



ST MARY'S CONCORD

7th Sunday Ordinary Time

19 February 2012

ASH WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2012

Masses: 8.30am, 10.00am (St. Mary's School) and 7.30pm. Ashes are distributed after the Gospel at each Mass. A Liturgy of the Word with the distribution of ashes for children from kindergarten to Year 3 will be held in the church at 11.50am.

PROJECT COMPASSION

Caritas Australia is the Catholic agency supporting development projects in Africa, Asia, East Timor and many other places. Each year we are invited to become sharers in these projects through our support of Project Compassion. **Take a set of Project Compassion envelopes home with you today.** It is an important way we can assist people in the developing world. They are doing so much but with your help through Project Compassion they could do much more.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Parish Pastoral Council is a consultative body entrusted with the task of reflecting on the Parish's vision and mission. In a spirit of service to the community the Pastoral Council works with the parish priest to foster and support appropriate pastoral action.

Members serve a four year term with half the Council changing every two years. **Nominations are now being invited to fill six positions on the Parish Pastoral Council. Information forms are on the table at the back of the church. Nominations close on Sunday 4 March 2012.**

Any parishioner 18 years of age or older may be nominated or may nominate his/herself. If you are nominating another person, the person who is being nominated must accept the nomination. Forms may be handed to Fr Paul or returned to the parish office.

LENTEN GROUPS: *Living Faith* is the program prepared by the Diocese of Wollongong. The sessions follow the scripture readings for the Sundays of Lent from the first Sunday of Lent to Passion Sunday.

The invitation was extended last Sunday for people to express interest in this program. Unfortunately, at short notice, only a few parishioners were able to make a firm commitment.

The parish Faith Sharing Group that meets in St Mary's Villa Chapel on Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm will be using the Lenten program and they welcome anyone who wishes to join them during Lent. They will begin on this Tuesday, 21 February. Please meet at the main door of St Mary's Villa before 7.30 pm so that you may enter together without needing to ring the bell and disturb the nursing staff. If you did not leave your name on the list last Sunday, it is still possible to participate. All are welcome but we do need you to contact the parish office by Tuesday 21 February.

Lectio Divina

Praying the Scriptures in Lent

Lent is a time when most Catholics make an extra effort to prepare for Easter. Project Compassion is an excellent way not only to give up something for Lent but to reach out to those in need. Another important Lenten practice is to give of our time both to help others and to spend some time in prayer.

Once again this year the Diocese of Broken Bay with the Australian Bishop' Commission for Mission and Faith Formation has produced a resource to help individuals and families to reflect on the Sunday readings for Lent.

It is not Bible study program nor is it a discussion group. It is a way of reading a passage from Sacred Scripture and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us to reflect on the message of the Word of God. To find more information about this method of prayer visit www.dbb.org.au/ourworks/Pages/LectioDivina.aspx

A free booklet, *Lectio Divina: Your Face O Lord I Seek*, is available today from the table at the back of the church and the table near the side door. It begins with Ash Wednesday and then follows the Sundays of Lent. The introduction explains how this method of prayer can be used alone, or in a family, or in a group. The *Lectio Divina* booklet is an excellent way to prayerfully reflect on the Sunday readings. **Please take a copy and use it each week.**

PENANCE FOR LENT: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of fasting and abstinence from meat. All those who have completed their 18th year and have not begun their 60th year are bound to fast on those two days unless health reasons prevent them. All those who have completed their 14th year are bound to abstain from eating meat on those days. See the church notice board for full details of Lenten Penance

THE COLUMBAN MISSION INSTITUTE invites applicants with experience and skills in both *administration* and *communications* for a full time position in Strathfield; for details see advertisement on [www.catholicjobsonline](http://www.catholicjobsonline.com), or e-mail director.cmi@columban.org.au. Applications close on 11 March 2012.

EXODUS JOURNEY A 21 day biblical pilgrimage from Cairo to Jerusalem departing 24 March 2012 accompanied by Fr Artur Wojtowicz, Chaplain at Concord Hospital. For more details please take a copy of the brochure in the side porch or see the church notice board

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION: St Benedict's Monastery, Arcadia. Christian Meditation Introduction and Renewal Days for 2012 to be held at the monastery - Sundays: 19 February, 20 May, 19 August and 18 November. For more information please contact the following; Ann Bergman 9498 2625 anniebergman@hotmail.com or Ann Lomas 9456 4775 atlomas@bigpond.com

ST BAKHITA CENTRE is in great need of extra help as the centre has become very popular with the Sudanese refugees, especially the women who love to learn and have never been to school.

As many may know, the St Bakhita Centre is in fact running an Adult Education School and a pre-school staffed only by volunteers. They are seeking someone to assist each week as a volunteer with administration/computer/co-ordination. They also need more sewing (urgent), pre-school and computer teachers, child carers and a librarian. Some Sudanese need help with TAFE Courses, especially in Community services (if someone has that background). Commitment will be one morning weekly or fortnightly, excluding school holidays. Please contact Maria Sullivan 0408 615 671 or email mariasull@bigpond.com

REFLECTION MORNING: You are invited to a morning of quiet reflection at the Grail Centre, 22 McHatton St, North Sydney, on Tuesday 21 February from 10am to 12 noon. The theme of the morning will be: God the Creator. There will be time for silent meditation on scripture and the opportunity to share thoughts in a group. We ask for a small donation to cover costs. For more information or to register your interest, please contact Tricia Gemmell (9436 3447 or pgemmell@tpg.com.au) or the Grail Centre (9955 3053) or ruthcrowe@ozemail.com.au

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER: A weekend for married couples. Take time out of your busy schedule, to invest in your most precious asset . . . Your Marriage! This is a unique opportunity to recharge your relationship batteries, refocus on each other and fall in love all over again! Weekend date: 23 – 25 March at St. Mary's Retreat Centre, Douglas Park, NSW. Bookings: Ardell & Bill Sharpe tel. 02 4283 3435 or wsharpe@bigpond.net.au Information: website www.wwme.org.au

GRIEF AND LOSS: One Day Workshop - Grief And Loss In Different Faiths And Cultures. On March 10, 2012 at Mt St Benedict, Pennant Hills, Rachel's Vineyard Ministries will host a workshop that will benefit spiritual directors, chaplains, counsellors, priests and anyone in pastoral care or bereavement counselling. Richard White, bereavement counsellor with WN Bull Funeral Directors, will explore the model of accompaniment as a way to walk with people who grieve. Following topics will be addressed - how to cope, survive and even thrive; what happens when grief is denied; what to say and what not to say and self-care for those in this ministry. There will be speakers from different faiths and cultural backgrounds presenting. Details: Tel: 9440 7980 or info@rachelsvineyard.org.au or www.rachelsvineyard.org.au .

Grief And Loss Conference – A Ministry Of Accompaniment. Rachel's Vineyard Ministries will host the 4th National Conference in Sydney on March 9-11, 2012 at Mt St Benedict Centre, Pennant Hills. The conference is for those in the ministry of spiritual healing after an abortion and will include training in grief and loss ministry, sharing of stories of post abortion experience and support of those grieving after an abortion, and talks and workshops by experienced practitioners in this field. Full details: tel: 9440 7980 or www.rachelsvineyard.org.au

ST MARY MACKILLOP NATIONAL PILGRIMAGES In 2012 two National Australian Pilgrimages will be conducted from 11 - 21 April and 24 October - 3 November. The pilgrimage offers you an opportunity to reflect on your own life as you walk with Mary MacKillop the journey of her life. Fly to Melbourne and then journey by coach to Hamilton, Portland, Penola, Adelaide, fly to Sydney and then home. Cost from Sydney \$2,540 pp twin share, single supplement \$410. For a brochure and further information please contact: Sister Monica Barlow on 02 8912 4818 or email mmp.ministries@sosj.org.au.

COMMUNION TO THE SICK Communion Ministers from our parish community take Holy Communion to the sick in their homes and in various Nursing Homes in the parish. If you have a family member who is unable to come to Mass and wishes to receive Communion, please contact the parish office.

CARING FOR OUR CHURCH: You may have noticed that many of the pews in the church have been scratched and damaged. When the church was restored in 1993-94 after the fire, all the timber pews were refurbished. For many years the pews remained in good condition but in more recent times deep scratches and gouges have been appearing. The damage is not always done by children but parents with small children are particularly asked not to bring metal or hard plastic toys into the church and please do not give children keys to play with during Mass. Help us to care for the church.

CHEWING GUM is also a constant problem. People who throw their used gum on the ground as they enter the church are creating a health hazard. They also leave it for someone to tread in and carry into the church on their shoe where it damages the carpet.

SMOKERS: please do not drop cigarette butts on the ground. The Parish Precinct includes the grounds of the Church, St Mary's Villa and St Mary's School. **It is a smoke-free zone**

PARKING FOR SUNDAY MASSES Thank you to all those who do respect the needs of others and take the time to find parking on the streets near the church. There is only limited parking available on the parish site.

Some parking is available in the Church Forecourt via the Parramatta Road gates. Please do not park in the restricted area near the church doors and park rear to the buildings to avoid reversing after Mass. There are many pedestrians, including small children, in the Forecourt after Mass. The safety of all is always the priority. **Never attempt to reverse your vehicle if you are parked in the Church Forecourt until all pedestrians have left the area.**

You may have also noted that it is taking several minutes for cars to exit on to Parramatta Road after Mass. If you park in the Forecourt please be patient.

SVdP CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS St Vincent de Paul Society is calling upon people of goodwill within the local community to help in the Vinnies shops as shop assistants. The role involves sorting, pricing, customer service and general store upkeep. You can help any day between Mon-Sun. To be successful, you need to have good interpersonal skills, love for retail and customer service, as well as a desire to help others. This is a high energy role and involves standing for long hours, light lifting and moving of donations as well as serving diverse customers. If you can help, please call Jedi on 9568 0275 to discuss. Thank you.

GO DEEPER WITH YOUR CATHOLIC FAITH

- Catholic Adult Education Centre 2012 Term 1 courses start 06 February. Monday nights at Lidcombe: The Early Church with Robert Haddad and Greek (New Testament) I with Thomas Flynn. Thursday nights at Lidcombe: The Sacraments with Fr Paul Rowse OP & James McDonald and The Gospel of John with Robert Tilley. For more information and to register; 9646 9010, study@caec.com.au or www.caec.com.au.

CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS. A 2 day intensive course at Lidcombe – with David Schütz (Executive Officer of Ecumenical & Interfaith Dialogue for the Melbourne Archdiocese). Dates: 19 & 20 March. For more information contact the Catholic Adult Education Centre: 9646 9010, study@caec.com.au or www.caec.com.au