

Project Compassion — Fifth Sunday of Lent

It must be difficult for somebody who has never experienced love to understand the Gospels. They are so full of different emotions, many of them tender. Just think of the beautiful reconciliation between Jesus and Peter after the resurrection. Jesus allows Peter to say that he loves him on no less than three occasions.

Thankfully, most of us can write down a long list of people we have loved and who have loved us. Many names would appear on both lists! We keep a special place in our hearts and prayers for the people we know who have died. Even after a long time, their memory will still bring a tear to our eyes. That sorrow comes from a place of deep gratitude. God changes the world one heart at a time.

When we encounter today's Gospel, the story of the raising of Lazarus, we are in a world of emotion. Martha and Mary are grieving for their brother. Jesus loves these two women. Thomas, the twin, is full of bravado and bluster, just as he was later when he wanted proof of the resurrection. Both Martha and Mary are disappointed, even angry, that Jesus has not come sooner. Jesus weeps at the grave of his friend. The mourners who have come to comfort the family must also have been sensitive to the situation.

When Jesus says, 'I am the resurrection and the life', he is not explaining an idea. He is responding to the deepest longings of our hearts, as he always does.

Today's Psalm reminds us, 'My soul is longing for the Lord more than the watcher for daybreak Over the last few weeks, we have shared some of the stories presented to us by Caritas Australia to make us more aware of the inspirational work we can support through Project Compassion. They call us to *Unite Against Poverty*.

This week Project Compassion asks us to learn more about the work of Caritas Australia in humanitarian emergencies. There are so many situations around the world that require a timely response. Caritas is active in the aftermath of earthquakes, floods, storms, plagues, drought and failed harvests. Of course, there will be time to enquire about the causes and to ask if climate change may have been a factor or if poor building standards caused problems. But first, people and communities need to survive, and Caritas has a lot of experience in this area. Your generosity to Project Compassion makes a wonderful difference to people in need. Thank you for helping to bring light to dark places.

Jesus says about Lazarus, 'unbind him, let him go free.' We too can set people free.

For those coping with humanitarian emergencies in many countries around the world, that our donations to Project Compassion this Lent make a positive difference to people in need.

Caritas Australia Head Office
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Street, Mascot, NSW, 2020

☎ 1800 024 413

🌐 projectcompassion.org.au

ABN: 90 970 605 069



 **Caritas**
AUSTRALIA | **PROJECT**
COMPASSION

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.

22 March 2026
Fifth Sunday of Lent
Year A

Entrance Antiphon

Give me justice, O God,
and plead my cause
against a nation that is
faithless.

From the deceitful and
cunning rescue me,
for you, O God, are my
strength.

First Reading from the
prophet Ezekiel 37: 12-14

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 129. R. v.7

Response: With the
Lord there is mercy and
fullness of redemption.

Second Reading from
the letter of St Paul to the
Romans 8: 8-11

Gospel Acclamation

Glory and praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ!

I am the resurrection and
the life, says the Lord;
whoever believes in me
will not die for ever.

Glory and praise to you,
Lord Jesus Christ!

Holy Gospel according
to John 11:1-45

Communion Antiphon

Everyone who lives and
believes in me will not die
for ever, says the Lord.

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.

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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.

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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

Diocesan Survey Update

Last year Bishop Brian asked us to fill in a survey about his vision for our parish. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. We truly appreciate your time, honesty, and care for our parish community.

Your feedback has been reviewed by the Diocesan team. The action points cover a wide range of areas, including our Liturgy and Worship, community engagement, discipleship formation, hospitality, and our shared spiritual journey.

We are pleased to let you know that the Parish Leadership Team has received the survey results and is now thoughtfully and prayerfully reviewing the recommended action points as we discern the way forward together.

We will keep you updated.

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

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

Sacred spaces and Sacred 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.

Car and Bike Show was a wonderful day for our parish. More than 150 cars & bikes were displayed and the atmosphere was electric. I thank the fundraising team and the parish volunteers who have welcomed visitors to our parish. The fundraising profit is \$6500 and the money will be saved for use later in the year in essential maintenance projects for our church and hall.

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.

Life in the Spirit Seminar The Monday Bible Study & Reflection Group invites you to attend a 9 week series commencing on Monday 13 April at 10 am in the parish meeting room. The topic for week 1 is "For the love of God". For more information and to register please call Nellie on 0411 965 526.

Grief and Loss Support Group will meet 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.

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 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.

Easter Sunday Outdoor Masses Mollymook Beachfront and Ulladulla Harbour – Sunday 05 April 2026 Please join Milton Parish at the 7 am Easter Sunrise Mass at Mollymook Beachfront (Surf Club) and/or Ulladulla Harbour at 9 am. The Ulladulla Mass precedes the Princess Parade, the Blessing of the Fishing Fleet and carnival activities and food stalls. On Easter Sunday let us remember that "In the Eucharist, fullness is already achieved; it is the living center of the universe, the overflowing core of love and of inexhaustible life. Joined to the incarnate Son, present in the Eucharist, the whole cosmos gives thanks to God.) Pope Francis Laudato si 236

Diocesan Youth Sports Festival Young people from ages 15 to 35 are invited to come together for the very first Diocesan Youth Sports Festival- a huge day of sport, faith and community. On Saturday 18 April 2026; Time: 9.30am – 3.30pm at Holy Spirit College, Bellambi; Cost: \$50 per team | \$10 per person ; Grab your friends, cousins, youth group or young adult crew and form a team of 7+ to compete in a fast-paced round-robin tournament. The twist? Teams vote on the main sport of the day, so register early and get training! Prefer something lower intensity? A table tennis competition will run throughout the day with plenty of chances to jump in. Morning tea and a BBQ lunch are included, and the day will finish with Mass celebrated by Bishop Brian Mascord at St Columbkille's Church in Corrimal. Register here: dow.sh/youthsportsfest

Catholic Chaplaincy at UOW UOW students and staff are warmly invited to become involved with the UOW Catholic Society. Join us for Mass and lunch, 12:30pm Thursdays during semester in the Building 11 Clubs Room. See @uowcathsoc on social media.

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 Olaaiga

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

29 March 2026	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Estela & Cecilia	Nelia, Anita & Francia	Terry & Maree
Altar Servers	Maria, Cassandra, Abigail & Austin	Vu	Stuart & Nathan
Readers	Richard & Tracey	Children's Mass	Fev & Madonna
Refreshments	Josephine & Glenda	Karen, Francia & Nelia	Beatrix & Madonna
Altar Linen	Ann Maree	CLOTW:	
Flowers	Maria & Estela	Church Vacuuming	Parish Office
Counters	Louise & Lina	Church Foyer	Parish Office
Choir	6pm choir C/ Nick	Children's choir C/ Maria	Youth choir C/ Nicole



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
Phone: 9603 7373 / 0434 705 176
Address: 193 St Andrews Rd, Varroville
Email: varroville@dow.org.au
Website: varroville.dow.org.au

Holy Gospel according John 11:1-45

I am the resurrection and the life.

The sisters Martha and Mary sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

'I am the resurrection and the life. If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live, and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.' Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.'

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.



Gospel Reflection by Diane Bergant, CSA

Ezekiel uses bodily resurrection as a metaphor of the re-establishment of the nation after its exile in a foreign land. The restoration envisioned is likened to creation. In the beginning, the creature that had been formed from the dust of the ground became a living being when God breathed the breath of life into it. Here, those in the grave live again when they are raised from the dust of death and are given God's own spirit. Both original creation and this resurrection from the dead are unconditional gifts from a magnanimous God.

The passage testifies to God's absolute and unconditional control over the powers of life and death, destruction and restoration.

The psalm response comes from one of the Penitential Psalms. It opens with a cry for relief, which is followed by an acknowledgment of the helplessness of sinful human beings, a confession of faith and an acknowledgment of God's covenant love. The psalmist contrasts two ways of understanding God's manner of dealing with sinners: retributive justice and compassion. Were God ever to mete out the exact punishments that human sin deserves, no one would be able to endure it. Instead, God shows mercy to sinners and grants them forgiveness. God's willingness to redeem Israel from all its sins is the basis of the psalmist's own trust in God's graciousness.

Paul contrasts two ways of living: life in the flesh and life in the spirit. When Paul refers to the flesh, he is speaking of human nature in all of its limitations which sometimes incline one away from God and the things of God. On the other hand, life in the spirit is attuned to God. Paul's denunciation of life in the flesh is unqualified. Such a life-direction cannot please God. Life in the spirit, on the other hand, is a form of union with God. He assures the Christians that they are in the spirit, if the Spirit of God dwells within them. The real point of this passage is the resurrection of those who are in union with God. The Spirit of God who raised Jesus will raise those who here and now live in the Spirit of Christ.

The death and resurrection of Lazarus proleptically point to Jesus' death and resurrection. Jesus' discussion with his disciples prepare for his instruction of Martha. She had hoped that Jesus would heal her brother. She had no idea that he would bring Lazarus back from the dead. Her response to Jesus' assurance that Lazarus will rise, shows that she shared the Pharisees' view of a general resurrection and judgment at the end of time. Jesus proclaimed that he is the resurrection and the life, and faith in him will guarantee life for others. Martha may not have known that Jesus is about to accomplish the impossible, but her faith and trust in him were secure.