

We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the elders, past and present and all the

13 April 2025
Palm Sunday of the
Passion of the Lord:
Year C



Commemoration of the
Lord's Entrance into
Jerusalem according to
Luke 19: 28-40

First Reading

A reading from the prophet
[Isaiah 50:4-7](#)

Responsorial Psalm

[Ps 21:8-9. 17-20. 23-24. R.](#)
[v.2](#)

(R.) My God, my God, why
have you abandoned me?

Second Reading from the
letter of St Paul to the
[Philippians 2:6-11](#)

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus
Christ, king of endless glory!
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. Praise to you, Lord
Jesus Christ, king of endless
glory!

Holy Gospel

The passion of our Lord Jesus
Christ according to [Luke](#)
[22:14 – 23:56](#)

Communion Antiphon

Father, if this chalice cannot
pass without my drinking it,
your will be done.

HOLY LAND COMMISSARIAT

Franciscan Provincial Office

To the people of the Church in Australia,
for the Holy Land Collection 2025



As many of you are aware, for 800 years the Franciscan Friars have shared the difficult lives of Christians in the countries that make up the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land: Israel and Palestine, Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Rhodes and Cyprus. The people of these countries face their own difficulties, but particularly Christians due to their minority status. Among them, the friars have never ceased offering their pastoral care.

Over the last five years the people of the Holy Land have had so much turmoil in their lives. My prayer as I write this letter is that the ceasefire in Palestine, Gaza and Israel will be honoured by all the leaders. Already the Christian church leaders are encouraging people to come back on pilgrimage. Pilgrims are vital because they generate income that allows the Friars and the local Church to fulfil their mission of caring for the Holy Places (which also gives work to the local people), as well as running parishes, schools and caring for orphans, refugees, the homeless, and more.

Brothers and sisters, I am amazed at the determination of the people of this area of unrest. I read with interest in January about the consecration of the new Church of the Baptism of the Lord at Al-Mughtas, Jordan. I remember visiting this site in 2015 when it was just a concrete shell of a building. Despite the challenges of the last 10 years, the people in the Holy Land (including many pilgrim sites in Jordan) have stayed strong in faith and the opening of a new church must bring about a great hope for the future.

In Dec 2024, Fr Francesco Patton ofm, the Franciscan leader of the Holy Land Custody wrote the following, which reminds us of the need to continue to support the Holy Land...

We provide more than 400 apartments for local Christians in Jerusalem. In this way, we are able to preserve the Christian character of the Christian Quarter in the Old City. We provide more than 200 houses in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas. We also have a major project starting soon in Jaffa and a joint project with the agricultural sector to build an efficient compound near the wall that encloses Bethlehem. This is one way we provide job opportunities. We provide jobs for more or less 2,000 people, which is a great effort because it means every month we have to pay a lot of salaries.

For me, the most important social activity is our schools. We have 18 schools in the Holy Land. These schools are crucial because they provide not only cultural education but also human and religious education. We stress the importance of living together and the values of (papal encyclical) "Fratelli Tutti." Our Magnificat music school is a rare example of coexistence: Most of the teachers are Jewish and most of the students are Muslim and Christian. Through these efforts, we hope to foster a mentality of living together and counter the polarization fueled by politics and ideology. (Patton, Dec 2024)

Brothers and sisters, as is always the case, the Good Friday Holy Land Collection is extremely important, and a mission that we all can assist with. The hope is that our Australian parishioners, Parish Priests and Bishops will again be as generous as they have always been. Our donation is a direct way to make a difference in the lives of people who are keeping alive the Christian presence in the land of Jesus, often in the face of great difficulty in recent years. On their behalf, I humbly and wholeheartedly thank you all.

Friar Bernie Thomas ofm; Commissary of the Holy Land (Australia)

<http://holylandfranciscansaustralia.org/>



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: 3rd Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Not during April	Fri and Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass & Devotion: First Friday of each month from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday at 12 noon	Healing Mass on the first Saturday of each month at 9am	Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am—12



Contact us

Parish Priest:
Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD

Parish Associate:
Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM

Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday: 9.30am-12.30pm
Phone: 9603 7373 / 0434 705 176
Email: varroville@dow.org.au
Website: varroville.dow.org.au

Prayer intentions

For the sick and homebound: Mary Ponnalam, Peter Presdee, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie and Barry Atkins, Carol and Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys, Pat Stewart, Allan Marquinez.

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

For our recently dearly departed: Reg Bucknell, Emma Reyes, Christophur Pereira, Effin D'Cruz, Mabel Artuz.

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Anthony Mangos, Anne & Jerry Migus.
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.



Meetings and Gatherings

Readers Ministry Meeting meets on the last Tuesday of every 2 months at 7.30pm via zoom.

Holy Family Fellowship meets on the 4th Saturday at 7pm.

Book Club meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 10am.

Children's Mass is on the 5th Sunday of the month, 30 March at 9.30am

Friendship Group is on the 1st Tuesday of the Month

Wrap with Love Knitting group meets on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday at 11am

Faith Circles meets every Monday via zoom at 2pm & 7.30pm.

Bible Reflection group meets every Monday at 10am.

Children's Choir will meet on 3rd Friday at 6pm.

Children's Ministry Gathering will meet on the 4th Sunday from 3– 5 pm

Young Adults Group will meet at 6pm every Sunday after 5pm Mass

Ascent Youth Ministry meets on the 2nd & 4th Friday from 6.30pm.



*"The more Eucharist we receive,
the more we will become like Jesus,
so that on this earth we will have
a foretaste of heaven"*
BY CARLO ACUTIS

Embracing the Life and Witness of Carlo Acutis Canonisation – 27 April 2025

A Documentary film, ***The Boy From Milan*** will be released on April 2, and outlines the life of Carlo Acutis, the **first millennial saint to be canonized**, and his story powerfully witnesses *extraordinary holiness in an ordinary life*.

He rose early to attend daily Mass before school, proclaiming the Eucharist as his “highway to Heaven.” He inspired his mother to return to the Church. He used technology to catalogue Eucharistic miracles and spread the Gospel with as many people as possible.

The universal church will join together to celebrate Bl. Carlo’s canonization on April 27 (Divine Mercy Sunday), by **showing *The Boy From Milan*** with first hand accounts about Carlo Acutis, the sneaker-wearing, computer-loving "gamer saint" of this generation, who because of his deep love of God, devotion to the Eucharist, and quiet acts of charity is drawing a new generation of young people to be amazed by the miraculous and strive to live with everyday holiness.

Parish & Community Notices



Easter Services

17 April: Holy Thursday Mass at 7.30pm

Followed by Adoration at the Altar of Repose until midnight.
(The Altar of Repose will be set up inside the Church this year)

18 April: Good Friday Stations of the Cross at 10am

(Inside the Church. Parishioners from all ministries are invited to participate by contacting Sr Jill this week)

Passion of the Lord at 3pm

(Additional seating will be available inside the hall and the mass will be streamed from the church)

19 April: Morning Prayer at 9am

(Instead of morning Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours will be recited.)

Easter Vigil at 7pm

(The Easter fire will be lit in the Columbarium area behind the church. Bring your candles).

20 April: Easter Sunday Masses at 9.30am and 5pm

27 April: Divine Mercy Sunday Mass and Devotions from 2pm

Mother's Day Movie Night: YOU are invited! Join ASCENT Youth Group for Mother's Day Movie Night on Saturday, 10 May at 7pm in the Parish Hall and enjoy a heartwarming screening of *Unsung Hero*, a TRUE STORY of a mother's unshakeable faith and her family's inspiring journey. All are welcome - bring the whole family!

Tickets include: Entry, sausage sizzle, tea/coffee, snacks & sweets. Pre-book via the Parish Office: \$20 (adults), \$10 (children); At the door: \$25 (adults), \$15 (children)
Raffle tickets & canned drinks available for purchase on the night with great prizes to be won! For more info: Caroline 0481 469 262 or Parish Office: (02) 9603 7373

Buy a Brick promotion held during January has been very successful and I thank everyone who has supported the venture. Receipts and bricks will be prepared in the next week for those who made donations. Over \$8000 has been donated this year. Thank you.

Penrose Park: Jubilee Youth Pilgrimage, Sat 26 April 2025,

Shrine of Our Lady of Mercy Penrose Park, 10am – 3pm
Join us for a special Youth Pilgrimage—a day of prayer, reflection, and encounter as we journey in faith through: Mass, Reconciliation, Rosary Walk, International Chapels, Fellowship & Lunch, and Creative Prayer Stations. Bring your passports to get stamped along the way! Come as Pilgrims of Hope, embracing the grace of this Jubilee Year! To register: dow.org.au/events/penrose-park-jubilee-youth-pilgrimage/

Port Kembla Golf Club Open Vinnies Charity Day Tuesday 29 April; Eligibility: Open to all Golfers; Format: 4 Person Ambrose (4 Drives per player) Registration: Contact jude.hennessy@dow.org.au for details and to book your spot. Cost: \$55 per player (\$10 directly to Vinnies)
Price includes BBQ lunch and Team entry into Raffle

The Journey is the weekly podcast for parishioners in the Diocese of Wollongong. Each week it brings you great music, formation in faith, with an array of fantastic presenters from our Diocese and around Australia. Just go to www.jcr.org.au and we will send it to you each week.

The Wollongong Office of the Tribunal In 2015, Pope Francis wrote that “charity and mercy demand that the Church, like a good mother, be near her children who feel themselves estranged from her.” The Inter-diocesan Tribunal of Sydney, which has an Office in the Diocese of Wollongong, is a service of the Church to assist with the pastoral care of Catholics and non-Catholics who are civilly divorced, and who are seeking to remarry or who want clarification of their standing in the Church. The Tribunal also assists remarried persons seeking to have their current marriage recognised in the Church, and remarried persons wishing to be baptised or received into the Catholic Church.

Any divorced person, or a divorced and remarried person is welcome to contact the Wollongong Office of the Tribunal to obtain further information, or to have their status within the Church clarified. Brochures are available from the church foyer or notice board area. The Wollongong Office of the Tribunal is open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. You are welcome to contact the Tribunal on 4222 2409 or tribunal@dow.org.au or visit www.tribunal.dow.org.au

CatholicCare's Fostering Futures program are seeking a forever home for Lachlan* aged 12: 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 new surroundings.

There is a critical shortage of foster carers at the moment and Lachlan has been waiting for a long time for his forever homes. Like all kids he deserves a home where he can feel safe, secure and loved.

CatholicCare have over 30 years' experience helping carers give vulnerable children a loving home and a brighter future. Carers receive comprehensive support including training, regular case worker support and career allowance for the child's day-to-day financial needs.

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 for more information and we will support you every step of the way. *Name has been changed for privacy.

Get Connected with what is on around the Diocese Every week, there are many great opportunities to be part of special events, courses, free resources and to nurture and encourage you and your family in your faith. Stay informed by subscribing at dow.sh/stayingconnected or visit dow.sh/weeklybulletin to see a full list of notices sent to Parishes.

REFLECTION by Dianne Bergant CSA

In this final Lenten Sunday we look again at the significance of Christ in our lives. We recognise him as our saviour, but we look more closely in order to discover just what kind of saviour he is. He has taken the form of a slave; he has been glorified with a name above all other names; he continues to suffer with us.

We have not been saved through military power, but through the self-offering humility of Jesus. Though he was really in the form of God, Jesus came in the form of a slave. We have a saviour who was crushed for our iniquities, nailed to a cross as a convicted felon, and there endured the sense of abandonment. In the face of this, we must ask a fundamental question: Why does God love us with such abandon?

We have a saviour who was lifted up and exalted precisely because he emptied himself of his divine prerogatives. He became one of us in order to show us how we are to live. Unlike conquerors who triumph by putting down their opponents, Jesus was raised up because he himself was first willing to be put down.

We have a saviour who first offered himself for us and then continues to offer himself to us as an example to follow. As he was willing to empty himself for our sake, so we are told to empty ourselves for the sake of others.



Project Compassion Reflection



**PROJECT
COMPASSION**

Today we read The Passion narrative from the Gospel of St Luke. It is not by any means for the fainthearted. Even if it is familiar to us, we should try to remember how extraordinary it is.

After so many centuries of cruelty, crucifixion still ranks as one of the most appalling things people have ever thought to do to their fellow humans. Yet this was how God chose to show the depth of his love. God was prepared to go to any lengths for us. The letter to the Philippians says that Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave. Why? The only possible explanation is love. Anyone who has loved another knows that it will inevitably bring a share of suffering. Jesus walks alongside all who suffer. He shares their cross as they share his.

The fact that crucifixion was so common in the Roman world should also make us pause for a moment. Jesus lived and died in a world in which people were routinely degraded. He met plenty of them in his travels, people cast by the wayside, and helped many. For those without power, life was fragile, even cheap. Has much changed? Throughout Lent, Caritas Australia has invited us to share the work of Project Compassion. The stories we have encountered remind us that the world is still an uneven field. Project Compassion invites us to respond in love to free people in captivity to very challenging circumstances. It invites us in a small way to carry the cross, to live in hope of the Resurrection.

Perhaps this week, as well as joining in the services of Holy Week, we can take some time to sit quietly with The Passion narrative from Luke's Gospel on our own. Think about all the characters we meet: Peter, Judas, Pilate, Herod, the women of Jerusalem, Simon of Cyrene, the soldiers, the two criminals, the women from Galilee, the centurion, Joseph of Arimathea. Try to see the events from each of their perspectives. Then quietly see them from your own perspective, from your world in 2025. Pray in humble gratitude.

We pray for a renewal of our faith during Holy Week. May we learn more deeply what it means to be pilgrims of hope in this Year of Jubilee. Through works such as Project Compassion, may we *Unite Against Poverty* and walk alongside our sisters and brothers towards the new life of Easter.

Through partnerships like these, Caritas Australia creates lasting change in communities across the globe.

Please donate today. You can support Project Compassion 2025 through the donation boxes and envelopes, or online at: caritas.org.au/project-compassion, or by calling: 1800 024 413;

Thank you for standing with us, as we *Unite Against Poverty* this Lent.

Project Compassion boxes and envelopes can be returned to the church. Please give to the welcomers at the entrance of the church.

