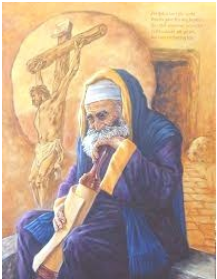


**10 March 2024**

**Fourth Sunday of Lent Year B**



**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  
second book of Chronicles  
36:14-16. 19-23

**Responsorial Psalm**

Ps 136. R. v.6

**Response:**

Let my tongue be silenced, if  
ever I forget you!

**Second Reading** from  
the letter of St Paul to the  
Ephesians 2:4-10

**Gospel Acclamation**

Glory and praise to you,  
Lord Jesus Christ!  
God loved the world so  
much, he gave us his only  
Son, that all who believe in  
him might have eternal life.  
Glory and praise to you,  
Lord Jesus Christ!

**Holy Gospel** according to  
John 3:14-21

**Communion Antiphon**

Jerusalem is built as a city  
bonded as one together.  
It is there that the tribes  
go up, the tribes of the Lord,  
to praise the name of the  
Lord.

**Fifth Sunday of Lent Year B**

**First:** 2 Jeremiah 31:31-34

**Resp Ps:** 50:3-4. 12-15.R.v.12

**Second:** Hebrews 5:7-9

**Gospel:** John 3:16

*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.*



**Growing up in the Mwanza district in southern Malawi, 26-year-old Memory was born to a low income family who relies on subsistence farming for survival.**

Memory's parents struggled to pay for her school fees and supplies, and she often had to walk to school barefoot. As the eldest of five children, Memory also faced the challenge of balancing her education with domestic chores, such as farming, cooking, cleaning, and carrying water.

Despite the challenges she faced, Memory understood that education was her best chance of breaking the cycle of poverty, "I told myself I can't stop going to school because this is the only way I can get a better life." With the support of Caritas Australia and the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM) – Caritas Australia's local partner in Malawi – Memory enrolled in a technical college where she undertook a three-year carpentry course. Her tuition and boarding fees were partially funded by CADECOM through funds provided by Caritas Australia.

Memory now stands proudly as the first female carpenter from her village, working at one of Malawi's largest hydroelectric power stations. With the income from her job, she can now support her family while inspiring other young women in her community to finish their education and seize opportunities within male dominated industries.

*"Being a female carpenter sets an example to others in my community," she said. "They see a woman can do what a man can do."*

**REFLECTION**

We have all lived through a great deal of change. Even young people have seen plenty. ChatGPT is a recent development and so are electric cars. Older people can remember having a phone plugged into a socket that you couldn't carry around with you. Sometimes we have discussions about the good old days. They are often tinged with nostalgia for things we miss and gratitude for improvements. We no longer need to buy film for our cameras or change typewriter ribbons. Climate change is deeply troubling. Many medical improvements are inspiring.

Change can certainly be frightening. It can also be an occasion of great hope. Jesus seems to have understood this. Nicodemus comes across as a character who is looking for change in his life, but he is nervous about it, so he comes to see Jesus under cover of darkness. Earlier in the chapter, Jesus uses the image of being born again. Of starting all over again. It is a dramatic description of change. Jesus says that the light has come into the world and that people prefer the same old darkness. They are set in their ways.

Every Lent, through Project Compassion, Caritas Australia asks us to help bring light into the world and to make positive change. An example is presented to us this week in the story of Memory, a young woman from rural Malawi, the eldest child in a family living at the level of subsistence farming. Listen to some of Memory's words:

*'Growing up in the village was not easy. My parents don't have a job, so they depend on farming. When the season goes wrong, we suffer a lot and become food insecure. Sometimes we need to bathe without soap. Sometimes we need to walk without shoes.'*

With the support of Caritas Australia and its partner the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), Memory was able to enrol at a technical college where she learnt practical skills in carpentry. A new life became possible. She was able to offer more to her family and her community.

Today, the letter to the Ephesians reminds us that every person is 'God's work of art.' God is the artist who never signs off on a painting but is always trying to make it better. Perhaps we can see the world in the same way.

## 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 and 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri and Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: First Friday of each month from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of even months at 12 noon	Healing Mass on the first Saturday of each month at 9am	<b>Stations of the Cross; Friday 7pm during Lent</b>
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm		Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am—12

### 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**

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

### Prayer intentions

**For the sick and homebound:** Una Champion, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda and John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie and Barry Atkins, Carol and 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 and affliction.*

**For our recently dearly departed:** Lola Moors, Rosario David, Rodney Smith, Joseph Baldwin Lopez,

**Those whose anniversaries occur at this time:** MA Pereira, Anne & Jerry Migus, Francis Haldar,  
*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.*



### Our Community: Rosters

17 March	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
<b>Welcomers</b>	Tracey, Richard & Estela	Sarah, Violeti & Martin	Betty & Bobi
<b>Altar Servers</b>	Berna, Christian & Ralph	Orly, Fisiilose & Claire	Robert & Nathan
<b>Readers</b>	Ryan & Michael	Irene & Lee	Kathy & Margaret
<b>Refreshments</b>	Josephine & Glenda	Nelia, Anita & Tina	Beatrix & Madonna
<b>CLOTW</b>		Josephine & Nellie	
<b>Flowers</b>	Jeanne & Jessica	<b>Church Vacuuming</b>	Tess
<b>Counters</b>	Margaret & Volunteer	<b>Foyer Cleaning</b>	Estela & Tess

### Our Community Notices: Upcoming meetings

**Youth Ministry** is on fire for faith, friendship and specially for God! All 13-17 years old are invited to join every fortnight on the 2nd & 4th Friday of every month, at 6:30 pm.

**Faith Circles** meets every Monday via zoom at 2pm & 7pm.

**Bible Reflection** group meets every Monday at 10am

**Readers Ministry Meeting** meets on the last Tuesday of every month at 7pm via zoom.

**Children's Choir** will meet on Friday 15 March at 7.30pm.

**Working Bee on Saturday 23 March from 8am to prepare the church and grounds for Easter**

**Altar Server Training** will be held on 4 Saturdays during March at 4pm. For anyone wishing to become an Altar Server and for those already serving, it is a refresher, especially in preparation for the Easter liturgies. For more info call the parish office.



# Bulletin Notices

**Cake Stall next weekend;** Our fundraising team will be having a cake stall after all the masses next weekend. The team will gratefully accept donations of some baked goods for the cake stall. Tickets for the Easter raffle are still available; \$2 per ticket. There are 4 chocolate prizes and it will be drawn before the Easter weekend.

**Holy Family Fellowship Prayer Group is calling you**

**Why:** to kick start our evangelization drive, and invite/inform other parishioners about what we do.

**Where:** OLMC Parish Hall on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024.

Please join us for the 9.00 am parish mass followed by a 2 hour session (morning tea provided).

**Sacraments of First Reconciliation, First Holy Communion and Confirmation;** The dates for these Sacraments are available on our parish website and registrations are being accepted via the Parish office.

**Fiesta Committee Meeting** Save the date for our first planning meeting for 2024 on Tuesday 9 April at 7.30pm in the parish meeting room.

**"Peace in difficult times" ( Retreat in the style of Taize):**

22-24 March; Our world seems to move at an ever-accelerating pace with increased suffering and challenges and amidst this, we may feel pain, overwhelm, and fear for ourselves and others. Join us for a weekend of prayer, connection and community, as we enter more fully into the embrace of god, who alone gives our hearts rest and peace.

**Day Retreat Saturday 6 March: "Sayings of Light and Love";** St John of the Cross composed sayings of Light and Love as counsels for following Jesus Christ. In these counsels we find sayings of discretion to guide us, of light for the path, and of love in the spiritual journey. [bookings@mtcarmel.com.au](mailto:bookings@mtcarmel.com.au). Please complete the enquiry form on our website; [mtcarmel.com.au](http://mtcarmel.com.au)

**Emmaus Silent Retreat** Friday 19th April - Sunday 21st April, Varroville: Embark on the sacred journey of the disciples on the road to Emmaus, where the victorious love of God is revealed through the abiding presence of Jesus. Be renewed in spending time alone with the Lord, and watch as He slowly sets your heart ablaze. This retreat is run by the MGL Sisters and is a retreat for both men and women: [trybooking.com/CNSXK](http://trybooking.com/CNSXK)

**Light to the Nations - 2024 Easter Youth Pilgrimage** You're invited to an Easter experience like no other. Camp under the open skies, joining in the celebration of Easter with 1000 people under a massive marquee. Held from 28-31 March, LTTN will be held on the grounds of Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville NSW. It is a transformative experience deigned to bring families, especially youth and young adults, to an encounter with the person of Jesus in the context of the Easter Triduum through prayer, worship, drama, music, and personal sharing. Register at [dow.sh/LTTN24](http://dow.sh/LTTN24)

**Palestinian Christians in Australia** We Palestinian Christians are often referred to as the "Living Stones", a term made popular over centuries referring to the first Christians from the Holy Land. Our ancestors were there when the spirit fell on

them in Jerusalem during Pentecost; they were the first to venerate the Holy Places, the actual stones where Jesus walked and suffered.

Our community are facing a big obstacle in settling refugees from Palestine in Australia especially with the accommodation expenses. We at Palestinian Christians in Australia managed to get 7 families a temporary rented apartments with basic needs but we still have many Christian families on the waiting list. If all the families who got visas end up arriving we will need a large amount of funds to host them in apartments for at least 3 or six months, till they have time to get settled and find work. We initiated an accommodation drive to try and raise some funds for that purpose. If you are able to help please go to the website for more information. The link to the website is: <https://palestinianchristians.org.au/accommodation-drive/>

**To celebrate 2024 Seniors Festival 11 – 21 March and the theme 'Reach Beyond', CatholicCare are hosting a number of fun and informative FREE events for seniors.**

♦ **LIVE SAFE:** Falls Prevention Information Session  
Where: 35A Cordeaux St, Campbelltown. When: 11am on Wednesday 13 March 2024 FREE – but only 12 spots available so book in quick.

♦ **GET CREATIVE:** Art & Social Session (Mosaic Art)  
Where: Seta's Café, 2/25-29 Dumaresq St, Campbelltown  
When: 12.30pm on Thursdays 14 & 21 March 2024. FREE – but only 25 spots available per session, so book in quick.  
To book your spot at one of the above events call Colleen on 0437715647 today!

**March 2024 Young Adult Over 18 Event** Join us on Saturday, 23 March, arrival from 5pm, at St Mary's Towers Douglas Park for a soul-enriching Holy Week and Easter experience. Connect with fellow young adults, engage in prayer, and delve into a catechesis on Holy Thursday and Good Friday events. The night concludes with an outdoor screening of 'The Passion of the Christ' by Mel Gibson. BYO dinner and snacks, along with a picnic blanket or chair. Free event!

**Register here** <https://www.trybooking.com/CPNVW> (Note: Over 18s only)

**The Journey Podcast** this Week: Sr Katherine Stone MGL asks do we truly believe that: "God sent his Son into the world that through him the world might be saved." Mother Hilda tells what really happens when we pray for somebody else. Plus, Fr Tony Percy and from the Pietà Lenten Series, Darren McDowell, and Trish McCarthy. The Journey podcast available at [www.jcr.org.au](http://www.jcr.org.au).

## EASTER SERVICES

**7.30pm Holy Thursday:** Mass of the Last Supper

**10am Good Friday:** Stations of the Cross

**3pm Good Friday:** The Passion of the Lord

**7pm Easter Vigil** on Saturday

**9.30am and 5pm Mass** on Easter Sunday

**7.30pm Friday 22 March:** Parish Reconciliation Service after Stations of the Cross.





## Holy Gospel according to John 3:14-21

*God sent his Son into the world that we might be saved through him.*

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

‘The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God’s only Son. On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.’

The Gospel of the Lord.



## Reflection of Pope Francis

On this fourth Sunday of Lent, the Eucharistic liturgy begins with this invitation: “Rejoice, Jerusalem...”. (cf. Is 66:10). What is the reason for this joy? In the middle of Lent, what is the reason for this joy? Today’s Gospel tells us: God “so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (Jn 3:16). This joyful message is the heart of the Christian faith: God’s love found its summit in the gift of his Son to a weak and sinful humanity. He gave his Son to us, to all of us.

This is what appears in the nocturnal dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus, a part of which is described in the same Gospel passage (cf. Jn 3:14-21). Nicodemus, like every member of the people of Israel, awaited the Messiah, identifying him as a strong man who would judge the world with power. Instead, Jesus challenges this expectation by presenting himself in three forms: the Son of man exalted on the cross; the Son of God sent into the world for salvation; and that of the light that distinguishes those who follow the truth from those who follow lies. Let us take a look at these three aspects: Son of man, Son of God, and light.

Jesus presents himself first of all as the Son of man (vv. 14-15). The text alludes to the account of the bronze serpent (cf. Num 21:4-9), which, by God’s will, was mounted by Moses in the desert when the people were attacked by poisonous snakes; whoever had been bitten and looked at the bronze serpent was healed. Similarly, Jesus was lifted up on the cross and those who believe in him are healed of sin and live.

The second aspect is that of the Son of God (Jn 3:16-18). God the Father loves humanity to the point of “giving” his Son: he gave him in the Incarnation and he gave him in handing him over to death. The purpose of God’s gift is the eternal life of every person: in fact, God sends his Son into the world not to condemn it, but so that the world that it might be saved through Jesus. Jesus’ mission is a mission of salvation, of salvation for everyone.

The third name that Jesus gives himself is “light” (vv. 19-21). The Gospel says: “the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light” (v. 19). The coming of Jesus into the world leads to a choice: whoever chooses darkness will face a judgment of condemnation; whoever chooses light will have a judgment of salvation. The judgement is always the consequence of the free choice of each person: whoever practices evil seeks the darkness; evil always hides, it covers itself. Whoever seeks the truth, that is, who practices what is good, comes to the light, illuminates the paths of life. Whoever walks in the light, whoever approaches the light, cannot but do good works. The light leads us to do good works. This is what we are called to do with greater dedication during Lent: to welcome the light into our conscience, to open our hearts to God’s infinite love, to his mercy full of tenderness and goodness, to his forgiveness.

Do not forget that God always forgives, always, if we humbly ask for forgiveness. It is enough just to ask for forgiveness, and he forgives. In this way we will find true joy and will be able to rejoice in God’s forgiveness, which regenerates and gives life.



[caritas.org.au/project-compassion](https://caritas.org.au/project-compassion)



1800 024 413



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