13

I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God. (v. 1) or Alleluia.

We are invited to sing praise to the Lord whose love and compassion rests on all that exists.

Second Reading
Revelation 21:1–5

God is the beginning of all creation and, through Christ, all things that lead away from God, all death and destruction, are being ‘made new’. A new creative blessing is bringing all things back to God.

Gospel Reading
John 13:31–35

In John’s Gospel, Jesus proclaims as a single commandment; to ‘love one another’. It is the marker of the true follower of Christ, that they know of and live out the love of Christ.

Reflection

We live in a world of marketing and promotion. The rise of consumer capitalism and the desire for sellers of goods and services to have their products stand out from the
crowd is a constant struggle. Thus, much effort is put into branding; to catch phrases and slogans that make products easily recognisable and that communicate the benefits of that product to a potential consumer. We’ve come a long way in the world of product promotion. The marketers and advertising agencies have become more sophisticated over the years, but so have our sensibilities to the hype and fluff that surrounds branding and slogan making. Think of all the ‘must see TV’ that we apparently ‘must see’. How can all of those shows claiming to be ‘must see’ actually be ‘must see’. Is not some of it at least quite uncompelling, a time waster and not a ‘must’ at all? Though we can be easily fooled, we are coy of the claims of many brandings and slogans that circulate around us. We are suspect of such things and rightly dismiss them.

Then there are catch phrases and slogans that are quite clever, and actually communicate something truthful. A well-known figure in the advertising and marketing industry, Leo Burnett, once said ‘The greatest thing to be achieved in advertising … is believability, and nothing is more believable than the product itself.’¹ Though Burnett no doubt produced slogans that had little to do with the actual product, there is something inherently true in his statement. We are drawn to authenticity, and we are drawn to the good.

In today’s Gospel reading, Jesus is doing some branding himself. He is calling his disciples to be identified in a particular way. Something akin to a slogan is being stated by Jesus, and it is to ‘love one another, as I have loved you’. This is how people will know who you are. This is how this small group of followers will stand out from the crowd and be identifiable. As the quote from Burnett indicates, the product itself is the primary form of advertising that is needed, and ‘the product’ in this case is the love of Jesus. If we love as Jesus loves, not only will it be identifiable, but it will also be believable. The love we show that is in keeping with Jesus’ love is what will do the convincing. It will be enticing to a world that desperately needs the love of God.

That said, Jesus’ words are not merely a slogan, a passing catch phrase that can be taken or left. It is a most substantive command. That Jesus is giving a commandment is putting him on par with the Lord God. It is something of a Christological statement of Jesus’ equality with God that Jesus can give the commandment at all. It also elevates what is being said to a matter of absolute importance.

The importance firstly lies in the exemplar of Christ’s self. Earlier in the Last Supper discourse found in John, of which today’s reading is part, we see Jesus washing his disciples’ feet. There Jesus points out ‘I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do’ (13:15). Throughout the extended dialogue that forms these chapters of John, Jesus is preparing his disciples for his parting. The ‘hour has come’ and the time for ‘the glorification is at hand’, that is the language that John uses to point to the Passion of the Lord and appears here in this

¹ Burnett, Leo. Communications of an Advertising Man. (Chicago: [Unknown Publisher], 1961), p. 78.
reading too. This is entirely what Christ is about and it is entirely what followers of Christ are to be about.

Secondly, then, the command to love is sacrificial. The love that the followers of Christ are to show is to be in keeping with this sacrificial call. It is to be entirely others centred, to be a laying down of one’s life combined with a trusting in God that, in the Lord’s power, it will be taken up again.

Thus, this love that Christ is commanding may be a form of branding, a branding of Jesus’ self to be sure. But it does not share much else with consumer advertising culture. We live in a society that sees transactions between people as form of exchange; if I give up something, I expect something in return. Even when we look to be giving, we might often be thinking in self-serving terms. This can be true of love itself; we love with an expectation of reciprocation in some form.

The love Christ is calling us too clearly does not fit that mould – and it is also clearly not easy. True love is a difficult task. It can be easy to get caught up on the difficulty of the commandment; to love by giving one’s life away. However, we need to hold the entire commandment in view; especially the ‘as I have loved you’ component. Implicit in this call to love, to make Jesus’ presence real in the world, is to receive the love of Jesus in the first place. Thus, we realise as we reflect on this scripture that the God of Love wants to flow through us to our world. There are many ‘commands’ that we find in scripture, but this is a most fundamental one. It was the heart of Jesus’ mission, and we pray that it can be the heart of our lives as well, to receive and give a love that overcomes all.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Father, with the psalmist we wonder at your regard for us, setting us free to sing a new song of rejoicing. Trusting in our relationship with you, and your love for us, we bring you our needs.

Petitions
We pray for your Church and its leaders that we may bring about your New Jerusalem, making all things new, opening the eyes and hearts of us all to the needs and afflictions of all.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all members of the Plenary Council, and the committees and support workers who are preparing for the second Assembly. May they be infused with the Easter joy and be open to the Spirit in all their deliberations and activities.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our world, given by you. For those who play a part in its governance, give them your wisdom and self-discipline to refrain from misuse of power; remind them to govern for all peoples and for the good of all creation. May they distribute vaccines for the pandemic equitably and work positively in this time of climate change.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our community rejoicing in our Easter life. We thank you for the gift of Easter. Enable each of us to blossom to our unique fullness in you.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for those who have come to the end of their earthly life. Receive them in your love and embrace them. Be with those who mourn their passing and especially receive those whose death is known only to you.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all those suffering from the effects of the pandemic; spiritually, financially, mentally and bodily. May they recover well and be renewed by the experience. We pray also for the all the frontline workers who care for those affected.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
Father, you have called us to be siblings dancing in the light of your Resurrection so that our living witness will draw others to you. As your children, we thank you for listening to our requests in the confidence that you hear them in the power of the Spirit and in the name of our brother Jesus Christ.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
All the ends of the earth. B Dufford SJ. 420
A new commandment. Unknown/ L Bartlett. 318
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. P Stotter/ M Vulpius. 365
Christ is made the sure foundation. J M Neale/ H Purcell. 640
Christians, let us love one another. A Nigro SJ and M Foltz SNJM/ French Melody. 206
God of peace. A Kelly CSsR/ C Willcock SJ. 553
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ English Melody. 468
Love divine, all loves excelling. C Wesley/ R Prichard. 463
Love is his word. L Connaughton/ A Milner. 462
No greater love. M Joncas. 460
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 364
Seek ye first. K Lafferty. 456
Take and eat. J Quinn SJ/ M Joncas.198
This day was made by the Lord. C Walker. 356
This is my will, my one command. J Quinn/SJ/ Gregorian Chant. 465
Ubi caritas et amor/ Where true love and charity are found. Gregorian Chant. 319
Ubi caritas. Taize. 324
Unless a grain of wheat. B Farrell. 500
Where there is charity and love. R Connolly. 323

AOV1
All the ends of the earth. B Dufford SJ. 76
I heard the voice of Jesus say. H Bonar/ English Melody. 54
Seek ye first. K Lafferty. 48
Sing to the Lord. O. Alstott. 46
Unless a grain of wheat. B Farrell. 35
This day was made by the Lord. C Walker. 183

AOV2
God of peace. A Kelly CSsR/ C Willcock SJ. 138
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 131
O God, you search me. B Farrell. 31
Sing a new song to the Lord. T Dudley-Smith/ Wilson. 76

AOV4Kids
Sing to the Lord. N Ford. 104
The Spirit lives to set us free. D Lundy. 95
This is the day. Traditional melody. 159

CWB
A new commandment I give unto you. 615
Christians, let us love one another. Fr. A. Nigro/Sr. M. Claudia Folz. 648
Love divine, all loves excelling. Charles Wesley, adapt. Anthony G. Petti. 740
Whatsoever you do. Willard F. Jabusch. 860
Where there is charity and love. Par. Richard Connolly.863
CWBII
Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions
A new commandment. John 13: 34, 35. 443
God of peace. Anthony KellyCssR. 546
Love divine, all loves excelling. Charles Wesley. 552
Love is his word. Luke Connaughton. 553
Where there is charity and love. Paraph. Richard Connolly. 638
Where true charity is dwelling/ Ubi caritas est vera. Tr. ICEL. 639
Additional selections by Chris deSilva
Christians, let us love one another. Armand Nigro SJ/M. Claudia Foltz SNJM. 469
Christ, be our light. Bernadette Farrell. 540
No greater love. Michael Joncas. 622

S&S1
I will lift up your name. Steve Angrisano. Tom Tomaszek. 91

S&S2
The Lord is near/I will praise your name. Tom Booth. 285

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 144: I will praise your name for ever, my king and my God./Alleluia.
Psalm 144: J. Robert Carroll/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 307
Psalm 145 (144): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 46
I will praise your name. Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 64

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
Sing new songs of joy (FWS, CWB II) Based on Ps 97/98 [Gathering]
Forever I will sing (FWS) Based on Ps 144/145 [Gathering, Gifts]
A life of love (TT/SYJ) [Gifts, Communion]
One body in Christ (Esp V5) (TWB) [Communion]
Introduction
We are nearing the end of the Season of Easter. Throughout we have heard readings of how Christ’s activity in the world has moved from the historical Jesus himself to the living Church. It is through the power of the Holy Spirit that this is possible, and it features again in today’s readings. The Church has come alive and is being formed into a body that will do all that Jesus commands. This weekend also concludes Laudato si’ week.

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus you came to show us the way so that we can have life.
Lord, have mercy.

You came to give us your peace so that we will not fear.
Christ, have mercy.

You gave us your Spirit so that we would be comforted.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
Grant, almighty God,
that we may celebrate with heartfelt devotion these days of joy,
which we keep in honor of the risen Lord,
and that what we relive in remembrance
we may always hold to in what we do.

Commentary by Gerard Moore
With the Season of Easter into its sixth week the collect is an encouragement to keep alive the celebration of the great feast. The centerpiece is the resurrection. However, the focus falls onto the hearts and actions of the faithful. The prayer seeks an ongoing depth of joyous devotion in tandem with a tenacious fidelity to the implications which the celebrations have for everything we do. There are a number of curious features to the oration. The verb ‘relive’ does not fully capture the sense of...
action and involvement of the original Latin, which carries a sense of ‘running through’. Moreover, the complete oration is a modern composite, with various clauses taken from a preface during a fast, a December Mass for the feast of John the evangelist, and an Easter liturgy, all from the ancient sources.

First Reading
Acts 15:1–2, 22–29
The emerging Church is having to deal with significant issues dividing the body. Though a conciliar approach, guided by the Holy Spirit, they move forward in the mission to bring God’s salvation to the world.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 67(66):2–3, 5–6, 8
O God, let all the nations praise you! (v. 4) or Alleluia.
Not only a select people but all of creation, every living being, is called to experience the blessing of God and exult the Lord.

Second Reading
Revelation 21:10–14, 22–23
John’s Revelation speaks of a new Jerusalem; a vision of a holy dwelling place of God, built on the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles of Christ, united in God’s salvific plan.

Gospel Reading
John 14:23–29
The Gospel reading speaks of an Advocate, the Holy Spirit that will teach and remind Jesus’ followers of all Jesus has said. It will help them move forward in love, doing the will of God that has been revealed in Christ.

Reflection
Last week we saw an important excerpt from what we termed the ‘Last Supper Discourses’ which is what many commentators call the long teaching offered by Jesus in chapters 13-17 in John’s Gospel. It prefaces the Passion that follows starting at chapter 18 and includes some of Jesus’ most memorable sayings. The same block of text is also known as the ‘Farewell Discourses’ because much of Jesus’ words refer to his parting. Moreover, they are full of words of comfort from
Jesus as his beloved disciples will soon be left without their master. Hence there are calls to not be afraid and be at peace (16:33), to have faith (14:1), to remain in the love of Christ (15:9) and to keep to Jesus’ teaching and commandments (14:15). Many of these elements are seen in today’s Gospel reading too.

Perhaps sensing their confusion and anxiety (what little the disciples say through these discourses indicates this very point), Jesus is preparing them for what is to come. So the heart of today’s reading includes those beautiful words from Jesus; ‘Peace I leave you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled’ (14:27 NRSV). The language is striking because Jesus does not offer a peaceful sentiment, a hope for peace, a sense of goodwill. Rather, it is ‘my peace’. It is, as the lectionary translation puts it, Jesus’ very own peace. It is, as the lectionary translation puts it, Jesus’ very own peace. It is the presence of Jesus and, because of this, even though Jesus is going, something is being left for Christ’s followers.

Of course, this is pre-empted by the notion of the Holy Spirit which is what Jesus mentions prior to the gift of peace. Though distinct, they appear linked; the Holy Spirit will bear the imprint, the very life of Jesus Christ and, so, will also include the peace that is also properly God’s (and thus cannot be found ‘in the world’).

Moreover, the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, is something that is to come in place of Jesus’ presence. Christ is to return to the Father, that is what is about to happen though the death and resurrection that is about to unfold in the Gospel narrative. However, the listeners need not be afraid at this absence because this will usher in a new age. An ‘in between’ time where Christ returns to the Father but will not be entirely absent either. This is what is captured in the sending of the Spirit. Christ is both absent to our senses, having gone ‘ahead of us’ to the end of all things with God the Father, yet is with us in the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Advocate that speaks in Christ’s name and teaches us all that Christ says to us.

That said, this talk of the Holy Spirit can seem a touch abstract. What will the Holy Spirit actually do, how will we know that it is with us, guiding us? That is a difficult question to answer, it requires attention to the specific contexts of a given situation. But there are some clear indicators, and one is the peace just mentioned. Trouble and confusion come. In these very discourses Jesus says as much; ‘in the world you will have trouble’. However, in the same verse Jesus also states while referring to the wider discourse, ‘I have told you this so that you might have peace in me … take courage, I have conquered the world’ (Jn 16:33). Jesus has offered us peace, a peace that is not dependent on worldly circumstance. Thus, one sign of the Spirit being operative is peace that is not worldly. It is peace that is truthful and just. When trouble abounds, it does not succumb to worldly tendency which is to find peace through tribalism, distrustfulness of the other and deceit.

This then links to another feature of the Spirit and is drawn from last week’s reading. Last week we heard of how Christ is going away, but his presence will remain in the love of one for another that is built and modelled on the love of Christ. As we love one another as Christ loved us, we manifest Christ. Christ loves with the love of God the Father, so too, our love needs to be drawn from our Lord God and the breath of
God, the Holy Spirit. We love each other by praying with, reflecting on, receiving, and actualising the Holy Spirit.

Finally, drawing on these two dimensions, peace and love, the Spirit will be drawn into community. In the First Reading we see the setting of an early Church that is having to deal with specific dilemma of the day. Many Christians were insisting that Gentile converts need to comply with certain Mosaic laws that Jewish converts have continued to hold to. As the text puts it, it is ‘no small issue’. The living community of Christ is facing one of many moments where they are facing trouble, peace is disturbed and how to actualise the love called for by Christ appears difficult. Importantly, the key feature of how the young Church navigates the issue is together. They gather as a community, they listen to each other and, with the aid of the Holy Spirit, apply the teachings of Jesus to their dilemma. Trouble and difficulty can also be opportunity for divisions and conflict. The Spirit of God is one that holds people together and we do well to draw on it as a Church family and in our smaller communities too.

Today we are reminded that Jesus is not with us as he was with his first followers, however, Jesus is with us in the Spirit. The Spirit will keep God’s peace and love close to us, allowing us to conquer fear, live with each other in peace and navigate the troubled world we live in.

Do not let your hearts be troubled or afraid.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would teach us everything, so we bring in prayer all our needs.

Petitions
We pray for the Church in Australia on the interweaving journey of Plenary Council and synod. Like the apostles and elders, may we sincerely discern God’s will, honestly confess to past mistakes, proclaim the Gospel without burden and speak the truth with love.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for peace in our world. May the God of all nations shed light on world leaders, so they are moved by a spirit of cooperation to seek wise, just and peaceful solutions to all disputes.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our Common Home. In this Laudato si’ Week, may we heed the urgings of Pope Francis to walk the path of renewal and heal our relationships with the Creator, with our neighbours and with the Earth itself.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who continue to cry out for climate justice. May they stir those of us in developed countries to make changes in our lifestyle and to take urgent and effective actions to protect our planet from further harm.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for persons who are facing hardship due to the pandemic. May they receive the financial support and caring services they need as well as comfort from true neighbours. May our community never tire of looking out for the needs of our sisters and brothers.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for children, especially those who endure neglect, abuse, exploitation or lack of opportunity. May we be attentive to the real needs of children and be proactive in ensuring they have the health-promoting and caring supports that promote growth and well-being.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
God of all nations, your rule is just and wise. Hear these intercessions and grant them according to your will. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
A new commandment. Unknown/ L Bartlett. 318
All the earth, proclaim the Lord. L Deiss. 534
All the ends of the earth. B Dufford SJ. 420
Christ is alive, with joy we sing. P Stotter/ M Vulpius. 365
Christians, let us love one another. A Nigro SJ and M Foltz SNJM/ French Melody. 206
Church of God. P Stotter/ M Daly 480
Come down, O love divine. R F Littledale/ R V Williams. 375
Forth in the peace of Christ we go. J Quinn SJ. 495
I have loved you. M Joncas. 402
Love divine, all loves excelling. C Wesley/ R Prichard. 463
Love is his word. L Connaughton/ A Milner. 462
Make me a channel of your peace. S Temple. 490
My peace be upon you. C Willcock SJ. 518
My soul is longing for your peace. L. Deiss. 519
No greater love. M Joncas. 460
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 364
One bread, one body. J Foley SJ. 193
Peace I leave with you my friends. G Norbet. 517
Take and eat. M Joncas. 198
This is my will, my one command. J Quinn/SJ/ Gregorian Chant. 465
Ubi caritas et amor/ Where true love and charity are found. Gregorian Chant. 319
Ubi caritas. Taize. 324
Unless a grain of wheat. B. Farrell. 500
Where there is charity and love. R Connolly. 323

AOV1
All the earth, proclaim the Lord. L Deiss. 184
All the ends of the earth. B Dufford SJ. 76
Come down, O love divine. R F Littledale/ R V Williams. 118
Enviatu Espiritu. B. Hurd. 95
I have loved you. M Joncas. 126
In perfect charity. R De Bruyn. 142
One bread, one body. J Foley SJ. 129
Remain in my love. C Willcock SJ. 159
Sing to the Lord. O Alsott. 46

AOV2
Make me a channel of your peace. S Temple. 126
My peace be upon you. C Willcock SJ. 96
Now the green blade rises. J Crum/ French Carol. 131
AOV4Kids
For the journey. G Holmes. 128
Sing to the Lord. N Ford. 104
The Spirit lives to set us free. D Lundy. 95

AOVNG
The peace of the Lord. Judy Bailey. 129

CWB
My soul is longing for your peace. Lucien Deiss. 751
Peace I leave with you. Gregory Norbet OSB. 785
To Christ, the prince of peace. Tr. Edward Caswall. 846

CWBII
*Sunday by Sunday hymn suggestions*
Give thanks to God, the Father. James Quinn SJ. 492
My peace be upon you for ever, The Grail (England)/Christopher Willcock SJ. 558
Peace with the Father. James Quinn SJ. 591
*Additional selections by Chris deSilva*
My soul is longing for your peace. Lucien Deiss, CSSp. 559
No greater love. Michael Joncas. 622

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy
Psalm 66: *O God, let all the nations praise you! Alleluia.*
Psalm 66: J. Robert Carroll/Joseph Gelineau SJ. CWB 310 (stanzas 1, 2, 3)
Psalm 67 (66): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 48
O God, let all the nations praise you! Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 67

Music selections by Michael Mangan
Easter alleluia (TT/SYJ) [Gathering, Recessional]
Sing out with joy (FWS) Based on Ps 66 [Gathering, Gifts]
Peace for all time (TCS) [Gifts, Communion, Recessional]
29 May 2022

Ascension of the Lord

Reflection by Anthony Doran

Introduction

The Ascension of Jesus marks the end of one era and the beginning of a new era of the Church’s life. While the physical presence of Jesus on earth ends with the return of Jesus to the Father, it is now the presence of the Spirit which gives life to the Church. And more than just life. The presence of the Spirit is also the impetus for us to go out and proclaim the Good News to all the world.

Penitential Act

Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you sit at the right hand of the Father.
Lord, have mercy.

You look upon your people with mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

You have conquered death.
Lord, have mercy.

First Reading

Acts 1:1-11

Luke shows how the mission of Jesus to initiate the end-time restoration of the Chosen People of God finds expression in the emergent, Spirit-filled Christian community in Jerusalem.

Responsorial Psalm


God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

This psalm extols God’s sovereign majesty, ruler over all the nations of the earth. For this, all the peoples of the earth rejoice.
Second Reading
Ephesians 1:17-23
Today’s reading is a prayer of thanksgiving from the opening of Pauls’ Letter to the Ephesians. God’s power, at work in Christ, inaugurates a new era for the whole of Creation, and for this, we do give thanks.

Gospel Reading
Luke 24:46-53
Luke’s account of the Ascension differs markedly from the more famous Matthean account. Instead of being sent out to all the world, the disciples are sent back to Jerusalem ‘until they are clothed with power from on high.’ For Luke, it is the Spirit who empowers the disciples (and therefore the Church) for mission.

Reflection
Late last year, Melbourne Theatre Company staged William Shakespeare’s play ‘As You Like It’. After so many months of COVID restrictions preventing any performance, it was certainly a joyful return to the theatre. Towards the end of Act II, Jacques utters his famous speech:

All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and entrances…

(As You Like It: II, 7, 139-141)

The theatre was absolutely silent as Jacques spoke these words: not only was the actor playing Jacques exceptional, but a deep truth resonates behind Shakespeare’s words. People come and people go. People arrive and people depart. People are born and people die. Most societies usually mark the time of birth and death with rites and ceremonies – we Catholics know this better than most. Births and deaths are registered because important public consequences flow from them – they affect other people. New arrivals are greeted and cooed over; new departures are prayed for and mourned.

The last we know of people in life is their death. This is what the apostles believed when Jesus died and why they felt so shattered and forsaken. Jesus’ death was difficult for the disciples because they thought it meant a future without hope. But, in their experience of him as their risen Lord, their faith was renewed and their hope was reborn. But they still had to face the fact that he would walk among them no longer, for he had to return to the Father. It is to mark that time of Jesus’ return to the Father that we celebrate the Ascension.
In today’s readings we have two stories of Jesus’ final departure. Both stories are written by Luke. Luke brings his gospel to a close with the story of Jesus’ ascension. He also opens his second book, the Acts of the Apostles, with the story of Jesus’ ascension. In doing that, Luke tells us that Jesus’ return to the Father is the completion of his mission, while at the same time it marks the beginning of a new age. The Ascension of Jesus is both an ending and a beginning. Death was not the final departure for Jesus. Our faith proclaims that God raised him from the dead and that he let himself be known to his chosen followers so that they could experience new life in him. This experience of new life will become the basis for their preaching to others.

In Luke’s Gospel when Jesus appears to his disciples, he does not breathe the Holy Spirit on them and commission them to go out and preach to all the nations. Rather Jesus tells the disciples to stay in the city of Jerusalem. They are to go nowhere preaching in his name because they are not yet empowered to do so. For Luke, Jesus has to go before the Holy Spirit can come. His going means the coming of the Spirit.

The disciples are not yet ready. They cannot witness to Jesus yet because they cannot fall back on their own resources to minister to other people. Their own resources are not enough for ministry. First, they must have a new wardrobe, a new outfit. They must be ‘clothed with the power from on high’. But before that can happen, Jesus must go. So, he takes them to Bethany, blesses them, and his ascension from there marks the time of the end of his appearances. It also celebrates the completion of his mission. It is completed. Now is the time of the Spirit.

When Jesus began his public ministry, he was first invested with the power of the Spirit. In his baptism, Jesus received power and authority from the Father through the experience of the Spirit. It was in that power, ‘filled with the Holy Spirit’, that he began his public ministry. The Spirit marked the time of Jesus’ new beginning, his time of ministry, his time for reaching out to others and ministering to them with power.

This same process of investiture is repeated for the followers of Jesus. The only difference is that now Jesus sends the Spirit from on high. When the disciples receive that Spirit, like Jesus, they will be empowered to minister to others and exercise a new authority. This is the beginning of the Church: a beginning which is made possible only in the Spirit of God.

And we believe that, as the Spirit made the beginning of the Church, that same Spirit empowers the community of believers today. The Spirit makes a new beginning for us. That is why next week’s solemn feast of Pentecost is so important. It is not just a memory of the beginning of the Church, but a celebration of the Spirit at the heart of the Church today. Without the Spirit, we have to rely on our own resources. And we know that our own resources are not enough. We can minister to others in Jesus’ name only in the Spirit.

Each of us gathered here is part of the Church. Each of us has a different role to play in the power of the same Spirit. This is what Paul prays for the Christian community at Ephesus in the Second Reading: that they may be blessed with the Spirit of God.
Without it, the community dies. With the Spirit, we have life and power. As the great and solemn feast of Pentecost approaches, we pray that we might be clothed anew with power from on high. Without that, we can go nowhere. Like the Apostles before Pentecost, we find that we must stay put because we have no resources for ministry. But, clothed with the Spirit, we can go anywhere and do anything.

Glory be to him whose power working in us can do infinitely more than we can hope or imagine. Glory be to him from generation to generation in the Church and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. Amen.

I will come back to you and your hearts will rejoice.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Friends, Jesus shares his living presence with us and all creation. So, in confidence, let us bring our prayer for the needs of the world.

Petitions
We pray for the Church, Christ’s Body. May the people of God be filled with the wisdom and perception to proclaim the love of Christ in new ways.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the Church on the journey of synodality. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our minds and fill us with hope as we continue Christ’s work on earth.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for First Nations peoples of this land during National Reconciliation Week. May we be guided to speak the truth, promote healing and build harmony among all peoples of Australia.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who are working for climate justice. May they be strengthened and encouraged in their work of protecting our oceans, forests, rivers and skies and all creatures that inhabit them.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who are lonely, isolated or living with mental health issues due to the pandemic. May they receive the comfort and care they need and be able to flourish and participate fully in their communities.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all our loved ones who have died. May they be raised to eternal glory with Christ. May the memories of their goodness comfort us in our grieving and inspire us in our living.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
God of all ages, you are with us till the end of time. Hear these prayers we bring in the name of Jesus Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Alleluia, sing to Jesus. W C Dix/R H Prichard. 371
Be not afraid. B Dufford SJ. 449
Forth in the peace of Christ we go. J Quinn SJ/ O Gibbons. 495
Hail Redeemer, King divine! P Brennan/ W Flood. 390
Holy God, we praise your name. C Walworth/ German Melody. 411
Lord, you give the great commission. J Rowthorn/C V Taylor. 313
O Christ, the great foundation. T Lew/ S Wesley. 483

AOV1
Alleluia, sing to Jesus. W C Dix/R H Prichard. 191
Be not afraid. R Dufford SJ. 114

AOV2
Holy God, we praise your name. C Walworth/ German Melody. 129
The fullness of God. F Andersen MSC. 62

AOV4Kids
Look up, look down. K Sherman. 4
To know, worship and love. K Abba/J Abrahams. 22

CWB
Alleluia, sing to Jesus. William Chatteron Dix. 619
Christ, our Lord, the prince of ages. Anon. 644
Glorious in majesty. Jeff Cothran. 688
Hail, redeemer, king divine. Patrick Brennan CSsR. 703
Let the earth rejoice and sing, alleluia. Melvin Lloyd Farrell. 731
Rejoice, the Lord is king! Charles Wesley. 799

CWBII
A hymn of glory let us sing! Venerable Bede, tr. Elizabeth Rundle Charles. 372
Clap your hands all you nations. John L. Bell. 373
Glorious in majesty. Jeff Cothran. 374
Hail the day that sees him rise. Charles Wesley. 375
Let the earth rejoice and sing. Melvin Lloyd Farrell. 376
Rejoice! the Lord is king. Charles Wesley. 377
Christ, our Lord, the prince of ages. Anon. 399
Hail, redeemer, king divine! Patrick Brennan CSsR. 400
Alleluia! sing to Jesus! William Chatterton Dix. 449
Go, make of all disciples. Leon M. Adkins. 493

S&S1
Shouts of joy. Ken Canedo. 65

S&S2
God mounts his throne. Curtis Stephan, 256
Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 46: God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord./Alleluia.
Psalm 46: Robert Kreutz/ Joseph Gelineau SJ.CWB 311
Psalm 47: All peoples, clap your hands. Kevin Siddell. GA 39
Psalm 47(46): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 50
God mounts his throne: Paul Mason. PM pg. 38
God mounts his throne: Marty Haugen. LPC pg. 70

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Feel the power (TCS) [Gathering]
Till the end of time (TT) [Recessional]
Hearts on fire (Vs 2 & 3) (SHOF) [Recessional]
Introduction

Introduction

Our celebration of the solemn feast of Pentecost is more than just a reminiscence of what happened all those years ago in the Upper Room. Pentecost not only inaugurates a new era in the history of God’s covenant with his people but is also a celebration of the Spirit at the heart of the Church today: giving life to us, recreating us, renewing us.

Penitential Act

Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you breathed your Spirit on us to strengthen us.  
Lord, have mercy.

You are with us until the end of time.  
Christ, have mercy.

You lead us to the Father.  
Lord, have mercy.

Collect

*The oration*

O God, who by the mystery of today’s great feast sanctify your whole Church in every people and nation, pour out, we pray, the gifts of the Holy Spirit across the face of the earth and, with the divine grace that was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed, fill now once more the hearts of believers.

*Commentary by Gerard Moore*

This festal collect takes its inspiration from the day of Pentecost described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 2:1-3). It contains a sense of celebration that, across the breadth of the nations and the peoples, the Church is present. Indeed, the wholeness of the Church embraces this diversity, and is sanctified throughout this
An earthy richness. For a prayer emanating from seventh-century Rome, this collect has a remarkable sense of the extent of the Church beyond local and imperial constraints. The petition has an evangelical thrust. It seeks first up that the gifts of the Spirit be spread across the face of the earth. These gifts need not be restricted to the seven that are usually brought to the fore at the time of Confirmation and based in Is 11:2-3. They should also include those that were granted at that first Pentecost: such as the gift of tongues, preaching (Peter) and baptism. At that first outpouring, the people gathered were ‘cut to the heart’ (Acts 2:37). Our prayer is asking that God, through the Spirit, revisit the hearts of the baptised and fill them again with this same love and enthusiasm.

First Reading

Acts 2:1-11
Luke’s account of the events of the first Pentecost are redolent with images from Mt Sinai: the gathered Twelve echo the Twelve Tribes, powerful winds shaking the whole house echo the shaking of the whole mountain, and the presence of tongues of fire. It is clear that, for Luke, this is a new theophany; a new manifestation of God’s power and presence.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 103:1. 24. 29-31. 34. R. v. 30
Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth.

Originally one of Israel’s hymns of praise to God the Creator, today’s psalm was obviously chosen for today because of its mention of God’s spirit. But we last heard this Psalm at the Easter Vigil. God’s gift of the Spirit to recreate and renew us occurs not just once, but again and again, giving life to us here and now.

Second Reading

Romans 8:8-17
In today’s Second Reading, Paul outlines the difference that life in Christ makes. Because the Spirit of God dwells in us, then we too, have life because of the Spirit living in us. Just as the Spirit fills all of Creation, so too, all of us moved by the Spirit, are children of God.

Gospel Reading

John 14:15-16, 23-26
Jesus promises that the Father will send the Holy Spirit, literally to stand beside us, as our Advocate, and our teacher. To remind us of all that Jesus has taught us and to keep us close the Father.
Reflection

Seven weeks after the Feast of Passover, the Jewish people celebrated the Feast of Shavuot or the Feast of Weeks. And this feast celebrated the many previous manifestations of the Lord throughout their history. Especially those manifestations of the Lord which marked the Covenant between the Lord and his people. In the desert of Sinai, after they had departed from Egypt and had declared that they would follow the Lord’s way, the people, led by Moses, prepared for the manifestation of the Lord. At Sinai, the mountain, burning like a furnace, trembled; there was thunder and lightning.

When the Jewish faith was translated into the Greek speaking world, this Feast of Weeks became known as Pentecost. Because ‘pentecost’ is the Greek word meaning fifty. And so, seven weeks, or fifty days after one particular Feast of the Passover, when Jesus had died and was risen from the dead, the Apostles, led by Peter and together with Mary, were gathered in prayer. As we read: ‘the Apostles had all met in one room.’ There is a great sense of expectation at the beginning of this reading. It was as if they were expecting something to happen. And something did.

Like the signs and portents at Mount Sinai, at Jerusalem ‘they heard what sounded like a powerful wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire house in which they were sitting. And something that appeared to them like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gift of speech.’ But what is so significant about this gift of the Holy Spirit? Surely, all the Apostles could speak before this?

Certainly, the Apostles could speak before this. But now, the devout people ‘living in Jerusalem from every nation under heaven’ could hear the Apostles speaking in their own language.

After the Tower of Babel in the Book of Genesis, the peoples of the earth had been scattered all over the earth, and there was a confusion of language. But when this particular Pentecost day came around, ‘every nation under heaven’ is gathered in Jerusalem. And now, the confusion of language is gone. For the nations of the earth, gathered symbolically in Jerusalem, hear the Apostles preaching in their own language. All of them were able to hear and understand the marvels of God preached to them.

Pentecost inaugurates a new era in the history of God’s covenant with his people. Jesus, who was risen from the dead, is with us no more, ascended to his Father in heaven. The presence of Christ in the world is now through his Church. The Church on earth is now the sacrament or visible sign of Christ in the world. The Church is the Body of Christ. And the Holy Spirit is given to the Apostles so that they can be the Body of Christ.

Every year on this great Solemnity of Pentecost, we read this account from the Acts of the Apostles about the manifestation of the Holy Spirit fifty days after the death and resurrection of Jesus. But why?
Our celebration of Pentecost is not just a commemoration of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of the Church. It is also a celebration of that same Spirit which empowers the community of believers today. The Holy Spirit which is given as the gift and grace of God to the Church, to us, to be the Body of Christ in our world today.

And we, as members of that same Body of Christ, are called to that same mission. Baptised in the waters of new life, and confirmed with the Spirit in Confirmation, each and every one of us is sent, like the Apostles, to proclaim the marvellous acts of God to the world. This task is not one that is the special preserve of bishops and priests and deacons. All of us who are baptised are called to be the community of the Church. All of us who are baptised share in the task of proclaiming the saving acts of God to the world anew.

Our prayer this Pentecost is that the Holy Spirit might come upon us anew with the fire of God’s love and ignite us to renew the face of the earth. Not that the Spirit is absent. Jesus’ promise remains true: ‘I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.’ The Spirit is with us, but sometimes, our hearts and our minds are closed. This Pentecost, as we are called to be the presence of Christ in our world today, we pray:

Come Holy Spirit. Fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Friends, blessed with the gifts of the Spirit, let us bring in prayer the needs of our community and our world.

Petitions
We pray for the Church. May the People of God, bishops, priests, religious and laity be open to receive the Holy Spirit’s renewing power and proclaim, in our world at this time, all God’s marvellous works.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We especially pray for the Church in Australia – the Great South Land of the Holy Spirit. As we prepare for the second Assembly of the Plenary Council, may members listen and respond to the promptings of the ‘Advocate’.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all nations. May the Holy Spirit renew the face of the earth so that there is a new spirit of understanding and harmony among nations of the world and that they work together for the mutual benefit of all humanity.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all creation on this annual World Environment Day. May the Spirit of God, who hovered over the waters, recreate in all people a deep wonder and respect for all creation and the commitment to living in ways that minimise climate change.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all frontline healthcare workers in Australia and overseas. May their dedication be appreciated, and may they be strengthened and supported in their work, so they remain healthy, physically and mentally.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

We pray for all who will be confirmed in their parishes on this feast. Anointed with the Holy Spirit, may they be strengthened in experiencing their own personal Pentecost and be filled with the fire of God’s love in their hearts.
(Pause) Lord hear us  OR  We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
God of power, hear these prayers we make through the power of the Spirit who you sent forth and in the name of Jesus Christ.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Come down, O love divine. RF Littledale/RV Williams. 375
Come, Holy Ghost, creator, come. R Manus/ T Tallis. 376
Diverse in culture, nation, race. R Duck/ T Tallis. 520
Gather your people. B Hurd. 530
O breathe on me, O breath of God. E Hatch/ Gaelic Melody. 432
One bread, one body. J Foley SJ. 193
Send down the fire. M Haugen. 475
Song over the waters. M Haugen. 435
The Spirit of God. L Deiss. 185
There is one Lord. J Berthier. 346
Veni, Creator Spiritus. R Manus/ Gregorian Chant. 373
We are many parts. M Haugen. 523

AOV1
Come down, O love divine. RF Littledale/RV Williams. 118
Gather your people. B Hurd. 71
One bread, one body. J Foley SJ. 129
Send us as your blessing, Lord. C Walker. 181
Spirit come, transform us. G Norbet. 96
We are many parts. M Haugen. 86

AOV2
Come now, Holy Spirit. P Kearney. 87
Send down the fire. M Haugen. 164
Spirit blowing through creation. M Haugen. 51
There is one Lord. O Alstott. 148

AOV4Kids
The Spirit lives to set us free. D Lundy. 95

AOVNG
Come Holy Spirit. Monica O’Brien. 27
Come, Holy Spirit. John Angotti. 28
Come O Holy Spirit. John Burland. 30
Holy Spirit come. Michael Mangan. 67
Send out your Spirit, Lord. John Angotti. 111
Veni, Creator spiritus. John Angotti. 141

CWB
Come down, O love divine. Bianco da Siena. 653
Come, Holy Spirit, live in us. St Ambrose. 649
Come Holy Ghost, Creator, come. Rabanus Maurus. 654
Filled with the Spirit’s power, with one accord. John Raphael Peacey. 676  
Holy Spirit, Lord of love. William Dalrymple MacLagan. 708  
O breathe on me, Breath of God. Edwin Hatch. 758  
The Spirit of the Lord. Huub Oosterhuis. 834

CWBII  
Holy Spirit, Lord divine. Tr. Peter J. Scagnelli. 379  
Holy Spirit, Lord divine. Tr. Peter J. Scagnelli. 380  
Come down, O love divine. Bianco da Siena, tr. Richard Frederick Littledale. 381  
Come Holy Ghost, Creator, come. Rabanus Maurus. 382  
Gifts of the Spirit. Christopher Willcock SJ. 383  
Filled with the Spirit’s power. John R. Peacey. 385  
Holy Spirit, come, confirm us. Brian Foley. 386  
Holy Spirit, Lord of love. William Dalrymple MacLagan. 387  
The Spirit of God rests upon me. Lucien Deiss, CSSp. 388  
Send down the fire of your justice. Marty Haugen. 389  
Veni Sancte Spiritus. Taizé Community. 391  
O breathe on me, O breath of God. Edwin Hatch. 564

S&S1  
Holy Spirit. Ken Canedo. 116  
One Spirit, one church. Maryanne Quinlivan, OSU/Rabanus Maurus. 132  
Send Out Your Spirit. Jesse Manibusan. 79

S&S2  
Come, Holy Ghost. Rabanus Maurus. 326  
Lord, send out your Spirit. Craig Colson. 275  
We wait for you. Tom Booth/Tammy Booth. 325

Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy  
Vigil Mass  
Psalm 103: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth./Alleluia.  
Psalm 103: Percy Jones. CWB 315  
Mass during the day  
Psalm 103: Lord, send out your Spirit and renew the face of the earth./Alleluia.  
Psalm 103. Kathleen Boschetti MSC. CWB pg. 316  
Psalm 104 (103): Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 51  
Lord, send out your Spirit: Paul Mason. PM pg. 82  
Lord, send out your Spirit: Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 77

Music selections by Michael Mangan  
Send out your spirit (FWS) Based on Ps 103/104 [Gathering, Gifts]  
Holy Spirit of fire (SHOF, CWB II) [Gathering, Gifts]  
Holy Spirit, come (TCS) [Gifts, Communion]  
Come, O Come, Holy Spirit (TWB) [Gifts, Communion]  
Hearts on fire (Vs 2 & 3) (SHOF) [Recessional]  
Holy Spirit rock (TT/SYJ) [Recessional]
Introduction
While all human language struggles to speak meaningfully about the mystery of God at the best of times, it is particularly acute on today's solemn feast of the Most Holy Trinity. Images of three and one are not all that helpful. Perhaps this mystery is not something to be explained so much as to catch a glimpse of here and there: in the beauty and wonder of Creation, in art and in poetry, in song and in science.

Penitential Act
Use one of the *Roman Missal* texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you draw us to the Father.
Lord, have mercy.

You gave us your Spirit.
Christ, have mercy.

You make us one in God.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
*The oration*
God our Father, who by sending into the world the Word of truth and the Spirit of sanctification made known to the human race your wondrous mystery, grant us, we pray, that in professing the true faith, we may acknowledge the Trinity of eternal glory and adore your Unity, powerful in majesty.

Commentary by Gerard Moore
The feast of the Trinity was first celebrated early in the second millennium, and so the Mass prayers have a slightly different feel to those found in the earliest sources. Our current prayer for Trinity Sunday is even more contemporary, as it was first created for the reform of the Missal after Vatican II. Its most unusual feature is to name God as ‘Father’. The ancient prayers are most reserved about this form of
appellation. Here, it identifies the divine Trinity as Father, Word and Spirit, whereas normally the language of Father would be set with that of Son as a more complete filial metaphor. In this, the prayer signals the difficulty of speaking about the triune God! The sense of the prayer highlights God’s self-revelation as triune through the incarnation of the Word and the gift of the Spirit. The response sought from God is that we profess the mystery and adore. This is a most wonderful reminder of the nature of God as revealed and sits well at the conclusion of the celebrations of the Paschal mystery and the power of the Spirit in our midst.

First Reading

Proverbs 8:22-31

God’s Wisdom reveals her origins in this poetic reflection on Creation: before ever there was anything else, Wisdom was born, by the Lord’s side, ever at play, delighting and laughing at God’s side.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 8:4-9. R, v, 2

Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!

This psalm follows the pattern of a classic hymn of praise. Beginning with an invitation to praise God, the reasons why we praise God follow: the splendour of God’s creation and the extraordinary dignity given to humanity by God.

Second Reading

Romans 5:1-5

This short reading is a reflection by Paul on the many gifts of God given to us through Jesus Christ our Lord. It concludes with the most beautiful image of the love of God being poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Reading

John 16:12-15

Overt Trinitarian references in the Gospels are rare – today’s Gospel Reading comes close. Jesus, in talking to the disciples about the time when he will no longer be with them, promises the Spirit who will glorify Jesus, reminding them of all Jesus taught them, who in turn received all he has from the Father.
Reflection

Some years ago, while reading one of the Saturday papers, I came across an article where famous people were asked to name the one book they have read which has had the most profound influence on their lives. And it set me to thinking: Which book has changed my life? When I had thought about it for a while, the answer was easy. And no, it was not the Bible. It was C. S. Lewis’s “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.” It was read to us in Grade 5.

“The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” is actually part of a series of seven books written by C. S. Lewis. The series of seven books is known as The Chronicles of Narnia. Perhaps you have read them. You might have seen the movie adaptations which began to appear some years ago. While many consider them to be children’s books, they are in fact, some of the most powerful books of poetic theology that I know. I have lost count of the number of times that I have read these books. I tend to read them – all seven – whenever I go on retreat. And, I never fail to get something out of them. Some fresh insight into God’s relationship with us.

In “The Magician’s Nephew”, the first of these Chronicles of Narnia, the Great Lion, Aslan, creates the world of Narnia:

In the darkness something was happening at last. A voice had begun to sing. It was very far away and Digory found it hard to decide from what direction it was coming. Sometimes it seemed to come from all directions at once. Sometimes he almost thought it was coming out of the earth beneath them. Its lower notes were deep enough to be the voice of the earth herself. There were no words. There was hardly even a tune. But it was, beyond comparison, the most beautiful noise he had ever heard.1

A song too beautiful for words…

We have long struggled to find words that depict the work of God’s creation. Different images have been used; different metaphors employed. C. S. Lewis employs one image – that of the world being sung into being.

Today’s First Reading uses a different image. In the Book of Proverbs, the creation of the world is described almost in architectural terms. God builds a house in a vast barren domain that he first marks out and makes clear. But alongside this picture of God who creates the world by building it, the author of the Book of Proverbs provides us with another image.

While God is creating, the Wisdom of God was beside him. At the beginning of this reading, Wisdom is God’s artisan, at his side. An associate of the Creator, his co-worker and inspiration.

Later on in the reading, Holy Wisdom paints herself as the child happy and proud to be with her parent at work. If you have ever watched a small child who is together with their parent doing something, you have some idea of the affection and closeness between parent and child. Of course, what binds them together is love.

And love, I think, is the key to understanding the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity which we celebrate this Sunday. Just as we have struggled to find words that depict the work of God’s creation, we have long struggled to understand the Trinity. We are all familiar with various ideas of three and one, three into one, one not three, and so on. But these, for the most part, are unhelpful. For God is not a set square. And how God exists as both one and three is a mystery. Not just something that we can work out, like a puzzle, if we try hard enough. No. It is truly something which is beyond our human comprehension.

So, instead of trying to understand the mystery of the Trinity, if we try simply to catch a glimpse of the mystery of the Trinity as the overflowing love of God, perhaps we can grasp something of it. This love of God, which as St Paul reminds us in today’s Second Reading, “has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us.” And the love of God has been poured into our hearts that we might give praise to God. There is nothing much that we can do in return for God for his great love for us. Perhaps all we can do is to give praise to God’s holy name. And so, I think the image of the song is an apt one. A great song of praise to God whose love for us is strong and faithful.

Just as Aslan, the Great Lion of Narnia sings his world into being, so too, out of his great love, the Father sings all creation into being. And this song reaches its high-point when the Father, at last, sings the Son into being. The Father can sing no greater song than he sings in his Son. And the music we hear is no less than the Holy Spirit.

And like all good songs, we find that we want to join in, and sing along. Years after we first hear the song, we find ourselves whistling the tune. And it is truly a tune we can’t get out of our heads, or out of our hearts for that matter. Nothing more sublime nor joyful can be sung in heaven or on earth than to love God, and to then love others because of God, and in God. The art and the science; the melody and music; the rhythm and beat of this song are given to us by the Holy Spirit.

Christ, our cantor and singing master, sang from the beginning and will eternally intone this canticle of faithful and endless love. Then, all of us, with all our might shall sing after him, here below as well as in the midst of the choir of God’s glory.

Thus, true and honest love is the common chant that we must all know in order to join the choir of the angels and saints in the Kingdom of God.

And this is why we celebrate this Solemn Feast of the Most Holy Trinity. This great feast, celebrated the Sunday after Pentecost, is a majestic song of praise and worship to the Father who raised his Son from the dead and brought him into glory where he reigns with the Holy Spirit whom he has sent to us.

This is our song, too beautiful for words…
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction

Friends, God has crowned human beings with glory and honour. So let us pray that we may cooperate in loving and protecting all God’s handiwork.

Petitions

We pray for our Church leaders. May the Spirit of Truth guide them as they lead all people to grow in the truth and wholeness promised by Christ.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for persons in our world whose basic human rights are denied. May civic leaders be guided in wisdom to uphold the God-given unique dignity of each person, regardless of their faith, race or status.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for Plenary Council members. May they be guided to listen and discern the many things that Christ has to say to the Church in Australia through the second Assembly.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our parish community. May the love of God poured into our hearts move us to deeply respect and listen to each other in our gatherings as we prepare for the Synod in 2023.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for our earth, the work of God’s hands. May we take urgent and effective action to limit climate change and protect all creation. May we dare to hope that the actions we take will make a difference.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for persons in the world and in our community enduring untold suffering due to the pandemic. May they receive the healing care and comfort they need.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion

O God, how wonderful your name through all the earth.
Hear these prayers we make to your glory, Father, Son and Spirit.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

**GA**
All creatures of our God and king. W Draper/ R V Williams. 395
Baptised in water. M Seward/ Gaelic Melody. 179
Firmly I believe and truly. J H Newman/ Sir E Elgar. 382
For the beauty of the earth. F Pierpont/ D Evans. 427
Forth in the peace of Christ we go. J Quinn SJ/ O Gibbons. 495
Glory and praise to our God. D Schutte. 417
Holy God, we praise your name. C Walworth/ German melody. 411
Holy Father, God of might. R Connolly. 424
Lord, you give the great commission. J Rowthorn/C V Taylor. 313
Now thank we all our God. C Winkworth. 425
Praise God from whom all blessings flow. T Ken/ L Bourgeois. 384
Today I awake. J Bell. 535

**AOV1**
For the beauty of the earth. F Pierpont/ C Kocher. 123
Glory and praise to our God. D Schutte. 16
Now thank we all our God. C Winkworth. 189
Praise God from whom all blessings flow. T Ken/ L Bourgeois. 10

**AOV2**
Holy God, we praise your name. C Walworth/ German Melody. 129

**AOV4Kids**
Father bless us. R Mann. 38

**CWB**
Father of mercy, God of consolation. James Quinn SJ.. 670
Firmly I believe and truly. John Henry Newman. 677
Holy God, we praise your name. Ignaz Franz. 710
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty. Reginald Heber. 712
I bind myself to God today. Attr. St. Patrick, tr. Cecil Frances Alexander. 719
Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Thomas Ken/ Ave colenda trinitas. 788

**CWBII**
I believe in God the Father. Michael Perry. 392
Sing praise to our Creator. Omer Westendorf. 393
Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Thomas Ken, tr. John David Chambers. 394
Firmly I believe and truly. John Henry Newman. 486
Go, make of all disciples. Leon M. Adkins. 493
Holy God, we praise thy name. Ignaz Franz, tr. Clarence Alphonsus Walworth. 504

**S&S2**
Holy, holy, holy. Reginald Heber. 333
O Lord, our God. Curtis Stephan. 247
Psalms Selected by Chris deSilva and Angela McCarthy

Psalm 8: O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name in all the earth!
Psalm 8: Noel Ancell. CWB 320
Psalm 8: O Lord, our God, how wonderful: Noel Ancell. GA 19
Psalm 8: Jenny O’Brien. JOBC pg. 52
O Lord, our God, how wonderful your name. Tony Alonso. LPC pg. 80

Music selections by Michael Mangan

Hearts on fire (SHOF) [Gathering, Recessional]
Maybe we can imagine (TWB) [Gifts, Communion]
Introduction
The greatest gift which God gives to the Church is the Eucharist – the body and blood of his Risen Son, Jesus. As we are fed and nourished with so great a gift, do we allow ourselves to be truly transformed into the Body of Christ, bringing life to the world in which we live? During this Refugee Week we could carefully consider the needs of all displaced people around the world. What can we do?

Penitential Act
Use one of the Roman Missal texts or this optional litany form:

Lord Jesus, you become food for us to eat.
Lord, have mercy.

You strength us for life in the Spirit.
Christ, have mercy.

You make us one with the Father.
Lord, have mercy.

Collect
The oration
O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament have left us a memorial of your Passion, grant us, we pray, so to revere the sacred mysteries of your Body and Blood that we may always experience in ourselves the fruits of your redemption.

Commentary by Gerard Moore
Our collect has been in the manuscript tradition from the earliest times of the celebration of this feast and betrays some of its medieval predilections. The ‘wonderful sacrament’ which is also a ‘memorial’ of the passion is the celebration of the Eucharist itself. Piety somewhat confusedly, though customarily, also refers to the consecrated Bread and Wine as the Sacrament. The sacred mysteries here is the presence of Christ in the consecrated bread and cup. The question remains what
it means to ‘revere’ this mystery. The Eucharistic liturgy would infer that the highest reverence to be made to the Body and Blood of the Lord is to eat and drink of it at the table of the Lord. The prayer is not so clear on this, and the thirteenth century context would dictate that it refers more to reverence by adoration and spiritual communion. The petition links reference to an experience of the fruits of God’s redeeming actions. There is in this not so much a dwelling on the passion of Christ, particularly the sense of blood, but a rejoicing that the power of the redemption is alive in us.

First Reading
Genesis 14:18-20
Upon returning after rescuing his nephew Lot, Abram is blessed by Melchizedek the priest-king of Salem, invoking the God Most High. Melchizedek blesses Abram with bread and wine.

Responsorial Psalm
Psalm 109:1-4. R. v. 4
You are a priest forever, in the line of Melchizedek.

Today’s psalm is no doubt chosen because of its reference to Melchizedek. It is one of the royal psalms, associated with King David and rich in images of enthronement. The psalm also establishes a father-son relationship between God and the king.

Second Reading
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
Today’s Second Reading is considered by scholars to be the earliest account of the institution of the Eucharist. In calling the Corinthian church back to right order, Paul reminds them of what the communal meal is about. Not gluttony and drunkenness, but as a memorial of the Lord Jesus.

Gospel Reading
Luke 9:11-17
By taking five loaves and two fish, blessing them, breaking the bread and sharing it, Jesus feeds five thousand. And there is enough left over to fill twelve baskets. When we are fed by Jesus, especially in the Eucharist, there is always more than enough to satisfy our every need.
Reflection

In the Bible, the figure of Melchizedek is somewhat mysterious. He appears only once in the Old Testament in the brief episode which we read in today’s First Reading. We know little about him. We are told that he was king of Salem, but we do not really know where Salem was. Some think Salem is Jerusalem, but we are far from certain. We are also told that Melchizedek is also a priest of God Most High who offers bread and wine.

Indeed, it is because of this that we still remember him today. In our First Eucharistic Prayer, we ask the Father to look with favour upon our offerings and accept them as he once accepted the offering of your high priest Melchizedek. Bread and wine. Offered and blessed.

In today’s Second Reading, St Paul is also concerned with bread and wine that is offered and shared. In writing his First Letter to the Corinthians, Paul is recounting the events of the Last Supper. How Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and shared it: ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.’ And then, in the same way he took the cup after supper: ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood…whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.’ Bread and wine. Offered and blessed.

It is the bread and wine offered by Jesus at the Last Supper, which is our Eucharist. But it is more than just bread and wine. For, in the Eucharist, we are nourished with the body and blood of the Risen Christ.

From its very beginning, the Church has gathered for this breaking of the bread. This is perhaps not so surprising. The Last Supper was not the only meal Jesus shared. Many, many times in the New Testament we find Jesus sharing a meal with others. These meals, shared with the poor and outcast, were one of the signs of the coming of the Kingdom. A sign of welcome and inclusion.

And the meal as a sign of the Kingdom reaches a highpoint in the Last Supper. At the Last Supper, Jesus interprets his death as a death for others. This death for others is symbolised in the breaking and sharing of bread, and the pouring and sharing of wine. And could we forget the meals Jesus shares after the resurrection? Perhaps the most famous takes place at Emmaus, where the disciples recognised Jesus in the breaking of the bread.

And it is our faith that we recognise Jesus as present in the breaking of the bread. Of all the ways in which he is present in the Church and in the prayer of the Church, it is our faith that Jesus Christ is truly present in the Eucharistic species of bread and wine. This stems from the words of Jesus at the Last Supper: ‘This is my body…this is my blood.’ By repeating the words of institution, the Church remembers Jesus in a way which renders him present. The pronouncement effects what it says. This real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist has long been taught by the Church. And the Church has explained this presence through the doctrine of transubstantiation. While the outward appearances of bread and wine remain, their substance is changed into the body and blood of Christ. And because the action of Christ is an action once and for all, then the presence of Christ in the Eucharist is once and for all. Permanent.
But it is not only the person of Jesus who is present in the Eucharist. His saving work is also present. In this way, we can talk of the eucharist as the memorial of his sacrifice on the cross. The sacrificial understanding of the eucharist comes from the words of Jesus at the Last Supper: ‘this is the blood of the new covenant.’ In days gone by the covenant, or mutual relationship between God and his people, was solemnised with ritual sacrifice in which both parties to the covenant shared.

But, in the death of Jesus, a new covenant is sealed. In the sacrificial self-giving of Jesus on the Cross, and the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, God shows his steadfast and faithful love once and for all. The Church is commissioned to ‘Do this in remembrance of me.’ But this remembering is not mere memory. It is a remembering which renders present the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross under the sacramental signs of bread and wine. The love which is present in the self-offering of Jesus on the cross, and the return of that love by the Father in the resurrection of Jesus is available to us through our celebration of the Eucharist. It is available to us because our own self-offering is joined to the self-offering of the Son and is taken up in his self-offering.

Our celebration of the Eucharist is also an expression of Church unity. Just as one loaf is broken into many from which we all share, so the eucharist is an expression of our unity as Church, particularly our unity with our bishop who is united with the other bishops and with the Pope. We express this unity in our Eucharistic Prayer when we pray for Francis our Pope, and Peter our bishop. But this unity is more than just unity with the Pope and bishops. It is a unity with all of our brothers and sisters. The unity which is expressed in Eucharist should overflow into concern and solicitude for all the other churches, especially those who are poor. The Eucharist is indeed bread for the life of the world.

This is perhaps the heart of the mystery of the Eucharist. This solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ is one of those feasts which seem to highlight our Catholic identity. In the past, we had grand and elaborate celebrations for the feast of Corpus Christi. Processions of the Blessed Sacrament through the streets. Masses of flowers; bank upon bank of candles. Great pageantry.

We do not do this so much anymore. Why not? Yes, our times have changed. As our society has become more pluralistic and less religious, such outward shows seem less appropriate. But our faith has not changed. We still believe that the Eucharist is the body and blood of the risen Jesus under the sign or sacrament of bread and wine. But, perhaps more than ever, the Eucharist is the food and drink of the disciples of Jesus. We are fed, and we are nourished with this food and drink so that we might be the Body of Christ in our world today. Truly, we are fed with the Eucharist so that we might be the life of the world.
Prayer of the Faithful

Introduction
Friends, Jesus made the crowds welcome and talked to them about the kingdom of God. In a spirit of hospitality, let us pray for the needs of our world and our community.

Petitions
We pray for Pope Francis and all our Church leaders; clergy, lay and religious. Like Melchizedek, may they continue to serve the people of God with faithful and joyful hearts.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for refugees and asylum seekers as we begin Refugee Week. May world communities, and their leaders, welcome persons seeking a safe place to call home and uphold their right to decent living conditions.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for the persons in our world who go hungry every day. May our sharing at the Lord’s table change us, so we become ever more compassionate. May we share generously with persons who are poor and hungry - not just from our own excess.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for children, and their families, who will be receiving Holy Communion for the first time at this Eucharist. May they celebrate the Eucharist in joy and know the close friendship of Jesus in their hearts. May this parish community grow in our hunger to remain in Christ, and for Christ to remain in us.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for Plenary Council members attending the forthcoming Council and the committees and support people working hard in the background. May their hearts and minds remain open to receive the Holy Spirit in all their prayer, listening and preparation. (Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

We pray for loved ones who have gone before us. May they know the joy of Christ’s presence forever in the heavenly banquet.
(Pause) Lord hear us OR We pray to the Lord.

Conclusion
God of hospitality and abundance, you fill us with living bread. Let us not be satisfied until it is shared, through the power of the Spirit and in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ.
Amen.
Music selections by Alessio Loiacono and Chris deSilva

GA
Alleluia, sing to Jesus. W C Dix/R H Prichard. 371
By your priestly power, O risen Lord. J McAuley/ R Connolly. 386
Christians, let us love one another. A Nigro SJ and M Foltz SNJM/ French melody. 206
Gift of finest wheat. O Westendorf/ R E Kreutz 191
I am the bread of life. S Toolan RSM. 204
In remembrance of you. C Willcock SJ. 355
Song of the Lord’s supper. M Joncas. 322
Take and eat. J Quinn SJ/ M Joncas. 198
The song of the supper. J Bell. 385
This body will be given for you. C Willcock SJ. 387

AOV1
Gather us together. O. Alstott. 111
I am the bread of life. S Toolan RSM. 49
In the breaking of the bread. B Hurd. 58
We remember. M Haugen. 81
When we eat this bread. M Joncas. 99

AOV2
As grains of wheat. L Rosania. 153
Bread broken, wine shared. R Horner. 155
Feed us now. R Mann. 93
Let us break bread together. American Folk Hymn. 98
May we come to know the Lord. D R Gagnon. 19
Table of plenty. D Schutte. 20
We gather here, O God. O Alstott/ C Smith CFC. 99

AOV4Kids
For the journey. G Holmes. 128
Take and eat. M Russell. 114
The table of God. F P O’Brien. 8
To live like Jesus. M O’Brien/ D Pudney. 160
We live and love your word. K Bates SM. 118

AOVNG
I am the bread of life. Tom Kaczmarek. 72
Jesus, bread of life. Amanda McKenna. 80

CWB
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<tr>
<td>PFS</td>
<td>Psalms for Feasts and Seasons; Revised and Augmented Full Music Edition Christopher Willcock. Published by Collins Dove. All music copyright © Christopher Willcock SJ 1977, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPSF</td>
<td>The Lyric Psalter: Revised Grail Lectionary Psalms, Solemnities Feasts and Other Occasions. Music by Tony Alonso and Marty Haugen. Published by GIA Publications, Inc. © GIA 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPC</td>
<td>The Lyric Psalter: Revised Grail Lectionary Psalms, Year C Music by Tony Alonso and Marty Haugen. Published by GIA Publications, Inc. © GIA 2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWB</td>
<td>Catholic Worship Book I Published by Collins and E J Dwyer 1985 © Compilation the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne 1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CWB II</td>
<td>Catholic Worship Book II Published by Morning Star Publishing 2016 © Compilation the Australian Episcopal Conference of the Australian Catholic Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOV1</td>
<td>As One Voice Volume 1. Published by Willow Connection Pty Ltd. © Willow Connection Pty Ltd. 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOV2</td>
<td>As One Voice Volume 2. Published by Willow Connection Pty Ltd. © Willow Connection Pty Ltd.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOVNG</td>
<td>As One Voice The Next Generation. © 2009 Willow Publishing Pty Ltd. Email <a href="mailto:info@willowpublishing.com.au">info@willowpublishing.com.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;S1</td>
<td>Spirit &amp; Song 1 ©Division of OCP. <a href="http://www.spiritandsong.com/ss">www.spiritandsong.com/ss</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S&amp;S2</td>
<td>Spirit &amp; Song 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>Gather Australia. ©1995 by NLMC Publications and GIA Publications Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JOBC</td>
<td>Psalms for the Sundays of Year C (Jenny O’Brien)</td>
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Mass Settings:
Recommended by the Australian Catholics Bishops Conference

Mass of St Francis (Paul Taylor – Archbishop’s Office for Evangelisation. This Mass can be downloaded from www.cam.org.au; Orders: Central Catholic Bookshop, Melbourne)
Mass of Our Lady, Help of Christians (Richard Connolly – Publisher: CanticaNova)
Missa Magis (Christopher Willcock – Publisher: Oregon Catholic Press, www.ocp.org)
Mass of Christ the Redeemer (Bernard Kirkpatrick – Publisher: Oregon Catholic Press)

FURTHER MATERIAL by Michael Mangan

General Gathering Songs: (* Masses with Children)
Come, Live Life LCC
Gather in Jesus’ Name LCC
Hearts on Fire SHOF
Shout Out with Joy (Ps 100) LCC
Sing New Songs of Joy FWS/CWBII
We Rejoice (PS 122) SYJ
Come Together* GLM/SYJ
Celebrate, Let’s Celebrate* TWB
Come Gather* GLM
Stand Up* SHOF
Let the Children Come* LCC

General Preparation Of Gifts Songs
Blessed be God LCC
We Bring These Gifts LCC

General Communion Songs (* Masses with Children)
Given for You* SHOF/CWBII
In Memory of Me* LCC
In the Body of Christ LCC
One Body in Christ TWB
One Body, One People SHOF
Take and Eat TT
The Bread of Life SHOF
We Come, We Come TWB
We Remember You LCC

General Recessional Notes (* Masses with Children)
Chosen and Sent LCC
Do What Jesus Did* GLM
Hearts on Fire SHOF
Let's Go*     TWB
Live God's Dream    LCC
Love God, Love Each Other*   LCC
Sing New Songs of Joy   FWS/CWBII
Taking it to the Streets   TWB
Till the End of Time*   TT
True Colours Shine*   TCS

COLLECTION CODES
LCC  Let the Children Come   (2017)
DOM  Doors of Mercy   (2016)
GLM  1,2,3, God Loves Me   (2014)
TWB  This We Believe   (2012)
MJC  Mass Jubilee/Celebration   (2011)
TWML  That We Might Live   (2010)
STAR  The Star   (2007)
TCS  True Colours Shine   (2007)
TT  This is the Time   (2005)
FWS  Forever I Will Sing   (2004)
SHOF  Setting Hearts on Fire   (2001)
SYJ  Sing Your Joy   (1993-97)

Come sing out our joy to God.
Ps 95:1
Our Contributors

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Dr Chris deSilva is a liturgical musician whose activities include singing, composing, choir direction and parish music ministry. He has served the parish of Bedford/Inglewood in Perth for more than thirty years and is currently involved in both the music ministry and the RCIA process there. He has been the Musical Director of the Julian Singers in Perth for more than fifteen years. As Music Consultant to the Perth Archdiocesan Centre for Liturgy, he supports parish musicians and facilitates music workshops for them. His original compositions are available from his web site, www.laudamus.com.au

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Anthony Doran is priest of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, currently Parish Priest of Strathmore. Prior to entering the seminary, Anthony was a secondary school teacher, teaching in country and suburban schools in Victoria. Ordained in 2003, he has held various appointments in suburban and country parishes. He completed further studies in Liturgy, focussing on the Rite of Dedication of a Church. He has written for Liturgy News, The Summit and The Australian Journal of Liturgy. He is the immediate Past President of the Australian Academy of Liturgy, and a member of Societas Liturgica, the international society for liturgical study and renewal. Since 2017, he has been a member of the Board of the Catholic Development Fund for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. He has undertaken the Foundations of Directorship Course of the Australian Institute of Company Directors is an Affiliate Member of the AICD.

Alessio Loiacono
Alessio Loiacono is a teacher in the Catholic school system in the Archdiocese of Perth, an organist and is also the Music Field Officer for the Centre for Liturgy- Archdiocese of Perth. He also facilitates workshops for Catholic Education Western Australia. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education (UWA) and a Masters of Religious Education (Notre Dame). Away from music, Alessio enjoys going for walks, coffee and going to the movies.

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Michael Mangan
Michael Mangan is a composer, educator and liturgist who is based in Brisbane. A former specialist music teacher, he has composed over 250 pieces which are widely used in Liturgy and Religious Education programs in schools and parishes throughout Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA. Michael tours extensively each year presenting concerts and workshops for students, teachers and parish musicians and speaks and performs at conferences and events throughout Australasia and North America. His music is published in North America by GIA/WLP. Michael holds a BA (Mus), a Grad Dip Ed (Arts Ed) and an M. Theol (Liturgical Studies). He is a member of the Australian Academy of Liturgy, National Chair of the Australian Pastoral Musicians Network, and Leader of Music Ministry at All Saints Catholic Parish in Brisbane. In addition to his commitments with Litmus Productions, Michael works as Liturgical Education Consultant with Liturgy Brisbane.
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Dr Angela McCarthy is an adjunct senior lecturer in theology at The University of Notre Dame Australia, Fremantle campus. Her first degree from Sydney University included work in Biblical Studies and Fine Arts. After time spent rearing a family, Angela resumed secondary teaching and further studies in theology and education in 1993 at Notre Dame and was awarded her PhD in 2007. Since then, she has completed a further Research Masters in Theology in the field of Scripture, art and theology. Angela has published in the areas of liturgy, icons, art and theology, liturgical music, educational practice and theological aesthetics. She is the former editor of the Australian Journal of Liturgy, a member of the Australian Academy of Liturgy, Chairperson of the Mandoz Art Award, a member of the Chamber of Arts and Culture WA and the Fellowship of Biblical Studies, and the editor of Pastoral Liturgy.

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Russell McDougall C.S.C, is a lecturer in theology and Associate Campus Minister at Kings College, Pennsylvania. Previously he served as Rector of Tantur Ecumenical Institute in Jerusalem. He received his BA and MDiv from the University of Notre Dame US and the SSL from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome. Ordained a priest of the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1991 he served the Church in East Africa for many years, both as curate of Holy Cross Parish in Nairobi, Kenya, and as academic dean and lecturer in Old Testament at Queen of Apostles Seminary in Jinja, Uganda. He has also been a Fellow of the Lonergan Institute at Boston College. Ecumenical and interfaith relationships have been an important part of Fr Russ’ priestly ministry.

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Tom Ryan
Tom Ryan is a Marist priest living in Sydney, Australia. He has been involved in tertiary theological education and adult faith formation for many years and held honorary positions in theology at the University of Notre Dame Australia and the Australian Catholic University. Since 2005, he has been a Judge on the Regional Marriage Tribunals in both Brisbane and Sydney. Apart from chapters in books, he has published numerous articles in theological journals both national and international. His recent book is Shame, Hope and the Church: A Journey with Mary (Strathfield, NSW: St. Pauls, 2020).

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Joe Tedesco has been involved in tutoring and teaching theology for over ten years at the University of Notre Dame Australia and at the Centre for Faith Enrichment in the Archdiocese of Perth. He completed Masters level studies focusing on scripture and Christian anthropology. He recently completed a thesis in the area of Wisdom Literature and its relationship to moral theology.

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Artwork

This issue also includes artwork by Tricia Walsh. Her beautiful and clear graphical style is published in two books, *Graphics and Prayers for Feasts and Seasons* and *Graphics and Prayers for Ordinary Time*, both published by John Garratt Publishing. © Used with permission of the publisher.