

9 April 2023
EASTER SUNDAY of the
Resurrection of the Lord
Year A



Entrance Antiphon

I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia. You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia. Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 117:1-2. 16-17. 22-23. R. v.24 (R.) This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

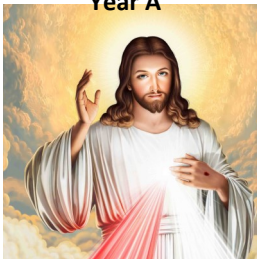
Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
Christ has become our paschal sacrifice; let us feast with joy in the Lord. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia; therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.

Second Sunday of Easter YEAR A
Feast of Divine Mercy
Year A



First: Acts 2:42-47

Responsorial Psalm:

Ps 117:2-4. 13-15. 22-24. R. v.1 (R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

Second: 1 Pt 1:3-9

Gospel: Jn 20:19-31

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.

The Divine Gardener

EASTER MESSAGE FROM BISHOP BRIAN MASCORD

He does this for us individually, but he also tends the garden of our communities. Will we let him make something ever more beautiful with us?



In the first Preface for Easter, we hear the words:

“....at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but on this day above all to laud you yet more gloriously, when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.”

Through this celebration of Easter, we are overcome with paschal joy and our churches resound with celebration and praise to our God whose love has destroyed death forever and filled us with the life of the Resurrection!

This Easter celebration beckons us to approach the empty tomb and encounter the risen Jesus, “The true Lamb who has taken away the sins of the world” (Preface I for Easter). It is no accident that St John’s account of Easter tells us that his crucifixion and burial occurred in the same garden (Jn 19:41), for to meet the risen Jesus, we cannot bypass the Cross. Our celebration occurs in the shadow of the Cross and Christ’s victory for us—evidenced by the empty tomb. We cannot have one without the other.

On that first day of the week when Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb, she, in her grief, mistakes the risen Jesus for a gardener (Jn 20:11–18). Perhaps Mary was not mistaken. In many sacred artworks depicting this scene, Jesus is shown with the weeping Mary, a shovel or spade in hand, as if he is already set to work. But what is he working on? Jesus becomes a gardener, not of a physical place but of our hearts. Just as Adam, through the curse of sin, was destined to work the land for food, Jesus, the New Adam, through his victory over sin, becomes our food, the Eucharist. Jesus, the Divine Gardener, comes to dwell in us—nourishing and feeding, pruning the branches that have become wild, and binding up all that is weak and broken—because he loves us and sees in us a garden that can, and will, bear fruit under the guidance of his gentle hand.

He does this for us individually, but he also tends the garden of our communities. Will we let him make something ever more beautiful with us? Will we allow him to transform, nourish, guide and heal us? Can we become a place that draws people to the Good News of the garden where sin and death were conquered by Love himself? Is this not what it means to be “bearers of Christ’s love”?

My prayer for you and us this Easter season is that we would allow the Divine Gardener to do in us what he did for those disciples who had walked from the Cross and discovered the empty tomb: till the soil of our hearts and communities and allow us to bear fruit in his timing.

May he who is risen from the dead and alive in our Church bless you all at this time and always.

Amen! Alleluia!

Yours in Christ

Most Rev Brian G Mascord DD
BISHOP OF WOLLONGONG



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: Friday 14 April from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of even months at 12 noon		
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm	Feast of Divine Mercy - Sunday 16 April: Confession, Mass & Devotions from 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: Myka Mangos, 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: Phyllis Cooper, Emmanuel Vella, Hugh Madden, June Wrightman

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Hilda Young, Maria Lourdes Inandan, Anthony Binny, Fr Tadgh, Anthony Mangos, Veni Menezes, *Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



Our Community: Rosters

16 April	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Berna, Suzanne & Russell	Nelia & Laura	Terry & Maree
Altar Servers	Cody, Christian, Ralph	Orly, Lusía, Carlos	Robert
Readers	Candice & Michael	Gabriel & Ofa	Gloria & Rachel
Refreshments	Margaret McD & Volunteer	Nelia & Anita	
CLOTW		School Holidays	
Flowers	Audrey	Church Vacuuming	Feiloakitohi family
Counters	Margaret & Aida	Foyer Cleaning	Feiloakitohi family

Our Community

Invitational Culture – Did you know? Recent research shows that over four in 10 Australians would come to Church if invited and a further 19% of those surveyed would be open. All age groups were equally likely to say 'yes' to an invitation".

Please take the time to read Bishop Brian's Lenten Invitation if you haven't already and pray about who God might be asking you to invite this Easter and after Easter, using the invitation cards that the Bishop provided to parishes

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

Meditation Workshop: For those who are called to adoration and meditation, a workshop will be held on Tuesday 18 April at 7.30pm at 12 Montrose Place, St Andrews.

Evangelisation and the Acts of the Apostles Bible Study with Dr Mary Healy

Begins Friday April 28 at 10:00 am OR Tuesday May 2 at 7:30pm
OLMC Parish Meeting Room

Cost:\$20 for Course Materials

You are invited to attend this Bible Study DVD series, where we study the Acts of the Apostles and explore topics such as the call



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of Jesus to evangelise, the power of the Sacraments, the role of charisms for building up the Body of Christ and techniques from St Paul to reach a secular culture.

Register via the parish office on 96037373 or M: 0434 705 176

Fundraising News: Our fundraising team will host a “High Tea” in the parish on Sunday 7 May. The cost will be \$15 per person for morning tea. The cakes can be purchased for those who prefer to take something home.

Fundraising Cash Raffle: Available from next weekend we will be selling raffle tickets in a major raffle to be drawn at the parish feast day on 16 July. Tickets will be sold after Mass and books of tickets are available to take home and sell.

Sacramental Preparation dates are now available on the parish website. Registration to the parish office is essential for anyone wishing to make their Sacraments this year.

Planned Giving comprises the envelopes and loose money put onto the second collection every week at Mass. Also the money pledged by direct debit which is deposited into the parish bank account regularly. The money from the Planned Giving collection **supports the maintenance of the parish buildings and pastoral programs**. The parish must work within its own budget and is unable to draw funds for expenses from any source other than its own parish income.

Making a formal commitment to planned giving helps with managing the budget and planning for the future. You can make a commitment to planned giving at any time by contacting the parish office or going onto our website and following the prompts to planned giving.

The Journey, Weekly Podcast On The Journey This Week: Easter Sunday reflections from Fr Mark De Battista and Mother Hilda, plus Fr Mike Delaney, Trish McCarthy and faith testimonial by Eddy Ferry from menALIVE, and some great contemporary Christian music. The Journey podcast is available at www.jcr.org.au.

Marriage Enrichment Weekend Learn to live your best life in love! **Join us on 14-16 April 2023** at Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville. Book online at www.wwme.org.au or contact Christine & Terry Mahony on 0490 774 419 or Email: nswbookings@wwme.org.au

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.

Catechist Retreat 2023: Prayer, a journey of friendship with God; The retreat will be facilitated by Fr Aloysius Rego OCD, of the Discalced Carmelite Friars in Australia-Oceania and is a much loved and experienced retreat facilitator. The retreat will be held in Campbelltown on Monday, 1 May, and in Gerringong on Friday, 5 May. Catechists will be able to register for either retreat and spouses are welcome to attend. Please register here or by visiting <https://www.dow.org.au/events/> and selecting the Catechist Retreat.

Understanding Aboriginal Catholic Spirituality Come for an introduction in Aboriginal Catholic Spirituality. Designed as an in-service for SRE Catechists, the talk will be open to all

parishioners interested about learning more about Aboriginal Spirituality, and in particular the beautiful Aboriginal Art Resource: Sacrament Series by artist Donna Marie Sadler. The course will run in Campbelltown on Monday 15 May from 9:30am - 1:30pm; Morning Tea will be provided. To register: <https://www.dow.org.au/events/understanding-aboriginal-catholic-spirituality/>

Compass: Catholic Family Camping Weekends for 2023 19-21 May (Book now!) Guntawang Catholic Youth Centre, Sheehys Creek Road, Oakdale (15 minutes from Picton). Stay in your tent, camper or van – with dorm accommodation also an option. The weekend is designed to unite families of every age, including couples with or without children, single parents with their children, and grandparents, all to celebrate the incredible gift of family life. We will be nurtured by each other’s company and emboldened as families to witness to living life to the full in our world, a key hope articulated by Pope Francis for families. There will be shared meals, games, music, prayer, and Sunday Mass led by Bishop Brian Mascord. To avoid missing out on this incredible opportunity, contact us now to secure your spot. Cost: \$30 per adult or \$70 per family (Regardless of size) Enquiries or to register your interest: Jude Hennessy 4222 2407 or jude.hennessy@dow.org.au To Register click here or visit the Diocesan Website Events.

Prayer Breakfast Book Launch | Fr Tony Percy 27 May 7:30am -9am Cost \$10; Micah House Evangelisation Centre, 35a Cordeaux Street, Campbelltown; Join us for a Prayer Breakfast, commencing with morning prayer of the Church, followed by breakfast and a Q & A with Fr Tony Percy about his new book which espouses that nations need strong foundations if they are to endure. Resting on the work of David Kemp’s five-volume political history, Fr Percy investigates the liberal intellectual roots of Australia’s democracy and asks what went right and what went wrong. He shows that, by any reasonable measure, the last 120-odd years prove the roots of this nation are strong. Signed copies of the book will be available for purchase for \$25. To learn more about the book click here. Spots are limited for what will be an engaging morning including a hot breakfast. I would strongly encourage you to register now to secure your spot by clicking here; RSVP by Wednesday 24 May. Any enquiries: cindy.oliver@dow.org.au

A vocation view: He is Risen! Salvation has been won; the power of death is broken. Be inspired by Christ’s triumph over death that you might be a confident witness of His Resurrection. (Matthew 28:6-7). If you want to talk about your vocation, please contact the diocesan vocations director, Fr Duane Fernandez at vocations@dow.org.au

Seeking a Foster Carer: CatholicCare are seeking a forever home for Lachlan* aged 10 years. Lachlan is a happy, loving boy who would like a family who can take him to the park to ride his scooter, kick a football around or push him on the swing. An ideal carer for Lachlan is someone who can help him find his feet in his new surroundings. Your consistency and stability will help create an environment that is loving, predictable and somewhere Lachlan feels safe. If you can provide a safe and supportive home for Lachlan, or kids like him, we’d love to hear from you. Please call 0418 783 956 or email fosteringfutures@catholiccare.dow.org.au

Holy Gospel according to Matthew 28:1-10

He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee.

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.



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.

Homily of Pope Francis

Today the Church repeats, sings, shouts: "Jesus is Risen!". But why is this? Peter, John, the women went to the Sepulchre and it was empty. He was not there. They went away with their hearts closed in sadness, the sadness of defeat: the Teacher, their Teacher, the One whom they loved so much had been put to death; He is dead. And there is no return from death. This is the defeat. This is the path of defeat, the path towards the sepulchre. But the Angel says to them, "He is not here, He is Risen".

It is the first announcement: "He is Risen". And then the confusion, the closed hearts, the apparitions. But the disciples stayed locked in the Upper Room the entire day because they were afraid that what happened to Jesus would happen to them. The Church does not cease to say before our losses, our closed and fearful hearts: "Stop, the Lord is Risen". But if the Lord is Risen, why is it that these things happen? Why is it that there is so much adversity: illness, human trafficking, human slavery, war, destruction, mutilation, vengeance, hatred? Where is the Lord then?

Yesterday I phoned a young man with a grave illness, an educated young man, an engineer, and while talking to him, to give him a sign of faith, I said: "There are no explanations for what is happening to you. Look at Jesus on the Cross. God did this to his Son, and there is no other explanation". And he answered: "Yes, but He asked His Son and the Son said 'yes'. I was not asked if I wanted this". This moves us. None of us is asked: "Are you happy with what is happening in the world? Are you willing to carry this cross further?". And the Cross goes forth and faith in Jesus comes down from it. Today, the Church continues to say: "Stop. Jesus is Risen". And this is not a fantasy. The Resurrection of Christ is not a celebration with many flowers. This is beautiful, but this is not it. It is something more. It is the mystery of the discarded stone which becomes the foundation of our existence. Christ is Risen. This is what it means.

In this throwaway culture where what is not needed is just used and disposed of, where what is not needed is thrown away, that stone — Jesus — the source of life, is discarded. And with faith in the Risen Christ, we too, pebbles on this earth of pain, tragedy, acquire meaning amid so many calamities. The sense to look beyond, the sense to say: "Look, there is no wall; there is a horizon, there is life, there is joy, there is the cross with this ambivalence. Look ahead, do not close within yourself. You pebble, acquire meaning in life because you are a pebble near that rock, that stone which the evil of sin discarded". What does the Church tell us today before so many tragedies? Simply this: the discarded stone is not really discarded. The pebbles which believe and stick to that stone are not discarded. They have meaning and it is with this sentiment that the Church repeats from the bottom of Her heart: "Christ is Risen".

Let us think for a while, each of us, think about the daily problems, the illnesses we have been through or of one that a relative has; let us think about wars, human tragedies and with simplicity, with a humble voice, without flowers, alone, before God, before us, let us say, "I do not know how this is, but I am certain that Christ is Risen and I have put a wager on it". Brothers and sisters, this is what I wanted to say to you. Go home today repeating in your hearts: "Christ is Risen"

16 April 2017