



St Paul Apostle Catholic Community

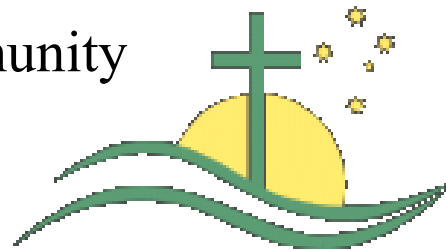
One Family

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First Sunday of LENT Year A, 25-26 February, 2023

Into the wild: a Lenten reflection

(extracted from Melbourne Catholic Magazine, original article written by Lucy Davison)

This week, as we enter into the season of Lent once more, we are invited to travel with Jesus into the wilderness.

It's not always an easy place to be. Wild places test us physically and emotionally. Though I have not always been a particularly enthusiastic camper, I have always been taking time away from the complicated suburban life-support system. I've had the experience in these places of feeling more alive and more connected to the earth and my true purpose; of being closer to God.

So sometimes, when I am caught in a busy day today life, I find myself longing for the simple, elemental experience of being alone on a walking track or of sleeping under the stars. And I wonder why and what is it that draws us out of our comfort zones and into the wilderness?

The Gospel this weekend might give us some clues. First, we read that Jesus is led into the wilderness by the Spirit. This is part of God's plan. There is something in the desert for Jesus to see and experience, but there is also something for him to resolve.

This passage appears immediately after the account of his baptism, which marks the beginning of his public ministry and of his long journey to the cross and beyond. And so, we are told, Jesus is led into the wilderness to be tempted and tested on a number of fronts, things we too need to consider in response to our own baptisms, our own callings.

The next sentence contains further clues, as well as what I once heard described as perhaps the greatest instance of understatement in all of the Bible. Jesus fasts for an extraordinary 40 days and 40 nights and after that, the gospel tells us, he was 'very hungry'. The author wants us to understand that this is no walk in the park for Jesus. His time in the wilderness has shown him what it means to be human and to be really, really hungry.

This can happen to us too when we spend time in nature. We become more aware of our own bodies and their needs. Out in the wild, exposed to the elements, we experience ourselves as small creatures in a very big creation. It's hard to avoid the fact of our own vulnerability and mortality; our limits and finitude;

our dependence on God for the very breath in our lungs.

In the wilderness, we can no longer deceive ourselves. In the wilderness, often we feel closer to our creator. We begin to see how things are connected and are reminded of the need for humility, compassion and care. We also start to see that our creatureliness and dependence on God are not things to be regretted or fought against but gifts to be accepted gratefully and to be embraced as the conditions for our true fulfilment as humans.

But while we might occasionally glimpse this truth on, most of the time we tend to forget it. Instead, we put our trust in ourselves. We embrace countless distractions to keep us from candid self-examination or quiet contemplation of our need for God. As Anglican theologian and former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams has observed, 'Being a creature is in danger of becoming a lost art.'

Lent doesn't rush us to the happy ending; it doesn't take easy shortcuts or try to avoid the pain and difficulty that often go hand in hand with the joy of being human. It takes us right into and through the wilderness; it makes us face our humanity and take it seriously, with all its heartache and beauty; it shows us our hunger, our dependence on God, and in so doing, it reveals that the way through to new life is via humility and trust—a path that can be simultaneously unnerving and exhilarating. Sometimes in the wilderness, and in the life of faith, the line between terror and wonder blurs.

The temptation that Jesus faces in the wilderness—and that he steadfastly rejects—is to take a shortcut, denying or avoiding his humanity and mortality by jumping straight to an easy but fatally compromised 'happy ending'. Rather than choosing power and self-sufficiency—the 'quick fix'—he embarks on a more difficult and costly path. But Jesus recognises that everything he needs, and everything worth having, comes from the hand of God. In the face of an uncertain and difficult future, he chooses instead to trust.

So as we embark again on this Lenten journey, travelling with Jesus deep into the wild regions of our lives, may we experience our own hunger and profound need of God. And may we listen attentively to the quiet voice of the Spirit, so that we might learn to trust the God who created us and who longs to give us all that we need.

Weekday Masses

Monday
9am Mass

Tuesday
9am Mass

Wednesday
7pm Mass

Thursday
9am Mass

Friday
9am Mass

Saturday
6pm Mass

Sunday
9am, 11am & 6pm Mass

Please note Sunday 11am is also
ONLINE

Please click on this link to follow

<https://youtu.be/90omXiTQYHY>

Reconciliation

Saturday 10am—10.30am

Priests:

Fr Brendan Connell CP (PP)
Fr Luke Bulley CP

Parish Staff:

Gillian Velupillay (Bursar)
Didi Karkas (Secretary)

Passionist Community

Fr Brendan Connell CP
Fr Brian Gleeson CP
Fr Kevin Hennessy CP
Fr Luke Bulley CP

St Paul Apostle North

Primary School
Ph. 9700 6068
Principal
Mrs Mary Lucas

St Paul Apostle South

Primary School
Ph. 9700 3663
Principal
Mr Paul Gleeson

St John's

Regional College
Ph. 9791 3366
Principal
Mr Tim Hogan

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL (PPC) MINISTRY

Following up from our presentation and discussion last weekend, we would like to invite people to nominate someone in the parish who you believe will be suitable to represent parishioners on the PPC. There will be nomination forms available in the gathering space, the foyer and the parish office. You can nominate more than one person. Please return the completed form to the parish office by the 12th of March (*signed by both nominee and the person who nominate her/him*). We will then process them and announce the newly elected PPC members after we have contacted the nominees.

JUSTICE GROUP

Asylum Seekers Resources Centre (ASRC) is a non-profit organization in Melbourne. Over this weekend SPA Social Justice group is again asking for your support through donations to supply eggs to the ASRC, our way to help asylum seekers here in Melbourne

STATION OF THE CROSS

During LENT we will hold Station of the Cross every Friday evening from 7pm in the Church. All are welcome. It will be led by our Passionist Companion group. You are also welcome to join for a cuppa afterwards

LENTEN BOOKLETS

Lenten booklets available in the Parish Office. This year's booklet is 'God is on the Journey, Too' written by Fr Chris Monaghan. Price is \$9 each. You can also approach Didi if you see her at the weekend Mass. Copies will be available then also.

AFTER SCHOOL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (for children who have been registered into receiving Sacrament of Reconciliation this year)

For all children who have been registered into our Sacrament of Reconciliation this year, but do not attend our parish schools, they must attend **ASRE** (After School Religious Education) which runs every **TUESDAY** at 4pm and finishes at 5pm in the Church. Dates are: **28th February, 7th and 14th March** Parents must sign in their child as they drop him/her at church. They must also sign them out as they pick them up. Please use the William Hovell Drive entrance, as we will not open other entrances

PARISH BINGO

Our next parish Bingo is on **FRIDAY, 24 MARCH 2023** in the Tim O'Toole Annexe and will start at 7.30pm. Anyone 18 yrs old

and older are welcome. You can come on your own or with friends. For more information please contact Louis 0419 008 173, Vianney 0438 700 675 or Joe 0419 385 441

WORKING BEE... WORKING BEE!!!

You may notice that there are piles of bark positioned around the Church garden. We want to spread them around the garden on **SATURDAY 4th MARCH from 8.30am** to around 11am. We hope many of you will be able to come and help so that we can finish in one day. If you have a wheelbarrow please bring it when you come as we only have 1 available.

THANKSGIVING ENVELOPES

We apologized for being late in issuing the new sets of envelopes. There are many parishioners who reminded us of this last weekend. Good news is that the new sets are now ready to be picked up from the foyer of the church. They are arranged in **STREET ORDER**. Therefore, if you wish to find your envelope, please look under your **STREET'S NAME** (eg. If you name is 'SMITH' and lives in 'RAVENHILL CRES', please find it under 'R') We would also appreciate if you could help to deliver those who lives in your street, so that we can minimise the mailing cost. If you are not in the thanksgiving and would like to take part in it, please fill in a form that are available in the foyer) and drop it off in the Parish Office so that we can include you in.

KNOW MY STORY

On Wednesday 22 February Well-springs for Women launch the 'Know My Story Exhibition' which is a project that honours the contributions of 10 women from migrant and refugee backgrounds, who have shaped the cultural landscape of



Dandenong. It is funded by the City of Greater Dandenong and the Victorian Public Records Office. Two of these women are from our parish. One is Liseby Lapierre who is still active in our parish and the other one is Joyce Rebeiro, who was very active in our parish before she passed away in 2016, nevertheless her legacy lives on.

Some of our parishioners attended the event and thank you to Liseby who shared a picture from the launch.

CHAPLAINCY APPEAL

Next weekend we will have a special collection to support the Chaplaincy Appeal.

Readings:

First Sunday of LENT Yr A

Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7 ;
Rom 5:12-19 ;
Mat 4:1-11

Second Sunday of LENT Yr A

Gen 12:1-4 ;
2 Tim 1: 8-10 ;
Mat 17: 1-9
www.universalis.com

This weekend we pray for:

Those whose sick

Cecil Harper, Michael O'Connor, Brian Tobin, Fr Brian Gleeson CP, Fr Peter Gaughan CP, Wilhada de los Reyes, Crystal Jayamaha, Elma, Alleyah, Nicole Pinto, Toni Celona, Shinead Kralj, Carlos Aquino, Jamie Cabrera, Angela Schink, Roy Conyers, Sandra D'Costa, Adeline Frante, Horace Stolke, Annette Perera, Ronald Peters, Godfrey Joseph, Camilla D'Rozario, Esric Jackson, Emily Broadbent, **and All those in aged care or homebound with chronic health issues**

Those who have died

Herman DeZylva, Hernan Ugarte, Mercia Fernandes, Ann van Ratingen, Carmen Hili, Rohini Ferrao, Br Stan Tyler CP, Gil Cortinhal, Teresa Madeira, Franco Elloro, Andre Machado, Alison Thijs, Diana Barbizzi, Dorothy De Niese, Alexis De Niese, Marie-Therese Low Tat, Rebecca Tirant **and all who are named in our church memorial book**

May they rest in peace



We are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults

