



ST. MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP PARISH
UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS



6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR B

14 FEBRUARY 2021

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON: Be my protector, O God, a mighty stronghold to save me. For you are my rock, my stronghold! Lead me, guide me, for the sake of your name.

FIRST READING: Leviticus 13:1-2,44-46.

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons.

'The man is leprous: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean." As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart: he must live outside the camp.'

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Happy the man whose offence is forgiven, whose sin is remitted.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10-31, 11:2

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God. Never do anything offensive to anyone – to Jews or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved. Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION: Alleluia, alleluia! A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people. Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL: Mark 1:40:45

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured! And the leprosy left him at once and he

was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON: God so loved the world that he gave his Only-Begotten Son, so that all who believe in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

COMMENTARY:

Paschasius Radbertus (c.785-860)

However great our sinfulness, each one of us can be healed by God every day. We have only to worship him with humility and love, and wherever we are to say with faith: "Lord, if you wish you can make me clean." It is by believing from the heart that we are justified, so we must make our petitions with the utmost confidence, and without the slightest doubt of God's power.

If we pray with a faith springing from love, God's will need be in no doubt. He will be ready and able to save us by an all-powerful command. He immediately answered the leper's request, saying: "I do want to." Indeed, no sooner had the leper begun to pray with faith than the Saviour's hand began to cure him of his leprosy.

This leper is an excellent teacher of the right way to make petitions. He did not doubt the Lord's willingness through disbelief in his compassion, but neither did he take it for granted, for he knew the depths of his own sinfulness. Yet because he acknowledged that the Lord was able to cleanse him if he wished, we praise this declaration of firm faith just as we praise the Lord's mighty power.

For obtaining a favor from God rightly depends as much on having a real living faith as on the exercise of the Creator's power and mercy. If faith is weak it must be strengthened, for only then will it

succeed in obtaining health of body or soul.

The Apostle's words, "purifying their hearts by faith" referred, surely, to strong faith like this. And so, if the hearts of believers are purified by faith, we must give thought to this virtue of faith, for, as the Apostle says, "Anyone who doubts is like a wave in the sea."

A faith shown to be living by its love, steadfast by its perseverance, patient by its endurance of delay, humble by its confession, strong by its confidence, reverent by its way of presenting petitions, and discerning with regard to their content—such a faith may be certain that in every place it will hear the Lord saying: "I do want to."

...All that the sinner's true confession maintained with faith, love and power immediately conferred. And in case the gravity of his sins should make anyone despair, another Evangelist says this man who was cured had been completely covered with leprosy.

"For all have sinned and forfeited the glory of God." Since, as we rightly believe, God's power is operative everywhere, we ought to believe the same of his will, "for his will is that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth."

Commentary on Matthew's Gospel V, 8.

REFLECTION ON THE READINGS by Fr John:

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ, Jesus' healing of the man with leprosy went beyond the physical miracle - He healed him of all that divided the man from his fellow human beings. And this experience enabled the man to proclaim the Good News to all. There are many in our world who continue to suffer spiritual illness, and others who are estranged from the Christian community, even people who do not know the love of God or who don't want to know God. All of these suffer from a kind of spiritual leprosy, and sometimes an exclusion from their brothers and sisters in the Lord. We need to examine our attitudes and actions, both individually and as Church - and see whether or not we are imitating the Master and welcoming everyone: even the contemporary 'prostitutes' and 'tax collectors' of our world. How do we WELCOME those whom we may not understand and those whom we may feel do not 'measure up'? How do we make those who suffer from spiritual or social leprosy today feel WELCOME in our community and in our lives? "If you want to, you can cure me". 'Of course I want to: be cured!'"

NOTES FROM FR JOHN:

***ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES (17 Feb): 8:30am Wentworth Falls, 10:00am Blackheath, 12 Midday Katoomba, 6:30pm Blackheath. Please remember that this is a Day of Fast and Abstinence for those aged between 18-60.

***Although we no longer HAVE to wear masks at Mass, I still think it is a wise thing to do. I intend to continue to wear a mask while giving out Communion. After all, the 2 square metre rule allows more people into our churches, but sometimes this conflicts with the 1.5m social distancing rule. We need to do our best to remain safe.

PARISH OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK: Wednesday 10am to 3pm. Closed Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

LENTEN GROUPS:

TUESDAYS in St Canice's Hall Commencing 16/2

Time: 9:30-11am

Group facilitator: Pam Le Breton

WEDNESDAYS commencing 17/2

Afternoon group 2pm

Evening group 7:30pm

Location: 3 Easter Street Leura

Groups facilitator: Barbara Davidson

Each participant will receive a Lenten Programme book. Suggested donation \$5 per book to help cover costs. Lenten group sign up sheets will appear beginning Saturday Vigil 13th February at the back of the church for people to join their preferred Lenten group. If you prefer to have the Lenten programme book for personal prayer and reflection during Lent you are welcome to request them from the parish office once groups have been finalised.

SUNDAY MASS: Due to an easing of covid-19 restrictions you no longer need to book to come to Sunday Mass. You will still, however, need to sign on when you arrive and observe social distancing requirements. Attendance is on a first come first served basis. Masks are recommended but no longer required.

ALTAR SERVERS: If you would like to serve contact Hugh Jones on 0402 904 681.

PERPETUAL ADORATION CHAPEL: If you are a parishioner (or visitor) who would like a rostered holy hour each week or to be on the temporary fill in list, please contact Jacquie on 0405 600 155 to register your details, many thanks!

PLANNED GIVING: Would the owners of Envelope numbers 38, 41 and 53 kindly contact the Parish office immediately to submit your contact details. Your contributions are unable to be recorded until we have this information.

ST CANICE'S SCHOOL NEWS: With our numbers doubling in Kinder from 2020-2021 we don't want any families to miss out on enrolling their child into our fabulous St Canice's Mountains School. Please contact the school for information about our school or to arrange a tour.

ROSARY AND OTHER DEVOTIONS: Ad Jesum per Mariam.

SAT and SUN: 4:10pm, Leura.

MON: after 8:30am Mass, Katoomba.

TUE: 4:30pm Divine Mercy, Rosary and Exposition, Leura.

WED: after 8:30am Mass, Wentworth Falls.

THU: after 8:30am Mass, Leura.

FRI: 11:30am before Mass, Katoomba.

FRI: 5pm Divine Mercy Hour, Leura.

SAT: 8:30am before Mass and also after Benediction following Mass, Katoomba.

ADORATION CHAPEL: 9am Monday - 9am Saturday, Katoomba.

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

You need to book Sunday

Leura 5pm (Saturday)

Wentworth Falls 8am

Katoomba 10am

Leura 5pm

*10am on public holidays

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

MON: 8:30am* Katoomba

TUE: 5:15pm Leura

WED: 8:30am W-Falls

THU: 8:30am Leura

FRI: 12pm Katoomba

SAT: 9am Katoomba

CONFESSION TIMES

TUE 4:45-5:00pm Leura

SAT: 9:30am Katoomba

SAT: 4:30-4:45pm Leura

Confessions are always available on request.



MASS OFFERING INTENTIONS: First wedding anniversary of Gracian Antony & Delani Lavaniya 17th February **DECEASED and ANNIVERSARIES:** NORA HAGAR, ALLAN LEATHWOOD, PHILOMENA GABRIEL, MAUREEN KELLY, RONALD JOHN DYCO, JAMES BLACK, NOEL CORRIGAN and all the faithful departed especially those for whom you requested prayers and masses AND THE FORGOTTEN SOULS IN PURGATORY. **SICK LIST:** Eleanor Hagor, Monique Haulber, Marie Thuez, Mary Sullivan, Kathleen Hayes-Gilson, Evelyn Maw, Wanda Heffernan, Mary Roberts, Jacquelin Singh, Kath Paine, June Way, Robert Sullivan, Natale Assanti, Susan Keegel, Eugenio Natonton, Emiliana Santiago, Pat Coyne, Inga Morphett, Amanda Peters, Alison Michaels, Aimee De la Motte, Lorraine Russelle, Margaret Murphy, Joan Nolan, Pat Wolthers, Tricia Hogan, Shiela Page, Sr Jeanie Heiningner, Michelle Scully, Julie Walss, Edwin Wulff

PARISH OFFICE: 158 Katoomba Street, Katoomba 2780

Postal Address: P.O. Box 526, Katoomba NSW 2780

Phone: (02) 4782 2804 Hours: 10am-3pm Tuesday-Friday.

Parish Email address: bluemountains@parracatholic.org

After Hours Emergency Number: 0428 878 810 Calls only; no

Weddings: Please call Parish Office for details. Baptisms: upon request.

Parish Website at: www.bluemountainscatholic.org.au

Parish Facebook: www.facebook.com/bluemountainscatholic

Parish School: St Canice's Catholic Primary School, Katoomba.

Principal: Ms. Miriam Meaney

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS TIMES

8:30am Wentworth Falls

10am Blackheath

12:00pm Katoomba

6:30pm Blackheath

FIRST CONFESSION: If you would like to enrol your child for 1st Confession you are invited to come to the first of 4 sessions held in St Canice's Hall Katoomba, 9am Sunday 28th February. Child must be in Year 4 or above. Please bring a copy of your child's Baptism certificate. At this session you will receive an enrolment form, information sheets and a preparation workbook. If you would like your child to receive 1st Confession you will need to attend this initial session with your child and the following three Sundays. Sessions will be held at the same time and venue. After each session those attending the preparation are warmly invited and highly encouraged to attend the 10am Sunday Mass in St Canice's Church. 1st Confession will be held in the church on the final session day Sunday 21st March after 10am Mass. Once completed the candidate will be able to participate in 1st Communion preparation sessions and day in term 2. Dates TBA.

FINANCES: If you would like to contribute to the 2nd Collection for the parish: Bank Transfer: BSB 067 950 Account 000 00594 Name: Mary MacKillop Parish Reference: Surname and envelope number or Parish Donation (with or without surname if preferred).

If parishioners would like to contribute to the First Collection for the clergy of the diocese: BSB 067 950 Account No 00004265 Account Name Diocesan Clergy Reference either the Parish Name or the parish code 6038

Pope Francis Ash Wednesday 2020 Homily:

"We are dust in the universe," he said. "Yet we are dust loved by God." The Holy Father added that we are precious dust that is destined for eternal life. "We are the dust of the earth, upon which God has poured out his heaven, the dust that contains his dreams," he said. "We are God's hope, his treasure and his glory."

Pope Francis went on to describe ashes as a reminder of the direction of our existence: "a passage from dust to life." But if we allow ourselves "to be shaped by the hands of God, we become something wonderous."

Lent, he said, is a time of grace during which we can change our lives by letting God gaze upon us with love.

The Pope noted that the ashes on our foreheads should influence the thoughts passing through our minds. "What am I living for?" is the question we should ask ourselves.

If we live for fleeting, worldly realities, then we spend our lives chasing after dust, moving backwards from life to ashes. But, he said, if we live to love and make God's dream a reality, then we allow the fire of love to be kindled in our hearts.

SAINTS THIS WEEK: Ora pro nobis.

WED: Ash Wednesday.

SUN: 1st Sunday of Lent.

Pope establishes World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly!

Pope Francis has decided to institute a Church-wide celebration of a World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly. Starting this year, it will be held on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the liturgical memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus.

From Vatican News

Following the Angelus on Sunday, Pope Francis announced the institution of World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly, which will take place each year on the fourth Sunday in July, close to the feast of Sts Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus.

Recalling the feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple – when the elderly Simeon and Anna encountered the child Jesus and recognised Him as the Messiah – Pope Francis said, “the Holy Spirit even today stirs up thoughts and words of wisdom in the elderly.” The voice of the elderly “is precious,” he said, “because it sings the praises of God and preserves the roots of the peoples.”

The elderly, he continued, “remind us that old age is a gift and that grandparents are the link between the different generation, to pass on to the young the experience of life.”

The elderly must not be forgotten

The Holy Father said he instituted the World Day of Grandparents and the Elderly because “grandparents are often forgotten, and we forget this wealth of preserving roots and passing on” what the elderly have received.

He emphasized the importance of grandparents and grandchildren getting to know one another, because “as the prophet Joel says, grandparents seeing their grandchildren dream,” while “young people, drawing strength from their grandparents, will go forward and prophesy.”

First fruits of the Family Year

In a press release following the announcement, Cardinal Kevin Farrell, Prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, the establishment of the Day of Grandparents and the Elderly “is the first fruits of the Family Year, a gift to the whole Church that is destined to continue into the future.”

He added, “The pastoral care of the elderly is a priority that can no longer be postponed by any Christian community. The Holy Father reminds us that no one is saved alone. With this in mind, we must treasure the spiritual and human wealth that has been handed down from generation to generation.”

The statement from the Dicastery notes that Pope Francis is expected to celebrate the first World Day by presiding at Mass on the evening of Sunday, 25 July, in St Peter’s, subject to health measures in place at the time. Closer to the Day, the Dicastery “will announce further initiatives that will mark the event.”

Priorities for Pope Francis

Within the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, Vittorio Scelzo is involved with the pastoral care of the elderly. It is necessary to bridge the gap between the elderly and younger generations, he said, adding, “The elderly are not saved by themselves. Unfortunately, we have seen during the pandemic how many elderly were not saved.” Pope Francis wants to remind us that similarly, “young people, adults and our society cannot save themselves without the elderly,” said Scelzo. He noted that intergenerational dialogue is essential: “In order to come out of the crisis better and not worse, every society needs to come to terms with its roots and develop a new synthesis of its values, starting also from dialogue with the elderly.”

The dreams of the elderly

Scelzo continued, “The opposite of the culture of discarding is precisely pastoral care for the elderly: putting the elderly at the centre of the life of our communities every day. Not only in emergencies, not only when it is too late to realise this.”

The elderly “are trees that always bear fruit and people who continue to dream.” So young people must be “brought into dialogue with the dreams of the elderly.” Scelzo recalls that this is a message often repeated by Pope Francis. “The dreams of the elderly have built our society; for example, I am thinking of Europe, of a world without war anymore.” The encyclical *Tutti fratelli* is full of “this dream of a world without war.” It is the dream that “our elders, our grandparents had after the Second World War.”

“Perhaps,” Vittorio Scelzo concludes, “we need to enter into dialogue with these dreams” in order “to understand what the dreams for the future of our society should be.”

