



SAINT JOHN
the Evangelist
CATHOLIC PARISH DAPTO

St John the Evangelist Parish Dapto

A Living Community

5th Sunday of Lent

29 March 2020

Welcome to St John's

*Come in and sit down, relax, don't stress. I welcome you to our beautiful parish & church. Please feel welcome and tell me if you need anything. Keep Smiling, **Francis Tran PP***



Parish Office Hours

Mon - Closed | Tues - Fri 9am - 4pm

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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Give me justice, O God,
and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless.
From the deceitful and cunning rescue me,
for you, O God, are my strength.

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 37:12-14

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

With the Lord there is mercy, and fullness of redemption

SECOND READING

Romans 8:8-11

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

John 11:1-45

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in the village of Bethany with the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and he was ill. It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.' The disciples said, 'Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?' Jesus replied:

'Are there not twelve hours in the day?
A man can walk in the daytime without stumbling because he has the light of this world to see by;
but if he walks at night he stumbles,
because there is no light to guide him.'

He said that and then added, 'Our friend Lazarus is resting, I am going to wake him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he is able to rest he is sure to get better.' The phrase Jesus used referred to the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by 'rest' he meant 'sleep', so Jesus put it plainly, 'Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.' Then Thomas – known as the Twin – said to the other disciples, 'Let us go too, and die with him.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus,

GOSPEL CONTINUED OVER PAGE...

GOSPEL CONT...

'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that, even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life.

If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die.

Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.'

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, 'The Master is here and wants to see you.' Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were in the house sympathising with Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus wept; and the Jews said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.'

Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.

I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.



REFLECTION

Those who have stood at the grave of parents or beloved ones know all too well the pain and the hurt Martha and Mary felt at the loss of their brother, Lazarus.

Even Martha's reproach to Jesus for not being present echoes the anger, bitterness and resentment which many of us feel against God on the occasion of an untimely death. The death of those we love brings into sharp focus what is important. Deep mourning and the pain of separation force us to question the goodness of God, the nature of the hereafter and the meaning of life. They make us realise how frail our grasp of this world is.

To people who have no faith, life is just a process from birth to dust and death comes along as the ultimate humiliation to make a mockery of their living, their hopes, plans and dreams. However, we must not allow the darkness of its shadow to cloud all our days because death for the Christian is the great moment of life. Our faith is rooted in the central truth of Christ's resurrection.

The Gospel speaks to all of us and gives us hope even right now, in our time, we are facing the biggest threat caused by the Corona virus! It tells us that God is stronger than death and he will bring all who are his friends into eternal life.

The raising of Lazarus points out that the life we are searching for is not an extension of physical life but eternal life with God. Real death is not physical death but spiritual death which is the destruction of the loving purpose God made us for.

While the iron law of nature dictates that we must all die and go to the grave, the life we share with God is not something which begins after death. It began on the day of our Baptism when the seed of God's life was planted in us for the first time. At that moment we were given the power to start seeing what Jesus sees, to love as he loves and to follow him to the right hand of the Father.

Once Baptised there should be no going back on that relationship. Unfortunately, many of us fail to hear God's call to intimacy because we are not fully convinced of being worthwhile objects of his love. Part of our trouble may come from being caught up in the ways of the world and so enticed by its passing pleasures that we refuse to come out of our tombs and be free. We hold on to selfishness, cling to past grudges and stand on our dignity because pride will not

permit us to make up past differences. As a result, the life we received at baptism weakens and we become dead to the voice of Christ calling us to himself and wanting to make his home in us.

The story of Lazarus tells us that in dying to sin we are born to eternal life. These last days of Lent are about joining ourselves to the passion and death of Christ by deepening our response to his way of life; prayer, penance, acts of charity and personal conversion are the soil in which the life grows. Joining with Christ in his death is a sure guarantee of sharing his resurrection.

My Dear Friends,

At this time of uncertainty, let us turn to the Lord and place our trust in him. God is with us and he never abandons us... Read the bible, unite with the Church and pray for each other and the world, say the rosary and appreciate your quality time at home.

Finally, stay calm and look after yourself and your family.



ELECTRONIC PARISH PLANNED GIVING

During this period of time where Masses in the diocese are suspended, parishes are going to need the financial support of parishioners more than ever as their overhead costs will not change.

As the vast majority of parishioners give physically to their parish in the first and second collection baskets during Mass, we are encouraging all parishioners to join the electronic parish planned giving program.

We have created a page with two simple options for parishioners to give to their parish electronically.

www.dow.org.au/plannedgiving

REGULAR OR ONE OFF PAYMENTS CAN BE MADE BY FOLLOWING THE ABOVE LINK.

For those who are not able to give electronically but would still like to continue their weekly giving, the office is open from Tuesday - Friday, 9am - 4pm. There is a locked drop box safe in the foyer that you can safely leave your donation.

PASTORAL STATEMENT

We are frequently getting updates from the Bishops office. Any new correspondence or pastoral statements will be placed on the home page of our website, Facebook or Instagram pages.

Facebook search **St John's Catholic Parish Dapto**

Instagram search **St John's Parish Dapto**

Website **www.stjohnsdapto.org.au**

PARISH OFFICE OPEN

At this stage the parish office is open, however if you are feeling unwell please do not come in.

If you have any questions you are encouraged to phone or email if convenient. Please be assured that we are still here to help.

If you have an urgent matter you can contact Fr Francis directly on 0413 449 821

PRAYER RESOURCES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

During this time of social isolation it is important that we pray and stay connected to our community. A range of online resources are available to assist with this. These include daily prayers and readings, prayer services, the Sunday Office, commentaries, homilies and reflections as well as Gospel based activities and resources to support personal and family prayer. Go to: liturgyhelp.com/aus/woll/pray and follow the prompts to access. Hopefully these resources will help create prayerful solidarity with our community and the whole Body of Christ.

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAM – Aired 29 March 2020

This week on the Journey, Bishop Brian Mascord proclaims the Gospel and Sr Anastasia Reeves provides some great Spiritual Direction for the 4th week of Lent. You'll hear some uplifting music and encouragement

It's free – go to www.jcr.org.au to get it sent to you each week.

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe you are really here in the Blessed Sacrament. I love you more than anything in the world, but since I cannot receive communion at this moment, feed my soul spiritually. I unite myself to you now as I do when I actually receive you. Never let me drift away from you. Amen

MASS ONLINE AND OTHER SPIRITUAL RESOURCES

During this period of time where Masses in the diocese are suspended, it is important to know that you have not been abandoned by the Church. Members of the faithful are urged to keep holy the Lord's Day by making an act of **Spiritual Communion**, a well-established devotional practice of uniting one's self in prayer with Christ's sacrifice when circumstances prevent one from receiving holy Communion.

Starting on Sunday 29 March, we will be premiering Sunday Mass online available at www.dow.org.au and on the diocese's Facebook page with Bishop Brian Mascord and other priests from the diocese.

These online Masses will continue every Sunday (including the Paschal Triduum during Holy Week) giving parishioners the opportunity to make an act of Spiritual Communion together as a diocese.

For daily Masses, parishioners throughout the Diocese are encouraged to access other home worship resources including:

- Mass for You at Home is available across the Ten Network on Sundays at 6:00 a.m. and any time on Ten Play
- Daily Mass on Demand is available at CathNews YouTube channel
- Saturdays 5pm and Sundays 10am Mass from St Mary MacKillop Catholic Church, Oran Park
- Daily Mass from St John the Evangelist Catholic Parish, Campbelltown
- Daily 7 p.m. Mass and Sunday 10 a.m. Mass from Mary Immaculate Catholic Church, Eagle Vale
- Daily 1 p.m. Mass and Sunday 11 a.m. Mass from the Archdiocese of Melbourne
- Daily Mass from Bishop Robert Barron's chapel

The following resources are also available on our website to assist parishioners with their home worship:

- Liturgy and prayer resources from the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.
- Daily Mass readings.
- Act of Spiritual Communion prayer card.
- Journey Catholic Radio is a Diocesan weekly podcast. It includes awesome music, a weekly Gospel reflection, interviews and a variety of weekly inputs from some of the best Catholic presenters in Australia.
- Faith Circles is free weekly single-sided A4 PDF resource that contains the upcoming Sunday Gospel reading as well as a reflection on the Gospel (usually by Pope Francis) accompanied by questions for discussion and prayer points. It is a great resource for individual and families to use at home.
- The diocese's Lenten Program is still available to purchase as a PDF and the MP3 resource is now available to download for free.

CAtHFAMILY

CAtHFAMILY brings you a selection of activities, prayer rituals, crafts and recipes for free from their website. Don't miss CathKids: A weekly interactive experience with a two-minute animated reflection on the Sunday reading, questions to stimulate discussion, a simple activity and prayer. Families in the diocese are encouraged to utilise these resources at home to share faith with kids. Visit www.cathfamily.org especially during this time of COVID-19 social distancing especially if children are unable to attend school.

2020 WOLLONGONG HOSPITALS

Fr George Condookala will be available for visits to the sick. He can be contacted on 0475 815 506.

FAITH CIRCLES - FREE SMALL GROUP RESOURCE:

During this period of Pandemic isolation, you are encouraged to spend time in prayer and spiritual reading and faith Circles is one way that you can do this. The weekly *Faith Circles* resource is available for free to download. It is easy to use, and could easily be done in your household or even by skype / phone with others at this time, with its questions and prayer points. It is available to download at www.faithcircles.dow.org.au or have it sent to you each month via email subscription.
