

**CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND ST. PAUL OF THE CROSS**

Catholic Parish of Dulwich Hill, Archdiocese of Sydney, Established in 1907

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Bishop Richard Umbers DD VG (Bishop in Residence)

Fr. Andrew James (Parish Priest), (Deacon) Rev Louis Azzopardi



Fourth Sunday of Lent / A

19 March 2023

PRIMARY SCHOOL

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info@stpcedulwichhill.catholic.edu.au**“He has opened my eyes!”**

Like last week's story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well, the story of the healing of the man "blind from birth" is intended by John to be read at a number of different levels of meaning. It starts off by noting that Jesus "saw the man as he went along". He does not ask Jesus to heal him, unlike every other healing story. Instead, Jesus "sees" him and goes on to heal him, an action that is then related to the whole purpose of Jesus' life: "as long as the day lasts, I must carry out the work of the one who sent me."

This "work" can be seen in the way Jesus heals the man's blindness. John wants us to see an echo of the way we were originally created as described in Genesis when Jesus forms a paste made of earth and his own saliva and applies it to the man's eyes. The very first thing this man ever sees is Jesus himself, "the light of the world". This is a phrase that reminds us of the Prologue of John's Gospel, where Jesus is described as "the light that is the life of all people."

Two meanings are intended when it says that he was blind from birth. First, it emphasises his complete dependence on others to help him throughout his life. Secondly, through the association in Jesus' time of physical disability with sinfulness, the story becomes a kind of parable of our own blindness and our need to be healed from sin. We are "blind from birth" in our natural lack of faith in Christ in our lives. We need to be healed by Christ through baptism so that we can "see" him in our lives: "He put paste on my eyes and I washed and I can see."

The story progresses in a way that reminds us of the Samaritan woman's journey to faith in Christ. Like her, he relates to Jesus in a deeper way as the story develops. First, Jesus is "the man who put paste on my eyes"; then a prophet, a man "who is devout and does God's will". At the end, when Jesus seeks him out after the Pharisees had rejected him, he acknowledges Jesus as "the Son of Man" and comes to worship him as Lord.

In both stories, this transformation, this journey to faith began when Jesus took the initiative, first in speaking to the woman, contrary to custom and then "seeing" the blind man. It reminds us that everyone's journey to faith in God is God's work in our lives. Our 'conversion story' may involve dramatic events and experiences but from beginning to end it reminds us, as Jesus said to Nicodemus, that "no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above."

As the man grows in faith, we also see him becoming more self confident. We see this especially through his response to the pharisees who refused to accept the nature and source of his healing. To them he was someone with no authority (unlike them!) to speak about God and healing since he was "a sinner through and through". He spoke however with the authority of his own personal experience of Christ as the source of God's healing of his life, an authority that gave him the courage to ridicule the pharisee's pretensions "Do you want to be his disciples too?" It is a courage that reminds us of the courage of the martyrs since his courage, and the faith that made this courage possible, is not "from birth" but a profound personal faith and trust in Christ in the face of opposition and rejection.

The pharisees are shown to be blind in a different way. It isn't the 'natural' blindness of human disability or ignorance but a self imposed one. They could see what had happened to the man but they refused to accept it. What Jesus had done undermined their authority as interpreters of the Law and so they considered Jesus' healing on the Sabbath as a serious problem, a breach of the Law as they understood it. As Bishop Robert Barron notes in his reflection on this Gospel, the pharisees couldn't deal with what Jesus had done. It was as if they had a personal investment in blindness. They benefited personally from their status as ultimate authorities and so Jesus was a threat to them. They preferred therefore to be 'blind' to him and all that he did and lived in the darkness of their own world rather than the "light" that Jesus brought.

What have we closed our eyes to in our own lives? Do we prefer the closed world of our own way of looking at things to the light that Christ offers us through his Church?

Loving God, open our hearts and spirits so that we can see others as you see them so that we can look beyond appearances and see their goodness and their dignity as your children. Take away the blindness that clouds our vision and give us the courage to walk in your light. We pray for the insight to recognise the opportunities you give us to grow as your disciples during this season of Lent. Amen (from God is on the journey too)

Deacon Louis

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney

Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with crimes are the police. If you, or anyone you know, have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 or safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org. You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.

Lenten Reflections

St Brigid's Marrickville is hosting a series of reflections based on the readings for each Sunday of Lent at 7pm each Monday.

Our parish Lenten program is based on the video series The Chosen and every Tuesday at 7pm. There are 8 episodes in the first season so it will continue on each Tuesday after Easter.

Please speak to Deacon Louis if you would like to know more about these evenings.

Stations of the Cross - every Friday through Lent at 7:00pm.**Sacramental preparation program for 2023**

Celebration of First Reconciliation :
Wednesday 29th March 6:30pm

Confirmation: Registration and enrolment
Wednesday 10th May 7:00pm

Preparation classes : 4:30 pm (Saturday) or 9:00 am Sunday on 13th/14th May; 20th/21st May; 27th/28th May; 3rd/4th June
Confirmation will be celebrated by Bishop Danny Meagher on Thursday the 8th June at 7:00pm

Morning Tea - Third Sunday of each month

This Sunday, 19th March is our Morning Tea Sunday after the 10:00am Mass at the front of the Church (outside).

Please join and bring a plate to share.

HOLY WEEK MASS TIMES

PALM SUNDAY: Holy Mass with the Gospel of the Passion of Christ
Sat 1 Apr 5:30pm & Sun 2 Apr 8am & 10am

HOLY MASS: Monday 9:00am
Tuesday 9:00am
Wednesday 9:00am

HOLY THURSDAY: 6 Apr 2023
7:00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper
Followed by a solemn procession to the Altar of Repose

GOOD FRIDAY: 7 Apr 2023
9:00am Morning Prayer - Matins and Lauds
10:00am The Stations of the Cross
3:00pm Solemn commemoration of the Lord's Passion

HOLY SATURDAY: 8 Apr 2023
9:00am Morning Prayer - Matins and Lauds
7:30pm Easter Vigil - The Service of Light
- The Liturgy of the Word
- The Liturgy of Baptism
- The Liturgy of the Eucharist

EASTER SUNDAY: 9 Apr 2023
8:00am & 10:00am Holy Mass

Feast/Solemnity/Memorial/Saint of the Week (20 - 25 Mar 2023)

Mon	20/3	ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
Thu	23/3	St Turibius of Mogrovejo, bishop
Sat	25/3	The ANNUNCIATION of the LORD

St Joseph was a descendant of King David and a carpenter by trade, living in Nazareth, a small town in Galilee. He is the "just man" who was simply, joyfully, wholeheartedly obedient to God - in marrying Mary, in naming Jesus, in shepherding the precious pair to Egypt, bringing them to Nazareth, in the undetermined number of years of quiet faith and courage. St Joseph is the patron of the Universal Church, and the patron



saint of fathers, both families and virgins, workers, especially carpenters, expecting mothers and unborn children. Among many others, he is the patron saint of attorneys and barristers, emigrants, travelers and house hunters. He is invoked against hesitation and for the grace of a holy death.

The Annunciation of the Lord is the celebration of the announcement by the Archangel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary, that she would conceive and bear a son through a virgin birth and become the mother of Jesus Christ, the Messiah and Son of God, marking the Incarnation.

**PARISH WEEKEND MASS ROSTER 25 - 26 March 2023**

Readers:	5:30pm	R Lazarus P Allport
	8:00am	A Di Donato N Dudley
	10:00am	P Marshall J Duru
Acolytes:	5:30pm	Philip & Morea
	8:00am	Andre
	10:00am	Tony & Ricardo
Counters:		Gabriel C Greg T

Choir Notice

The next rehearsal will be on Monday 27th March 2023 at 7:00pm.



Caritas parish speaker, Sister Ivy, is coming this Sunday, 19th March 2023 to talk on Project Compassion.

Parish Office

Maria - Mondays
Cecilia - Wed-Friday
9.30am - 2:30pm

Parish Enquiries

9558 3257

Mass Times

Sat: 5:30pm (Vigil)
Sun: 8am & 10am
Mon to Fri: 9:00am
Sat: 9:30am

Filipino Mass

1st Sun 11:30am

Sacraments**Confession**

Sat 8:30-9:20am,
4:45pm or any time by appointment

Baptism

Every 2nd and 4th
Sunday of the month.

Marriage

At least 6 months
notice required

Anointing of the Sick

Any time on call

Devotions

Holy Hour & Rosary
Monday - Friday
before morning mass

Rosary & Benediction

Sat 8:30-9:30am

Novena to Our Lady**of Perpetual Help**

Wednesday 7pm

