



ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PARISH

Nelson Bay

Diocese of Maitland - Newcastle

We acknowledge the Worimi people - the traditional custodians of this place

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Phone Number 4981 1069

Office Hours Tuesday to Friday
9:30am to 3:00pm

MASSES AND PRAYERS REQUESTED:

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ: John Lordanie

Anniversary: Denis Hogan, Aubrey James, Jim McAllister, Angelina Merlino, Brian Meek

Recently Deceased: Richard Mantle, Maureen Buchan

Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

Pastoral Letter to the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Confronting COVID-19 Pandemic Event

Public Celebration of Mass:

1. The public celebration of Mass is suspended until further notice. This suspension applies to both Sunday Mass and Weekday Mass, and includes Sunday Celebrations of the Word (with Communion) and weekday Liturgies of the Word (with Communion).

2. All members of the faithful, other than priests, are dispensed from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass. Members of the faithful should observe the holiness of Sunday by observing one of the options listed in the Appendix (the Bishops Letter and Appendix is available on our website).

3. Priests of the Diocese will continue to celebrate Mass on Sundays using the provisions of the Roman Missal for "Mass With One Minister", offering it on behalf of those who cannot attend and for the whole nation.

4. While there will not be a public celebration, I or my Vicar General will celebrate Sunday Mass in the Cathedral each week. The Diocese is currently investigating arrangements for Livestreaming the Cathedral Mass. Further details to follow when they are available.

Celebration of Holy Week and the Sacred Paschal Triduum

1. The public celebration of the ceremonies of Holy Week and the Sacred Paschal Triduum is cancelled.

2. The public celebration of the Chrism Mass is cancelled; the Chrism Mass will be celebrated privately in the Cathedral in a modified form; further details will be forthcoming shortly.

3. The Sacred Paschal Triduum will be celebrated in the Cathedral in a modified form; this will not be a public celebration.

4. The celebration of Christian Initiation usually associated with Easter is postponed until the current pandemic event resolves itself. Arrangements will be made to facilitate the initiation of our Elect at that time.

5. The Diocese is currently investigating the possibility of televising or livestreaming the Cathedral celebrations of the Chrism Mass and Sacred Paschal Triduum; further details will be forthcoming shortly.

We will keep you updated on our
Parish Website:

www.nelsonbaycatholicchurch.com

The bulletin will also be uploaded
to the website weekly

Project Compassion 2020

Thirty-two-year-old Sakun lives in a village in central east India. She developed polio as a child and has difficulty walking. After joining a Caritas Australia-funded program, Sakun has learned new skills and gained important mobility. She is more resilient, more confident and more independent.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to help uplift vulnerable communities and support the rights of indigenous peoples around the world.

See the Parish Website under the "Faith Formation" tab to access this week's video story.

Let's Go Further, Together. You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, or by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion

Lenten Reflection Program 2020

Tuesdays at 3pm at 57 Gordon Close, Anna Bay
Wednesdays at 7.00pm in the Church Meeting Room
Sundays at 2.00pm in the Church Meeting Room

THANK YOU

Thank you for your financial contribution to the support of our Parish Community and its priests - it is very much appreciated.

The First Collection taken up at Mass goes to the Maitland Clergy Central Fund (MCCF) for the financial support of the priests.

The Second Collection taken up at Mass is for the upkeep of the Parish.

While Masses are cancelled, there will be systems in place to accept your planned giving envelopes and donations for the usual First and Second Collections each week. We thank you for your continued support during this difficult time.

Next Week's Readings:

Fifth Sunday of Lent
First Reading: Ezekiel 37:12-14
Second Reading: Romans 8:8-11
Gospel: John 11:1-45



Sick, isolated are united in Christ, Pope

Pope Francis said:

"In this pandemic situation, in which we find ourselves living more or less isolated, we are invited to rediscover and deepen the value of the communion which unites all members of the Church.

United with Christ we are never alone, but we form a single Body, of which He is the Head.

It is a union that is nourished with prayer, and also with spiritual communion in the Eucharist, a highly recommended practice when it is not possible to receive the sacrament. I say this for everyone, especially for people who live alone".

Pope Francis made a surprise excursion through the deserted streets of Rome to pray.

Reconciliation will be celebrated in our parish as requested at the time of Private Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; and the **Second Rite will be on Thursday, 2nd April at 6.00pm**
Cancelled

Monday 23 March
Church Closed

Tuesday 24 March
3.30pm - 5.00pm
Private Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Wednesday 25 March The Annunciation of the Lord
8.00am - 10.00am
Private Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Thursday 26 March
3.30pm - 5.00pm
Private Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Friday 27 March
8.00am - 10.00am
Private Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Saturday 28 March
6.00pm Mass Cancelled

Sunday 29 March
8.30 am Mass Cancelled



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Enrolments for Year 7 and Year 8 2021 are now open.



THE SAVING WORD

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT / A

22 MARCH 2020

FIRST READING

1 Sam 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

A reading from the first book of Samuel

In the presence of the Lord God, they anointed David king of Israel.

The Lord said, to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 22. R. v. 1

R. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd; / there is nothing I shall want. / Fresh and green are the pastures / where he gives me repose. / Near restful waters he leads me, / to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**

2. He guides me along the right path; / he is true to his name. / If I should walk in the valley of darkness / no evil would I fear. / You are there with your crook and your staff; / with these you give me comfort. **R.**

3. You have prepared a banquet for me / in the sight of my foes. / My head you have anointed with oil; / my cup is overflowing. **R.**

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me / all the days of my life. / In the Lord's own house shall I dwell / for ever and ever. **R.**

SECOND READING

Eph 5:8-14

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 8:12

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!

GOSPEL

Jn 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

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?' '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.

Longer form, 9:1-41

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Reflections on the Gospel

TWO RESPONSES TO THE LIGHT

In today's Gospel story, the blind man's physical disability is relieved in the opening scene. But his journey to the light (of day) in this physical sense is only a symbol of a much longer journey that he then begins: a journey out of the darkness of unbelief to discovery of the Light of the world in the person of Jesus.



While Jesus' role in the episode is crucial, he appears only at its beginning and end. In between, the healed man—and his parents—engage in a battle with the religious authorities. These constantly strive to get him to deny the truth of what Jesus has done for him. Far from discouraging him, however, the intensifying hostility only propels him on a journey of ever growing faith, that comes to a climax when he falls down and worships Jesus.

An attractive feature is the way the man's character emerges as the story develops. Questioned about how he came to be cured, he never goes beyond the evidence; he simply sticks to the facts and draws the inescapable conclusions. His journey into faith is a journey into ever deeper perception of reality.

The adversaries, on the other hand, resort to denial of the obvious facts, then to unfounded accusations and personal abuse. Finally, they appeal simply to their own authority and status. While the man comes to the Light, they—despite their physical ability to see—journey to the darkness of sin and unreality.

Going in opposite directions, the two journeys dramatically illustrate two responses to Jesus as Light of the world.

Brendan Byrne, SJ