



## St Mary's Parish Concord

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent**

Year B

**21 February 2021**

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

**FIRST READING:** Genesis 9:8-15

*I will establish my covenant with you,*

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:** Ps: 25

**R:** You ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

**SECOND READING:** 1 Peter 3:18-22

*The waters of the flood prefigured the baptism which now saves you.*

**GOSPEL:** Mark 1:12-15

*Repent and believe in the Good News.*

### PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for Giuseppina Ferrara, Bice Mitteregger, Rory O'Kane, Michele Pellegrino, Giuseppe Amato (Italy) and all those who have died recently.

We pray for Maria Rosa Pappalardo, Giuseppe Russo, William Obeid and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time.

We pray for Vincenzo Pappalardo, Nancy & Antonio Bonaccorso and 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 have been affected by natural disasters.

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

**WEEKDAY MASS:** A Communion Service will replace the normal 8.30 am Mass on Tuesday 23 February

### CHURCH ATTENDANCE UPDATE

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

Although the Government has allowed churches to move to 2 sq m, it is still not possible to use every pew in the church. However, the change does allow more people to sit in each available pew. Please leave space at the end of the pew for others to join you.

**The QR Code for churches is now compulsory.**

To use the QR Code you first need to download the Services NSW App to your phone.

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.

**FACE MASKS:** Health authorities no longer require the wearing of a face mask in churches. However, social distancing is still important.

**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](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCL0awxfUmJ6XjHJZcqsR2_A)

### Acknowledgement of Country



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

### FIRST RECONCILIATION

First Reconciliation is a parish celebration for children from the parish who are preparing for First Holy Communion this year. The children who will celebrate First Holy Communion in August 2021 will celebrate their First Reconciliation in March.

It is celebrated in the church at 7.00 pm to allow parents and other family members to participate.

**There will be two sessions: Tuesday 9 March and Wednesday 10 March.**

Please email [parish@stmarysconcord.org.au](mailto:parish@stmarysconcord.org.au)

In your email, please nominate the date on which you wish your child to celebrate his/her Reconciliation. An information letter and enrolment form will then be sent to you. **Registrations close on 26 February 2021.**

## FASTING AND LENTEN PENANCE

As noted last Sunday, only Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are now set down as days for fasting and abstaining from eating meat. However, all Christians are called to do some form of penance on Fridays throughout the year and during the season of Lent.

The traditional penitential practices of prayer, fasting and alms-giving are still recommended. However, the form of penance that is practiced is left to each person.

We know that by the second century Christians were already preparing for Easter by a forty hour fast that began on Good Friday.

By the first Council of Nicaea in 325 the preparation for Easter had been extended to forty days. It was seen to be a way to imitate the 40 day fast of Jesus after his baptism. This extended period of preparation became the season of Lent.

The Lenten fast at that time meant that people had only one meal each day and it was eaten after sunset. Abstinence from meat and wine and the further restriction on all dairy products during Lent were only added in later centuries.

Fasting for medical reasons was not uncommon in ancient Greece and Rome. However, the essential feature of Christian fasting was its link to prayer. In modern times we call fasting without prayer dieting.

Christians also saw fasting as a preparation for the reception of the Spirit and so it was associated with preparing for Baptism and the Eucharist.

But against that background there were also many references in the early Church to the prophet Isaiah (Is 58:1-9) and to the teaching of Jesus (Mt 6:16-18) who both warned against fasting becoming only an external practice that did not touch the heart, the core of a person's being.

Penance is always about conversion and is summed up in the call to repent and believe in the Good News. It is linked therefore to prayer and reflecting on the Word of God.

*Paul Crowley*

*The reflection draws on Adolf Adam's history of Lent in his book "The Liturgical Year" (Pueblo Publishing, New York 1981) which was originally published in Germany.*

## CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Children's Liturgy is part of the parish 9.30 am Mass during the school terms. It will commence next Sunday (28 February). The Children's Liturgy of the Word is not a catechetical class or Sunday school; it is a celebration of the Word of God.

The children listen to the Gospel reading of the Sunday and share prayers and reflections. All children of primary school age are invited to attend. The children leave the church after the Opening Prayer for a celebration of the Word of God at a level appropriate for their age. They return to the church at the Preparation of the Gifts. The Children's Liturgy is held in the chapel of St Mary's Villa. The Children's Liturgy would not be possible without the help of the adult leaders. We are still in need of helpers; their role is to assist the leader.



Jamila, a young Rohingya woman, lives in the world's largest refugee camp in Bangladesh. She was forced to flee the armed conflict in Myanmar to save herself, her elderly mother and her eight-month-old baby. With the support of Caritas Australia, through Caritas Bangladesh, Jamila



was able to access emergency food and shelter. She also received counselling, emotional support, and learnt sewing skills to help her earn an income. Jamila now feels less alone, with a sense of community around her. She is able to 'Be More' to her little family.

Please take home a Project Compassion box and/or a set of donation envelopes and support Caritas Australia. The envelopes may be placed in the parish collection (black bucket). Donations are tax deductible. If you require a tax receipt please clearly fill in all the details and tick the box.

Your generosity will assist some of the world's most vulnerable communities to lift themselves out of poverty.

## 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/>

**ONLINE MARRIAGE SEMINAR:** The Marriage Kit – Online Seminar is a six week workshop series for married couples wanting a lasting, passionate relationship. Facilitated through the SmartLoving learning platform, from the privacy of your home, the course includes self-directed learning with your spouse that you complete together. Four facilitated Zoom meetings will provide you with opportunities to ask questions, share your insights and connect with other couples in the course. For more information go to: <https://members.smartloving.org/rockhampton-marriage-kit-seminar/>

## 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. For more information about visiting see the website: <https://eileenconnor.com.au/open-days>.

## 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.

**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.

## 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>

**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.



## 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.

**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](mailto:amelia.savage@jrs.org.au) and/or [zoe.grant@jrs.org.au](mailto: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](mailto: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/>

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.

**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



## 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](mailto:office@houseofwelcome.com.au)  
**197 The Trongate, Granville**  
**Ph: 02 9727 9290**  
[stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome](http://stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome)