

Catholic Parish of Lindfield-Killara

Diocese of Broken Bay

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER 3 – 5 – 20
'The season of glad song has come' (Song of Songs 2:12)

This week: Acts 2:14,36-41 1 Peter 2:20b-25 John 10:1-10
Next week: Acts 6:1-7: 1 Pet 2:4-9; Jn 14:1-12

I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.'

Those words of Jesus in the great tenth chapter of John's Gospel which reflects on the image of the Good Shepherd are very much Easter words:

and they *challenge* us,

they challenge us as to whether our words and actions live up to that goal.



And it's worth reflecting particularly on our *words*, as they speak of others:

are they the truth, or half-truths? the parts of the truth that suit our purpose, our polemic, our bandwagon?; words that tear down others without reference to their reputation; without reference to the Gospel imperative of justice and of love?

if our words and actions,
both individually and as a Church,
fail to bring life, life to the full, to others;
or worse, if they positively crush that life,
then we are not an *Easter* people.

Fr Colin

An opportunity for developing and nourishing your faith:

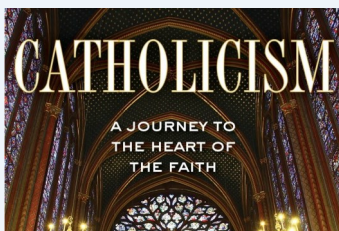
Starts *this* Wednesday

Our parish is blessed to have the resource 'Catholicism—A Journey to the heart of the Faith', a renowned faith development course coming from the legendary Fr (now Bishop) Robert Barron.

We are going to run this programme with its rich video input in an online way. The first session will be on **this Wednesday 6th May at 7:30pm**, and then on the first and third Wednesdays of each month after that.

If you're interested please email me (colin@lindfieldkillara.org.au) and I'll send you the login details for the sessions.

Let's look for graced opportunities such as these in these difficult times. Fr Colin



FIRST COMMUNION PREPARATION PROGRAMME



Although we don't know when we will be able to gather again to celebrate Mass in the church, we thought it would be good to offer the preparation programme for First Communion now as a way of helping you as parents to help your children remained connected and engaged with their faith.

Also, because of the current circumstances and the financial hardship being experienced by many we will not charge the usual fee which covers the cost of providing the programme on this occasion. There will however still be a small fee as the celebrations themselves approach to cover costs of printing, social celebrations associated with the Masses, certificates, etc.

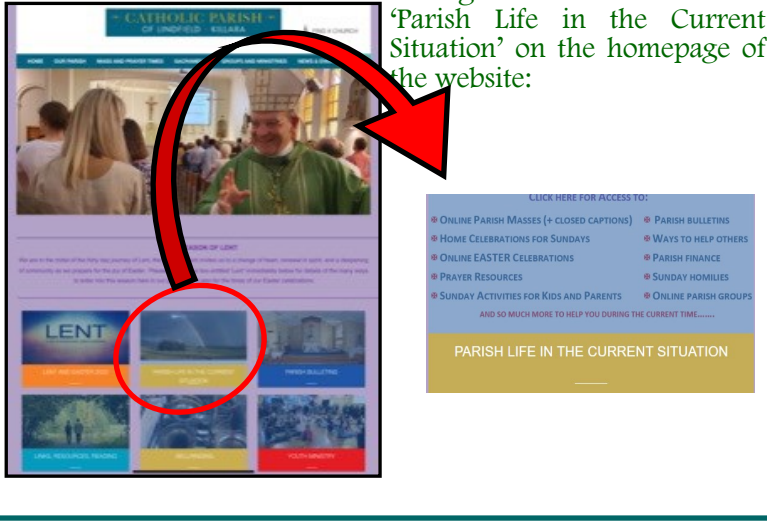
Our Sacramental Programme Coordinator, Maia Schulze-Tsang, will run this programme in an online way and groups will gather as usual for the sessions of the programme—though this time doing that in an online way using Zoom.

We do have to be clear however that we cannot indicate when the actual celebration of First Communion will take place—this will be dependent upon government restrictions, church protocols, & above all, medical advice.

Details of the programme and the link to enrolling via Trybooking **are now available** on our parish website (www.lindfieldkillara.org.au). Click on 'Sacraments' and then on 'Children's Sacraments'. Fr Colin

OUR PARISH LIFE ONLINE

Please keep visiting the special part of our parish website (www.lindfieldkillara.org.au) where we keep expanding the resources for you online: Mass in our parish, helps for prayer, home Sunday liturgies, helps for leading the kids through a Sunday reflection and much much more. All accessible through the hotlink box 'Parish Life in the Current Situation' on the homepage of the website:



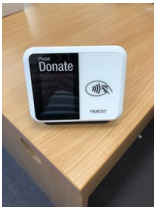
TWO LETTERS FROM OUR BISHOP ANTHONY RANDAZZO

Our Bishop has written two letters to us this week: firstly his weekly reflection for this time we are going through, and secondly a letter about the next steps for our Catholic School system in the diocese during the current public health restrictions. Both of these can be found via the link box on the special page for the current situation on our parish website.



J-Walk for young adults 18+
OUR NEXT MEETING IS ONLINE!
SUNDAY 17 MAY, 7PM
Contact us via our webpage:
<https://lindfieldkillarayouth.weebly.com/contact.html>
for more information on how to join in the meeting!

TAP AND GO is accessible again.



The two machines (one for the First and one for the Second Collection) are now fixed against the glass wall of 'The Basement' at the rear of and underneath Lindfield church. Tap donations to both collections can be made at any time, night or day, by tapping against the glass.

We of course are not encouraging unnecessary excursions from your home, but if this works in with your daily exercise or your visit to the supermarket the devices are there for you.

Apologies if you tried last weekend and found the batteries dead—this has now been rectified.

CAN YOU SUPPORT US AS A PARISH ?

As you would imagine, our parish income has been much affected in the current public health emergency—we have no weekly collections and our other source of income—rental of parish facilities—has also stopped.

Many thanks to those who have been in touch to make arrangements for electronic giving or to increase their existing electronic giving . **Sadly however only a relative few members of our community have made arrangements for continued giving to the parish in the current circumstances—which is somewhat discouraging.**

If you haven't yet done this and would be able to do so please see the special hotlink box on the homepage of our parish website (www.lindfieldkillara.org.au) which will set out the various ways for online contributions. The hotlink box is pictured below. Or just contact Alison directly—alison@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Fr Colin



SUPPORTING PARISH FINANCES DURING THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESTRICTIONS

Collection for the Needy
Members of the FUSION youth group and the TWO HANDS social justice group at our parish collected food/toiletries for Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS). JRS serves refugees and asylum seekers in need - especially hurting during these times!



Food was dropped off to a parishioner's car boot and then delivered straight to JRS - social distancing rules followed!

THANK YOU to all who donated; to Sue Mowbray for delivering the food; and SPECIAL THANKS to Henry & Donna Tsang, parents of parishioner Clem Tsang (wife Maia) for their very generous donation!

**PARISH YOUTH GROUPS
ARE MEETING ONLINE!**



**FUSION
NETFLIX
PARTY**

**6 - 7:30 pm
Sunday 3rd May**

Check the **blog page** on website for details
<https://lindfieldkillarayouth.weebly.com/>

NOTE: Blog is password protected for privacy. Contact us for access.
Use the "Contact Us" form on the Website OR
Email: youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au OR
DM (Instagram): [youth.fusion](https://www.instagram.com/youth.fusion)



**Hey
BLASTers!**

We hope it won't be long
until we're together again!

In the meantime, check out the
BLAST challenge on our website.

Every week a new challenge!
Every week a new Winner!

<https://lindfieldkillarayouth.weebly.com>
Go to the "BLAST" page on the website to find the challenge

BLAST
just for kids



OUR MONTHLY HEALING MASS will still be celebrated (online) this Friday 8th May. Although we can't celebrate the Sacrament of the Sick we will have prayers and a blessing for the sick and for those who seek God's healing strength as part of the Mass. The Mass will be able to be accessed in the section containing the link to *Weekday Masses* on the special section of our parish website (see page 2).

FR RICHARD ROHR OFM'S MEDITATION.....

DARK LIMINALITY *

When I am in that darkness, I do not remember anything about anything human. —Angela of Foligno (1248–1309)

After working as a physician and bioethicist for decades, Living School alumna and chair of the CAC Board LaVera Crawley became a hospital chaplain and spiritual companion for patients and their families in the liminality that often occurs between life and death. It seems to me that spiritual companionship is an art many of us are learning to practice these days, but we must be willing to be present to those in need, not just physically (or virtually), but with our whole selves. LaVera shares some of the challenges of this spiritual work and how it can be transformative for both parties.

There are likely few situations with the power to reliably propel us beyond the threshold of everyday existence and into the realm of the liminal than the way of the despair of receiving a diagnosis of a serious, life-threatening illness. It can feel like being hit by a brick or like being hurled into the dark abyss. Once there, the territory can be utterly disorienting and terribly frightening. . . .

Few know how to enter the liminal space where their loved one or patient has been forced to go, let alone how to be there should they be brave enough to dare to enter. We are uncomfortable in these kinds of liminal spaces because it is strange and unfamiliar territory, woven with the difficult feelings we've been taught to suppress by medicating them away, by bypassing them through platitudes . . . or denying them all together. . . .

It takes willingness, fortitude, knowledge, skill, and a deep trust in Spirit to go into these dark places as both witness and companion.

To be very clear, I am not equating darkness with something bad or negative, any more than I would consider the apophatic way [1] as such. There is deep beauty in the darkness, in the unknowing, in the indescribable, if only we can open ourselves to its purpose. Metaphorically, the dark emotions of grief, fear, and despair can be profound teachers and guides. . . . The primal howl of existential suffering holds within it the lesson that we all must learn at some time in our lives: To heal from our suffering—not merely to ease or palliate it, but to transform it into the source and substance of our growth and wisdom—requires a journey through it. We must listen attentively for whatever message it has for us and, according to [psychotherapist Miriam] Greenspan, find authentic ways to befriend it so that we can surrender to its transmuting power. All spiritual traditions teach some variation of this wisdom. While it may not come naturally to us to respond to suffering in this way, through practice, it can become a learned skill. . . .

The art of spiritual companionship through the realm of the liminal can be learned, whether we are accompanying others or attending to our own souls. The first step requires trusting that, in the course of time, the very healing we seek can emerge by our journeying through liminal space, listening attentively to what the liminal seeks to tell us.

(* *Liminal*: from the Latin for *doorstep* —being at a threshold or boundary).

We're here, we're online:
and here are some ways to join in ONLINE parish gatherings.....

These linkups takes place using Zoom – the organisers will simply send you an email which provides you with a link to click on at the appropriate time, along with a 'Meeting ID' and a password which you enter when requested. Then off you go.

I. OUR PARISH CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP

Our parish has for the last few years had a weekly Christian Meditation Group. This group is now gathering **online** and invites anyone to join them for a short time of prayer **each Wednesday morning at 8am.**

If you haven't tried Christian meditation before don't worry – our lovely group will help you to get introduced to this gentle way of praying.

If you'd like to join the group please email either Kay (Kay.Hunt@optusnet.com.au) or Catherine (catherinecwillis@gmail.com)

II. OUR PARISH SCRIPTURE STUDY SESSIONS

are also taking place online—both the daytime group and the evening group. **If you're not already in either or both of these groups and would like to be please contact Fr Colin (94167195) or email (colin@lindfieldkillara.org.au).**

- **The daytime Scripture Group** will gather online on the first & third Thursdays of each month at 11am (next meeting Thursday 7th May). We are studying St Paul's Letter to the Romans.
- **The evening Scripture study group** will gather online on the second & fourth Wednesdays of each month at 7:30pm (next meeting Wednesday 13th May). This will be the last of Fr Colin's introductory talks on the Scriptures—this time looking at the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse). After that we will begin our Scripture study on Luke's Gospel.

III. PARISH BOOK CLUB This year exploring the theme of Hope.

Meeting time: Last Wednesday of Month, 10:00—11.20 am.

The book for Wednesday 27th May is 'The Moment of Lift' by Melinda Gates.

If you'd like to be added to the email list receive details of how to take part in the online gatherings and to receive updates about further online gatherings in 2020 please contact either Catherine Willis (catherinecwillis@gmail.com) or Elizabeth Reedy (elizabethreeedy@msn.com).

IV. YOUTH: Please see page 3 for details of an another online gathering for FUSION YOUTH—our high school youth group—THIS WEEKEND, and for details of fun online activities for BLAST (Years 3-6).

V. SUNDAY MORNING TEA ONLINE: every Sunday at 10:30am - see p.1.

VI. CATHOLICISM: A FAITH DEVELOPMENT COURSE a renowned audio-visual faith development course coming from the legendary Fr (now Bishop) Robert Barron. This starts **this Wednesday 3rd May at 7:30pm** via Zoom and will take place on the first and third Wednesdays of each month. If you'd like to join in our parish online sessions see page 1 for details.

VII. YOUNG ADULTS ('J-WALK') are gathering online for a fun evening online very few weeks. Next gathering is on **Sunday 17th May at 7pm.** See page 2.

IF YOU NEED HELP in learning how to take part online in any of these activities please call (9416 7195) or email (colin@lindfieldkillara.org.au) Fr Colin and he'll be happy to help you to master the technology (it's not hard at all!).

We'll be looking at more ways that we can gather as a community online.
Please keep watching the bulletin and the special section of our parish website.

WOULD YOU LIKE A CHAT?

Things can get stressful or lonely during the current social restrictions.

We have a number of parishioners who are happy to phone and have a chat.

If you'd like to arrange to have someone call please call 9416 3702 Monday-Sunday (leave a message if the phone isn't answered and we'll get back to you) or email alison@lindfieldkillara.org.au

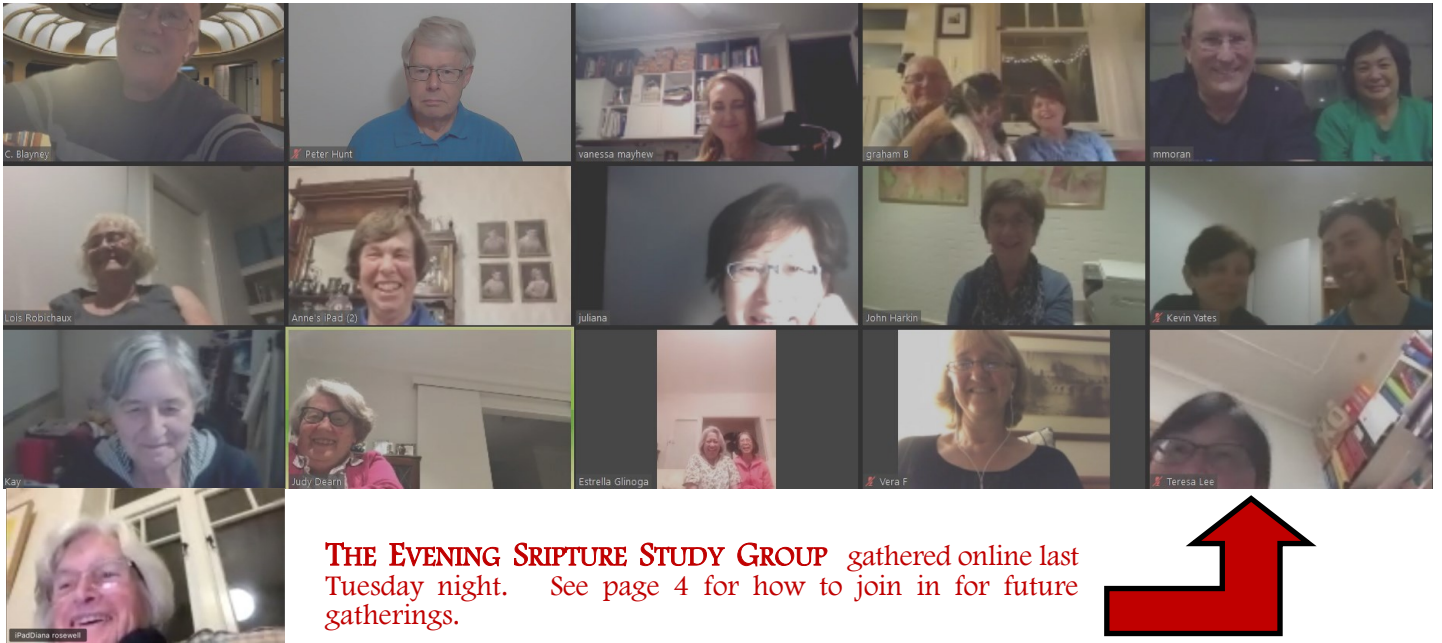


The Parish Office is continuing to operate, though only one staff member is there at a time—the rest of the staff are working from home. For public health it's not possible to visit the office so please make contact by phone or email and the staff will assist you. **The Parish Office is functioning from Tues-Fri.**



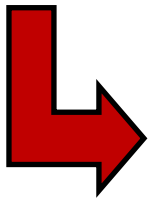
As disciples let's lead the way in helping protect public health and save lives. Download the CovidSafe app so that as social restrictions slowly are changed we can help to keep our communities safe.

Some of this week's parish online gatherings on Zoom



THE EVENING SCRIPTURE STUDY GROUP gathered online last Tuesday night. See page 4 for how to join in for future gatherings.

PARISH BOOK GROUP met online on Thursday for a lively discussion of Tom Wright's 'Surprised by Hope'. See p. 4 for details of next month's gathering.



Would you like to gather for a chat and a cuppa with fellow parishioners?



We can't do that physically of course but we can do it online.

Every Sunday there is online morning tea at **10:30am** using Zoom.

To join in just put this link in your internet browser (and don't pay any attention to the conspiracy theorists who distrust Zoom!):

<https://zoom.us/j/93474637065?pwd=R2hHLOtvZ2xPRUdhS3hER3pDNEFKZz09>

(or just go to the special part of our website ('Parish Life in the Current Situation'), scroll down to Resource 11 and click on the link).

and if requested enter the following Meeting ID and password:

Meeting ID: 934 7463 7065 Password: 611969

Make a cuppa, settle into your lounge or garden, and have a catchup with fellow parishioners for half an hour. *Fr Colin*

A VERY PRACTICAL WAY YOU COULD HELP US

In order to provide our online Masses we've had to purchase two pieces of software recently at a total cost of \$118-27.

If you would like to cover the cost of these purchases in these challenging times your contribution can be made to:

Lindfield-Killara Parish Church Account:

BSB: 062 784

A/c no.: 1116 8001

Please use the reference: 'Software'

復活期第四主日 3.5.2020

讀經一 (天主已把耶穌立為主，立為默西亞了。)

恭讀宗徒大事錄 2:14,36-41

五旬節那天，伯多祿同十一位宗徒站起來，高聲向群眾說：「猶太人，及所有居住在耶路撒冷的人！請你們留意，側耳靜聽我的話！以色列全家應確切知道：天主已把你們所釘死的這位耶穌，立為主，立為默西亞了。」

眾人一聽見這些話，就心中刺痛，於是向伯多祿和其他宗徒說：「諸位仁人弟兄！我們該作什麼？」伯多祿便對他們說：「你們悔改吧！你們每人要以耶穌基督的名字受洗，好赦免你們的罪過，並領受聖神的恩惠。因為這恩許就是為了你們和你們的子女，以及一切遠方的人，因為都是我們上主天主所呼叫的。」他還講了許多作證的話，並勸他們說：「你們應救自己脫離這邪惡的世代。」於是，凡接受他的話的人，都受了洗；在那一天約增添了三千人。——上主的話。(默想片刻)

答唱詠 詠23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6

【答】：上主是我的牧者，我實在一無所缺。
(詠23:1)

領：上主是我的牧者，我實在一無所缺。他使我躺在青綠的草場，又領我走近幽靜的水旁，還使我的心靈得到舒暢。【答】

領：他為了自己的名號，領我踏上了正義的坦途。縱使我應走過陰森的幽谷，我不怕凶險，因你與我同在。你的牧杖和短棒，是我的安慰和舒暢。【答】

領：在我對頭面前，你為我擺設了筵席；在我

的頭上傳油，使我的杯爵滿溢。【答】

領：在我一生歲月裡，幸福與慈愛常隨不離；我將住在上主的殿裡，直至悠遠的時日。

【答】

讀經二 (你們現在卻被領回，歸依你們的靈牧和監督。)

恭讀聖伯多祿前書 2:20-25

親愛的諸位：

你們如果因行善而受苦，且堅心忍耐，這才是中悅天主的事。你們原是如此而蒙召的，因為基督也曾為你們受苦，給你們留下了榜樣，叫你們追隨他的足跡。

他沒有犯過罪，他口中也從未出過謊言；他受辱罵，卻不還罵；他受虐待，卻不報復，只將自己交給那照正義施行審判的天主；他在自己身上，親自承擔了我們的罪過，上了木架，為叫我們死於罪惡，而活於正義。

你們是因他的創傷，而獲得了痊癒。你們從前有如迷途亡羊，現在卻被領回，歸依你們的靈牧和監督。——上主的話。(默想片刻)

福音前歡呼

領：亞肋路亞。

眾：亞肋路亞。

領：主說：我是善牧，我認識我的羊；我的羊也認識我。(若10:14)

眾：亞肋路亞。

福音 (我是羊的門。)

恭讀聖若望福音 10:1-10

那時候，耶穌說：「我實實在在告訴你們：凡不由門進入羊棧，而由別處爬進去的，便是賊，是強盜。由門進去的，才是羊的牧

人。看門的給他開門，羊聽從他的聲音；他按名字呼喚自己的羊，並引領他們出來。當他把羊放出來以後，就走在羊前面；羊也跟隨他，因為羊認得他的聲音。羊決不跟隨陌生人，反而逃避陌生人，因為羊不認得陌生人的聲音。」

耶穌給他們講了這個比喻。他們卻不明白他所講的是什麼。

於是，耶穌又對他們說：「我實實在在告訴你們：我是羊的門；凡在我以前來的，都是賊和強盜；羊沒有聽從他們。我就是門，誰若經過我進來，必得安全；可以進，可以出，可以找到草場。賊來，無非是為偷竊、殺害、毀滅；我來，卻是為叫他們獲得生命，且獲得更豐富的生命。」——上主的話。(講道後默想片刻)

華人天主教會 北區中心主日彌撒12時-牧職修

女 司徒金美修女 0419- 426899

中心聯絡 Gloria Cheung ☎0416-118089主日

彌撒12時

JUNIOR WORDSEARCH

I am the gate for the sheep

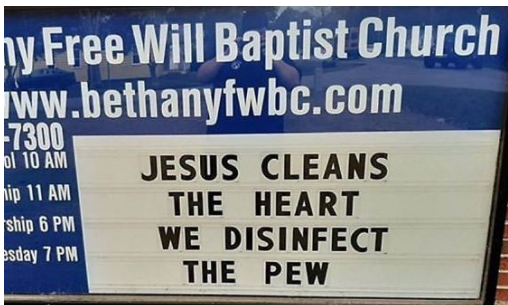
24/03/20

Q H E S T O R Y W L D P B O
J S X W E O U Q H A A L P Z
O H S H E P H E R D Q N O L
I E G T N H M Y V R Q D A L
V E T H X Z F O L L O W T I
C P Z F X D K V T H U W H F
R F R E R N V G K O V O I E
S O H N V P M I W J U T E I
H L X C S A N O M H X X F V
W D F E C V I B A D Z S W K
S T R A N G E R T A U D W P
B B P D M G J S H E E P E K
J H N D G H W A U C T C T F
P C J N A M E R O S O Y K C
V O I C E W B G A T E R L C

Try to find these words:

fence
follow
gate
life
name
sheep
sheepfold
shepherd
story
stranger
thief
voice

Signs of the times ... !



Catholic Parish of Lindfield -Killara

Fr Colin Blayney, Parish Priest
colin@lindfieldkillara.org.au 9416 7195
 Fr Thomas Alackakunnel VC, Asst Priest
thomas@lindfieldkillara.org.au; 0421 406162

Parish Office

Parish Office Hours: Tue-Fri 9.30 am ~4pm
 Postal address: PO Box 22, Lindfield NSW 2070
 Phone: 9416 3702
 Email: parish@lindfieldkillara.org.au
 Parish Website: www.lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Staff

Parish Secretary:
 Philita Marundan philita@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Office Coordinator
 Child Protection Coordinator:
 Alison Williams (M,W,Th only)
alison@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Sacramental Programme Team:
 Maia Schulze
Tsang sacramental@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Facilities' Coordinator (volunteer) :
 Anthony Cassidy: anthony@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Youth Ministry Coordinator (volunteer)
 Jean Shatek: youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish School

Holy Family School: 4 Highfield Rd, Lindfield 2070
 Principal: Mr Lou Dogao Phone: 9416 7200
 Email: info@holyfamily.nsw.edu.au
 School Website: www.hfldbb.catholic.edu.au

What's happening in our online parish?

MAY

Sunday 3rd	On demand 10:30am	Parish Mass online Online morning tea See page 1
	6:00-7:30pm	Fusion Netflix Video Night See page 3
Wednesday 6th	8:00am	Meditation Group See p. 4
	7:30pm	'Catholicism' Session 1 See p. 1
Thursday 7th	11:00am	Daytime Scripture Study Gp See p. 4
Friday 8th	On demand	Monthly Healing Mass See p. 3
Sunday 10th	On demand 10:30am	Parish Mass online Online morning tea See page 1
Wednesday 13th	8:00am	Meditation Group See p. 4
	7:30pm	Evening Scripture Group See p. 4
Sunday 17th	On demand 10:30am	Parish Mass online Online morning tea See page 1
	7:00pm	J-Walk (Young Adults) See page 2.
Wednesday 20th	8:00am	Meditation Group See p. 4
	7:30pm	'Catholicism' Session 2 See p. 1
Thursday 21st	11:00am	Daytime Scripture Study Gp See p. 4
Sunday 24th	On demand 10:30am	Parish Mass online Online morning tea See page 1
Wednesday 27th	10:00am	Parish Book Group See p.4
	7:30pm	Evening Scripture Group See p.4

Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of everlasting life. Grant that life to:

Recently deceased: Fr Pat McAuliffe, Angela Ying Fung Yim, Patrick Fitzpatrick, Joyce Antelman, Jean Groves, John Cashman, Julie Wright, Maria Ciong KN, Joyce Murphy, Eleanor Villenor Quema,

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

Nicholas Sutherland, Jesse Langford, Anthony Ellison, Ron Burke, Nena Umali, Wolfgang Liers, Cyril Ferriere, Alex Noble, William Wise, Lise Therese Ferriere, Ian Coffey, Maureen Hobbs, Russell Adams.

And for all those affected by COVID-19.

‘When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognise his voice’ (Jn 10:4)

ON HEARING THE VOICE THAT SOOTHES

Inside each of us there is a deep, congenital restlessness. We are not restless beings who sometimes get restless, but restless beings who occasionally experience rest. Karl Rahner, I believe, had it right when he said that we do not have souls that get restless, but that our souls themselves are lonely caverns thirsting for the infinite, deep wells of restlessness that make us ache to sleep with the whole world and all that is beyond.

Because of this we can find it difficult to concentrate during the day and to sleep at night. We go through life feeling like we are missing out on something, that life is more exciting and fulfilling for others than it is for us. Our achievements rarely satisfy us because we are always aware of what we haven’t achieved, of missed chances and failed possibilities. Always too, it seems that we are inadequate to the task, that we disappoint those we love.

We are always a bit dissatisfied. As Henri Nouwen puts it, in this life it seems that there is no such a thing as a clear-cut, pure joy, but that even our happiest moments come with a shadow, a fear, a jealousy, a restlessness. Inside us, no matter what our age, we are always somewhat lost and full of a sadness that we don’t quite know what to do with. Thoreau was right, we do live lives of quiet desperation. What are we meant to do with that?

An analogy might help us here: we can learn something valuable, I believe, by comparing these feelings to what a baby feels, at a certain moment, in the presence of a baby-sitter in the absence of its mother. As many a frustrated baby-sitter has learned, there can come a moment, usually later in the evening, when the baby grows tired of being titillated by flashy toys, extra sweets, and the continued cooing of the baby-sitter. The baby becomes irritated, cranky, weepy, and finally disconsolate. At this point nothing will soothe its aches, except the voice and the touch of the mother herself. The baby needs to hear the mother’s voice and the mother’s voice alone. No attempt by the baby-sitter to replace the mother or even to imitate the mother are of much avail. The baby will not be fooled, there comes a moment when only the mother can soothe and comfort. The baby’s disquiet will disappear only when she again hears the mother lovingly call her name.

It’s no different for us really, as adults, in trying to come to grips with our

congenital restlessness. We can distract ourselves for awhile, be titillated by flashy toys, be soothed and lulled by sympathetic voices, and momentarily even be content in the absence of our real mother. But there will come a time, usually a little later on in the proceedings when we are a bit more tired and cranky, when these things will soothe no more. We will begin to miss, in the very depths of our souls, the one voice and one presence that can ultimately bring us rest.

Of course the one voice that can soothe, the one voice that we search for among all the others, is the voice of God, the primordial Mother. Ultimately we reach a point in life when there is an ache and a sadness inside us that no one can still and comfort, other than the one who ultimately brought us to birth. Like the baby frustrated with its baby-sitter, we too need to hear our mother lovingly pronounce our names.


The Gospel of John opens very differently than the other Gospels. There are no infancy narratives. Right at the beginning we already meet the adult Christ and the first words he speaks are a question: “What are you searching for?” John’s whole Gospel tries to answer that, but the full answer is given only at the very end, by Jesus himself.

What are we ultimately searching for?

On the morning of the resurrection, Mary Magdala meets the newly-risen Jesus, but she doesn’t recognise him. He approaches her and asks (in words that repeat his question at the opening of the Gospel): “What are you searching for?” She explains that she is searching for the body, the dead body, of Jesus. He says just one word to her in response: “Mary.” He calls her by name and, in that, she not only recognises him, but she hears precisely what a disconsolate baby cannot hear in the voice of her baby-sitter, the voice of the mother, lovingly pronouncing her name.

In Jesus’ response to Mary Magdala, we learn the answer to life’s most fundamental question: what do we ache for? Ultimately all our aching is for one thing, to hear God call us by name, lovingly and individually. There comes a moment in the night for each of us when nothing will console us other than this, hearing our names pronounced by the mouth of God.

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