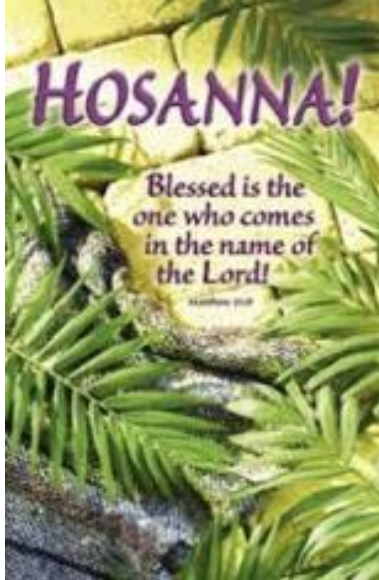


HORNSBY CATHEDRAL PARISH

Letter from Fr Peter de Souza
5 April 2020



My dear Parishioners,

Greetings! to each of you and your families.

The Church celebrates this weekend as both Palm Sunday and Passion Sunday. This is the time of year we stop to remember and relive the events which brought about our redemption and salvation. What we commemorate and relive during this week is not just Jesus' dying and rising, but our own dying and rising in Him, which will result in our healing, reconciliation and redemption.

Following from the same, we will enter into Holy Week liturgies, which are an invitation to deepen our relationship with God, increase our faith and strengthen our lives as disciples of Jesus.

On Holy Thursday, we celebrate three anniversaries:

- 1) The anniversary of the Institution of the Eucharist,
- 2) The anniversary of the Institution of the Ministerial Priesthood in order to perpetuate and celebrate the Eucharist, convey God's forgiveness to repentant sinners, and preach the Good News of salvation,
- 3) The anniversary of Jesus' promulgation of His new commandment of love: "Love one another as I have loved you" (Jn 13:34).

On Good Friday, we reflect on God's solidarity with suffering humanity demonstrated. Although God could have saved humanity in any number of ways, He allowed a cruel execution for His only Son to show His solidarity with suffering humanity. This gift enables us to find meaning for our own sufferings in the sufferings of Christ. Jesus' announcement, "It is finished" is clear and simple. Jesus had completed his task of reconciling sinful humanity with God, thus enabling us to accept our eternal salvation.

Easter celebrates

- 1) The Resurrection of Christ is the basis of our Christian Faith. St. Paul writes: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain; and your Faith is in vain." (1 Cor 15:14)
- 2) Easter is the promise of our own resurrection. Jesus assured Martha at the tomb of Lazarus: "I am the Resurrection and the life; whoever believes in Me will live even though he dies." (Jn 11:25-26)
- 3) Easter is a feast which gives us hope and encouragement in this world of pain, sorrows and tears. It reminds us that life is worth living.

In the coming days, we have a lot to reflect, meditate and pray upon. May I request you to please spend a few moments gathered in the same.

Fr Vincent Trung Nguyen joined the Hornsby Cathedral Parish team on the 17 May 2016. His Ministry was God's special gift to each of us. Sadly his term comes to an end, and he moves on to leafy shores. On behalf of each of you, I extend your personal gratitude to Fr Vincent. His Person, Ministry and his gift of Vocation has been a great blessing to us, and communities around us. As he moves on as a Chaplain to Royal North Shore Hospital, we wish him well, and many special blessings. When we gather once again as a community, we will be able to celebrate his gift to us. In the words of Bishop Anthony, "I would like to take this opportunity, to thank Fr Vincent for his marvellous work and Pastoral Ministry at the Cathedral. I am personally grateful for his assistance as the Master of Ceremonies."

Fr Biju Mathew Koikattil is just new to the country and will be joining us after Easter. Please make him feel welcome among us, and I ask you to offer him your welcome and support too.

As COVID-19, continues to be a part of our new long-term normal, we have been faced with new challenges in our day-to-day situation; new ways of thinking, learning, meeting and praying, and you could add on to the list all this *is being distant yet connected*.

In the past week, I had the opportunity to touch base with and say a big thank you to St Vincent de Paul Societies of our Parish and the Hornsby Circle, for meeting various needs, in a new and updated fashion, probably it has been a challenge to many of our members too. To many of our Parishioners who have put up their hands to help and support various people, thank you. I do encourage you to contact our local Presidents of the SVdP Society to seek the best advice and help you can give and get. Please be aware, that we are good citizens, and our civic duty calls us to be "good".

I would also like to say a big thank you to all those who are financially contributing to Parish Life, even as each of you come to terms with our own struggles, Your generosity is tremendous, and while I thank you, I assure you all of my prayers too.

Palm Sunday and Passion Sunday liturgies combine contrasting moments, one of glory, the other of suffering: the royal welcome of Jesus in Jerusalem and the drama of the trial, culminating in crucifixion, death and burial for the Christ.

The prayer for blessings of the Palms, may help us on our journey:

Increase the faith of those who place their hope in you, O God, and graciously hear the prayers of those who call on you, that we, who today hold high these branches to hail Christ in his triumph, may bear fruit for you by good works accomplished in him, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. (*The New Roman Missal*)

With prayerful wishes during this time,
Fr Peter de Souza

Notices for this weekend:

- ❖ **Sacrament of Reconciliation** will be offered to our people, even though it is ***not possible to celebrate this Sacrament in the closed church***. Also note the official government regulation for physical distancing is important.
- ❖ **Sacrament of Anointing** is available on request, and in emergency, please call our emergency number. ***Please make sure if your family member is in the Hospital or Nursing Home, it should go through the hospital or nursing home authorities.***
- ❖ **Daily Mass at the Cathedral is now live streamed on YouTube. The link can be found on the parish website: www.bbcatholic.org.au/hornsby**
Prayer Resources for Catholics at home is available on the Diocesan website: www.bbcatholic.org.au/news-events/covid-19/prayer-resources
- ❖ **Our Congratulations and blessings to Frank and Jill Bradley on their 60th Wedding Anniversary**, may the goodness of the Lord surround you and your family, and thank you for what you generously do for our community. It is a special blessing for us all.
- ❖ **Please remember in your prayers**, those who are sick, and have died recently and whose anniversaries occur during this time. May I request you to keep all those who are struck with the virus, those tested positive and those in isolation in your special prayers.
- ❖ We are investigating on plans for our Sacramental programme to continue. There are many of you who have enrolled for the upcoming Sacrament of Confirmation already. In the coming days, we will be able give you some clarity on the same. Please watch out for the news items.
- ❖ There are a few printed bulletins available, outside both our Churches, by Friday afternoon; you are welcome to have the same. In the same token, if you wish to receive our e-bulletin, could you please let the office know. Thanks again for the same.
- ❖ Daylight saving will end this weekend at 3am on Sunday 5th April. Clocks go back one hour.
- ❖ Those who still have the Project Compassion envelopes and wish to contribute, please call Caritas on 1800 024 413, or visit their website to donate online. www.caritas.org.au

Holy Week Services from the Cathedral:

Live streamed on YouTube – link available via the parish website.

Palm Sunday: 8.00am

Holy Thursday: 7.30pm

Good Friday: 10.00am Stations of the Cross

3.00pm Passion of Our Lord

Easter Vigil: 7.00pm

- ❖ May I request that you stay tuned with us during the Holy Week Services. Your family Church is a continuation of our joint celebrations “gathering of families”, ‘The Body of Christ’.
- ❖ **If a Priest is needed** in a matter of emergency, after hours or on the weekend, please call 0458 351 843.