

Participating in The Mission of Christ



DIOCESE OF BROKEN BAY
2024 LENTEN PROGRAM

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INTRODUCTION

Bishop Anthony



My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Each year the Church offers us the opportunity to journey towards the joyous solemnity of Easter. The season of Lent affords us the chance to reflect on our lives and our response to the call to participate in the Mission of Christ.

In 2024, the Lenten season coincides with the invitation from the Holy Father, Pope Francis, to dedicate ourselves to a Year of Prayer in preparation for the Jubilee Year of 2025. The Holy Father's desire is that this time of prayer be fruitful to reawaken and revitalise the desire to be in the presence of the Lord, to listen to Him and adore Him, as we unite together in a great symphony of prayer.

My hope is that this Lenten resource will be a powerful experience of prayer with Scripture, opening up the well of our hearts to the Word of God. I pray also that the Word be planted in our lives and transform them.

Therefore, for each and every one of you, I pray that this Lenten period may be a time of meaningful prayer, and that we respond to the invitation to step more intimately into the Mission entrusted to us by Jesus, whose resurrection restores us all to communion with the Father.

+ Anthony Randazzo

Most Rev Anthony Randazzo DD JCL
Bishop of Broken Bay



How to Use this Booklet

This booklet invites you to reflect prayerfully on the Sunday Gospel readings in Lent, and can be used individually or as part of a group. The notes below are provided for use in a small group context.

For each of the 6 weeks of Lent, this resource includes a reading of the Gospel text; a reflection on the text which draws on one of Bishop Anthony's priority areas; and a personal testimony on an aspect of that particular priority area. All materials and reflections have been prepared by members from our Broken Bay Church community, making this resource relevant to us and the journey we are on as a community.

It is suggested that you allocate 1 ½ hours to complete each session. The recommended process is as follows:

1. Opening Prayer (10 mins)

An Opening Prayer is offered, which may be read together by participants. Song suggestions are given for each week which you may wish to consider using as part of the gathering prayer time for the group.

2. Gospel Reading (15 mins)

Optional: To allow participants to prepare themselves well to hear God speak through the Sacred Scriptures, you may wish to pray the prayer of Saint John Chrysostom prior to reading the Gospel text.

Listen to the Gospel text by inviting a participant from the group to read the text.

Pause for silent reflection for a few moments. Invite people to share one insight into what they are hearing through the text. This is not a time for discussion, but only an invitation to offer a short comment. The group listens attentively to each person but does not respond.

3. Reflection with Guided Questions (35 mins)

A reflection is offered on the scripture text, drawing out the themes of the Gospel.

Invite participants to read the text, one paragraph each. They may wish to underline phrases that they particularly notice. Discuss the Scripture text and reflection, inviting conversation about what people are hearing, and their insights or comments.

Invite conversation using the guided questions offered at the end of the session.

4. Personal Story (25mins)

A personal testimony is offered on the text. It is suggested that this could be read quietly by participants, whilst underlining phrases that stand out for them.

Discuss the Personal Story, asking: What aspects of the testimony spoke to you most deeply? How is this story encouraging you in your faith journey?

To conclude the session, invite participants to respond to what they have heard and discussed during the whole session. How are they being called to respond? What action might they take? They may wish to write down one or two personal actions that they

could take into their week in the space provided. There is no obligation to share these; only do so if appropriate to the group.

5. Closing Prayer (5mins)

To conclude, pray the final prayer together.

Prayer of Saint John Chrysostom Before reading the Scripture

O Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart, that I may hear your word and understand and do your will, for I am a sojourner upon the earth. Hide not your commandments from me, but open my eyes, that I may perceive the wonders of your law. Speak unto me the hidden and secret things of your wisdom.

On You I set my hope, O my God, that You will enlighten my mind and understanding with the light of your knowledge, not only to cherish those things which are written, but to do them; that in reading the lives and sayings of the saints I may not sin, but that such may serve for my restoration, enlightenment and sanctification, for the salvation of my soul, and the inheritance of life everlasting.

For You are the enlightenment of those who lie in darkness, and from You comes every good deed and every gift. **Amen**

First Sunday of Lent

Music Suggestion

40 Days Matt Maher

The Glory of These Forty Days Gregory the Great

Opening Prayer

Loving and gracious God,
Amid our own wilderness, allow the Holy Spirit to comfort and
reveal Jesus to us, so that as one community of the
Church in Broken Bay, we may be strengthened, sustained and
encouraged to participate in the Mission of Christ.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Gospel Reading

Mark 1:12-15 (NRSV)

After Jesus was baptised, the Spirit drove him out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

Now after John was arrested; Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying,

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the Good News.”

Fr Alex Peter MSFS
Diocese
of Broken Bay



Gospel Reflection

By Fr Alex Peter MSFS

“Time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, Repent and Believe in the Good News”

“Repent and Believe” is a Divine Call

Can any of us recall the first instance when we attempted to experience regret or repentance? It's a challenging task to pinpoint. As we embark on the sacred season of Lent once again, we are presented with an opportunity to heed the divine call to “repent and believe.” I term it a divine call because this is not a novel message that we've only recently encountered. In fact, it dates back to the beginning of creation, resonating through the teachings of Moses, the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, the apostles, and now echoing through the teachings of the Church.

Moses frequently interceded on behalf of the people and is closely linked with messages of turning back to God, seeking forgiveness, and obedience to God's commandments. The divine call did not conclude with Moses; it persisted through the proclamations of the prophets. They consistently urged people to turn away from sin and return to God, as evident in passages such as, Jer 18:11, Ezek 18:30, and Joel 2:12-13. We read in Is 55:7, “Let the wicked abandon his way and the evil one his thoughts. Let him turn back to Yahweh who will take pity on him, to our God, for he is rich in forgiveness.” John the Baptist, the precursor to Jesus,

was a fearless man. In Mt 3:7-10, particularly verse 8, he emphatically states, “Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance.” According to the Gospels of Mark and Matthew, the opening message from Jesus is “repent and believe.” Jesus commences his ministry by proclaiming the divine call to repent and believe, likely marking the initiation of his public outreach. He calls people to turn away from sin and embrace the imminent reign of God, Mt 4:17; Mk 1:12-15; later carried by his apostle Peter, Acts: 3:19, “Repent, therefore, and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.” And Paul also contributed for the same, Acts 26:20, “but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout the countryside of Judea, and also to the gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God and do deeds consistent with repentance.” To this day, God’s call continues to knock on the door of our hearts through the sacrament of reconciliation.

Repent and Believe in

What and Whom:

The Good News = Jesus Christ

The Good News is not merely an external concept but a belief in Jesus Himself. Jesus is the embodiment of the Good News for us, signifying that God is with us. In Lk 2:10-11, the angel announces to the shepherds, “Do not be afraid; I bring you good news that will cause

great joy for all the people” referring to the birth of Jesus. This is because He is going to bring Good News to the poor, liberty to the captives, sight to the blind and announce the year of the Lord’s mercy (Luke 4:18). St. Paul articulates in Rom 10:9, “If you declare with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.” Jesus preached the Gospel, or the Good News, that God is a loving, forgiving, caring and merciful father who wants to liberate us and save us from our sins through his son Jesus. Therefore, the Good News is a dynamic reality that reaches its culmination in the person of Jesus Christ, inviting individuals to a personal and transformative faith in Jesus as the source of salvation and eternal joy.

The Call of the Church

There is a saying, ‘the confessional is the only tribunal where the verdict is always mercy’. We read in Ps 103: 12, ‘As the distance of east from west, so far from us does he put our faults.’ The tribunal of forgiveness surpasses earthly judgments. In a world often laden with condemnation, the confessional becomes a sanctuary where the broken-hearted encounter a verdict not of condemnation but of boundless mercy. Here, the penitent’s heart encounters not a stern judge, but a compassionate Savior who whispers forgiveness. The confessional, a spiritual haven, beautifully mirrors the promise of God. In Psalm 103:10, we read, “He does not treat us as our sins deserve, nor repay

Personal Story

By Deacon Hien Vu

us as befits our offences". Thus, let us make use of the confession as often as possible to receive his mercy.

St. Padre Pio says that "God will forgive you if you ask him with a sincere heart. The doors of mercy are always open." Let us remember repentance is not merely an external but an internal transformation. It is about a fundamental shift in priorities, values and actions. It involves a genuine turning of the heart, a deep sorrow for sin and return to God.

Guided Reflection

1. When was the last time you made an attempt to feel sorry for the wrongs that you did?
2. Can you recall the last time that you visited the Sacrament of Reconciliation?
3. Do you acknowledge your mistakes, or do you have a tendency to justify them?

Remember the words of the philosopher Socrates:
"An unexamined life is not worth living."

Led by the Spirit

In 2013, while working as an accountant in Vietnam, I stumbled upon a church one evening, surrounded by long lines of people waiting for confession during the Lenten season. Intrigued, I joined the queue, confessing after a prolonged period of spiritual silence. I felt a deep sense of peace and I truly believed that it was prompted by the Holy Spirit. This experience led me to a newfound commitment to attending evening Mass after work. This event, along with the question of what God truly desires from me, marked the beginning of my journey towards Priesthood.

Into the Wilderness

In early 2015, I commenced the discernment for the Diocese of Broken Bay, a path that I had never thought of before. Despite the invitation being unexpected, I seriously prayed about it along with seeking spiritual direction. The subsequent two-year visa process proved a real test to my patience and resilience, tempting me to give up. However, I resolved to use this waiting period to study English and learned more about Australian culture.

Upon my arrival in Sydney in July 2016 as a seminarian for the Diocese of Broken Bay, I encountered a few hiccups such as culture shock and language barrier. Amidst the difficulties, I found encouragement in my prayer, realising that what mattered most was my will to follow Christ, and the other factors were mere sidelines. This period was when I gained strengths and a sense

Personal Story continued.

of purpose. With support from many goodhearted people, I gradually overcame obstacles, starting an intensive English course and finding a home parish at Lower North Shore, where I received tremendous support from clergy, parish staff, and parishioners. In February 2017, I commenced my seminary formation at the Seminary of the Good Shepherd in Homebush. In the last year of 2023, I completed my seven-year Seminary formation.

Good News!

I remember vividly that while on the way to the Cathedral of St Francis in Assisi for the Mass, Bishop Anthony publicly announced the date of my Diaconal Ordination. The bus was filled with rejoicing and warm congratulations, making my experience of WYD 2023 truly special. This announcement served as a powerful affirmation of my vocation journey toward Priesthood.

I was ordained as a Deacon on November 24, 2023. This was a joyful and meaningful day for me, surrounded by so many people that I had been journeying with over the years. Now, as a Deacon, I find joy in preaching the Word and offering service to others in whatever way I can. As we enter this Lenten season, I pray that each of us remains open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, explores the Love of God in our daily lives, and is rejuvenated to proclaim the Good News of the Lord to others.



Deacon Hien Vu
Hornsby
Cathedral Parish

Guided Reflection

1. What aspects of Deacon Hien’s story spoke to you most deeply?
2. How is this story encouraging you in your faith journey?



Closing Prayer

*Loving God, I give thanks for Your word today.
Allow it to shape my life; and enliven my efforts to put it into practice.*

*Bless my Lenten journey so that with Your help,
I may be able to turn to You with a change of heart that opens
up new pathways of prayer and friendship.*

*Give me the grace and wisdom to recognise Jesus as my light and
my life; and draw me more genuinely into unity with Your people, the
Church, so that we may all be united in Your mission.*

Amen

Second Sunday of Lent

Music Suggestion

Draw Me Fr Rob Galea
All that is Hidden Bernadette Farrell

Opening Prayer

Loving and gracious God,
Your Son so loved the world that He gave Himself up to
death for our sake.

Grant us the grace to receive this love through our personal
encounter with Jesus and to proclaim Him as our beginning and
end. May the entire People of God in Broken Bay be one in Christ
and experience the promise of abundant life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Gospel Reading

Mark 9:2-10 (NRSV)

Jesus took with him Peter and James and John, and led them up a high mountain apart, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white, such as no one on earth could bleach them.

And there appeared to them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” Peter did not know what to say, for they were terrified.

Then a cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud there came a voice, “This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him!” Suddenly when they looked around, they saw no one with them any more, but only Jesus.

As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them to tell no one about what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead.

So they kept the matter to themselves, questioning what this rising from the dead could mean.



Fr Biju Jose OSH
Diocese
of Broken Bay

Gospel Reflection

By Fr Biju Jose OSH

A Light to the Nations

Mountains hold great significance in the Bible, for God often reveals Himself on mountain tops. There are various mountains mentioned in the Bible: Mt. Zion, Mt. Sinai, Mt. Tabor, Mt. of Olives, Mt. Hor, Mt. Moriah, Mt. Ararat, Mt. Nebo, and Mt. Carmel. In Mk 9:2-10, Jesus took three of his apostles and led them up a high mountain where his divinity was revealed to them. Through the Transfiguration of Jesus, they previewed the future glory which we all hope to share in heaven.

The Synoptic Gospels that record this miraculous event agree on most of the details, but they also differ. However, the image that the evangelists use to convey the Transfiguration is light which is a very important metaphor in the Bible. Light was among the first things created by God in the Bible, Gen 1:3-4. The light is often used to describe God, 1 Jn 1:5, and Jesus Christ, Jn 8:12; 9:5; 12:46. Israel's mission is to be a “light to the nations”, Is 42:6. This image also extends to Christians, who are described as “children of light”, Eph 5:8; 1 Thess 5:5. St Irenaeus says, “The light of the Father passes into the flesh of Christ; and from Christ it shines forth upon us, so that each of us is enfolded”, Against Heresies 4.20.2.

While giving a homily at the Closing Mass of the World Youth Day Lisbon-2023 in Parque Tejo, Pope Francis asked an

important question: What will we take back with us as we resume our daily lives?" The first answer was "to shine" or radiate the light of Christ. As Christians, our primary mission is giving credible witness to Jesus and radiate his light into the arenas, such as entertainment, politics, sport, the internet, family, school, university, and parish life, to name but a few.

At our Baptism, we were given a lit candle. We were entrusted with the light of Christ and told that we were to keep that light burning brightly. The value of witness is therefore an irreplaceable element in Jesus' understanding of mission. A light is often a guide, and it shows the way. Jesus Christ is the light of the world and light is our distinguishing feature. Let our lights shine, keeping the flame of faith alive in our hearts and showing it to our world.

The society in which we live is under the influence of the power of light and darkness. The power of darkness attempts to dim the splendour of the divine light. In this world there are works of darkness such as violence, injustice, corruption, racism, fanaticism, individualism, consumerism, drugs and alcohol, abortion, euthanasia, debauchery, to name but a few. So, understanding the critical nature of the times, Christians should prove themselves to be children of the light. It has something important to say about

Christian involvement in society. For this, we need deep convictions and courage especially when we are faced with hard choices or tempted by many things like power, prestige, money, sex etc... We have to say 'no' to many things which are contrary to Gospel values. May this holy Lenten season help us to be with Jesus on the mountain top so that we can clearly listen Jesus and we can be the reflections of the True Light in the society.

Guided Reflection

- 1. As children of God, our mission is to radiate the light of Christ around us. How is it possible in the pressures of secularism and modern life in the society?*
- 2. Why are people tempted to love the darkness rather than the light?*
- 3. Do you really believe that you will share in the same glory which the apostles shared on the mountain?*
- 4. What is the meaning and importance of your Baptismal candle in your life?*

Personal Story

Sr Rosa Covino

The imagery of Jesus leading Peter, James and John up a high mountain reminds me of the first time I returned to the place of my birth, atop a very high mountain that was accessible only on foot. I travelled light and the view that awaited me was worth every laboured breath. The narrative of the transfiguration parallels this journey for me as it takes me beyond the visual of nature to a deeper desire to know “home”. It takes me into the landscape of my interior life with God. Jesus takes me up a high mountain with Him with the desire to reveal Self to me so that at journey’s end we can become One. But Jesus never promises a smooth pathway!

St John of the Cross makes this clear in *The Ascent of Mount Carmel*. An arduous journey! The desire and readiness to take the first step involves the willingness to rummage through my backpack and take an honest look at my load. Oh, and allowing Jesus to make suggestions as to what to leave behind at different points of the journey. Surrendering baggage such as anger,

resentment, unforgiveness, enables me to unburden myself of what weighs me down and speeds up the pace towards “home”. The whole process is a slow, repetitive rhythm of dying and rising.

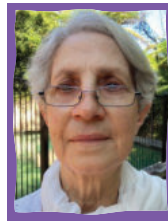
I often witness this same rhythm in ministry. Engaging with people, I travel the sacred ground of interior landscapes shaped by the contradictions, joys and sufferings of life. Abuse, violence, torture, war, critical illness and relational struggles often create barriers to the awesome “terror” of Jesus “transfigured before them”. The disciples are witnesses to a radical change in the nature of Jesus. In my own experience, this vision also reveals our own end story. So “Rise, and have no fear.”

A woman I companioned some years ago initially presented with anger and multiple wounds of the psyche and soul at the memory of domestic violence. Within the narrative of the struggle to forgive, of deep wounding, Jesus revealed to her that he had always been there with her. “Don’t be afraid”, “Listen to Him”. Her commitment to prayer and contemplation eventually brought her peace and the readiness to forgive. “As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus instructed her, “Don’t tell anyone what you have seen.” I’m not sure she honoured that request! However,

Personal Story continued.

unbound, unburdened, changed, enlightened and encouraged by her experience, the descent led her to embracing a new ministry as a hospital chaplain. *(Story shared with permission).*

The focus in the narrative of the transfiguration is not on the ascent but on the disciples witnessing Jesus as both Messiah and Son of God. This was intended to strengthen them and, perhaps also Jesus Himself, in preparation for the events that would take place at Calvary. For me, the events on Calvary and the Transfiguration are two sides of the one coin. Inseparable. It helps me to remember that when facing a sheer and hazardous cliff!



Sr Rosa Covino
*Daughter of
Compassion*

Guided Reflection

- 1. What aspects of Rosa's story spoke to you most deeply?*
- 2. How is this story encouraging you in your faith journey?*



Closing Prayer

*Loving God, I give thanks for Your word today.
Allow it to shape my life; and enliven my efforts to put it into practice.*

*Bless my Lenten journey so that with Your help,
I may be able to turn to You with a change of heart that opens
up new pathways of prayer and friendship.*

*Give me the grace and wisdom to recognise Jesus as my light and
my life; and draw me more genuinely into unity with Your people, the
Church, so that we may all be united in Your mission.*

Amen

Third Sunday of Lent

Music Suggestion

Jealous Kind Jars of Clay
From Ashes to the Living Font Alan J Hommerding

Opening Prayer

*Loving and gracious God,
Turn our hearts to yourself that we may recognise Jesus Christ
in every person we encounter.*

*Let the Holy Spirit animate the virtue of humility in us,
to place the poor at the heart of the People of God in Broken Bay
and live in righteousness as we embrace the value
and dignity of all your children.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Gospel Reading

John 2:13-25 (NRSV)

The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"

His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

The people then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." They then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?" But Jesus was speaking of the temple of his body.

After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this; and they believed the scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.

Gospel Reflection

By Fr Alex Peter MSFS

"Do not make my father's house a house of trade"

Denial of the Love of God and Love of Neighbour.

Jesus comes straight to the temple. He finds the outer court of the temple like a market place. This kind of trade was introduced by the high priest Caiaphas and protected by the temple guards. The things sold in the temple were costlier than things sold outside. Thus, before entering into relationship with God, people had to go through the exploiting system of trade and money exchange. In the house of God, offertory things and temple money had replaced God who loves and liberates the people. Thus, God's house of divine presence was turned in to a marketplace and 'a den of thieves.' So, he said "stop making my father's house a market place." The behaviours of traders and the money exchangers had no room for the love of God and love of neighbour.

Denial of Love of God

The temple, intended as a place of worship and communion with God, had become the place for commercial activities. The focus on profit and business had overshadowed the sacred purpose of the temple as a house of prayer. Material pursuits and worldly concerns replace our relationship with God. Let us remember the words of Jesus in Mt: 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted

to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

Denial of Love of Neighbour

The commercial activities in the temple were not only a denial of the love of God but also a disregard for the well-being and reverence of those coming to worship. The exploitation and profit-making were contrary to the spirit of love of God. Traders and the money exchangers failed to understand their actions were disturbing the worshiping community. Least concerned about the well-being of the poor who come to the temple, they exploited the sentiments of the worshipers to make money through unjust means. Most likely, those who were selling in the temple were not mindful of the Ten Commandments. Karl Rahner said “those who preach God with their words deny him with their life style and that is what the unbelieving world finds simply unbelievable.” Jesus’ cleansing, the temple encourages to reflect on the way we worship God. Are our expressions of worship genuine or do we sometimes engage in rituals without true devotion and sincerity?

“Destroy this Temple”

Jesus is the Temple of God

And Jesus said; “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” Jn: 2:19. He responds to a challenge from the religious leaders who ask for a sign to justify his actions. In response, Jesus speaks of the temple’s destruction and resurrection, but the people misunderstand him, thinking he refers to the

physical temple. However, John clarifies in verse 21 that Jesus was speaking about the temple of his body. What do you understand by this response of Jesus?

Jesus as the True Temple

Jesus is presenting himself as the true and ultimate dwelling place of God. The physical temple in Jerusalem was a symbol of God’s presence among His people, but Jesus, through his life, death, and resurrection, becomes the embodiment of God’s presence. We read in Col 2:9 “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.”

The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

The statement (Destroy this Temple) foreshadows Jesus’ approaching death on the cross and his subsequent resurrection. The destruction of the temple (his body on the cross) and its restoration (his resurrection) become central to our belief. In Mt 12:40 we read, “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a big fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”

New Covenant and Access to God

Jesus’ role as the temple points to a new covenant where access to God is through faith in Christ. Believers are no longer limited to a physical location for encountering God but have direct access through their relationship with Jesus. In Heb 10:19-20 we read, “Therefore, my friends, since we have confidence to enter the sanctuary by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain (that is, through his flesh).”

Personal Story

Tim Curran



*Fr Alex Peter MSFS
Diocese
of Broken Bay*

Thus, the words of Jesus “destroy this temple” reveals the reality that Jesus, as the perfect and sinless Son of God, becomes the ultimate means through which humanity can be reconciled with God. His death and resurrection provide the way for forgiveness and eternal life. And the establishment of a new covenant where believers have direct access to God through faith in Christ. In Jn 14:6, Jesus says, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me.”

Let us not forget that the love of God and love of neighbour is the one and only way that, can bring us closer to God. We pray that we may learn to show our deep love for God and our brothers and sisters in truthfulness.

Guided Reflection

1. Are the Ten Commandments familiar to me? (Ex 20:1-17)
2. Am I a person who loves God and hates my neighbour? (1 Jn 4:20)

Remember the words of Karl Rahner “those who preach God with their word’s deny him with their lifestyle.”

John 2:13-25 tells the well-known story of Jesus “cleansing the temple” by evicting the money changers and traders; those that sought to extract unjust profits from the many pilgrims who travelled to the temple to offer sacrifices at the time of the Passover.

This passage of scripture has challenged or inspired me in different ways at different times in my life depending upon the reason I was reading it, the perspective or angle from which I was approaching it, and the circumstances of my life at the time. There is space here for me to recount just one such example.

Many years ago I sought to learn more about the design, practices and customs of the Holy Temple, the focal point of Jewish sacrifice, prayer and worship. Amongst many other things, I learnt about the different sections of the temple and what their function was, and came to understand that the scene from John 2 took place in the “Court of the Gentiles” – the only court within the temple that gentiles, i.e. non-Jews, were permitted. This knowledge provided a new insight for me into Jesus’ righteous indignation at the actions of the traders and money changers. By setting up their market stalls and operating their extremely busy, noisy and smelly businesses, the traders made it impossible for gentile pilgrims to pray and honour God at the temple. This then challenged and continues to challenge me when I reflect upon this passage of scripture. Is there anything that I am doing that makes it difficult for “gentiles”, often equated with “non-believers” in this

Personal Story continued.

present age of the New Covenant, to draw near to God? Of course, I have never set up a market stall at the entrance of a church that physically stops a non-believer entering. But have any of my words or actions or attitudes turned people away from God? Have I been judgemental? Have I turned to look at the parents of a noisy child in a church service in a way that causes them to feel uncomfortable? Have I made every effort to welcome a visitor to the church that I am attending, or has the visitor interpreted my lack of engagement with them as a sign that they are not really welcome? And of greatest relevance to me and perhaps many other Christians; do the words I speak and behaviours I exhibit each day reflect the beliefs that I espouse, or do the “gentiles” around me see me as just another hypocritical Christian who fails to practice what he preaches?

On this last point, I confess I come up short every time I ask myself the question. But I do not become despondent. I instead turn to God and seek the forgiveness that has been made available to us by God through Jesus Christ's sacrifice. Indeed, this is exactly what Jesus spoke about in Jn 2:19 when He referred to His body as the new temple; the temple through which we can receive forgiveness of sins and the hope of everlasting life. It is of course the very Gospel of Jesus Christ - the “Good News” we should be sharing with non-believers during the season of Lent.



***Tim Curran**
Executive Director
CatholicCare Broken Bay*

Guided Reflection

- 1. What aspects of Tim's story spoke to you most deeply?*
- 2. How is this story encouraging you in your faith journey?*



Closing Prayer

*Loving God, I give thanks for Your word today.
Allow it to shape my life; and enliven my efforts to put it into practice.*

*Bless my Lenten journey so that with Your help,
I may be able to turn to You with a change of heart that opens
up new pathways of prayer and friendship.*

*Give me the grace and wisdom to recognise Jesus as my light and
my life; and draw me more genuinely into unity with Your people, the
Church, so that we may all be united in Your mission.*

Amen

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Music Suggestion

In the Light Emmanuel Worship
God so Loved the World John Stainer

Opening Prayer

*Loving and gracious God,
Through the Holy Spirit, give us the gifts of knowledge, wisdom
and understanding.*

*Guide us in deepening our understanding of Christ, the Gospel
message and reveal in us our true identity. Make us bold
in proclaiming this Truth with fidelity to your Word and your people.
Help us to think, speak and live the Gospel in order to participate
in your mission of making disciples.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Gospel Reading

John 3:14-21 (NRSV)

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

“Just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

“Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

“And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

Gospel Reflection

By Fr Biju Jose OSH

Jesus: Source of Eternal Life

Jesus was so often surrounded by the people. In this gospel passage we see Jesus in contact with Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and a member of the Sanhedrin, who came to Jesus at night and Jesus revealed himself as the source of eternal life. Jesus says that new life comes only through the exaltation of the Son of Man. The incident of the bronze serpent, Num 21:1-9, is mentioned as a foreshadowing of what is to take place in Jesus. Here the lifting up of the Son of Man points both to the death and resurrection of Jesus. In fact, the Gospel of John does not narrate the ascension. The very death on the cross is seen as Jesus' Glorification that is called being "lifted up" or exaltation. Jesus exalted on the cross is the source of eternal life. After having cited the Old Testament incident, the scene goes to the very heart of Johannine theology and especially in v. 16 summarises all the fundamentals of the Christian faith:

“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life”.

No doubt, this is one of the well-known, recited, and memorised verses of the Sacred Scripture. Now, I invite you all to reflect on the three parts of this verse: God's love, God's Son, and our belief.

1. God's love. This verse certainly highlights the role of God in the salvation of the world. God is the one who takes initiative and so everything begins from God. He is the source of all goodness. Again, God's love is not a superficial love but a love of sacrifice, i.e., giving His only Son. It is the ultimate manifestation of God's love. The 'world' (Greek: kosmos) here stands for all humanity, not just the elect. No one is excluded from God's love because nobody is unwanted by God and His love embraces all. Regardless of who we are; or what our background is; or our capabilities; or our race, or our culture; or our social status every individual human being is precious in the sight of God. In the world of exclusion and separation by so many differences, it is a firm assurance that we are all loved by God. He wants you and me!

2. God's Son. This verse makes it clear that Jesus Christ—and Jesus Christ alone—is the means of salvation for the entire world. Jesus is the only mediator of God's saving plan, and it is through his death and resurrection that was accomplished. Jesus is the only Savior of the world. Again, it highlights the sacrificial aspect of Jesus death on the cross which is the overflowing of God's love for us. The purpose of this extreme sacrifice is the gift of life for all, that no one should perish, but have eternal life.



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Diocese
of Broken Bay*

3. Finally, it stresses our response. To participate in that life, one should look at him with faith. Only by believing in the Son can one receive eternal life. Here God is offering a choice. One can accept Jesus as the Son of God, believe in Him, and obey His words and so live or reject him and die. There is contrast between life and death, light, and darkness. Unfortunately, many choose death and darkness by not believing in Jesus. That is the judgement. One is pronouncing the final judgement on oneself by the decision one makes now in front of Jesus.

We are not told what the response of Nicodemus was, but later John reports how he stood up in the Sanhedrin in support of Jesus, Jn 7:50, and after the death, he comes out openly to bury the body of Jesus, Jn 19:39. Thus, Nicodemus becomes a model of a person who slowly comes out of darkness to light. This is expected of each one who wants to have eternal life. May this holy season of Lent help us listen to the Spirit, and follow his directions, accepting Jesus as the source of life.

Personal Story

Kristy Komadina

Guided Reflection

1. *What does this bible passage reveal about who Jesus is and what He came to do in this world and in your life?*
2. *How does Nicodemus become a model of a person who slowly comes out of darkness to light?*
3. *Eternal life depends on the response we make now.*
4. *“God so loved the world that he gave his only Son”. How is it applicable in your personal life?*

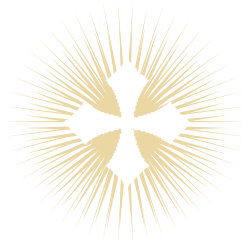
When I was a child, I vividly remember being curiously intrigued by seeing people in movies and in crowd scenes at sporting events holding up signs that simply said “John 3:16”. It was such a cultural movement that it even made it into an episode of “The Simpsons.” Back in those days when there was no such thing as simply “Googling” the answer to unknown references, I asked my dad what it meant and he replied, “I think it comes from the bible.”

I went and found our family bible and found the passage that read, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

My nine-year-old self probably understood that at some basic level the passage meant that God sent us Jesus so that we could have eternal life in heaven. I think I felt at the time that it was stating the obvious however I didn’t truly grasp how Jesus’ life on Earth really did that for me.

These words continued to pop up in my life through the years. Later when I became a Catechist, we taught the children a boppy, up-beat children’s memory verse song to sing at the Easter assembly. Its rollicking melody hung around like an earworm. There was pure joy in seeing a hall full of children dancing and singing about believing in Jesus and having eternal life. Gosh, that is something to jump up in praise about!

A few years later I had the privilege of singing a glorious piece of acapella 4-part



Closing Prayer

*Loving God, I give thanks for Your word today.
Allow it to shape my life; and enliven my efforts to put it into practice.*

*Bless my Lenten journey so that with Your help,
I may be able to turn to You with a change of heart that opens
up new pathways of prayer and friendship.*

*Give me the grace and wisdom to recognise Jesus as my light and
my life; and draw me more genuinely into unity with Your people, the
Church, so that we may all be united in Your mission.*

Amen

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Music Suggestion

Lord Have Mercy Greg and Izzy, The Vigil Project
New Heart for a New World Trisha Watts & Monica O'Brien

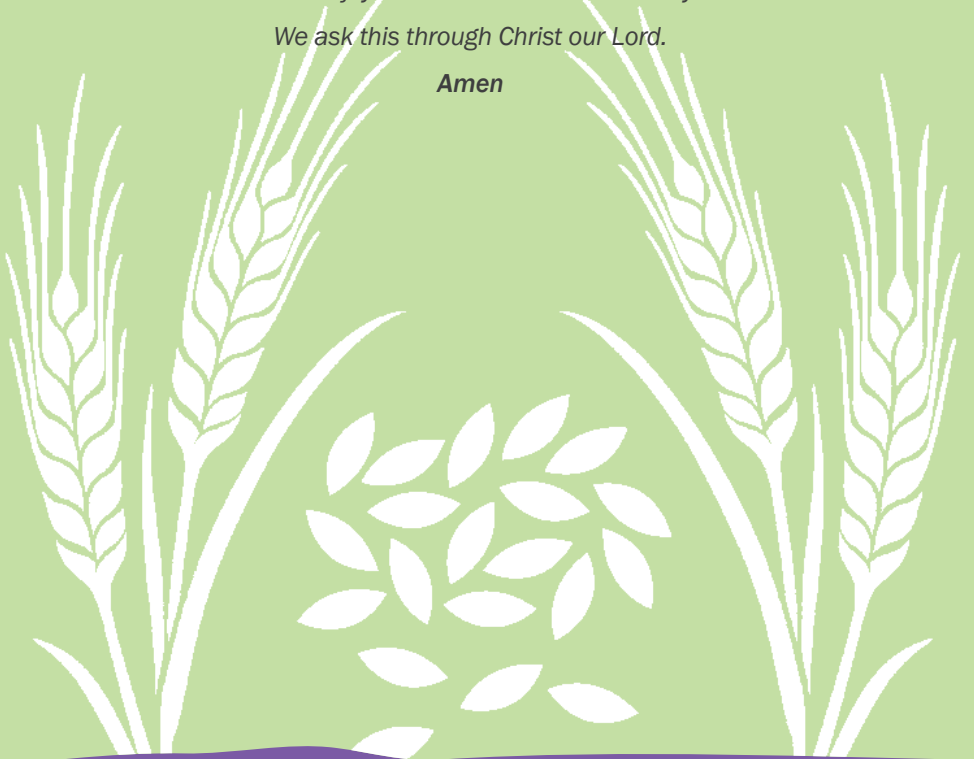
Opening Prayer

*Loving and gracious God,
In this season of Lent, pour out on us your abundant graces of
love and mercy and show us a new way of living the Gospel.*

*Fill the People of God in Broken Bay with the Holy Spirit,
renewing us in our unity, as many parts of one body. Help us to
move towards the joy of Easter as the unified Body of Christ.*

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen



Gospel Reading

John 12:20-30 (NRSV)

Among those who went up to worship at the festival were some Greeks. They came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."

Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

"Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

"Now my soul is troubled. And what should I say - 'Father, save me from this hour'? No, it is for this reason that I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

The crowd standing there heard it and said that it was thunder. Others said, "Angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not for mine. Now is the judgement of this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death he was to die.

Gospel Reflection

By Fr Alex Peter MSFS

"And He was heard because of his Obedience".

*Coming of Jesus' Hour:
Unveiling of Jesus' Purpose.*

Coming of Jesus' Hour is the culmination of Jesus' earthly mission and the unfolding of God's redemptive plan. This begins with a group of Greeks approaching Philip with a simple yet profound request: "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." This seemingly straightforward plea carries a deeper meaning and a turning point in Jesus' ministry. The arrival of these gentiles represents the widening embrace of salvation, foretelling the hour when Jesus would draw all people to Himself.

Jesus responds to the Greeks' request with a thoughtful acknowledgment that the hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. This "hour" is a recurring theme in the Gospel of John, symbolising the appointed time when Jesus would fulfill His ultimate purpose through His sacrificial death on the cross. The symbol of a grain of wheat falling to the ground and dying summarises the transformative power of this approaching hour, foreshadowing the abundant life that would spring forth through Christ's self-sacrifice.

As the hour approaches, Jesus grapples with the weight of His approaching suffering. His soul is troubled, yet He

Gospel Reflection continued.

willingly submits to God's plan: "And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour." This resonates with the Old Testament prophetic imagery of the suffering servant in Is 53, emphasising Jesus' voluntary embrace of the redemptive path laid out for Him. The anticipation of the cross becomes even more emotional as Jesus speaks of the lifting up of the Son of Man. This lifting up, both on the cross and through the subsequent resurrection, signifies the ultimate triumph over sin and death. Jesus draws a parallel to Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness stressing that, just as the serpent lifted up brought healing, so too would the lifted-up Son of Man bring salvation to all who believe.

Sacrificial Obedience of Christ and the Reward for his Obedience

Jesus differed from the Patriarchs, Kings, and prophets in his attitude of obedience to God. In Jn 4:34, He explicitly states, "My food is to do the will of God." Unlike us who eat food to gain strength for our work, Jesus found nourishment in fulfilling God's will. While we rely on physical nourishment to perform our tasks, Jesus derived his strength from obeying his Father. He proved exceptional obedience to God's commandments, particularly the



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profound directive to embrace death on the cross for the salvation of humanity. Jesus discovered his strength and fulfillment in carrying out God's will and he remained obedient even unto death.

Philippians 2:7-11 beautifully captures the gift bestowed upon Jesus for his obedience. It portrays Christ's self-emptying as he took on human form, humbly submitting to the Father's will. This passage reveals the exaltation that follows his obedience. "Therefore, God has highly exalted him, and gave him the name that outshines all other names. So that at the name of Jesus all knees should bend in heaven and on earth and under earth and all tongues proclaim that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the Father."

Is it not true that the name of Jesus is proclaimed everywhere? Is it not true that our knees bend when we hear the name of Jesus? Is it not true that all our tongues confess the name of Jesus? Jesus served God in obedience, and God highly exalted him. And this reward is not only for Jesus but for all those who obey Him. We have a beautiful Saint, Mary MacKillop, who served God in obedience, and God honoured her.

We are invited to follow the example of Jesus' obedience. In doing so, we are to confront the hours of hardships

Personal Story

Fr Chima Ofar

and challenges that might arise, including physical illness, problems in our families, and discouragement. Our human tendency is to cling to and preserve the status quo, to lead a no-risk existence, to be unwilling to change, and to resist welcoming new initiatives. We may also be hesitant to die to self. In these situations, let us seek Jesus, like the Greeks, and follow the request of the Greek: Jesus, I want to speak to you. Leave everything in God's hands and practise utter surrender. Allow Him to take control of our lives. Remember that obedience to God's commandments brings us closer to Jesus. There are no shortcuts.

Guided Reflection

1. *Our first parents lost their friendship with God due to their disobedience. What can we learn from their mistake?*
2. *Being obedient begins with obeying our parents, elders and the teachings of the Church. What holds us back from being obedient?*
3. *Evaluate yourself; how many times have you disobeyed the Ten Commandments? Be true to yourself.*

**Take time to Read Pro 13:13;
Pro 16:20; Pro 19:16!**

“Let nothing disturb you; let nothing frighten you; all things are passing; God is unchanging. With patience, all is possible; nothing is lacking for those who have God. God alone is sufficient.”

This prayer, attributed to St. Teresa of Avila, etched in the depths of my soul during my seminary years in Banyo. I knew the prayer off by heart. I could articulate its theological meaning. However, what the prayer is asking of me unfolded only with time and ministerial experience.

Embarking on my ordained path, transitioning from parish to parish, ministry to ministry, this prayer transformed from mere words to a guiding beacon, illuminating my vocational journey. I recall, as a newly ordained deacon, visiting a parish where the stark contrast of searing summers and piercing winters mirrored my apprehension about serving in that region. Ironically, it was there, in the very place I wished to avoid, that my first priestly assignment began. There, in the heart of what I once resisted, I encountered a wellspring of nurturing and life-affirming experiences. These encounters were not merely episodes of joy and growth but crucibles forging my readiness for further pastoral endeavours. I am fully convinced that God always equips us in ways that enable us to do life with God.



Closing Prayer

*Loving God, I give thanks for Your word today.
Allow it to shape my life; and enliven my efforts to put it into practice.*

*Bless my Lenten journey so that with Your help,
I may be able to turn to You with a change of heart that opens
up new pathways of prayer and friendship.*

*Give me the grace and wisdom to recognise Jesus as my light and
my life; and draw me more genuinely into unity with Your people, the
Church, so that we may all be united in Your mission.*

Amen

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Music Suggestion

No Words The Vigil Project
Were You There Mahalia Jackson

Opening Prayer

*Loving and gracious God,
Here I am, participating in the journey of Jesus to the Cross.*

I walk alongside as best I can, watching the events unfold, and feeling the emotions of all involved – some in distress, others in ridicule.

*I recognise these same elements from my own life.
For the moments in my life where I have fallen, I ask for the perseverance to get back up; for the moments where I've been ridiculed for my faith, I ask for the courage to stand firm; for the times when I've run from the presence of Jesus, I ask for the humility to return; for the times when I've experienced pain and loss, I ask for a renewed conviction of the Good News that offers us love and life.*

*As I reflect on your word today, may your Holy Spirit reveal to me the saving power of the life, death and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ.
May my relationship with Him be renewed; my trust in Him deepened; and my joy increased as I choose to participate in His Mission every day.*

Amen



Gospel Reading

Mark 15:1-39 (NRSV)

As soon as it was morning, the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. They bound Jesus, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate. Pilate asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" He answered him, "You say so." Then the chief priests accused him of many things. Pilate asked him again, "Have you no answer? See how many charges they bring against you." But Jesus made no further reply, so that Pilate was amazed.

Now at the festival he used to release a prisoner for them, anyone for whom they asked. Now a man called Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection. So the crowd came and began to ask Pilate to do for them according to his custom. Then he answered them, "Do you want me to release for you the King of the Jews?" For he realized that it was out of jealousy that the chief priests had handed him over.

But the chief priests stirred up the crowd to have him release Barabbas for them instead. Pilate spoke to them again, "Then what do you wish me to do with the man you call the King of the Jews?" They shouted back, "Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Why, what evil has he done?" But they shouted all the more, "Crucify him!" So Pilate, wishing to satisfy the crowd, released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified.

Then the soldiers led him into the courtyard of the palace (that is, the governor's headquarters); and they called together the whole cohort. And they clothed him in a purple cloak; and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on him. And they began saluting him, "Hail, King of the Jews!" They struck his head with a reed, spat upon him, and knelt down in homage to him. After mocking him, they stripped him of the purple cloak and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him out to crucify him.

They compelled a passer-by, who was coming in from the country, to carry his cross; it was Simon of Cyrene, the father of Alexander and Rufus. Then they brought Jesus to the place called Golgotha (which means the place of a skull). And they offered him wine mixed with myrrh; but he did not take it. And they crucified him, and divided his clothes among them, casting lots to decide what each should take.

It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified him. The inscription of the charge against him read, "The King of the Jews." And with him they crucified two bandits, one on his right and one on his left. Those who passed by derided him, shaking their heads and saying, "Aha! You would destroy the temple and build it in three days; save yourself, and come down from the cross!" In the same way the chief priests, along with the

Gospel Reading continued.

scribes, were also mocking him among themselves and saying, "He saved others; he cannot save himself. Let the Messiah, the King of Israel, come down from the cross now, so that we may see and believe." Those who were crucified with him also taunted him. When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. All may kneel for a period of silence. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

Gospel Reflection

By Fr Biju Jose OSH

True Disciples

In this Gospel passage, we are dealing with the second part of the passion narrative that describes the trial before Pilate, the condemnation, mocking by the soldiers, way of the cross, crucifixion and death.

The whole narrative is centered on the question: who is Jesus? Various responses and reactions are presented. It will be helpful to see the various actors of this drama and each one's role. Jesus is the central character, but he is very silent and passive. Only very few words are uttered; he does not take any initiative. He is acted upon. Before Pilate he admits that he is the King of the Jews. On the cross he apparently laments as if in despair and dies with a loud cry. It must be noted that in the original text it is not a cry or lament, but giving out loud voice, that is presented



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as the shout of victory. Religious leaders: They take the initiative in the event. They accuse Jesus before the judges, and force him to condemn Jesus to death, due to jealousy. The People: Manipulated by their leaders, they shout for the release of Barabbas, the Zealot and to condemn Jesus to crucifixion. Pilate: Though he recognises that Jesus is innocent, to please the people and their leaders, he pronounces the death sentence.

Soldiers: They insult, mock, and torture Jesus, making him wear a red robe and a crown of thorns. They salute him as the King of the Jews as a mockery, not realizing that they were proclaiming the truth. Simon the Cyrene: A stranger who was passing by, but was forced to carry the cross, and thus becomes some help to Jesus. Women at the foot of the cross: They are the only ones who stand with Jesus, while all the male disciples fled at the moment of the arrest. The Centurion: The one, who was responsible for the crucifixion, now becomes the one true disciple who confesses Jesus as the Son of God.

Two details of the centurion need to be noted:

1. He stood facing Jesus and
2. He saw how he died.

It is not any cosmic signs such as solar eclipse and earthquake, but the way Jesus died that forced the centurion to make the confession. Usually, people die on the cross out of suffocation. They would barely be able to breath. Now this loud voice is proof that this is not just a man, but God Himself.

Jesus had chosen the twelve to be with him and to be sent out as witnesses, Mk 3:14, but at the decisive moment they all fled. One betrayed him, another renounced him and all of them ran away. It was a total failure. Where the apostles failed, a pagan centurion succeeded in recognising Jesus as the Son of God and standing with him. One must stand at the foot of the cross, see how Jesus dies and still believe that he is the Son of God.

It is easy to accept and follow a leader who is triumphant, but not the one who is rejected, persecuted, and murdered. Unless one is ready to carry the cross and follow Jesus, one will not be able to be a true disciple. The Son of God has become the suffering Son of Man, and it was by the death on the cross that He revealed His true identity. Those who seek only wonders and miracles do not really understand who Jesus is. That

Gospel Reflection continued.

is what happened to the twelve. But Simon the Cyrene, the women disciples at the foot of the cross and above all the Roman Centurion are models of true discipleship, also for us.

Guided Reflection

1. *What character/s in the passion narrative do you relate to and why?*
2. *What is the meaning of Christ's death on the cross for you?*
3. *What does this passage teach you about being a follower of Jesus?*
4. *Though Pilate recognises that Jesus is innocent, to please the people and their leaders, he pronounces the death sentence. When someone tries to please the people, justice is denied.*

Personal Story

Maisie Tenev

Who doesn't like a good love story? As a child, it started with the fairytales of Prince Charming and finding 'true love'. Growing up, I read novels by Jane Austen and became obsessed with 'Pride and Prejudice', particularly with the characters of Lizzy and Mr Darcy. My sister and I delighted in many Rom-com movies as young adults and I must admit, even to this day, I love those 'movie moments' where you lose yourself when the great declaration of love occurs. Throughout this Lenten season, I am reminded that while the stereotypical romantic comedies like 'Sleepless in Seattle' and 'Love, Actually' provide momentary distraction and happiness, this week's Gospel reading is the THE ultimate love story.

When I reflect on the passion and death of Jesus, I am sometimes overwhelmed with so much grief and guilt because of the pain and torture he had to endure. My sin put Him on the cross and despite my weaknesses and failures, He paid the debt and made the ultimate sacrifice that I could never repay. The people who so lovingly welcomed Him with palms, were the same people who shouted, "Crucify him!" Jesus knew what was to happen, and it wasn't the three nails that kept Him on the cross, it was love.



Closing Prayer

*Loving God, I give thanks for Your word today.
Allow it to shape my life; and enliven my efforts to put it into practice.*

*Bless my Lenten journey so that with Your help,
I may be able to turn to You with a change of heart that opens
up new pathways of prayer and friendship.*

*Give me the grace and wisdom to recognise Jesus as my light and
my life; and draw me more genuinely into unity with Your people, the
Church, so that we may all be united in Your mission.*

Amen



nihil obstat:
Fr John Hill
Diocesan Censor
5 February 2024

imprimatur:
✠ Anthony Randazzo
Bishop of Broken Bay
6 February 2024

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