

Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



Issue 20
6th - 9th
April 2023

VERITAS

HOLY WEEK

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

Parish Priest

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Mass Times

Monday - NO Mass

Tuesday & Thursday
8.00am

Wednesday & Friday
5:30pm

Saturday - 9:00am
Vigil - 5:pm

Sunday - 8:00am, 10:00am,
5:00pm

Reconciliation

Saturday
4pm - 4.45pm

Adoration - Holy Hour

Friday's 6pm - 7pm

Pray the Rosary

Before 10am Mass on Sundays

'He is risen'



'Alleluia'

As we move through Holy Week to the special services of the Easter Triduum we have much to pray that the 'extremes of Easter speak to our times. This year has revealed the depth of our need as persons and as members of the human race'.

However, 'we believe that we live in the presence of the risen Christ who has experienced the depths of our betrayals and misery and has risen to offer us a vision of a world beyond human possibility and our imagining'.

PASSION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER THURSDAY OF THE TRIUMM

FIRST READING



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

A reading from the Book of Exodus

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 'This month is to be the first of all the others for you, the first month of your year. Speak to the whole community of Israel and say, "On the tenth day of this month each man must take an animal from the flock, one for each family; one animal for each household. If the household is too small to eat the animal, a man must join with his neighbour, the nearest to his house, as the number of persons requires. You must take into account what each can eat in deciding the number for the animal. It must be an animal without blemish, a male one year old; you may take it from either sheep or goats. You must keep it till the fourteenth day of the month when the whole assembly of the community of Israel shall slaughter it between the two evenings. Some of the blood must then be taken and put on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses where it is eaten. That night, the flesh is to be eaten, roasted over the fire; it must be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. You shall eat like this: with a girdle round your waist, sandals on your feet, a staff in your hand. You shall eat it hastily: it is a Passover in honour of the Lord. That night, I will go through the land of Egypt and strike down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, man and beast alike, and I shall deal out punishment to all the gods of Egypt, I am the Lord. The blood shall serve to mark the houses that you live in. When I see the blood I will pass over you and you shall escape the destroying plague when I strike the land of Egypt. This day is to be a day of remembrance for you, and you must celebrate it as a feast in the Lord's honour. For all generations you are to declare it a day of festival, for ever.'"

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 115:12-13, 15-18

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

How can I repay the Lord
for his goodness to me?
The cup of salvation I will raise;
I will call on the Lord's name.

O precious in the eyes of the Lord
is the death of his faithful.
Your servant, Lord, your servant am I;
you have loosened my bonds.

A thanksgiving sacrifice I make:
I will call on the Lord's name.
My vows to the Lord I will fulfil
before all his people.

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

SECOND READING

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn passed on to you: that on the same night that he was betrayed, the

Cont....Lord Jesus took some bread, and thanked God for it and broke it, and he said, 'This is my body, which is for you; do this as a memorial of me.' In the same way he took the cup after supper, and said, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink it, do this as a memorial of me.' Until the Lord comes, therefore, every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are proclaiming his death.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Gospel Acclamation: John 13:34

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

I give you a new commandment:

love one another as I have loved you.

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

Gospel: John 13:1-15

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

It was before the festival of the Passover, and Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to pass from this world to the Father. He had always loved those who were his in the world, but now he showed how perfect his love was.

They were at supper, and the devil had already put it into the mind of Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray him. Jesus knew the hour that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garment and, taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'At the moment you do not know what I am doing, but later you will understand.' 'Never!' said Peter 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus replied, 'If I do not wash you, you can have nothing in common with me.' 'Then, Lord,' said Simon Peter 'not only my feet, but my hands and my head as well!' Jesus said, 'No one who has taken a bath needs washing, he is clean all over. You too are clean, though not all of you are.' He knew who was going to betray him, that was why he said, 'though not all of you are.'

When he had washed their feet and put on his clothes again he went back to the table. 'Do you understand' he said 'what I have done to you? You call me Master and Lord, and rightly; so I am. If I, then, the Lord and Master, have washed your feet, you should wash each other's feet. I have given you an example so that you may copy what I have done to you.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PRIESTHOOD



The events of Holy Thursday contribute two major elements of our Catholic faith: the institution of the Holy Eucharist (as Sacrifice and Sacrament), and the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

These sacraments go together because there can be no Eucharistic Sacrifice, without the ministerial priesthood. It is Catholic dogma that on this most solemn night Jesus Christ eternal high priest of the new Israel

Cont...consecrated twelve men for service as the new priests of the new Israel. These twelve foundation stones of the new Temple were set apart so that the new, final, and eternal covenant could be celebrated anticipating Christ's return.

Yet, how do Jesus' twelve disciples become priests? First of all Christ himself is a priest. His priesthood derives from his ancestral lineage from King David. Jesus is, according to the flesh, a member of the tribe of Judah, David's tribe. Now, priests didn't ordinarily come from the tribe of Judah but from the tribe of Levi because that tribe did not engage in false worship of the golden calf and hence, because of their fidelity to the God of Israel, Moses chose them to be ministers of Israel's cult. David's priesthood however comes from both his anointing as king where it's written in the 1st Book of Samuel: "and from that day on, the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David". David was filled and anointed by the Holy Spirit to serve both as Israel's ruler and its high priest. David's priesthood likewise comes also from that mysterious character we find in the book of Genesis: Melchizedek.

It is the occupation of Jerusalem and in becoming its king that David assumes full priestly power. Melchizedek was the priest-king of Salem which is Jerusalem and thus in taking on Melchizedek's mantle David too becomes a priest-king.

It is then this Davidic-Melchizedek priesthood Jesus inherits. Jesus however uses both Davidic and Levitical practices in erecting his new priesthood. The first important evidence for Jesus' priesthood, and by extension that of his twelve disciples, is found in Matthew's gospel where we see Jesus and the disciples in a cornfield pulling corn and eating it on the Sabbath. The Pharisees object to this activity seeing it as work but Jesus retorts using the episode of David and his men eating the Bread of the Presence. Scripture Scholar John Bergsma comments on this occurrence in the following way:

Let's discuss the implications of the analogies that Jesus draws here. First, he compares himself to David, who we know was "a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek" (Ps 110:4). Then, he compares his Apostles to David's men in a situation where they performed a priestly act: they ate the bread of the Presence, which is a type of the Holy Eucharist. This is something that only priests were allowed to do. Jesus's logic here is that, as temple priests, he and his Apostles are allowed to work on the Sabbath. (J. Bergsma, Jesus and the Old Testament Roots of the Priesthood, p.57).

Similarly, Jewish Rabbi, Jacob Neusner, who, remarking on this passage notes:

"He [Jesus] and his disciples may do on the Sabbath what they do because they stand in the place of the priests in the Temple."

Other examples of the disciples priestly power is the power to bind and loose. In Matthew's gospel Peter is given this power first, later the other disciples also receive this authority. On face value the office of binding and loosing makes no sense to the casual reader. But when we provide the Old Testament background they provide a solid foundation for the disciples priestly office. Binding and loosing were basically powers to interpret the Law:

We read in Deuteronomy 17 that if any of the people of Israel are faced with a problem in how to interpret or apply the laws of God, they are to go to the central sanctuary and there consult with the Levitical priests (Deut 17:8-9). The interpretation and decision of the Levitical priests



Cont...had the same force and authority as God's law itself, (Bergsma, p.58)

A final, but a no doubt relevant piece of evidence for the disciples' reception of this new priesthood, arises from the very gospel we read for tonight, the washing of the feet. Most people will interpret it as Jesus' act of service and charity, but this is really only secondary to the true symbolism of this act. Scripture scholar John Bergsma once more analyses this passage highlighting its Old Testament import:

We see here that Jesus laid aside his garments, poured water, and began to wash the disciples' feet. If we revisit Exodus, we discover that the priests had to wash their feet before entering the sanctuary and performing any kind of ministerial duty (Exod 30:19-21). The similarity between Jesus's actions and those of the priests in Exodus is striking, especially because this foot washing occurs before the institution of the Eucharist. At this meal, Jesus says, "This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me... This chalice which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood" (Luke 22:19-20). Note that Jesus says, "Do this in remembrance of me." He is telling his disciples to do this as a memorial. The word "memorial" is a liturgical term: in the Old Testament it was the name of a grain sacrifice that was regularly offered to God in the Temple to "remind" God of the covenant (we would say, "to renew" the covenant). Returning to the washing of feet, we can now see that Jesus is about to commission his disciples to be priests of the new-covenant "memorial" sacrifice of the Eucharist, and he is preparing them by washing their feet, just as was required in the Old Covenant.

Peter's protest in this passage is also significant. Peter says, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus replies, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me," and then Peter says, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Let's examine Jesus's reply further. In Greek, the word for "part" or "portion" is *meris*, and it is almost exclusively priestly. In the Book of Numbers it says: "And the Lord said to Aaron, 'You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any portion among them; I am your portion and your inheritance among the people of Israel. To the Levites I have given every tithe in Israel for an inheritance, in return for their service which they serve, their service in the tent of meeting'"

Priests have no portion or part of the land, no portion among Israel; rather, the Lord says that he is their portion. All the other tribes received land as their portion, but the priesthood received God Himself. When Jesus replies to Peter, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me," he is saying that Peter's "part" or inheritance, like that of the Old Testament priesthood, will be himself alone that is, God alone.

As we reflect on Christ the priest this evening may we understand that in essence Jesus is both the priest and victim, he offers himself as St Thomas Aquinas wrote once 'with his own hands'. It is this priestly offering he will make tomorrow on the cross.

Fr Mannes

FRIDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Entrance Antiphon: Cf. Galatians 6:14

We should glory in the Cross
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
in whom is our salvation,
life and resurrection,
through whom we are saved
and delivered.

FIRST READING

First Reading: Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

See, my servant will prosper, he shall be lifted up, exalted, rise to great heights. As the crowds were appalled on seeing him - so disfigured did he look that he seemed no longer human - so will the crowds be astonished at him, and kings stand speechless before him; for they shall see something never told and witness something never heard before: 'Who could believe what we have heard, and to whom has the power of the Lord been revealed?' Like a sapling he grew up in front of us, like a root in arid ground. Without beauty, without majesty (we saw him), no looks to attract our eyes; a thing despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering, a man to make people screen their faces; he was despised and we took no account of him. And yet ours were the sufferings he bore, ours the sorrows he carried. But we, we thought of him as someone punished, struck by God, and brought low. Yet he was pierced through for our faults, crushed for our sins. On him lies a punishment that brings us peace, and through his wounds we are healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each taking his own way, and the Lord burdened him with the sins of all of us. Harshly dealt with, he bore it humbly, he never opened his mouth, like a lamb that is led to the slaughter-house, like a sheep that is dumb before its shearers, never opening its mouth. By force and by law he was taken; would anyone plead his cause? Yes, he was torn away from the land of the living, for our faults struck down in death. They gave him a grave with the wicked, a tomb with the rich, though he had done no wrong and there had been no perjury in his mouth. The Lord has been pleased to crush him with suffering. If he offers his life in atonement, he shall see his heirs, he shall have a long life and through him what the Lord wishes will be done. His soul's anguish over he shall see the light and be content. By his sufferings shall my servant justify many, taking their faults on himself.

Hence I will grant whole hordes for his tribute, he shall divide the spoil with the mighty, for surrendering himself to death and letting himself be taken for a sinner, while he was bearing the faults of many and praying all the time for sinners.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 30:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25

Father, I put my life in your hands.

In you, O Lord, I take refuge.
Let me never be put to shame.
In your justice, set me free.
Into your hands I commend my spirit.
It is you who will redeem me, Lord.

In the face of all my foes
I am a reproach,
an object of scorn to my neighbours
and of fear to my friends.

Those who see me in the street
run far away from me.
I am like a dead man, forgotten in men's hearts,
like a thing thrown away.

But as for me, I trust in you, Lord,
I say: 'You are my God.'
My life is in your hands, deliver me
from the hands of those who hate me.

Let your face shine on your servant.
Save me in your love.

Father, I put my life in your hands.

SECOND READING

Second Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

Since in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven, we must never let go of the faith that we have professed. For it is not as if we had a high priest who was incapable of feeling our weaknesses with us; but we have one who has been tempted in every way that we are, though he is without sin. Let us be confident, then, in approaching the throne of grace, that we shall have mercy from him and find grace, when we are in need of help.

During his life on earth, he offered up prayer and entreaty, aloud and in silent tears, to the one who had the power to save him out of death, and he submitted so humbly that his prayer was heard. Although he was a Son, he learnt to obey through suffering, but having been made perfect, he became for all who obey him the source of eternal salvation.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Philippians: 2:8-9

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
Christ became obedient for us even to death,
dying on the cross.

Therefore God raised him on high
and gave him a name above all other names.
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!



Gospel - John 18:1-19:42

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kedron valley. There was a garden there, and he went into it with his disciples. Judas the traitor knew the place well, since Jesus had often met his disciples there, and he brought the cohort to this place together with a detachment of guards sent by the chief priests and the Pharisees, all with lanterns and torches and weapons. Knowing everything that was going to happen to him, Jesus then came forward and said,

Who are you looking for?

They answered,

Jesus the Nazarene.

He said,

I am he.

Now Judas the traitor was standing among them. When Jesus said, 'I am he', they moved back and fell to the ground. He asked them a second time,

Who are you looking for?

They said,

Jesus the Nazarene.

Jesus replied,

I have told you that I am he. If I am the one you are looking for, let these others go.

This was to fulfil the words he had spoken, 'Not one of those you gave me have I lost.'

Simon Peter, who carried a sword, drew it and wounded the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. Jesus said to Peter, Put your sword back in its scabbard; am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?

The cohort and its captain and the Jewish guards seized Jesus and bound him. They took him first to Annas, because Annas was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had suggested to the Jews, 'It is better for one man to die for the people.'

Simon Peter, with another disciple, followed Jesus. This disciple, who was known to the high priest, went with Jesus into the high priest's palace, but Peter stayed outside the door. So the other disciple, the one known to the high priest, went out, spoke to the woman who was keeping the door and brought Peter in. The maid on duty at the door said to Peter,

Aren't you another of that man's disciples?

He answered,

I am not.

Now it was cold, and the servants and guards had lit a charcoal fire and were standing there warming themselves; so Peter stood there too, warming himself with the others.

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teaching. Jesus answered,

I have spoken openly for all the world to hear; I have always taught in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together: I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught: they know what I said.

At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying,

Is that the way to answer the high priest?

Jesus replied,

Cont...

If there is something wrong in what I said, point it out; but if there is no offence in it, why do you strike me?

Then Annas sent him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

As Simon Peter stood there warming himself, someone said to him,

Aren't you another of his disciples?

He denied it, saying,

I am not.

One of the high priest's servants, a relation of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said,

Didn't I see you in the garden with him?

Again Peter denied it; and at once a cock crew.

They then led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the Praetorium. It was now morning. They did not go into the Praetorium themselves or they would be defiled and unable to eat the passover. So Pilate came outside to them and said,

What charge do you bring against this man?

They replied,

If he were not a criminal, we should not be handing him over to you.

Pilate said,

Take him yourselves, and try him by your own Law.

The Jews answered,

We are not allowed to put a man to death.

This was to fulfil the words Jesus had spoken indicating the way he was going to die.

So Pilate went back into the Praetorium and called

Jesus to him, and asked,

Are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus replied,

Do you ask this of your own accord, or have others spoken to you about me?

Pilate answered,

Am I a Jew? It is your own people and the chief priests who have handed you over to me: what have you done?

Jesus replied,

Mine is not a kingdom of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, my men would have fought to prevent my being surrendered to the Jews. But my kingdom is not of this kind.

Pilate said,

So you are a king, then?

Jesus answered,

It is you who say it. Yes, I am a king. I was born for this, I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice.

Pilate said,

Truth? What is that?

and with that he went out again to the Jews and said, I find no case against him. But according to a custom of yours I should release one prisoner at the Passover; would you like me, then, to release the king of the Jews?

At this they shouted:

Not this man, but Barabbas.

Barabbas was a brigand.

Pilate then had Jesus taken away and scourged; and after this, the soldiers twisted some thorns into a crown and put it on his head, and dressed him in a purple robe. They kept coming up to him and saying,

Hail, king of the Jews!

and they slapped him in the face.

Cont...

Pilate came outside again and said to them,
Look, I am going to bring him out to you to let you see
that I find no case.

Jesus then came out wearing the crown of thorns and
the purple robe. Pilate said,

Here is the man.

When they saw him the chief priests and the guards
shouted,

Crucify him! Crucify him!

Pilate said,

Take him yourselves and crucify him: I can find no case
against him.

The Jews replied,

We have a Law, and according to that Law he ought
to die, because he has claimed to be the Son of God.

When Pilate heard them say this his fears increased.

Re-entering the Praetorium, he said to Jesus

Where do you come from?

But Jesus made no answer. Pilate then said to him,

Are you refusing to speak to me? Surely you know I
have power to release you and I have power to crucify
you?

Jesus replied,

You would have no power over me if it had not been
given you from above; that is why the one who handed
me over to you has the greater guilt.

From that moment Pilate was anxious to set him free,
but the Jews shouted,

If you set him free you are no friend of Caesar's; any-
one who makes himself king is defying Caesar.

Hearing these words, Pilate had Jesus brought out, and
seated himself on the chair of judgement at a place
called the Pavement, in Hebrew Gabbatha. It was
Passover Preparation Day, about the sixth hour. Pilate
said to the Jews,

Here is your king.

They said,

Take him away, take him away! Crucify him!

Pilate said,

Do you want me to crucify your king?

The chief priests answered,

We have no king except Caesar.

So in the end Pilate handed him over to them to be
crucified.

They then took charge of Jesus, and carrying his own
cross he went out of the city to the place of the skull or,
as it was called in Hebrew, Golgotha, where they cruci-
fied him with two others, one on either side with Jesus in
the middle. Pilate wrote out a notice and had it fixed to
the cross; it ran: 'Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews.'
This notice was read by many of the Jews, because the
place where Jesus was crucified was not far from the
city, and the writing was in Hebrew, Latin and Greek. So
the Jewish chief priests said to Pilate,

You should not write 'King of the Jews,' but 'This man
said: "I am King of the Jews."'

Pilate answered,

What I have written, I have written.

When the soldiers had finished crucifying Jesus they
took his clothing and divided it into four shares, one for
each soldier. His undergarment was seamless, woven in
one piece from neck to hem; so they said to one an-
other,

Instead of tearing it, let's throw dice to decide who is to
have it.

Cont...

In this way the words of scripture were fulfilled:

They shared out my clothing among them.

They cast lots for my clothes.

This is exactly what the soldiers did.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his
mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary
of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple
he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother,

Woman, this is your son.

Then to the disciple he said,

This is your mother.

And from that moment the disciple made a place for
her in his home.

After this, Jesus knew that everything had now been
completed, and to fulfil the scripture perfectly he said:

I am thirsty.

A jar full of vinegar stood there, so putting a sponge
soaked in the vinegar on a hyssop stick they held it up
to his mouth. After Jesus had taken the vinegar he said,
It is accomplished;

and bowing his head he gave up his spirit.

Here all kneel and pause for a short time.

It was Preparation Day, and to prevent the bodies re-
maining on the cross during the Sabbath – since that
Sabbath was a day of special solemnity – the Jews
asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies
taken away. Consequently the soldiers came and
broke the legs of the first man who had been crucified
with him and then of the other. When they came to Je-
sus, they found he was already dead, and so instead of
breaking his legs one of the soldiers pierced his side with
a lance; and immediately there came out blood and
water. This is the evidence of one who saw it – trustwor-
thy evidence, and he knows he speaks the truth – and
he gives it so that you may believe as well. Because all
this happened to fulfil the words of scripture:

Not one bone of his will be broken;

and again, in another place scripture says:

*They will look on the one whom they have
pierced.*

After this, Joseph of Arimathaea, who was a disciple of
Jesus – though a secret one because he was afraid of
the Jews – asked Pilate to let him remove the body of
Jesus. Pilate gave permission, so they came and took it
away. Nicodemus came as well – the same one who
had first come to Jesus at night-time – and he brought
a mixture of myrrh and aloes, weighing about a hun-
dred pounds. They took the body of Jesus and
wrapped it with the spices in linen cloths, following the
Jewish burial custom. At the place where he had been

crucified there
was a garden,
and in this
garden a new
tomb in which
no one had yet
been buried.
Since it was the
Jewish Day of
Preparation and
the tomb was
near at hand, they
laid Jesus there.



GOOD FRIDAY



An example of a Nun who refused to remove the Cross of Jesus Christ. Rather than preach on our texts I thought I'd tell you a story about the significance of the cross. The story is about an heroic nun during World War II.

Sister Maria Restituta began Lent of 1942 under arrest. She was taken on Ash Wednesday. She was sentenced to death for a crime which has cast over it the shadow of the cross. The following year 1943, on Tuesday of Holy Week, she was executed.

May 1, 1894, was a happy day for Anton and Marie Kafka. Marie had just given birth to her sixth child and mum and daughter were both doing fine. The proud parents named their new baby girl Helena. Devout Catholics, Anton and Marie had Helena baptized into the faith only 13 days after her birth.

The ceremony took place in the Church of the Assumption, in the town of Husovice, located in Austria. Before Helena reached her second birthday, the family had settled in the city of Vienna.

Helena was a good student and worked hard. She received her First Holy Communion in St. Brigitta Church during May of 1905 and was confirmed in the same church a year later. After eight years of school she spent another year in housekeeping school and, by the age of 15, was working as a servant, a cook, and being trained as a nurse.

At age 19, she became an assistant nurse at Lainz City Hospital. This was Helena's first contact with the Franciscan Sisters of Christian Charity and she was immediately moved to become a sister herself. On October 23, 1915, she became Sister Maria Restituta. She made her final vows a year later and began working as a nurse.

By the end of World War I, Sister Restituta was the lead surgical nurse at Modling Hospital in Vienna. She had never heard of Adolf Hitler and could never have imagined that one day, because of this man, her beloved nation would be annexed into the German Republic.

On March 12, 1938, the Austrian Nazi Party pulled off a successful coup d'etat taking control of the government. The unforeseen and unimagined had come to pass, and Hitler now controlled the once proud Austrian nation.

Sister Restituta was very outspoken in her opposition to the Nazi regime. When a new wing to the hospital was built she hung a crucifix in each of the new rooms. The Nazis demanded that they be removed. Sister Restituta was told she would be dismissed if she did not comply.

She refused. The crucifixes remained on the walls.

One of the doctors on staff, a fanatical Nazi, would have none of it. He denounced her to the Party and on Ash Wednesday, 1942, she was arrested by the Gestapo as she came out of the operating room.

The charge against her included, "hanging crucifixes," The Nazis promptly sentenced her to death by the guillotine for "favouring the enemy and conspiracy to

Cont....commit high treason." They offered her freedom if she would abandon the Franciscans she loved so much. She adamantly refused. Although many nuns lost their lives in the extermination camps, Sister Restituta would be the only Catholic nun ever charged, tried, and sentenced to death by a Nazi court.

An appeal for clemency went as far as the desk of Hitler's personal secretary and Nazi Party Chancellor, Martin Bormann. His response was that her execution "would provide effective intimidation for others who might want to resist the Nazis." Sister Maria Restituta spent her final days in prison caring for the sick. Because of her love for the crucifix — or rather, the One who died upon it — she was beheaded on March 30, 1943.

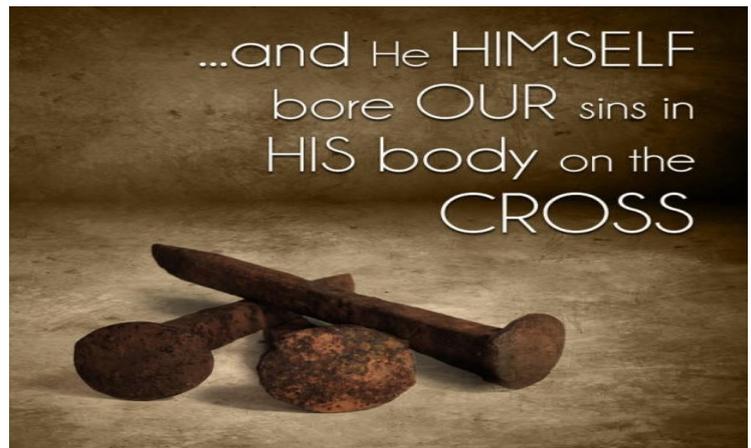
The day she died happened to be Tuesday of Holy Week. She was 48 years old.

Pope John Paul II visited Vienna in 1998 and there beatified Helena Kafka, the girl whose destiny was service. She was declared Blessed Maria Restituta. She had learned how to serve others extremely well. But the One she served best of all was her crucified Savior. She gave Him her life.

Never say that the crucifix is unimportant.

Blessed Marie Restituta, please pray for us.

Fr Mannes



HOLY LAND COLLECTION

The annual collection for the support of the church in the Holy Land will take place on Good Friday, April 7th. This collection promotes the missionary work of the Church in the Holy Land by providing welfare assistance to local Christians in areas such as health, education, employment, housing, Parishes, and orphanages. It is also used to maintain over 70 churches and shrines associated with the life of Jesus.

Whilst life in the Holy Land is returning to some new sense of normality (as is the rest of the world) the Church and people of the Holy Land are still struggling with reduced income due to fewer pilgrims and lower church attendance around the world.

Please remember the Christians of the Holy Land on Good Friday. Thank you.

Donations can be made by cash in the collection boxes at the exits or by using the Tap & Go machines on the exit tables. All donations of Good Friday will go to the Holy Land Collection.

EASTER VIGIL OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD



FIRST READING

First Reading: Genesis 1:1, 2:2

A reading from the book of Genesis

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water.

God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night'. Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven'. Evening came and morning came: the second day. God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came; the third day.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

Cont...

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 103:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12-14, 24, 35

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

Bless the Lord, my soul!
Lord God, how great you are,
clothed in majesty and glory,
wrapped in light as in a robe!

You founded the earth on its base,
to stand firm from age to age.
You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak:
the waters stood higher than the mountains.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys:
they flow in between the hills.
On their banks dwell the birds of heaven;
from the branches they sing their song.

From your dwelling you water the hills;
earth drinks its fill of your gift.
You make the grass grow for the cattle
and the plants to serve man's needs.

How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your riches.
Bless the Lord, my soul!

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

SECOND READING

Second Reading: Exodus 14:15 – 15:1

A reading from the Book of Exodus

The Lord said to Moses, 'Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his

Cont...

chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.'

Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and of cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. 'Let us flee from the Israelites,' the Egyptians cried, 'the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!' 'Stretch out your hand over the sea,' the Lord said to Moses, 'that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.' Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh's whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm: Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18

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

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph!
Horse and rider has thrown into the sea!
The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation.
this is my God and I extol him,
my father's God and I give him praise.

The Lord is a warrior! The Lord is his name.
The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea,
the flower of his army is drowned in the sea.
The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone.

Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power,
your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy.
In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe.

You will lead your people
and plant them on your mountain,
the place, O Lord, where you have made your home

Cont...

the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made.
The Lord will reign for ever and ever.

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

THIRD READING

Third Reading: Isaiah 55:1-11

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty; though you have no money, come! Buy corn without money, and eat, and, at no cost, wine and milk. Why spend money on what is not bread, your wages on what fails to satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and you will have good things to eat and rich food to enjoy. Pay attention, come to me; listen, and your soul will live. With you I will make an everlasting covenant out of the favours promised to David. See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples, a leader and a master of the nations. See, you will summon a nation you never knew, those unknown will come hurrying to you, for the sake of the Lord your God, of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you. Seek the Lord while he is still to be found, call to him while he is still near. Let the wicked man abandon his way, the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him, to our God who is rich in forgiving; for my thoughts are not your thoughts, my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks. Yes, the heavens are as high above earth as my ways are above your ways, my thoughts above your thoughts. Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm: Isaiah 12:2-6

**We will draw water joyfully
from the springs of your marvellous love.**

Truly you are my salvation,
I trust, and I shall not fear.
For you are my strength,
my song, and my saviour.
With joy we will drink
from your well.

Give thanks to the Lord,
give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples,
declare the greatness of his name.

Sing a psalm to the Lord
for he has done glorious deeds,
make them known to all the earth!
People of Zion, sing and shout for joy
for great in your midst is the Holy One
of Israel.

**We will draw water joyfully
from the springs of your marvellous love.**

EPISTLE

Epistle: Romans 6:3-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life. If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Gospel Acclamation: 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his love has no end.
Let the sons of Israel say:
'His love has no end.'

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
his right hand raised me up.
I shall not die, I shall live
and recount his deeds.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.
This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.

Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Gospel - Matthew 28:1-10

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

After the sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre. And all at once there was a violent earthquake, for the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow. The guards were so shaken, so frightened of him, that they were like dead men. But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, 'There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him." Now I have told you.' Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.

Cont...And there, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings' he said. And the women came up to him and, falling down before him, clasped his feet. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there.'



The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

CHRIST OUR MEANING



On this wondrous night, the mother of all vigils, the highest liturgy of our year we once more ponder the concept of resurrection.

From the beginnings of the Christian faith it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ that has given identity to the community Jesus gathered around him. And yet, even in

those primordial ages, as there is today, doubts were raised. St Paul when writing to the Corinthians c.53AD answers their doubts about Jesus glorious return from death:

Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:12-14 RSV

Paul's reply outlines in fact that the risen Jesus, far from appearing only to a few supporters in fact :

"...appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep." 1 Corinthians 15:6 RSV

Despite some people's doubts about this supernatural event deep down within the very psyche of the human person the hope of resurrection, or some kind of apotheosis, resides. This urge articulates itself in a quest for purpose, meaning, a quest for certainty, a quest for peace; a yearning for the transcendent.

The Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* sketches this attitude of the human person

The tensions disturbing the world of today are in fact related to a more fundamental tension rooted in the human heart. In man himself many elements are in conflict with each other. On one side, he has experience of his many limitations as a creature. On the other, he knows that there is no limit to his aspirations, and that he is called to a higher kind of life.

Cont...GS The quest for this higher life is revealed in a variety of ways. Only three paths can be discerned though:

There is no meaning to life. Everything is chaos, and only the weak person searches in vain for such consolation. This doctrine was taught by the German philosopher Frederick Nietzsche and the Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Nietzsche's superman (ubermensch) did not need a meaning, he was meaning. Whereas Freud saw meaning as irrelevant but our yearning for it could only be pacified by therapy.

Heaven is on earth. The program of idealists such as Karl Marx identified economic equality with the utopia humanity has hoped for. This project has yet to succeed in any given place where it has been implemented. The same can be said of unbridled capitalism and free market economics where the acquisition of goods is the key to meaning and happiness. Lastly the project of existentialism and materialism points to meaning being found only in this world. What kind of meaning can be achieved however falls into circumstance. The pursuit of true and fulfilling meaning varies according to degree of wealth, education and opportunity, not to mention environmental and political concerns of any given place. All up a quite uncertain and unbalanced project. To what extent can someone who has little in the area of wealth, education or opportunity create for themselves a meaningful life? Some may, others will only see meaning in a limited way.

The way of Christ. Christian anthropology identifies two streams in human life, humanity's life on earth and the life in the world to come. For the Christian his life in this world, tempered by the acquisition of virtue and energised by God's grace, seems to be the most fruitful way humanity can at once tend to its state as creaturely yet also called to be partakers of the divine nature. The resurrection heralds the triumph of God in the human person. Christ's resurrection makes clear that our human toil will be ennobled. Humanity's dream to be godlike comes true in the event we recall vividly this evening.

The true meaning of our lives then is celebrated in this vigil. If it is not then we fall back into the various other paths I have outlined. But if the very meaning of our lives is this Easter event, let us confess it and share it with others.

Truly then, everything we live for, everything we pray for, all the suffering we endure winds it's way to an empty tomb. Life has conquered death and by virtue of our own baptism we are thrust into the midst of this sacred drama. We are as much players as are the apostles and friends of Jesus, his story is our story, and so it is with joy that we celebrate tonight because his victory is our victory. He says to us this eve 'I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me, although he dies, yet, shall he live.' May we like Martha exclaim: 'Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, he who is coming into the world.'

It is Christ Jesus who is our meaning, with St Paul we too make our motto "For me to live is Christ".

God love you and Happy Easter.

Fr Mannes

EASTER VIGIL

Some people think of the celebration of the Easter Vigil as just another mass, but one that is longer than a Sunday mass. This is not true. There are things we do at the Easter Vigil that we do at no other time in the church year. The most significant of these is the welcoming of new members into our Church and our parish. We hear more of Holy Scripture proclaimed on this night because our salvation history is a long story dating back to the creation of the world. We build a large fire outside to remind us that Jesus is our light in the darkness, and after lighting the new Easter candle from this first fire, we process it into the church and hear of Christ's resurrection. We need time to do all of these things well. A vigil is a watch kept for an extended period of time. In our daily lives we might keep vigil as we wait by the telephone or in a hospital waiting room for news. We cannot rush a vigil; it must take as long as it takes. The same is true of the Easter Vigil on Saturday night. As masses go, it is considerably longer than a Sunday mass. As vigils go, it is relatively short.

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We cannot rush a vigil; it must take as long as it takes. The same is true of the Easter Vigil on Saturday night. As Masses go, it is considerably longer than a Sunday mass. As vigils go, it is relatively short. Easter is the sacred celebration of Christ's resurrection from the dead. It is the oldest and holiest Christian festival, the climax and centre of the liturgical year, and the holy day to which all other holy days point. Even denominations that do not strictly follow a liturgical calendar commemorate Easter with tremendous joy and thanksgiving. Jesus Christ conquered sin and death by rising from the dead. He is the One who rose from the dead.

We did not! We will all participate in the sacramental celebrations which allow us to actually enter into the saving death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The liturgical actions taking place this evening are what our Lenten journey has been focused on. Together we will celebrate Christ's victory over sin and death, a victory which we share in because the Master has made us one with himself. The acceptance of the "victorious gift" is sometimes difficult. We live in a society that glorifies its own accomplishments. We live in a society that constantly reminds us of our abilities to excel and overcome. In such a society it is easy to forget about God and our intrinsic need for him. However, if we are willing to view our accomplishments as signs of God's presence with us, we may discover the One we seek in our efforts at such acceptance.

EASTER SUNDAY OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE LORD



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Entrance Antiphon: Luke 24:34; Cf. Revelation 1:6

The Lord is truly risen, alleluia.
To him be glory and power
for all the ages of eternity, alleluia, alleluia.

FIRST READING

First Reading: Acts 10:34. 37-43

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil.' Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses - we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead - and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 117:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

**This is the day the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad.**

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,
for his love has no end.
Let the sons of Israel say:
'His love has no end.'

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;
his right hand raised me up.
I shall not die, I shall live
and recount his deeds.

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.
This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.

**This is the day the Lord has made;
let us rejoice and be glad.**

SECOND READING

Second Reading: Colossians 3:1-4

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians

Since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed - and he is your life - you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

EASTER SEQUENCE

Christians, to the Paschal Victim
offer sacrifice and praise.
The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb;
and Christ, the undefiled,
hath sinners to his Father reconciled.
Death with life contended:
combat strangely ended!
Life's own Champion, slain, yet lives to reign.

Tell us, Mary:
say what thou didst see upon the way.
The tomb the Living did enclose;
I saw Christ's glory as he rose!
The angels there attesting;
shroud with grave-clothes resting.
Christ, my hope, has risen:
he goes before you into Galilee.
That Christ is truly risen from the dead we know.
Victorious king, thy mercy show!

GOSPEL

Gospel - John 20:1-9

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. 'They have taken the Lord out of the tomb' she said 'and we don't know where they have put him.'

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed.

Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.



EASTER SUNDAY



Resurrection seems to be such a foreign idea for us even though we've celebrated so many Easter Sundays. This strange phenomenon continues to captivate us yet it also continues to perplex us. Is it all true? Did this really happen.

The Christians of the early Church shared similar doubts. Like us, they too were sceptical of such supernatural events despite the superstitions of the time.

St Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians endeavoured to prove that the resurrection of Jesus wasn't a figment of someone's imagination or some kind of myth, and so he writes:

Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain."

There are a variety of arguments that suggest what happened over two thousand years ago could not have been some kind of mythical concoction.

First of all Paul, again in his first letter to the Corinthians, begs his Corinthians charges to investigate themselves by producing a list of people who had witnessed Jesus risen from the dead. And so the apostle argues:

"For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep....Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me."

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 RSV

Paul indicates that the witnesses are still alive and it would be easy enough to inquire with them. Furthermore, Paul mentions that Jesus didn't just appear to his inner circle but to five hundred brethren at one time. Hardly a mass illusion?

Another reason to attest the validity of our celebration are the four gospels and their daring witness accounts. The great Protestant scripture scholar N.T. Wright argues that if we scan the scriptural data in all four gospels it is Mary Magdalen and other women followers that either experience the empty tomb, encounter angels who explain what has happened, or as we see in St John's gospel, Mary Magdalen is the first to see the risen Jesus. Wright mentions that the testimony of women during the time of Christ sadly counted for nothing. Women were not permitted to testify in a law court. They were not deemed credible. Thus if the gospel writers were being consistent with the culture of their day they would not have dared allow such an embarrassing narrative. The fact that they do in fact mention these faithful women, risking the ridicule of their contemporaries, adds further credence to the fact the events unfolded as narrated.

Cont....Lastly, an argument Pope Benedict XVI offers in his work *Jesus of Nazareth* regards the celebration of the Sabbath. As we know the Jews celebrated the Sabbath on the Saturday. In the aftermath of Jesus' resurrection the disciples, and the great multitude of followers, who were all devout Jews and would never dare alter their liturgical day of worship and rest, began transferring their worship day to the Sunday, the day of the Lord's resurrection. For such devout Jews to alter their sacred traditions Benedict deduces something significant must've occurred for them to do this and thus sever their ties with their Jewish confrères.

And so contemplating these arguments from tradition we reflect that today is our day of celebrating the Lord's resurrection. It is our day and so with Pope Leo the Great we conclude that:

The body that lay lifeless in the tomb is ours. The body that rose again on the third day is ours. The body that ascended above all the heights of heaven to the right hand of the Father's glory is ours. If then we walk in the way of his commandments, and are not ashamed to acknowledge the price he paid for our salvation in a lowly body, we too are to rise to share his glory. The promise he made will be fulfilled in the sight of all: *Whoever acknowledges me before men, I too will acknowledge him before my Father who is in heaven.*

(Leo the Great, pope)

God love you all. You're all in my prayers.
Fr Mannes OP

ALL IN THE EARLY MORNING GREY

Easter Day.

Fr Richard Conrad OP

preaches on the unending eighth day.

Last night's Easter Vigil readings began with the Creation Story. By his all-powerful Word, God crafted the cosmos in stages. At the story's climax, he created the human being in his image. Each stage ended, 'There was evening and there was morning, Day One, Day Two... Day Six.' Then God rested. So God's People used to keep the Seventh Day of the week holy, as a way of sharing God's delight in his Creation.

We *didn't* hear, 'There was evening and there was morning, Day Seven.' It's as if Day Seven just kept going.

Eventually, God spoke his all-powerful Word into the world in a new way. When Jesus, the Word become flesh, healed the paralysed man, he made him carry his mat home, though it was the Sabbath. He explained why: 'My Father is working still, and I am working' (John 5:17). The Father and his Word were breaking their Sabbath rest and picking up the work they had left unfinished at the end of Day Six.

That should have meant taking human beings on a smooth journey home, into the Triune God in whose image humanity was made. But the image had been spoiled; it needed remaking in a 're-run' of Day Six. Two days ago, on Day Six of Holy Week, we heard Pilate bring forth Jesus crowned with thorns and say: 'Behold the Man.' He shocked us with the ways we spoil what God crafted on Day Six – and we beheld the remedy, the New Adam's Passion, which is God's Word of

Cont....fierce loyalty to his handiwork, a Word of mercy eloquent enough to re-fashion us.

After that, as we recalled yesterday, the Creator God could take a final Sabbath Rest in the Tomb.

Evening came, and morning, and Day Seven was over. As Caswall's version of *O filii et filiae* puts it: 'All in the early morning grey, Went holy women on their way,' went to the Garden on the Day after the Sabbath, to find that the Final Word of Creation had already been spoken in the silence of the Tomb, saying: 'Let my People rise from death.' From both kinds of death. That Word echoes throughout all ages. Every time anyone has ever risen from the *spiritual* death of sin – in Paul's words, has died to sin so as walk in newness of life – that has been caused by the Word of re-making and resurrection spoken on Good Friday and this Easter Morning. That Word hits home to us in the Sacraments.

Some Easter music is triumphant, like 'Thine be the glory,' to Handel's tune 'Maccabeus.' But much traditional Easter chant has a 'mystical' – even an 'elusive' – feel, like today's Introit *Resurrexi*, which keeps hovering a semitone above the final. Some more popular Easter music has a similar feel, like 'The strife is o'er,' to W H Monk's adaptation of Palestrina, or *O filii et filiae*. For no one saw Jesus burst from the Tomb radiant with dazzling light. All his appearances had an 'elusive' feel to them. When Mary Magdalene grasped him, she had to let go with her hands, and hold him by Faith, Hope and Love.

Christians do not keep the Sabbath, we keep the next Day, this, the Lord's Day, sharing the Creator's delight in the work he completed on the Eighth Day. We live, now, in that Eighth Day – but it's as if we are still in its early morning grey. Jesus has gone on ahead; humanity's journey home continues – not a smooth journey, but one energised and dignified by Jesus' own Passing Over through Death to undying Life. We hold Jesus by the Hope of catching up with him. The Spirit helps us read the signs rightly, as John did when he saw the grave-clothes, and so we hold Jesus by Faith, Faith nourished by the Sacraments and the Scriptures. Prayer and the Sacraments bring us the grace of both Day Six and Day Eight; this grace is that Love by which we hold Jesus and, while the weeks still roll round, die to sin so as to walk in newness of life.

*We shall never hear, 'Evening came,
and morning; Day Eight is over.'
We await the radiant noon
of this endless Day in whose grey dawn
we now journey, the noon when
we will see Jesus burst the tombs
open with his dazzling light.
Then the Final Word of Creation spoken
in the Tomb will resound even against bodily
death, saying: 'Let my People rise like me.'*

THANK YOU

THANK
YOU

To all who have contributed to the Easter Liturgies - Art & Environment, Volunteers who set up the church, Choir Director, Choir, Organists/

Pianist, Acolytes, Readers, and those who helped bring a 'shine' to our Church and direct each of the ceremonies. Finally to all who contributed so prayerfully to our celebrations. Thank You for your help.

A DEEP TRANQUILLITY

Jesus gave us an example of a tranquillity that did not ignore the messiness of life but accepted and transcended it.

In Year Seven our English teacher decided it was time we learned some poetry by heart. This would have been unfashionable in some sections of his department, but he was a man for whom fashion had become immaterial some decades prior. We only got through two poems, so far as I can remember. One was Wordsworth's *Daffodils*, which I can still recite by heart.

Something about wandering lonely opens out the possibility of calm, serenity, a deeper self-possession. The poignancy is in savouring a moment of such sticking beauty, to which the writer returns:

*For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.*

The sense of stillness not interrupted but somehow deepened by beautiful flowers that dance, that were, and are, 'Fluttering and dancing in the breeze'. As a 13-year-old I was so intrigued by what a pensive mood might be, and just as much by how memory of something so seemingly simple could fill a heart with pleasure. I still am, though I've now had experience of both.

AUSTRALIAN CLASSIC

The other poem we learned by heart was the Australian classic, *The Man from Snowy River*, about 'the colt from Old Regret' that got away, 'And had joined the wild bush horses'. A juxtaposition, maybe, from those bushmen who loved hard riding to the subtle beauty in the other poet's wandering.

Yet in Patterson's tale that man from Snowy River who 'never shifted in his seat' as he pursued the wild horses, is as one with his moment. Different in exertion and in outward temperament from one floating over 'vales and hills', following the horses 'like a blood hound on their back', nevertheless he is present, focused.

Obviously, it is not the same thing. Two different men, two different moments. But however haphazardly brought together, maybe suggesting something of how persons can be in their surrounds. Suggesting even how we are called to be in our surrounds. If we are to be tranquil, we can withdraw from all difficult moments, we can savour only what is immediately pleasing, and this may work for a while.

Soon, though, we will have to recognise that we are ignoring much of the messiness of life, all that is displeasing and difficult.

Sidestepping moments when hard work is required, when we must be determined, even tenacious. Or when there is a hardship to be experienced, without immediate riposte. As Christ



Cont...experiences his Passion, experiences carrying his cross.

PROFOUND MOMENTS

I have always found the three falls in the Catholic version of the Stations of the Cross to be profoundly powerful. They are not scriptural, of course, but they are so evocative of the humiliation and suffering Jesus experienced. It seems to me that we are called to imagine Jesus tranquil in these moments. Tranquil in that, despite outward struggle, he is calm, even serene and experiencing that deeper self-possession that suffering can bring. He knows who he is in those moments as much, and more, as in any moment.

Jesus was probably frustrated, humiliated and maybe even angry during his Passion. Being very much human we can imagine all those things being true given the nature of the experience. In some sense, as we know from his dialogue in the garden, he would not have had it be this way. But the Father did not remove the cup to be drunk, and so Jesus goes from the garden knowing what will come.

In Jesus the Christian has the most perfect image of 'calm under fire', that heroic cultural archetype.

Usually, the warrior who is almost self-forgetful. Jesus is tranquil, though, to the extent that he is not defined by the violence that is done to him. There is a depth to the calm that gives it virtue. He is in possession of a self that eschews violence, and the power that might come with it, for humiliation and the service that might be done through it.

TRANQUILITY

Such an example might make us wonder about the tag 'tranquil' for the bushman chasing horses to tame them, or the poet stumbling on experiences to delight his quiet moments. I would not want to foreclose on either being tranquil. For as with all things, Jesus is the great leveller. His example suggests a depth to the term that should not make us dismiss other experiences of unity with a moment.

Jesus' example invites us to consider how we are in and with the moments of our own lives. Do we savour what is beautiful, holding it gently? Do we engage headfirst in tasks that feel right, that allow us to contribute to our community by doing our best? Do we take up our cross when required and live in the moment, however painful, aware of our human integrity? If we do these things, even some of the time, we might notice God accompanying us as we are, in the moment as it is.

By Julian Butler

ROSTER 15 / 16 April

Saturday 5.00pm - Acolyte - M. Tran
Reader - C. Barbaro
Computer - Volunteer required

Sunday 8.00am - Acolyte - K. Linard
Reader - M. Falk, T. Klekner
Computer - Volunteer required

Sunday 10.00am - Acolyte - L. Kim
Reader - J. Cooke, K. Bergin
Computer - J. Kim

Sunday 5.00pm - Acolyte - P. Tran
Reader - M. Proctor
Computer - Volunteer required

PRAYERS

In Your Prayers please remember those in our community who are ill:

Mary Martin, Anne Corver, Barbara Wilson, Mimma Gia, Philip Bailey, Veronica Cornelly, Rosa Maria Santos, Peter Catlin, Beth Delos Santos, Ursula Ramsay, Sue King, Fr Ellis Clifford, Joe Schimizzi, June Pollard, Awny El-Ghitany, Pamela Sandy, Elizabeth Webster, Una Ford, Terry Stephens, Maureen Blood, Una Bell, Lily Copeland, Neville Caulfield, Maggie McKeon, Michelle Brotohusodo, Carmel Slammon, Katey Tuite, Nola Nolan, Brian & Suzanne Brown, Maria Bankovsky, Fr Rafael Cabezon OP

RECENTLY DECEASED

Our recently Deceased: May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord.
Giuseppe Caruso, Urbanus Lingga

IN LOVING MEMORY

Labib Jazrawi

PRAY THE ROSARY Sunday Mornings prior to 10.00am Mass the Rosary will be recited. Please join in.

CRAFT GROUP meets noon - 4.00pm in the Parish Centre on Wednesdays. Contact the office for details.

DOMINICAN LIBRARY will open **Saturday** mornings, 9.30am - 12.00 noon in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

BLACKFRIARS MEDITATION GROUP meets on Thursday evenings in the 7.30pm Parish Centre. Enquiries John Jarvis 6296 2001 or www.wccm.org

WEEKLY READER FORMATION - Formation sessions are on Wednesday evenings. These sessions provide reflection on the Scripture readings for the following Sunday. All parishioners are invited. - Meet in the church Office.

HOLY ROSARY WOMEN'S FAITH CIRCLE The Holy Rosary Women's Faith Circle returns on Thursdays. Please join us as we share life, break open the word, pray for and with each other. Contact Emily at emilykathrynhall@gmail.com for further information.

VERBUM BIBLE STUDY FOR YOUNG ADULTS 18-35

We are starting up a new series of bible studies on **Tuesday 28th February**. Topics will include:

- St Matthew's Gospel
- The Eucharist in Scripture

Please join us at 7pm in the Parish Centre. We hope to run the bible studies throughout the year.

DONATIONS TO PARISH & PRIESTS

Parish details to contribute to the Planned Giving. Bank details - Account Name: Blackfriars Parish Watson BSB: 062786 - A/C : 000013341 - Reference: Name

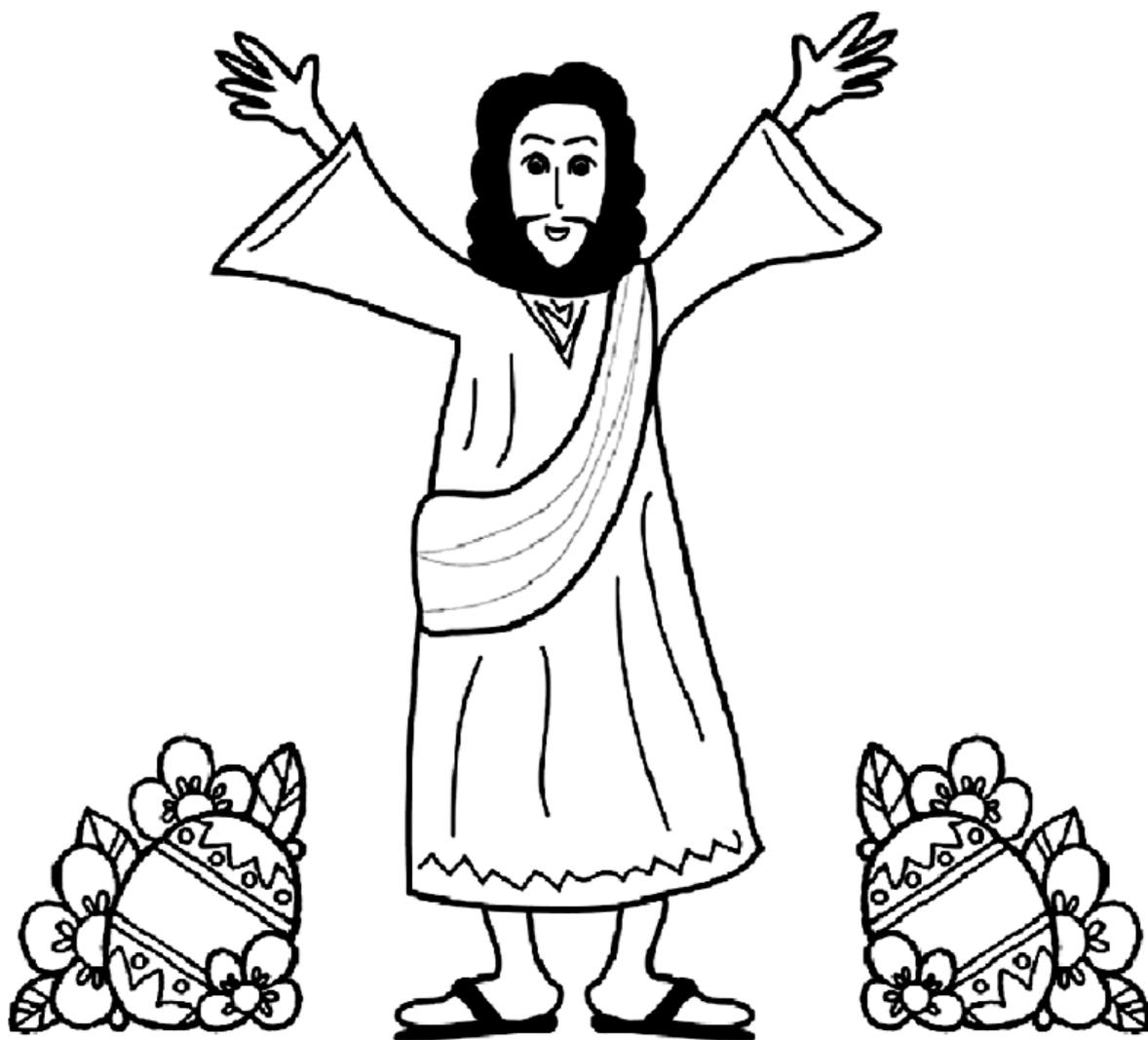
Priests details to contribute to the First Collection. Details - Account Name: Dominican Fathers Watson BSB: 083 347 Account number: 97 310 5044 Reference: Your Name - Donation

**DONATIONS TO ST DOMINICS GARDEN
CAN BE MADE USING THE
PARISH BANKING DETAILS
BANK DETAILS - REFERENCE GARDEN**

Easter Garden Raffle winners: Br. Francis, Moira Patenia, Hung Tran, Mary Connelly, Rahul Basu. Please pick up your prize from the Sacristy.

Car Boot Sale: in St Brigid's car park 8-12noon Saturday 15 April. Car entry to sell items welcome \$30 limited spots -first in. Devonshire tea and other food for sale.

Christ is Risen!
Alleluia!



**HAPPY
EASTER**

May the glory of the Lord's miracle strengthen your faith and renew your hope. Wishing you a blessed Easter...