

St Mary's Parish Concord

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year B

31 January 2021

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps: 95

R: If today you hear God's voice,
harden not your hearts.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 7:17,32-35

Lead the life the Lord has assigned.

GOSPEL: Mark 1:21-28

They were all amazed: a new teaching – with authority.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for Bill Carter, Maurice De Silva, Giuseppina Biviano, Lisette Marchand, Paul McKenna (Ire) and all those who have died recently.

We pray for Concetto Pappalardo, Ilario Tassone, Matividad Alcantara and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

We pray for all our deceased family members, friends and parishioners.

We pray for those in many places who have died of the COVID-19 virus, for their families and all who mourn for them.

We pray for all those who are sick and for the health workers who care for the sick.

LIVE STREAMING MASSES: The 9.30 am Sunday Mass is now being live streamed to on the parish Facebook page (St Marys Parish Church Concord) and to the parish YouTube channel.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL0awxfUmj6XjHJZcqsR2_A

ST MARY'S VILLA AGED CARE

A Work of St Mary's Parish

FACILITY MANAGER

I am pleased to welcome Fiona Kendall as the new Facility Manager of St Mary's Villa. Fiona will begin with us on 1 February 2021.

Fiona comes to St Mary's Villa with many years of experience in the management of residential Aged Care facilities. I am confident that she will make a very positive contribution to St Mary's Villa.

In welcoming Fiona, I also acknowledge the leadership that Lucille McKenna has provided for the past ten months. Lucille had retired at the end of August 2018 after ten years of leadership as Director of Nursing and then General Manager of St Mary's Villa.

When Robert Johnson resigned from the manager's position in March 2020, just as the COVID 19 pandemic struck, Lucille agreed to come out of retirement and resumed the leadership of the Villa. The past ten months have been demanding for the whole community but especially for those working in Aged Care.

Throughout 2020 the staff, residents and families worked together to ensure that St Mary's Villa remained free of COVID 19. That success has been due in no small part to Lucille's leadership. Because of the challenges that we still face, Lucille will continue to work with Fiona and the Villa leadership team in a supporting role until the end of February 2021.

I look forward to working with Fiona and all the staff to ensure that St Mary's Villa will continue to be an outstanding place of care for the aged and an important part of the life of our parish community.

Paul Crowley
Parish Priest

Acknowledgement of Country



We acknowledge the Wangal people of the Eora nation as the traditional custodians of this land.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE UPDATE

All are welcome to join us at our Sunday and weekday Masses. No bookings are required at present.

The cap of 100 has been lifted by the Government but the 4 sq m rule still applies.

The QR Code for churches is now compulsory. To use the QR Code you first need to download the Services NSW App.

Those who do not have a smart phone must record their name and contact details (phone or email) on the forms provided at the church doors. Please write clearly. It is very important that your details are accurately recorded.

If you are unwell, please do not come to the church. Any parishioners in a high-risk category are encouraged to stay home.

PLEASE WEAR A MASK IN CHURCH

Health authorities still require the wearing of a mask in situations where social distancing is difficult. Those situations include public transport and at religious gatherings. Therefore, please wear a mask when you come to Mass.

For hygiene reasons you need to provide your own mask.

Particular care should be taken when greeting and talking to others before and after Mass. When entering the church, please keep social distancing requirements when signing in and please use the hand sanitizer that is provided.

Servant of God, Eileen O'Connor

Eileen O'Connor died in Coogee on 10 January 1921. In 1913, together with Fr Edward McGrath msc, she had founded Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor (popularly called the Brown Nurses). Her cause for canonization was accepted in 2018 and she was declared a Servant of God.

Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor is opening up its home at 35 Dudley Street, Coogee to visitors for monthly open days throughout 2021 to allow Sydneysiders to pray at the tomb of Eileen O'Connor and learn more about this 'saint in waiting'.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, numbers will be limited to 12 visitors at any one time. The next open day will be held on Sunday 7 February and you can register online at the new Eileen O'Connor website: <https://eileenconnor.com.au/open-days>.

PRIVATE PRAYER IN THE CHURCH: The church will be open for private prayer on Sunday after the 9.30 am Mass until 12 noon and on Monday to Friday from 9.00 am until 12 noon. All those entering the church must record their name and contact details.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR 2021

This year is *Year B* of the three-year cycle of Sunday readings. On the Ordinary Sundays we will read from Mark's Gospel, although on occasions we will turn to John's Gospel. We will follow what is called a semi-continuous reading, that is, one Sunday usually begins where the previous Sunday's Gospel concluded.

St Mark's Gospel

Most scholars accept that Mark's Gospel was the first of the four Gospels to be written and it is dated between the years 65 and 75. It is also accepted that Mark was not an eyewitness to the ministry of Jesus. He represents the second generation of disciples who had received various oral accounts from those who were eyewitnesses. Mark then wrote his Gospel for a particular community.

All the New Testament books were written in Greek. From his writing style we believe that Mark was a native Greek-speaker and was probably a member of the early Christian community in Rome.

His Gospel was written for a community that had undergone persecution and in many ways was struggling to hold on to the message of Jesus.

The Lectionary

The Lectionary is the book containing the Scripture readings selected to be read at Mass. On Ordinary Sundays the first reading is taken from the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) and is chosen to reflect on the Gospel reading of that particular Sunday. The Responsorial Psalm has been chosen to respond to the message of the first reading.

The second reading is not connected with the first reading or the Gospel. It is an opportunity for us to read from the other books of the New Testament, particularly the Letters of St Paul. For the next four Sundays (until Lent begins) we will read from the **First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians**. St Paul was writing from Ephesus in late 56 or very early in 57. Therefore, his letter to the Corinthians was written about ten years before Mark wrote his Gospel.

*Paul Crowley,
Parish Priest*

PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney Safeguarding Office provides support and training for parish communities to ensure that our communities offer a safe and caring environment. The Safeguarding Office also provides support for those who have suffered abuse.

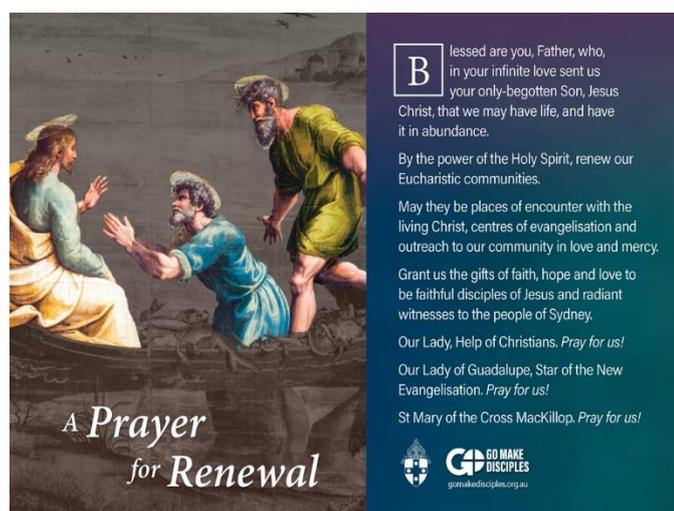
If you or a person close to you has been abused by someone working or ministering within the Archdiocese of Sydney, the Safeguarding Office will listen to you respectfully, offer support and discuss the options you have available to you. Please contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office on phone: 9390 5812.

GO MAKE DISCIPLES

Archbishop Anthony Fisher has launched a new Archdiocesan Mission Plan *Go Make Disciples*. The new plan is aimed at renewing parishes as places of encounter with the living Christ and centres of outreach to our community in love and mercy.

To find out more about the Mission Plan go to <https://www.gomakedisciples.org.au/>

In the weeks and months ahead we are invited to join in an Archdiocesan-wide prayer campaign, calling on the Holy Spirit to prepare the hearts of each of us and of all our parishes and Eucharistic communities to receive anew the fire of God's love and the desire to be ever more faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ.



Australians' Spiritual Practices in a year of crises

NCLS Research is a world leader in research focused on connecting churches and their communities. Decades of rigorous and thoughtful research has examined wellbeing, spirituality and church health. The most well known five-yearly project is called the **National Church Life Survey**, which has had millions of participants. Cooperating denominations, including Catholics, Anglicans and Protestants, are a network for sharing practical resources to help churches and communities.



Life changed significantly for Australians in 2020, with bushfires, floods and then the COVID-19 pandemic. Many church services went online, people stayed home and zoom meetings became commonplace.

In this context, we asked Australians about their experiences of stress, wellbeing, spirituality and church, in the 2020 Australian Community Survey.

Nearly seven in 10 Australians say that spirituality is important in personal wellbeing, in the context of events including bushfires and COVID-19. The greatest stressors listed are family relationships and social isolation.

Just under half of Australians report personally drawing on spiritual practices during the year, with 15% of those people increasing the level of their practice in 2020. While fewer Australians participated in religious services after March 2020 than before, a moderate proportion of Australians engaged in other spiritual practices.

Spending time in nature or outdoors; listening to music; and praying and meditating are the spiritual practices of most appeal.

As we approach Christmas, around four in ten Australians say they are open to being invited to church by family and friends.

For more information about the work of NCLS go to <http://www.ncls.org>.

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2020-21

The ACBC Office for Social Justice have released the Social Justice Statement for 2020-21, entitled *To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today*.

This year's Statement encourages faith communities, governments, and each one of us to make mental health a priority. It is a timely message in a year where we have experienced bushfires, floods and the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic has also influenced the way in which the Statement and associated materials are being distributed this year. The Social Justice Statement and prayer card for 2020-21 have been made available online as free downloads. To download your copies now, please visit <https://socialjustice.catholic.org.au>

PLENARY COUNCIL DISCERNMENT PAPERS RELEASED

Due to the COVID 19 pandemic the National Plenary Council Assembly has been postponed to October 2021 (Adelaide) and April 2022 (Sydney). Importantly as part of the journey towards the national Assembly, the discernment papers foundational to the development of the working paper and ultimately the agenda for the Assembly are available on the National Plenary Council webpage under the Discernment tab: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/>

THE FIRST CHURCH OPENED IN 1845

The first church built of the St Mary's Parish site was blessed and opened by Archbishop Polding on 7 December 1845. The painting that now hangs in the parish hall is based on a photograph taken in 1917 when the hall was under construction.

Prior to European settlement, the Burwood-Concord district was occupied by the Wangal clan. They called themselves the Eora, meaning 'the people' and they had been living in the Sydney area for at least 10,000 years.

The British colony of New South Wales had been established in January 1788 with the arrival of the First Fleet under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip.

In late 1788 a small settlement was established at Parramatta and by 1791 a bush track had been built between Sydney and Parramatta that became what is now Parramatta Road. In 1793 some free settlers received grants in the area then named Liberty Plains. In that same year, land grants were made to six non-commissioned officers in the district that came to be known as Concord.



The Concord-Burwood district continued to grow and in 1844 land was purchased by the Catholic Church on Parramatta Road at Concord for the site of a church and school. The first church stood in the present Church Forecourt in front of the parish hall. It was blessed by Archbishop Polding on 7 December 1845.

At that time there was no resident priest. A priest came from Parramatta, where the parish of St Patrick's had been established in 1827. When the parish of Petersham (now Lewisham) was established in 1851, the church at Concord became part of Petersham parish. St Mary's Concord became a parish in 1870.

The first church was also used as a hall and a school. A Catholic School, operating with Government funds, had begun operating on the parish site in 1846.

HERITAGE SIGNS: St Mary's Parish commissioned five heritage signs to mark the sesquicentenary of the parish. They have now been installed in the Church Forecourt and recall historical parish buildings that once existed on the parish site: the first church (1845), the second church (1874), the presbytery (1882), the first school building (1894) and the convent (1898). They have been placed close to the original locations of the buildings.



FOODBANK DONATIONS: earlier this year a bin was placed at the back of the church and parishioners regularly donated food items to assist the Jesuit Refugee Service. With the church closed except for Masses it is more difficult to donate food but we can still help. There are drop off points including St Columba's Parish at 213 Elswick St North Leichhardt on Tues. Wed or Thurs. between 10am and 2pm. For more information, please contact amelia.savage@jrs.org.au and/or zoe.grant@jrs.org.au

MEALS ON WHEELS: Volunteers are needed to assist with the delivery and/or packing of meals. If you can help or need more information, please contact: 9747-1135 or delivery@bcw.org.au

GIFT OF BREAD: Due to the current COVID-19 health restrictions many of the organisations who previously supported the *Gift of Bread* outreach program are no longer able to continue their support. The calls for assistance and support from *Gift of Bread* have significantly increased over the past three months which leaves the GOB program in need of financial assistance. The *Gift of Bread* program has created a donation page called "**Who gives a loaf? You can.**" The banner photo on the donate page is the team from St Mary's Concord in the parish hall. The program needs cash donations to keep their outreach services operational. If you can support this program, please go to: <https://www.givenow.com.au/givealoaf>

CELEBRATING AT HOME

We can be united with each other in prayer by setting aside a time when we can pause and read the Word of God and share our reflections. Many find it helpful to create a "prayer space" that helps us to focus.

We can also find those places where the Mass is being televised or live streamed.

For those who have access to the Internet there are many places that offer prayers and resources to help us. Those listed below are some examples

LITURGY BRISBANE offers a range of resources that are updated each week. They can be found on the Liturgy Brisbane website at <https://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/prepare/sunday-readings-and-family-prayer/>

SUNDAY READINGS READ AT HOME

The Brisbane Liturgy website gives the Sunday readings with associated commentaries and prayers. It is suggested that families gather to read the Scriptures aloud together.

FAMILY PRAYER WEEK BY WEEK

The second resource is designed for families with young children. An extract from the Sunday gospel is provided, along with some reflection questions, a family activity and a worksheet for children.

We invite you to share these resources with anyone who may find them useful.

SACRED SCRIPTURE Set aside a time each day to read the Bible by taking a book, such as one of the Gospels or the Psalms, and working your way through it together. Pause and reflect on the passage. Use *Lectio Divina* when reading a bible text – this is explained in **Universalis** (see below) and also on the Jamberoo Abbey website.

THE ROSARY is a prayer that a family can easily recite together or can be said by those living alone.

APPS and PODCASTS: For those with access to a smart phone or a computer, the following Apps and Podcasts may help families and individuals to set aside time for prayer.

The Examen is a daily reflection that aims to help us to review how God is present in the ordinary moments of life. It is done at the end of the day and is inspired by the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola.

Search iTunes or other platforms for the following podcasts:

The Examen with Fr James Martin SJ

This 18 minute Podcast offers a guided reflection from the American Jesuits.

Are you struggling in this time of crisis?

Depression. Anxiety. Loneliness. Conflict. Stress. CCareline 13 18 19 is a free and confidential helpline for counselling, relationships, parenting, ageing, disabilities, addictions and mental health. For help finding help, call CCareline on 13 18 19



Follow us on Twitter 
St Marys@ParishConcord

HOUSE OF WELCOME FOODBANK APPEAL



Foodbank provides household necessities for people seeking asylum who have limited or no income. People can access groceries on a weekly basis to alleviate the cost of living. The Foodbank program is largely stocked through the generosity of people in the community. No contribution is too small.

**Contact: office@houseofwelcome.com.au
197 The Trongate, Granville
Ph: 02 9727 9290
stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome**