



Project Compassion Meet Manaini from Fiji

In remote northern Fiji, life has always been a struggle for 44-year-old Manaini, a mother of six and grandmother of two. Holding back tears, she shared: *“The things I worry about the most is my kids’ education. The requirements that need to be met are hard for me to try to achieve with my daily income”.*

Meals were often plain and unbalanced, and store-bought food was too expensive. Leftover crops were fed to animals, and at night the village was in darkness, leaving children and the elderly unsafe. Almost a quarter of Fiji’s population live in poverty, with higher rates in rural villages, where any extra income can mean the difference between children completing school, buying medicine, or covering daily essentials. Thanks to your generosity, Manaini joined training offered by Caritas Australia’s local partner, FRIEND, where she learnt food processing skills to transform leftover crops into flour and increase her weekly income.

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 forwards. 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.

Manaini, a 44-year-old mother and subsistence farmer in remote northern Fiji has transformed her family’s life through food processing and organic farming, thanks to a Caritas-supported project. Once reliant on more store-bought food and prone to food waste, she now produces homemade flours, dried foods, and sells produce and baked goods from local crops. Her passion for learning has made her a key player in her community, working with others to embrace more sustainable, empowering ways of living. Thanks to the generosity of the Australian Catholic community, hundreds of thousands of people such as Manaini are finding an answer to the question, ‘where can we go from here.’

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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.

**15 March 2026
Fourth Sunday of 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 22 R. v.1

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.

The
*Season
of
Lent*



Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil: 6pm

Sunday: 9.30am & 5pm

Samoan Mass:

1st Sunday at 12 noon

Maori Mass:

1st Sunday of each month at 2pm

Filipino Mass: 3rd Sunday of each month at 11.15am

Children's Mass: 5th Sunday of the month at 9.30am

Weekday Mass

9am each day except Thursday;

Thursday at 7.30pm

Healing Mass on the 1st Saturday of each month at 9am.

Reconciliation

every Saturday at 11am

Devotions & Prayer groups

Adoration with the Rosary:

Saturday at 9.30am

Alliance of the 2 hearts Mass

& devotion: 1st Friday of each month at 7.30pm

Divine Mercy Devotion:

3rd Sunday of each month at 3pm

Faith Circles:

every Monday at 2pm & 7pm via zoom

Holy Family Fellowship:

every 4th Saturday at 7pm.

Book Club:

meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 10am.

Friendship Group:

is on the 1st Tuesday of the Month

Bible Study & Reflection

Group: meets Monday at 10am.

Children's Ministry

Gathering will meet on the 4th Sunday from 3– 5 pm

Ascent Youth Ministry:

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

Parish Notices

Sacred spaces and Scared Vessels church interactive talk by Acolyte Andrew Fricot at 11am- noon Sunday 29th March for all interested in a deeper understanding of objects used during Lent and Easter. Suitable for adults and children.

Stations of the Cross on Good Friday; If you would like to join the preparation please call the parish office and submit your details.

Car and Bike Show was held today and I thank the fundraising team and the parish volunteers who have welcomed visitors to our parish.

Our Pastoral Care Team visit people who cannot attend Mass any longer due to ill health and age. If you know anyone who would like to have a home visit and Holy Communion please call the parish office and submit the persons contact information.

Grief and Loss Support Group was held this week with 14 participants. Our group will continue on a monthly basis for people who have experienced grief and loss in their lives and who would like an opportunity to connect with others in a gentle environment. **Please come along at 10am till 12 on Tuesday 14 April.**

Working Bee will be held on Saturday 21 March to give our church and grounds a clean up before Easter. Please come along for an hour or 2 in the morning. **Our next Property committee meeting** will be on Wednesday 18 March at 7.30pm. Our team will welcome new members who can help with planning and overseeing the maintenance of the parish buildings and grounds.

Stations of the Cross are held every Friday at 7pm during Lent.

Invitation to join Planned Giving: Here at Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish, where our church represents more than just a physical space. It serves as a symbol of support, growth, and hope for our community. We believe it is crucial to ensure its sustainability for future generations.

Planned Giving is a powerful way to demonstrate our commitment to the values that unite us as followers of Christ. By sowing the seeds of faith, compassion, and generosity through planned giving, we can make a lasting impact both now and when we are called back to our Lord.

The act of offering has been central to worship since the beginning. Just like Abel offered his best sheep as an oblation to God in the Garden of Eden, we can give from our own necessities with faith.

But you may wonder why Planned Giving is necessary. As stewards of the blessings bestowed upon us, we have a responsibility that goes beyond our own lifetimes. Planned Giving allows us to leave a sustainable legacy of faith and love for ourselves, our children, and generations to come.

Join Planned Giving Affordable, consistent contributions can have a profound impact on our parish community. Joining the OLMC Planned Giving Program is an easy, two-step process as follows:

STEP 1

Complete the Parishioner Information Form. If you haven't already registered your family in our parish you can do so by downloading the form at: https://www.varroville.dow.org.au/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2022/09/New-Parishners-registration-form-09_22.pdf

Or ask for a form in the foyer after mass.

STEP 2

Contributions can be set up via direct debit at: <https://www.varroville.dow.org.au/about-us/new-parishioners/>

Or submit the family information form to the office and tick the box requesting a set of envelopes.

Legion of Mary All active and auxiliary members of legion of Mary are invited to the annual ACIE's Ceremony to be held at Holy Family Catholic Church, (136 Oxford Rd, Ingleburn on Saturday 21 March at 1pm. To Jesus through Mary. Refreshments will be provided in the parish room afterwards.

Catechist Retreat - March 2026 All Catechists and supporters of the Catechist Ministry are welcome to join us on a special day of retreat either in Wollongong on Monday 23 March or in Rosemeadow on Friday 27 March. Being the season of Lent, the theme for the retreat is Gospel Conversion: Turning to the God of Jesus;. Retreat facilitator, Fr Aloysius Rego OCD, will lead us into a greater understanding of the God of Jesus, as revealed to us in Scripture. There will be times for prayer, learning and discussion. Mass is planned before lunch. Please BYO lunch. Morning Tea provided. Donations are welcome however there is no cost for the retreat. Register now: dow.sh/CCDRETREAT26

Hear from Pope Leo XIV Sunday Echo is a limited-release resource the Diocese has developed that contains, using the Holy Father's most recent homily or reflection and accompanying discussion questions. Each issue will be released the day after Pope Leo XIV gives a homily or reflection on the most recent Sunday Gospel readings go to <https://www.dow.org.au/media-resources/faith-circles/> to access or sign up to have access.

What's on around the Diocese? Check out upcoming Diocesan events and courses—too many to list in one place. Subscribe here and we will keep you in the loop dow.sh/stayingconnected about what's happening around our Diocese!

Easter Timetable

- Parish Reconciliation Service: Friday 27 March at 7.30pm
- Holy Thursday Mass at 7.30pm
- Good Friday Stations of the Cross at 10am
- Passion of the Lord at 3pm
- Holy Saturday Liturgy of the hours at 9am
- Easter Vigil at 7pm
- Easter Sunday Mass at 9.30am & 5pm.



Prayer intentions

For the sick and homebound:

Pat Cullen, Mary Ponnappalam, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdryns, Pat Stewart, Allan Marquinez, Richard Scolyer, Vladdy Mher Peralta, Pausumu Olaiga

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

For our recently departed
Shirley Wrightman

Anniversaries that occur at this time

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



Our Rosters

22 March 2026	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Paul & Lori	Chris, Margaret & Gabriel	Beatrix & Michael
Altar Servers	Berna, Christian, Elijah & Arland	Orly	Robert & Nathan
Readers	Bevina & Mark	Irene & Aura	Niya & Effie
Refreshments	Estela & Myra	Irene, Tina, Meg & John	Margaret. Geoff & Danni
Altar Linen	Maria	CLOTW: Rhonda & Kon	
Flowers	Asinate & Mago	Church Vacuuming	Parish Office
Counters	Richard & Michael	Church Foyer	Parish Office
Choir	6pm Nick & Amanda	9.30am Parish	5pm Youth



Contact Us

Parish Priest:
Fr Shane Kelleher OCD

Deacon:
Rev Stuart Lake

Parish Associate:
Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM

Office Hours

Tuesday-Friday: 9.30am-12.30pm
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Holy Gospel according 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.

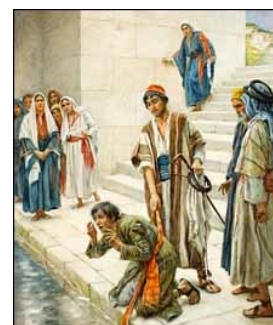
His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

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. yes?' '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.

The Gospel of the Lord.



Gospel Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Spittle and Mud I love the earthiness of this episode in the Gospels:

'[Jesus] spat on the ground, made a paste with spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, [said] Go and wash ... and his sight was restored.'

Can anyone doubt that our Lord, by the power of his word alone, could have healed the dis-ease of this man blind since birth? And, yet he chose very down to earth actions to bring about the healing. Why?

Jesus was Jewish, as was the crowd around him. It is not surprising that Jesus uses the old Jewish dream time story of creation which we call Genesis. In one of those accounts, the first human creature was fashioned from the dust of the earth. Obviously, this would have had to have been moistened like clay.

When Jesus used moistened earth, onlookers would have immediately understood the symbolism. Something creative was going to happen. And, indeed, for the blind man, it was as though he had been created anew.

When God wants to do something creative or recreative in our lives, invariably something physical is involved. God rarely works by telepathy. We see God's preferred way of working in the Sacraments. We Catholics are a sacramental church. Oil or water or bread or wine are elements of creation which can bear, or even become, the presence of the Divine Life for us.

On a first Friday, I celebrate Mass at a nursing home and anoint the elderly and frail residents there in the Chapel or in their rooms. I anoint them with olive oil, blessed by the Bishop every year in the week before Easter. Couldn't a prayer do? But, the olive oil has a soothing effect on the skin. It is a lovely ointment which is absorbed by the skin and makes it feel good. This symbolises the power of the Holy Spirit. We pray that the Holy Spirit may have a soothing effect on the person who is frail or sick, overcoming undue anxiety or fear.

We pray that the Holy Spirit may enter the very pores of the sick person and become part of him or her, relieving that person of undue anxiety and giving strength for the next stage of life. This is symbolised and effected by the sacred oil.

Recently I have conducted funerals for two elderly people. I had anointed them (the Last Rites) as they were dying. At each of those funerals, the children told me how their parent had become peaceful and calm and even a little more conscious in a way which was a blessing for them and their family.

The Sacrament of Anointing the Sick is what we might call the formal ritual of healing by the Church. But there are a million informal ways in which we are called upon to heal people. You or I may simply be given the opportunity to put one's arm around someone who is lonely or unwell, soothing their fears. In this way we become sacramental to the world.

Let us go into the world with our eyes wide open like the man healed by Jesus – wide open to see those opportunities where we might exercise the healing power of the Lord of the Gospel.