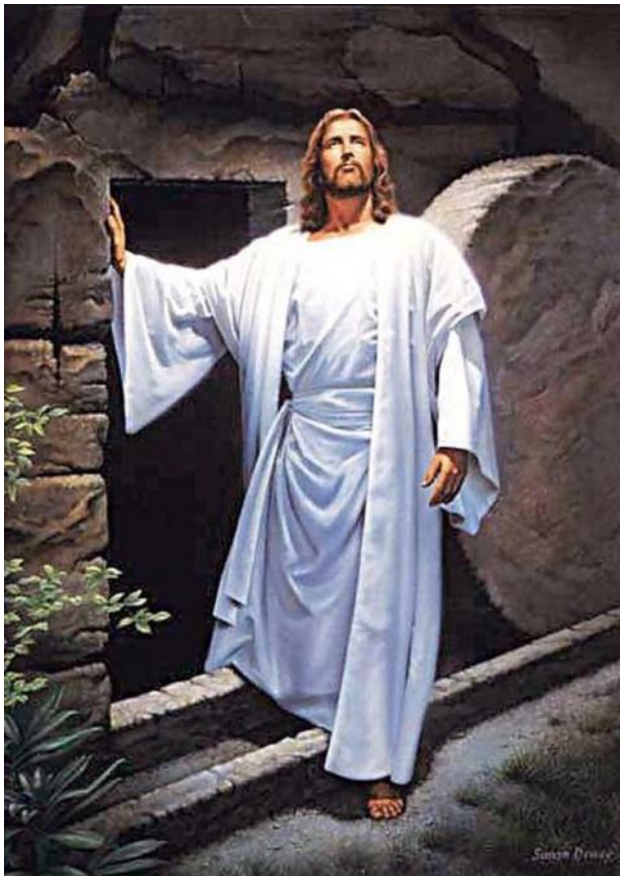


Christ is Risen! He is with us!



With all the shut downs the feast of Easter brings a strange feeling. The usual celebrations are not possible. You may be missing the BBQs with your friends, holiday meetings with your family, grandparents and grandchildren and the like. For that we will have to wait till this pandemic is over. What are most cherished now are the care for the sick and the needy and quality time with the immediate family. Love and its expression are at the heart of everyone much more than the fear of the pandemic. The disaster of COVID19 is helping humanity to transcend the perishable aspects of life and focus on the force that drives humans, love. In the death and resurrection of Jesus, the love of God is manifested in a very powerful way. Easter joy is the celebration of the love of God.

In the Holy Week, we meditated on the bodily destruction of Jesus. With the pain of this loss, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb of Jesus only to find it empty. Losing even the dead body of Jesus was too much for her. She wept. Such was her love for Jesus. But soon she realised that Jesus was not lost. He was risen. Now the risen Christ lovingly called her by name. John uses this bond of love to speak about the resurrection of Christ. No one ever saw the body of Christ coming out of the tomb. But all who proclaimed the resurrection of Christ had a loving bond with Jesus. Those who condemned Jesus to death could kill his body, but not the love-bond of the disciples with Jesus. Mary Magdalene and other disciples who continue to experience the loving bond with Jesus after his resurrection became a new creation. They became powerful generators of love, creating mighty fellowship that could transcend all odds. As a disciple of Christ you too are able to generate the power of love needed to weave a beautiful fellowship. The fellowship you weave with your love is what is needed in this time gloom. Live it and celebrate it in Christ risen.



In the narration of Luke also there is no mention of anyone witnessing the body of Jesus coming out of the tomb. He tells the story of two people travelling from Jerusalem to their village Emmaus and towards darkness. These people were very learned and could discuss any part of the scripture. They were also fully aware of the life and death of Jesus. But they were still gloomy. Then the magic happened. Jesus walked with them. They invited Jesus into their own home. When these two travellers showed their love for Jesus, he in turn manifested his love for them by breaking bread with them. That became a bond of love between them. This loving bond brought so much light into their lives that now they are radiating hope and joy. With that they returned to Jerusalem to create fellowship with other disciples.

Easter is the revelation of God's immense love. If you encounter the resurrected Christ, you will realise that God has gifted you the greatest force, love and charity, which can conquer everything in the world including this pandemic. May your life shine the light of Easter for the world. Alleluia, Christ is risen!

First Reading

Gen 1:1 – 2:2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was a formless void, there was darkness over the deep, and God's spirit hovered over the water.

God said, 'Let there be light', and there was light. God saw that light was good, and God divided light from darkness. God called light 'day', and darkness he called 'night'. Evening came and morning came: the first day.

God said, 'Let there be a vault in the waters to divide the waters in two.' And so it was. God made the vault, and it divided the waters above the vault from the waters under the vault. God called the vault 'heaven'. Evening came and morning came: the second day.

God said, 'Let the waters under heaven come together into a single mass, and let dry land appear.' And so it was. God called the dry land 'earth' and the mass of waters 'seas', and God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let the earth produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruit with their seed inside, on the earth.' And so it was. The earth produced vegetation: plants bearing seed in their several kinds, and trees bearing fruit with their seed inside in their several kinds. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the third day.

God said, 'Let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years. Let them be lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth.' And so it was. God made the two great lights: the greater light to govern the day, the smaller light to govern the night, and the stars. God set them in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, to govern the day and the night and to divide light from darkness. God saw that it was good. Evening came and morning came: the fourth day.

God said, 'Let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven.' And so it was. God created great sea-serpents and every kind of living creature with which the waters teem, and every kind of winged creature. God saw that it was good. God blessed them, saying 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the waters of the seas; and let the birds multiply upon the earth.' Evening came and morning came: the fifth day.

God said, 'Let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles, and every kind of wild

beast.' And so it was. God made every kind of wild beast, every kind of cattle, and every kind of land reptile. God saw that it was good.

God said, 'Let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth.'

God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth.' God said, 'See, I give you all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth, and all the trees with seed-bearing fruit; this shall be your food. To all wild beasts, all birds of heaven and all living reptiles on the earth I give all the foliage of plants for food.' And so it was. God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good. Evening came and morning came: the sixth day.

Thus heaven and earth were completed with all their array. On the seventh day God completed the work he had been doing. He rested on the seventh day after all the work he had been doing.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 103:1-2. 5-6. 10. 12-14. 24. 35. R. see v.30

R. Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth .

Bless the Lord, my soul! Lord God, how great you are, clothed in majesty and glory, wrapped in light as in a robe. **R**

You founded the earth on its base, to stand firm from age to age. You wrapped it with the ocean like a cloak: the waters stood higher than the mountains. **R**

You make springs gush forth in the valleys: they flow in between the hills. On their banks dwell the birds of heaven; from the branches they sing their song. **R**

From your dwelling you water the hills; earth drinks its fill of your gift. You make the grass grow for the cattle and the plants to serve man's needs. **R**

How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you have made them all. The earth is full of your riches. Bless the Lord, my soul! **R**

Second Reading

Ex 14:15 - 15:1

The Lord said to Moses, ‘Why do you cry to me so? Tell the sons of Israel to march on. For yourself, raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and part it for the sons of Israel to walk through the sea on dry ground. I for my part will make the heart of the Egyptians so stubborn that they will follow them. So shall I win myself glory at the expense of Pharaoh, of all his army, his chariots, his horsemen. And when I have won glory for myself, at the expense of Pharaoh and his chariots and his army, the Egyptians will learn that I am the Lord.’ Then the angel of the Lord, who marched at the front of the army of Israel, changed station and moved to their rear. The pillar of cloud changed station from the front to the rear of them, and remained there. It came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. The cloud was dark, and the night passed without the armies drawing any closer the whole night long. Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove back the sea with a strong easterly wind all night, and he made dry land of the sea. The waters parted and the sons of Israel went on dry ground right into the sea, walls of water to right and to left of them. The Egyptians gave chase: after them they went, right into the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his own horsemen. In the morning watch, the Lord looked down on the army of the Egyptians from the pillar of fire and cloud, and threw the army into confusion. He so clogged their chariot wheels that they could scarcely make headway. ‘Let us flee from the Israelites,’ the Egyptians cried ‘the Lord is fighting for them against the Egyptians!’ ‘Stretch out your hand over the sea,’ the Lord said to Moses ‘that the waters may flow back on the Egyptians and their chariots and their horsemen.’ Moses stretched out his hand over the sea and, as day broke, the sea returned to its bed. The fleeing Egyptians marched right into it, and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the very middle of the sea. The returning waters overwhelmed the chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh’s whole army, which had followed the Israelites into the sea; not a single one of them was left. But the sons of Israel had marched through the sea on dry ground, walls of water to right and to left of them. That day, the Lord rescued Israel from the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians lying dead on the shore. Israel witnessed the great act that the Lord had performed against the Egyptians, and the people venerated the Lord; they put their faith in the Lord and in Moses, his servant.

It was then that Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song in honour of the Lord:

Responsorial Psalm

Ex 15:1-6. 17-18. R. v.1

R. Let us sing to the Lord; he has covered himself in glory.

I will sing to the Lord, glorious his triumph! Horse and rider he has thrown into the sea! The Lord is my strength, my song, my salvation. This is my God and I extol him, my father’s God and I give him praise. **R**

The Lord is a warrior! The Lord is his name. The chariots of Pharaoh he hurled into the sea, the flower of his army is drowned in the sea. The deeps hide them; they sank like a stone. **R**

Your right hand, Lord, glorious in its power, your right hand, Lord, has shattered the enemy. In the greatness of your glory you crushed the foe. **R**

You will lead your people and plant them on your mountain, the place, O Lord, where you have made your home, the sanctuary, Lord, which your hands have made. The Lord will reign for ever and ever. **R**

Third Reading

Is 55:1-11

Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;

though you have no money, come!

Buy corn without money, and eat,

and, at no cost, wine and milk.

Why spend money on what is not bread,

your wages on what fails to satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and you will have good

things to eat

and rich food to enjoy.

Pay attention, come to me;

listen, and your soul will live.

With you I will make an everlasting covenant out of the favours promised to David.

See, I have made of you a witness to the peoples, a leader and a master of the nations.

See, you will summon a nation you never knew, those unknown will come hurrying to you,

for the sake of the Lord your God,

of the Holy One of Israel who will glorify you.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,

call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,

the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;

for my thoughts are not your thoughts,

my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

Yes, as the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.

Responsorial Psalm

Is 12:2-6 R. v.3

R. You will draw water joyfully from the springs of salvation.

Truly God is my salvation, I trust, I shall not fear.
For the Lord is my strength, my song, he became my saviour. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. **R**

Give thanks to the Lord, give praise to his name!
Make his mighty deeds known to the peoples,
declare the greatness of his name. **R**

Sing a psalm to the Lord for he has done glorious deeds, make them known to all the earth! People of Zion, sing and shout for joy for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel. **R**

Fourth Reading

Ez 36:16-28

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: 'Son of man, the members of the House of Israel used to live in their own land, but they defiled it by their conduct and actions. I then discharged my fury at them because of the blood they shed in their land and the idols with which they defiled it. I scattered them among the nations and dispersed them in foreign countries. I sentenced them as their conduct and actions deserved. And now they have profaned my holy name among the nations where they have gone, so that people say of them, "These are the people of the Lord; they have been exiled from his land." But I have been concerned about my holy name, which the House of Israel has profaned among the nations where they have gone. And so, say to the House of Israel, "The Lord says this: I am not doing this for my sake, House of Israel, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I mean to display the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned among them. And the nations will learn that I am the Lord – it is the Lord who speaks – when I display my holiness for your sake before their eyes. Then I am going to take you from among the nations and gather you together from all the foreign countries, and bring you home to your own land. I

shall pour clean water over you and you will be cleansed; I shall cleanse you of all your defilement and all your idols. I shall give you a new heart, and put a new spirit in you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your bodies and give you a heart of flesh instead. I shall put my spirit in you, and make you keep my laws and sincerely respect my observances. You will live in the land which I gave your ancestors. You shall be my people and I will be your God.'"

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 41:3. 5; 42:3. 4. R. Ps 41:2

R. Like a deer that longs for running streams, my soul longs for you, my God.

My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life; when can I enter and see the face of God? This is my God and I extol him, my father's God and I give him praise. **R**

These things will I remember as I pour out my soul: how I would lead the rejoicing crowd into the house of God, amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving, the throng wild with joy. **R**

O send forth your light and your truth; let these be my guide. Let them bring me to your holy mountain to the place where you dwell. **R**

And I will come to the altar of God, the God of my joy. My redeemer, I will thank you on the harp, O God, my God. **R**

Epistle

Rom 6:3-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans
Christ, having been raised from the dead, will never die again.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life. If in union with Christ we have imitated his death, we shall also imitate him in his resurrection. We must realise that our former selves have been crucified with him to destroy this sinful body and to free us from the slavery of sin. When a man dies, of course, he has finished with sin.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel
Mt 28:1-10


After the Sabbath, and towards dawn on the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala and the other Mary went to visit the sepulchre. And all at once there was a violent earthquake, for the angel of the Lord, descending from heaven, came and rolled away the stone and sat on it. His face was like lightning, his robe white as snow. The guards were so shaken, so frightened of him, that they were like dead men. But the angel spoke; and he said to the women, "There is no need for you to be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said he would. Come and see the place where he lay, then go quickly and tell his disciples, "He has risen from the dead and now he is going before you to Galilee; it is there you will see him."

Now I have told you.' Filled with awe and great joy the women came quickly away from the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.

And there, coming to meet them, was Jesus. 'Greetings,' he said. And the women came up to him and, falling down before him, clasped his feet. Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers that they must leave for Galilee; they will see me there.'

Communion Antiphon
1 Cor 5:7-8

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed; therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia.



Christ is risen!

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life.

He who believes in me will live,

even though he dies;

and whoever lives and believes in

me will never die."

Have a blessed Easter!

Entrance Antiphon

Cf. Ps 138:18,5-6

I have risen, and I am with you still, alleluia. You have laid your hand upon me, alleluia. Too wonderful for me, this knowledge, alleluia, alleluia.

First Reading

Acts 10:34. 37-43

Peter addressed Cornelius and his household: ‘You must have heard about the recent happenings in Judaea; about Jesus of Nazareth and how he began in Galilee, after John had been preaching baptism. God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him, Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil. Now I, and those with me, can witness to everything he did throughout the countryside of Judaea and in Jerusalem itself: and also to the fact that they killed him by hanging him on a tree, yet three days afterwards God raised him to life and allowed him to be seen, not by the whole people but only by certain witnesses God had chosen beforehand. Now we are those witnesses – we have eaten and drunk with him after his resurrection from the dead – and he has ordered us to proclaim this to his people and to tell them that God has appointed him to judge everyone, alive or dead. It is to him that all the prophets bear this witness: that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through his name.’

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 117:1-2. 16-17. 22-23. R. v.24

R. This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, for his love has no end. Let the sons of Israel say: ‘His love has no end.’ **R**

The Lord’s right hand has triumphed; his right hand raised me up. I shall not die, I shall live and recount his deeds. **R**

The stone which the builders rejected has become the corner stone. This is the work of the Lord, a marvel in our eyes. **R**

Second Reading

Col 3:1-4

This is what I received from the Lord, and in turn since you have been brought back to true life with Christ, you must look for the things that are in heaven, where Christ is, sitting at God’s right hand. Let your thoughts be on heavenly things, not on the

things that are on the earth, because you have died, and now the life you have is hidden with Christ in God. But when Christ is revealed – and he is your life – you too will be revealed in all your glory with him.

Sequence

Christians, to the Paschal Victim offer sacrifice and praise. The sheep are ransomed by the Lamb; and Christ, the undefiled, hath sinners to his Father reconciled. Death with life contended: combat strangely ended! Life’s own Champion, slain, yet lives to reign. Tell us, Mary: say what thou didst see upon the way. The tomb the Living did enclose; I saw Christ’s glory as he rose! The angels there attesting; shroud with grave-clothes resting. Christ, my hope, has risen: he goes before you into Galilee. That Christ is truly risen from the dead we know. Victorious king, thy mercy show!

Gospel Acclamation

1 Cor 5:7-8

Alleluia, alleluia!

Christ has become our paschal sacrifice; let us feast with joy in the Lord.

Alleluia!

Gospel

Jn 20:1-9

It was very early on the first day of the week and still dark, when Mary of Magdala came to the tomb. She saw that the stone had been moved away from the tomb and came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved. ‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb’ she said ‘and we don’t know where they have put him.’

So Peter set out with the other disciple to go to the tomb. They ran together, but the other disciple, running faster than Peter, reached the tomb first; he bent down and saw the linen cloths lying on the ground, but did not go in. Simon Peter who was following now came up, went right into the tomb, saw the linen cloths on the ground, and also the cloth that had been over his head; this was not with the linen cloths but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in; he saw and he believed. Till this moment they had failed to understand the teaching of scripture, that he must rise from the dead.

Communion Antiphon

1 Cor 5:7-8

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed, alleluia; therefore let us keep the feast with the unleavened bread of purity and truth, alleluia, alleluia.

REFLECTIONS ON MATTHEW 27:11-54

Scriptural context – Passion Narratives

Towards the end of the 19th Century, the German scholar, Martin Kähler, described the gospels as ‘passion narratives with lengthy introductions’. Over time, this description was more commonly applied to the gospel of Mark, but it is quite true of all four gospels. The passion elements are the climax of each gospel narrative and were probably written first to establish the unique interpretation of each of the gospel communities. The remainder of the gospel was written to ‘set the scene’ for the culmination of the message in the passion. Reading the four accounts of the passion reveal the unique styles and themes of the different gospel writers.

Different View – The Blame Game

This Passion narrative has been used in the past as justification for persecution of Jews. The text has the people of Jerusalem calling out, ‘his blood be on us and on our children!’ This has been interpreted (poorly) as reason to condemn all subsequent generations of Jews for the death of Jesus. However, this gospel was written in the aftermath of the fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple in 70 CE. The gospel writer sought some explanation for this disaster in the story of Jesus’ life and death: it is the children of the crowd at Jesus’ death who suffered in the fall of Jerusalem.

Gospel Focus – Uniquely Matthew

The passion narrative in the gospel of Matthew follows the gospel of Mark very closely. However, unlike in other sections of the gospel the Matthew writer has not just inserted sections from the Mark account. Rather, the material is reworked and given a unique Matthean ‘flavour’. In addition, the Matthew account includes five events that are not found in the Mark account: Judas hanging himself (27:3-10); Pilate's wife's dream (27:19); Pilate's washing his hands (27:24-25); extraordinary events at the time of Jesus' death (27:51b-53); sealing and guarding the tomb (28:62-66).

The Easter praise of Christ

Easter homily by Melito of Sardis (died around 180 AD)

We should understand, beloved, that the paschal mystery is at once old and new, transitory and eternal, corruptible and incorruptible, mortal and immortal. In terms of the Law it is old, in terms of the Word it is new. In its figure it is passing, in its grace it is eternal. It is corruptible in the sacrifice of the lamb, incorruptible in the eternal life of the Lord. It is mortal in his burial in the earth, immortal in his resurrection from the dead.

The Law indeed is old, but the Word is new. The type is transitory, but grace is eternal. The lamb was corruptible, but the Lord is incorruptible. He was slain as a lamb; he rose again as God. He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, yet he was not a sheep. He was silent as a lamb, yet he was not a lamb. The type has passed away; the reality has come. The lamb gives place to God, the sheep gives place to a man, and the man is Christ, who fills the whole of creation. The sacrifice of the lamb, the celebration of the Passover, and the prescriptions of the Law have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Under the old Law, and still more under the new dispensation, everything pointed towards him.

Both the Law and the Word came forth from Zion and Jerusalem, but now the Law has given place to the Word, the old to the new. The commandment has become grace, the type a reality. The lamb has become a Son, the sheep a man, and man, God.

The Lord, though he was God, became man. He suffered for the sake of those who suffer, he was bound for those in bonds, condemned for the guilty, buried for those who lie in the grave; but he rose from the dead, and cried aloud: Who will contend with me? Let him confront me. I have freed the condemned, brought the dead back to life, raised men from their graves. Who has anything to say against me? I, he said, am the Christ; I have destroyed death, triumphed over the enemy, trampled hell underfoot, bound the strong one, and taken men up to the heights of heaven: I am the Christ.

Come, then, all you nations of men, receive forgiveness for the sins that defile you. I am your forgiveness. I am the Passover that brings salvation. I am the lamb who was immolated for you. I am your ransom, your life, your resurrection, your light, I am your salvation and your king. I will bring you to the heights of heaven. With my own right hand I will raise you up, and I will show you the eternal Father.

Parish Donation Page QR Code

Some parishioners were asking about donation to the Parish. You could drop your envelopes in the Parish mailbox as some do. If you would like to organise direct debit, please contact Lea in the Parish Office by emailing info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au. Alternatively, you could use the **SUPPORT US** button found on the top right-hand corner of the Parish Website. You can also scan this QR code with your mobile device and it will direct you to our donation page. Thank you for your continued support.



Live Streaming of Liturgies

We will continue to live stream masses after Easter. Monday to Saturday at 8.00am and Sunday at 10.00am. Visit: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCedFcfdv_ILEHVNmQrpWeVA/videos.



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Covid-19 is affecting all of us. In these challenging times, your kindness and solidarity can make a world of difference to the lives of the most vulnerable. Your support is life saving.

Do you have PC boxes and cash to hand in?

You may drop off your Project Compassion donations into the Parish Office Mailbox at any time.

Did you know that you can go online at lent.caritas.org.au and securely donate with your credit card or you can send a cheque to Caritas Australia, GPO Box 9830, Sydney, NSW 2001.

INTENTIONS for Fr Thomas to include in his Livestreamed Mass

Sick: Sr Tomsy

Recently Deceased: Fr Ray Farrell, Monica Smith

Anniversary: Michael Baptiste, Francisca Natividad

Deceased: Nellie Lim, Fr Mark Spora, Anavea & Pakalesio, Petelo F Sili, Malia Selek, Makalita Pongi

Deceased Members and Friends of: O'Dwyer & Erwin Families, Amores Families

Other Intentions: For all those affected by the Corona Virus. For the intention of the Holy Father.

Contact the Parish Office to include your intentions in the Mass by Fr Thomas.