



St Bernard's Parish

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Parish Team

Fr Sang Ho (Parish Priest)

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3rd March 2024

Third Sunday of Lent Year B

Reflection

The Lenten journey has begun with our traditional celebration of Ash Wednesday. This year, we had all the year six students from our school joining our parish Mass in the morning. They were invited to be the school representatives to join in on our community celebration and then took the responsibility to take Ashes back to school for the other year level groups to celebrate this significant occasion within the school.

At the evening Mass our two RCIA candidates signed their names on the scrolls with their sponsors. On the first Sunday of Lent they travelled to the Cathedral and submitted their scrolls and their names were inscribed into the book of the Elect.

Apart from commencing our Journey of Lent with Ash Wednesday celebrations, last Tuesday, 22 Children from our parish have commenced their first Eucharist classes. This program will run for eight weeks. These students will then join our Clairvaux students for the commitment Masses, a formation night with parents and a retreat day. They will then receive Communion for the first time in May. I ask you to keep all these young ones in your prayers.

As I reflect on the work of faith education, I recall something that I have learned about the bamboo tree. As you know the bamboo tree is one of the most significant symbols for the Vietnamese people. Just as the golden wattle is Australia's national floral emblem, the bamboo tree is Vietnam's national emblem.

They say that it takes **four years** for a bamboo shoot to grow only **3cm** tall. But from the **fifth year** onward, it could grow very quickly and in an unimaginable way, **30cm a day!** This means that within **6 weeks**, it could reach a height of **15 meters**. Possibly, there are times that we feel disheartened as we might not easily see much growth in the first few years, we might not see the result of successes or achievements. Very often, we tend to think that first few foundation years are a waste of time. However, the facts about the growth of the bamboo tree teach us that foundation years are so very important. This is because these are the years when hundreds of meters of bamboo root embed deep down into the soil and create a solid foundation for the tree to grow further.

So let us not lose hope in the work of sharing faith with our young ones. St Paul reminds us in his first letter to the Corinthians when he says that: *'I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.'* We can definitely plant the seed and water it, but God will know how to make the seed grow.

Fr Sang Ho

Our community prays :

For those who have died:

Teresa Sutherland

For those who are unwell:

Christie Raj

Isobel Symons

David Butler

Iris Appleton

Rita Croft

John Orders

Frank Whyte

Frances Butler

Marion Andrew

Katherine D'Arcy

George Koch

Jennifer London

Jeanette Freijah

Melissa Bann

Lila Moorfoot

Josephine Mariah

Vanessa Eldridge

Judy Robertson

Colin & Linda Boyd

Lynette Stott

Margaret Walker

Maria Pereira

Gerry O'Donoghue

Brittany Schultz

Rev Alan Ansell

Sofia Solistyo

Joan Hepworth



Easter at St Bernard's

Wed 20th	7.30pm	Penitential Service
Mon 25th March	7.30pm	Tenebrae quiet prayer
Holy Thursday	7.30pm	Mass : The Lord's Supper <i>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament</i>
Good Friday	10.00am	The Stations of the Cross
	3.00pm	The Passion of the Lord
Easter Vigil	7.30pm	Mass
Easter Sunday	9.00am &	
	10.30am	Mass

A journey through the Passion of Christ:

We invite you to a prayerful and spiritual Lenten experience including Holy Mass and healing adoration with Fr. Rojan George VC - Director of Vincentian Retreat Centre in Melbourne. **Thursday, 21 March from 6.30 pm at Holy Family Church, Bell Park.**

RCIA logo

RCIA is the pathway for adults to become Catholics. Since August last year, our candidates Adam and Meredith have been going through their journey with Fr Sang and the St. Bernard's RCIA leaders' group. This includes prayer, faith education sessions and reflection time to enable them to grow in a deeper relationship with Jesus and sharing God's great love.



On Ash Wednesday they were presented to our Parish community and we confirmed they were ready to continue their journey. That presentation was in preparation for them undertaking the Rite of Election and Welcoming at St. Patrick's Cathedral. They did that on Sunday 18 February with members from 60 other parishes.

Please pray for Adam and Meredith as they move through their final stage of preparation to become Catholics at Easter.

St Bernard's Parish Groups—The Men's Group

The St. Bernard's men's group was born from the idea that there may be retired men who would be happy to sit and talk about the simple things of life. Whether it be hobbies, or their ideas on life in general. Basically, just things of interest that other men may share.

It started a couple of years prior to Covid, when a notice was placed in the church bulletin, for interested men. The response was surprising as about a dozen men attended and immediately proved that there was an interest.

Since that time, the group has survived Covid and continues to meet every second Tuesday of the month at 10:30am, in the Church café. A cup of tea/coffee is supplied and cakes appear regularly. As well as the church notice, we encourage prospective members by a letter/email of personal invitation.

Initially the group shared stories of what they had done in their 'past life', that being prior to retirement. A few of the exploits were quite surprising and left a new found respect for one another.

Attendance numbers vary, usually around 10-12, as sometimes life can be hectic with grandchildren, or medical appointments. There is no committee, as we run on a no fuss system. We welcome interested men to join. Enquiries to Terry - email belmont@cam.org.au

Vocations News

Thank you for your prayers for Vocations over the years. We were delighted to accept eight men to the Seminary for Melbourne this year:

Chinh Tran, Rohan Prince, Luke Kennedy, Luke Emslie, Tung Phan, Joseph Maae, Patrick Harris and Mathews Noble.

Many of you have personally helped and encouraged these men along their journey to apply to join the Seminary; it truly is a team effort!

Please continue to pray for them!



Project Compassion—For Future Generations



Samoa may be a country surrounded by water, but access to clean drinking water is scarce in some areas, with many families facing extreme hardship as a result.

Leaia lives with her five children, husband, brother, and sister-in-law on the island of Upolu in Samoa. Not having access to clean water for their daily lives has caused Leaia a lot of worry. Their home is not connected to a piped water system, so they used to rely solely on rainwater collected in old fridges. When their water ran out, she had to walk with her young children to collect water in buckets and containers from a neighbour down the street.

With the support of Caritas Australia's local partner, Caritas Samoa, a water tank was installed at their home. She and her family now have a steady supply of clean drinking water at home. Next year, they will also have a toilet built, with the support of Caritas Samoa, which will further improve.

'We are very thankful and grateful for the water tank. It has helped us so much and made our daily life easier,' Leaia said.

Prayer of Intercession - *We pray that we will deepen our faith over the whole of our lives. May we be open to the many lessons God wants to teach us. Through Project Compassion, may we support the journey of all to fullness of life. Lord, hear us.*

Lent banner:



A big "thank you" to Jan Fagan for preparing the Lent banner across the front of the altar at short notice.

Central to the banner is the image (painted by Titian in 1560) of Jesus carrying the cross to Calvary. The lantern in the left hand corner of the banner is a reminder of the light which we are all seeking, which we sometimes struggle to find.

Lent is a time when we are called to conversion, to trust in the future, in spite of temptations not to do so. It is the light and life that emerge after the Crucifixion because of Jesus' Resurrection that give us hope to persevere in walking our own way of the cross throughout our lives.

The Liturgy Team

What Lent means to people preparing to join the Catholic Church

Like many traditions in the Catholic Church, the season of Lent developed over time from simple, practical origins.

In the early Church, new members were always initiated into the Christian community at Easter. People preparing for baptism, called '*catechumens*', fasted for two days beforehand. Gradually this time of preparation lengthened until, by the fourth century, it had become set at 40 days.

The number 40 has special significance in scripture: in the story of the great flood it rained for 40 days and 40 nights; Christ spent 40 days in the wilderness after being baptised by John; Moses and Elias fasted for 40 days in the desert.

As well as the time for catechumens to make their final preparations for initiation, Lent was a period of preparation for penitents who would be reconciled with the Christian community on Holy Thursday. Other members of the church journeyed with the catechumens and penitents during these 40 days through fasting, almsgiving and prayer.

When it became the norm for infants rather than adults to be baptised, Lent lost its baptismal focus and became associated almost exclusively with penance. This is why many people associate Lent exclusively with acts of self-denial, like '*giving up*' a favourite food or pastime.

The original meaning and purpose of Lent has largely been reclaimed because of a change in the process of initiating adults into the Church following the Second Vatican Council. For hundreds of people who will be baptised at Easter, Lent is once again a time of intense preparation known as the '*Period of Purification and Enlightenment*'.

A special liturgy called the Rite of Election is held on the first Sunday of Lent, usually in the cathedral church of the diocese, to mark the beginning of this stage. It celebrates publicly the fact that the catechumens have progressed on their faith journey and have opened their hearts to Christ in a spirit of faith and love. They are '*elect*' for initiation into the Church, not because they have earned it, but because God has chosen them. From this point on they are known as '*the elect*'. The Church asks us all to '*surround the elect with prayer*' and to '*accompany them to encounter Christ*'.

On the third, fourth and fifth Sundays of Lent, rites called '*Scrutinies*' are celebrated with the elect in their parish communities. In the light of God's word, they examine their lives and ask the entire Christian community to pray that whatever is weak and sinful within them may be eliminated and that whatever is good and holy may be affirmed.

As well as conferring strength and healing on the elect, these rites confront all the faithful with the need for conversion. Lent is a time of purification and enlightenment for each one of us as we strive to rid ourselves of the hidden corruption of evil.

During Lent we are all on a journey as we prepare to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Christ at the Easter Triduum and to continue that celebration throughout the 50 days of the joyful Season of Easter.

Edited Extract Elizabeth Harrington – Liturgy Lines

Reflection

God has given us the Ten Commandments, the Law, the Prophets and Jesus his Son, so that we might know *the Way, the Truth and the Life*. When we are called to account for how we spent our lives, whom we loved and how we made the world a better place for all, most of us will not be able to plead ignorance.

May our Eucharist this Sunday enable us to be mindful of what the Ten Commandments say, but even more may it give us the courage and strength to live them out in a world that needs witnesses to them more than ever.

Edited extract Fr Richard Leonard SJ

We pray for Mohammad

We pray for Mohammad that he be comforted while he awaits a decision on his application for a visa.

For the people of Israel, Palestine, Ukraine & other war torn countries.
May there be peaceful resolutions.



St Bernard's community

On Fridays during Lent Stations of the Cross will be prayed after the Midday Mass

Lenten Reflections Mondays 10.00am & 7.30pm in the Church. Enquiries the Parish Office 5243 2739 or belmont@cam.org.au

St Bernard's annual Book Fair

We welcome books, DVD's, CD's, Games, Toys & Puzzles **all year round**, so if you are having a clean out please call and they can be collected (ph Peter 0409 969 648), or deliver to the Parish office. Thank you. (no textbooks, encyclopedia or magazines)



The Geelong Community ...

Saturday 9th March, 2 -4.30pm. Faith and Light Geelong St Mary's Parish Offices, 1st floor, 150 Yarra Street. Entry by lift. Share your Lenten journey with the Gospel, Prayer, & Activities Includes shared Afternoon Tea. Enquiries : Tricia 0414672267

Thursday March 14, 6.45pm for 7pm start Real Deal Community Forum Geelong West Town Hall, 153 Pakington Street, Geelong West. At this forum, we will bring together community members, politicians, and stakeholders to discuss one of the most pressing issues facing Geelong, the housing crisis. Please [register here](#).

Clonard College Open Day Wednesday 13 March until Friday 22 March. Multiple Information and tour sessions. Bookings via www.clonard.vic.edu.au Enrolments for Year 7 close on Friday 3 May 2024.

Details of how to report graffiti:-

- call our Graffiti Hotline on [03 5272 4319](tel:0352724319) or
- email graffiti@geelongcity.vic.gov.au or

Clean Up Australia - March

A great opportunity during this month to conserve the environment, eliminate litter and reduce waste pollution.

Some neighbourhood actions you might like to consider - Pick up litter, adopt a highway, report graffiti, organise a neighbourhood clean up.

Laudato Si Goal 1: Cry of the Earth



'In the spirit of reconciliation, St Bernard's Parish acknowledges the Wadawurrung People, the Traditional Custodians of country and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.'

Mass Times this week

Saturday: **6pm**
Sunday: **9am & 10.30am**
Tue & Fri: **12 noon**
Wed & Thurs : **9.30am**

*The **Rosary** is prayed after each weekday Mass*
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament held **First Friday** of each month after 12pm mass

To receive the **bulletin** by **email** please subscribe via the parish website:

<https://stbernards.org.au/>

Contact the Office - 52 432 739 to arrange :

**** Communion at home (Friday am)**
New volunteers welcome to assist with this ministry.

**** To receive an email link to the Passionist Fathers recorded Mass each weekend.**

**** To receive an emailed worksheet for children**, linked to the Sunday readings.

Sunday Mass on Radio :

7.00am Light FM 89.9
10.00am Pulse 94.7 FM (*St Mary's*)

Sunday Mass on TV :

Channel 10 6-6.30am
Channel 31 or 44 11am *St Patrick's Cathedral*

Parish Office hours

Mon: 9am—4pm
Tues: 10am—3pm
Wed: 9am—4pm
Thurs: 10am—1pm
Fri: 9am—4pm

* **St Bernard's Play Group** Every Tuesday of school term 9-10.30am Gold coin donation

* **St Vincent De Paul** Membership enquiries : through Parish Office

* **Men's Group - 2nd Tues** of the month 10.30am Church cafe

* **Charismatic Prayer** meeting will resume in March 2023

* **Ladies Coffee and Chat Group, 3rd Mon** of the month, 10.30am at **FULL Circle**, Belmont opposite Car Wash, cnr Roslyn Rd.

* **Mill Market donation & Book Fair drop off** Saturdays 9am and 10am.



To assist the Mannyas communities :

direct bank trf to :

BSB : **BSB 083347**

ACC# **358514559**

Ref : **surname & support project**
i.e *Hall or education or General needs.*

Please note new account details

Readings this week : Exodus 20:1-17 ;
or Exodus 20:1-3,7-8. 12-17 ; Ps 18:8-11 ;
1 Corinthians 1:22-25 ; John 2:13-25

Next Week's Readings :

2 Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-23 ; Ps 136 ;
Ephesians 2:4-10 ; John 3:14-21

