

**19 March 2023**  
**Fourth Sunday in Lent**  
**Year A**



**Entrance Antiphon**

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all  
who love her. Be joyful, all  
who were in mourning;  
exult and be satisfied at her  
consoling breast.

**First Reading** from the  
first book of  
Samuel 16:1. 6-7. 10-13

**Responsorial Psalm**  
Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R. v.8

**Response:** The Lord is my  
shepherd; there is  
nothing I shall want.

**Second Reading** from the  
letter of St Paul to the  
Ephesians 5:8-14

**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!

**Holy Gospel** according to  
John 9:1-41

**Communion Antiphon**

The Lord anointed my eyes:  
I went, I washed, I saw and I  
believed in God.

**NEXT WEEK**  
**26 March 2023**  
**Fifth Sunday of Lent**

**First:** Ez 37:12-14

**Second:** Rom 8:8-11

**Gospel:** Jn 11:1-45

*We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand,  
the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.*

## WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

### FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



When Thu was 12 years old, he lost his leg after stepping on an unexploded land mine – from the Vietnam War. Living with a disability in rural Vietnam presented many challenges for Thu, who worked mainly as a rice farmer. After his wife, Linh, suffered a stroke, he had to take on the additional role of carer for his wife.

*"She is my wife and we have been living together and depending on each other,  
I am the one to be there with her and for her," Thu said.*

Thu joined the Empowerment of People with Disabilities program, supported by Caritas Australia through our local partners, the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development (SRD).

Through the program, Thu learnt livelihood, financial and independent living skills and joined a Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) where he could interact with other people with disabilities and earn income through making incense sticks.

The VSLA helped Thu to obtain a loan so that he could set up a barber shop and earn extra income to support his family. The project also helped Thu to build an accessible toilet for Linh, who has become more independent thanks to the support of a physiotherapist.

There are many occasions when we ask the question why, and can't find the answer for which we are looking. Why did we miss out on a job? Why did someone we love get cancer? Why can't we find a place to live that we can afford? Why do some days seem so difficult?

It is good to sit with our confusion and even grief. It is good to share it with the Lord who loves us so tenderly. But sometimes we have to step aside from the question why did this happen? It may be better to start with, where can I go from here? What small steps will enable me to face the future in a positive spirit?

Today's readings touch upon these issues. In the Gospel, Jesus encounters a person who was born blind. The bystanders want to know why this happened. They think it must be because either he or his parents did something wrong. They are looking backwards. Jesus prefers to look forward. He says 'he was born blind so that the works of God may be displayed in him.' In other words, his blindness presents opportunities for growth, not a pretext for blame. The letter to the Ephesians similarly reminds us that we are on a journey from darkness to light. The whole of Lent could be described in those words. The letter says 'try to discover what the Lord wants of you.' It asks us in terms of possibilities! The same thing happens when Samuel anoints David. It doesn't matter that David is a young shepherd. He has a big future, as anyone familiar with the Bible well knows.

This week Project Compassion shares with us the story of Thu, who lives in Vietnam. At the age of 12, Thu's life was thrown into chaos when he trod on a land mine from the Vietnam War. Surely, he must have asked why he was among the unlucky ones. He might have asked the same thing again when his wife suffered a stroke. But Thu joined the Empowerment of People with Disabilities program, supported by Caritas Australia through our local partners, the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development. As with so many others, your generosity enabled Thu and his family to build a brighter future. Thank you for helping in this wonderful work of transformation.

*-Written by Michael McGirr*



## Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am & 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri & Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: First Friday from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of even months at 12 noon		<b>Stations of the Cross</b> will be held every Friday during Lent at 7pm in the Church.
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm		Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am

### Contact us

Office Hours: **Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-12.30pm**

Phone: **9603 7373 / 0434 705 176**

Email: **varroville@dow.org.au**

Website: **varroville.dow.org.au**

Parish Priest: **Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD**

Assistant Priest: **Fr “Sam” Ransom Rapirap OCD**

Parish Associate: **Sr “Jill” Girlie Sudario, CM**

### Prayer intentions

**For the sick & homebound:** Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda & John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Phyllis Cooper, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys.

*May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.*

**For our recently dearly departed:** Emmanuel Vella, Hugh Madden, June Wrightman, Sandra Bastoli, Marites Sitjar,

**Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** Veni Menezes, Virginia Abunassur, Jerry & Anne Migus, John McDermott.

*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



### Our Community: Rosters

26 March	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
<b>Welcomers</b>	Tracey, Richard & Volunteer	Irene, Gerry & Margaret	Patricia & Matthew
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Ryan, Amana & Elijah	Orly, Luisa & Carlos	Samantha & Nathan
<b>Readers</b>	Suzanne & Margaret	Tess & Aida	Kathy & Margaret
<b>Refreshments</b>	Emmarie, Suzanne & Berna	Steve & Sarah	
<b>CLOTW</b>		Sarah & Cordelia	
<b>Flowers</b>	Maria & Volunteer	<b>Church Vacuuming</b>	Jacinta & Volunteer
<b>Counters</b>	George & Wendy	<b>Foyer Cleaning</b>	Anita & Volunteer

### Our Community

#### Easter Mass Times:

**Parish Reconciliation Service**—Friday 31 March at 7.30pm

**Holy Thursday**— Mass at 7:30pm

**Good Friday**— Stations of the Cross at 10am  
The Passion of the Lord at 3pm

**Easter Saturday**— Easter Vigil 7.00pm

**Easter Sunday**— Mass at 9:30am & 5.00pm

**Feast of Divine Mercy** - Sunday 16 April: Confession, Mass & Devotions from 2pm.

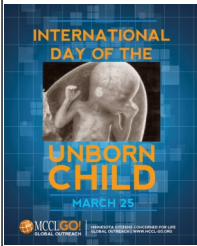
**Preparation for Good Friday Stations of the Cross will be held every Sunday at 1.30pm in the parish hall.**

**RCIA:** This Lent we include Grant, Jack and Adam in our Prayers of the Faithful and I ask all parishioners to keep them in your personal daily prayers as we join in the journey to renew our own baptismal promises at Easter. *Diane Redmayne RCIA*



# Bulletin Notices

**Legion of Mary:** Our Lady Queen of Peace Campbelltown Curia will hold its annual Acies on the Feast of the Annunciation, 2pm Saturday March 25, at John the Evangelist Catholic Church Campbelltown.



**Day of the Unborn Child:** March 26 is internationally recognised as the Day of the Unborn Child. It is a day of celebration and dignity of the unborn. 10:30am mass at St Marys Cathedral, 12 noon Angelus; 1:30pm Benediction.

## Consecrated Life Weekend: Discernment Retreat, 25-26

**March 2023:** An opportunity for single women aged 16-35 to come and listen for the voice of Jesus, ask questions and experience prayer, talks, sisterhood and times of sharing to help you discern your vocation. Registrations: [mgl sisters.sydney@gmail.com](mailto:mgl sisters.sydney@gmail.com)

**Marriage Enrichment Weekend** Learn to live your best life in love! **Join us on 14-16 April 2023** at Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville, NSW a stunning & tranquil oasis on the edge of Sydney. Book online

at [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au) or contact

Christine & Terry Mahony

on 0490 774 419 or

Email: [nswbookings@wwme.org.au](mailto:nswbookings@wwme.org.au)



**Joelle Maryn: Master of the Pieces Book Tour** We would like to invite all those interested in adult faith formation to join us for a very special evening on Monday 20 March 2023 at 7pm. Award winning Actress, Speaker and TV Host, Joelle Maryn will be speaking at the new CCD and Evangelisation Resource Centre in Campbelltown and sharing her message of God's healing love as a part of her "Master of the Pieces" book tour. The event will include refreshments, good company, as well as the opportunity for Q and A and books to purchase.

To register: [www.dow.org.au/events](http://www.dow.org.au/events)

## Appin Massacre Memorial Ceremony Sunday 16 April 2023

Cataract Dam Picnic Area 11am – 3.30pm. Hosted by: Winga Myamly Reconciliation Group. The event will take place regardless of weather conditions. Please see flyer for contacts and additional details.

**Liturgy Training Workshop Saturday 1 April 2023** Ingleburn Parish is hosting a Ministry Workshop, specifically for Readers, Ministers of Communion and Acolytes, both for existing ministers and those interested in joining these ministries. The day will begin with mass at 9am, followed by the workshop at 9.30am and conclude with a light lunch at approximately 1pm. A contribution to the lunch would be appreciated. If you would like to register for this workshop please call the parish office on 96037373 / 0434 705 176.

## Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Manager –

**Catholic Diocese of Wollongong** An exciting opportunity exists for a suitably experienced and qualified person to apply for the role of Executive Assistant to the Chief Operations Manager. Please visit the website <https://www.dow.org.au/news-and-events/>. Applications can be emailed to [recruitment@dow.org.au](mailto:recruitment@dow.org.au).

**The Journey, Weekly Podcast:** On The Journey This Week: Fr Mark De Battista says this Gospel takes us on a journey into true spiritual insight. Mother Hilda says it is not what we see that has its lasting effects, it is how we see it. The Triumph Lenten series continues with Sr Anastasia Reeves and Ken Bryant. Plus, Fr Mike Delaney and God in the Everyday. The Journey podcast available at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au).

**Could you provide a forever home? CatholicCare** urgently needs foster carers to provide love, care and support to help children thrive and reach their full potential. Carers receive comprehensive support from the Fostering Futures team to ensure they have a full range of resources and networks to nurture their forever home. Our team have over 30 years' experience helping carers give vulnerable children a loving home and a brighter future. We are currently looking for a forever home for two siblings, Liam\* and Sofia\* aged 10 & 8 years. Liam is an outgoing & active boy who loves to joke around and makes friends easily. He enjoys playing with Lego, fishing, being outdoors, riding his bike, watching movies, drawing and colouring in. His sister Sofia is a resilient, confident and kind young girl who loves playing with her friends, riding her bike, gymnastics and writing stories. Liam and Sofia are looking for a forever home with carers who are kind, loving and patient and who can give them safety, family and a sense of belonging. *\*names have been changed for privacy.* If you would like to learn more about becoming a carer with CatholicCare, please call 0418 783 956 or email [fosteringfutures@catholiccare.dow.org.au](mailto:fosteringfutures@catholiccare.dow.org.au) for more information and we will support you every step of the way.

## St Michael's Parish Thirroul Centenary Monday 30 October

**2023:** Special events will be held on 28 October. Details will be announced in the coming months. Anyone with a connection with the parish is invited to join us. Organisers are also interested in any stories and photos of the parish to include in a centenary publication. Inquiries to Judy Bull, [judy.bull@bigpond.com](mailto:judy.bull@bigpond.com).

## Mystery & Mission: The Art of Liturgical Celebration 28 – 30 September 2023, Brisbane.

The Australian Pastoral Musicians Network and the National Liturgical Council are delighted to announce a combined Liturgy and Music Conference. Early Bird Registrations are now Open: For all enquiries contact [liturgy@liturgybrisbane.net.au](mailto:liturgy@liturgybrisbane.net.au)

## Palms Australia Mission: Change their lives...and yours.

Palms Australia is offering Australian Catholics the opportunity to enter Global Mission and they are inviting parishioners to join their overseas placements program. **Mission: Change their lives ... and yours.** Communities in Africa, Asia or the Pacific are seeking Australians from a variety of professions and trades to share their skills with those who have less opportunity to develop their talents. On our website you can also see news including stories from those currently supported in Timor-Leste, Samoa, American Samoa and Thailand. Please enquire further about potential assignments for you or someone you know: RING: 02 9560 5333 or 0422472 567. WEB: [www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au)





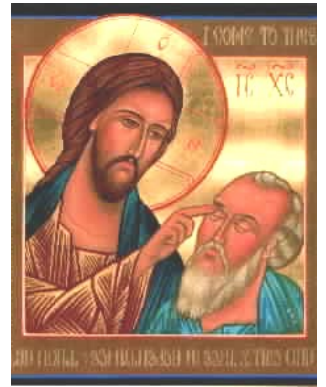
## Holy Gospel according to John 9:1-41

*The blind man went off and washed himself and came away with his sight restored.*

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man. 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away. Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.



## Reflection by Pope Francis

At the centre of the Gospel this Fourth Sunday of Lent we find Jesus and a man blind from birth. Christ restores his sight and performs this miracle with a type of symbolic ritual: first, He mixes dirt with saliva and spreads it on the blind man's eyes; then, He orders him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. The man goes, washes, and regains his sight. He was blind from birth. With this miracle, Jesus manifests himself, and He manifests himself to us as the Light of the World. The man blind from birth represents each one of us, who was created to know God; but due to sin has become blind; we are in need of a new light; we are all in need of a new light: that of faith, which Jesus has given us. Indeed, that blind man in the Gospel, by regaining his sight, is opened to the mystery of Christ. Jesus asks him: "Do you believe in the Son of man?". "And who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?", the healed blind man replied. "You have seen him, and it is he who speaks to you". "Lord, I believe", [the blind man said,] and he prostrated himself before Jesus.

This episode induces us to reflect on our faith, our faith in Christ, the Son of God; and at the same time, it also refers to Baptism, which is the first Sacrament of faith: the Sacrament which makes us "come to the light", by being reborn through the water and through the Holy Spirit; as happens to the man born blind, whose eyes are opened after being cleansed in the water of the pool of Siloam. The man born blind and healed represents us when we do not realize that Jesus is the light; he is "the Light of the World", when we are looking elsewhere, when we prefer to entrust ourselves to little lights, when we are groping in the dark. The fact that the blind man has no name helps us to see our face reflected and our name in his story. We too have been "illuminated" by Christ in Baptism, and thus we are called to behave as children of the light. Acting as children of the light requires a radical change of mind-set, a capacity to judge men and things according to another scale of values, which comes from God. The Sacrament of Baptism, in fact, requires the choice of living as children of the light and walking in the light. If I were to ask you: "Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God? Do you believe that he can change your heart? Do you believe that he can show reality as he sees it, not as we see it? Do you believe that he is light, that he gives us the true light?". How would you answer? Each of you, respond in your heart.

What does it mean to have the true light, to walk in the light? First of all it means abandoning false lights: the cold, vain light of prejudice against others, because prejudice distorts reality and ladens us with aversion to those whom we judge without mercy and condemn without appeal. This is our daily bread! When you gossip about others, you do not walk in the light, you walk in shadows. Another false light, because it is seductive and ambiguous, is that of self-interest: if we value men and things on the basis of usefulness to us, of pleasure, of prestige, we are not truthful in our relationships and situations. If we go down this path of seeking self-interest, we are walking in shadows.

May the Blessed Virgin, who was the first to welcome Jesus, the Light of the World, obtain for us this grace of welcoming anew the light of faith this Lent, rediscovering the inestimable gift of Baptism, which all of us have received. And may this new illumination transform us in attitude and action, so that we too, beginning with our poverty, our narrow-mindedness, may be bearers of a ray of the light of Christ.