



St Mary's Parish Concord

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year C

30 January 2022

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM; Psalm 71
I will sing of your salvation.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 12:31 – 13:13
The greatest of these is love.

GOSPEL: Luke 4:21-30
No prophet is accepted in the prophet's hometown.

PRAYER INTENTIONS

We pray for Gaetano Giordano, Peter Lalor, Fr Peni Folaumoetu'I, Fr John Snehadass and all those who have died recently.

We pray for Margot Lillicrap, Concetto Pappalardo, Ilario Tassone and all those whose anniversaries occur about this time and for all our deceased family members, friends and parishioners.

We pray for all health care worker and all those who continue to work to protect the community.

We pray for the people of Tonga and all those affected by natural disasters.

CHURCH ATTENDANCE UPDATE

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

Face masks are mandatory. Please continue to check-in using the QR code.

If you are unwell, please do not come to the church. See the parish website for more details

CONFIRMATION 2022: There will be two celebrations of Confirmation at St Mary's Concord: **Saturday 14 May at 3.00 pm and Sunday 15 May at 11.00 am. Registrations will only be accepted from Monday 28 March** until Friday 8 April 2022. More details will be available in March. Numbers at each session may be limited depending on COVID Health Restrictions in May 2022.

NEW SCHOOL YEAR: We welcome Ms Liz Pisano, the new principal of St Mary's Concord, new staff members and all families who are new to the school.

As we welcome back all the staff and students at St Mary's School and Southern Cross Catholic College, Burwood, please note that all parking restrictions for school days now apply.

Acknowledgement of Country



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

LIVE STREAMING FROM ST MARY'S

We began live streaming the parish 9.30 am Mass in December 2020. When we were locked-down from June to October 2021, the live streamed Mass provided a valuable link for our parish community.

The dynamic coverage is made possible because someone is directing the cameras. A small team of volunteers has enabled that to happen each Sunday. In 2022 we need directors. **Are you interested in becoming part of the live-streaming team?**

The 9.30 am Sunday Mass is 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

While we encourage all who can to join us on Sundays, we know that some older and frail parishioners are not able to come to the church.

OUR PARISH COMMUNITY IN 2022

In early 2021 it seemed that the COVID pandemic was under control and life could slowly return to normal. Then on Saturday 26 June 2021 Sydney went into another lockdown as the Delta strain began to spread. All churches were closed. What was to be a two-week lockdown lasted almost four months.

Even when Masses resumed on 24 October 2021 many people were hesitant to come back to Mass. By late November as the vaccination targets were reached, we began to hope that families could once again celebrate Christmas.

Although some restrictions were lifted, many were still hesitant. The numbers at our Christmas Masses in 2021 were well below the pre-COVID attendance.

As we come to the end of January, our Mass attendance continues to be well below our pre-COVID numbers. The arrival of the Omicron variant of the virus has had a significant impact on public confidence as we experience a "shadow" lockdown.

On the positive side, the decision to install video cameras in the church in November 2020 has enabled us to live-stream the 9.30 am Mass each Sunday. It continues to be an important point of contact for those who are unable to come to Mass.

It remains true, however, that many of the things we took for granted in the past are still not possible. The residents of St Mary's Villa, like all those in Aged Care facilities, have been seriously affected. Children have not been able to attend school and spend time with their friends.

Important family celebrations have been cancelled or postponed. In 2020 the parish sesquicentenary celebrations were cancelled

We will slowly emerge from the COVID pandemic and when we do, one of the challenges we face is the rebuilding of our parish community.

We need to rebuild our teams of volunteers such as our catechists and those who in the past took Holy Communion to the sick. Our other parish ministry teams also need new members: readers, ministers of Communion, acolytes, altar servers, the altar society.

The Parish Pastoral Council has an important role to play as we reflect on our Vision and Mission. New members are needed in 2022.

Please think about how you can contribute to rebuilding the parish community. Now is the time to start planning for a post-COVID world. Perhaps a good place to start is our Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. If you are well and fully vaccinated, join us each Sunday as we give thanks to God for our many blessings.

Paul Crowley
Parish Priest

For help finding help,
call CCareline
on 13 18 19



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

HERITAGE SIGNS: In 2020 St Mary's Parish commissioned five heritage signs to mark the sesquicentenary of the parish. They 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). The signs have been placed close to the original locations of the buildings.

THE PRESBYTERY: When Father Callaghan McCarthy was appointed parish priest in 1870, he lived in a cottage on the Burwood side of Parramatta Road until the presbytery (the priest's residence) was built in 1882. It stood on the northern side of the 1874 church and faced Burton Street.



The Presbytery was on the eastern side of the church and faced Burton Street.

The original building was extended several times as the needs of the parish changed. As well as providing a residence for the priests, it also served as the office for the parish until 1994 when the parish office was relocated to 4 Ada Street.

The presbytery continued to be as the residence for the priests of the parish until 2002. It was demolished in 2008 to make way for the new St Mary's Villa.

COLLECTIONS: The normal practice of passing the collection plates remains suspended. There are two containers at the back of the church and at the side door marked 1st and 2nd Collection. Your regular donations can be placed in the appropriate containers. For your convenience Tap and Go stations

are now available at the doors of the church. Tap to donate the set amount. Please note that receipts cannot be issued for donations and the transactions cannot be reversed.

ST LUKE'S GOSPEL

This year on the Ordinary Sundays we read from Luke's Gospel. For the next five Sundays, until Lent begins, we will be exploring Luke's account of the beginnings of the ministry of Jesus in Galilee.

This Sunday, after hearing the opening words of Luke's Gospel, we take up the story in chapter 4 where Luke presents Jesus entering the synagogue in Nazareth. Jesus reads from the Prophet Isaiah and Isaiah's words become the "Mission Statement" of Jesus' ministry.

The Australian Jesuit priest and scripture scholar Brendan Byrne has called his book on Luke's Gospel, *The Hospitality of God*. He believes that the idea of "hospitality" is a key to understanding Luke's Gospel.

Many important moments in Luke's Gospel are in the context of a meal where Jesus either offers hospitality or shares in the hospitality of others. Also significant for Luke's Gospel are the individuals and groups with whom Jesus shares a meal. A good example towards the end of the Gospel is the meeting between Jesus and Zacchaeus.

Zacchaeus is a tax collector and that makes him an outsider in his society. Yet Jesus asks to stay at his home. Zacchaeus is delighted to be asked and offers hospitality to Jesus. But in the exchange that follows it becomes clear that Jesus the guest becomes Jesus the host.

At the very heart of Luke's Gospel is the understanding that Jesus is the one who offers us the hospitality of God. As Byrne puts it "Luke sees the whole life and ministry of Jesus as a visitation on God's part to Israel and the world."

In Luke "Salvation" is the invitation to share in the hospitality of God but it is not just the end point of the journey, it is the journey itself. The invitation is to be one with God now not just in the future.

We share in the hospitality of God every Sunday when we gather to share in the Eucharist.

Paul Crowley, Parish Priest

VOTIVE CANDLES: A long Christian tradition has linked lighting a candle to prayers of petition. When we pray for a particular intention or for someone who has died, lighting a candle often provides a visible expression of our prayer. That is also why we give a donation so that it becomes "my



candle" that I am offering as a sign of my prayer. Many churches have moved to electric votive candles. We have two electric votive candle stands to give parishioners an opportunity to "light" a candle. You simply need to touch the button in front of the candle. We also have a votive candle stand in the shrine of *Santa Maria Vergine Annunziata* at the back of the church. It offers an opportunity to light a specially designed candle that fits into a glass holder. A donation can be placed in the box at the front of the stand.

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.

St Mary's Church Concord

The painting of the Blessed Virgin Mary that is the dominant image of Mary in the church is a copy of *The Immaculate Virgin of Los Venerables* painted by the Spanish artist Bartolome Esteban Murillo (1618-1682) in about 1678.

It is believed that the original painting was commissioned from Bartolomé Esteban Murillo by Justino de Neve, who was ecclesiastical president of the *Hospital de los Venerables* in Seville. He later donated it to the chapel at the hospital. The original painting is now in the Prado Museum in Madrid

The title of Immaculate Virgin reflects the belief that Mary was without sin from the first moment of her being. Although it was only officially declared a dogma of the Church in 1854, belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary had been a popular devotion in Spain since the 16th century.

In this painting Murillo combined two different iconographic traditions: the Immaculate Conception and the Assumption. Although the Assumption of Mary was only declared to be a dogma in 1950, it too had been a popular devotion for many centuries.

The parish's copy was cleaned and restored in February 2020 to mark the Sesqicentenary of the founding of St Mary's Parish (1870-2020).



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**

SUNDAY & ORDINARY TIME

Changes in society have already led many to see Sunday as just another day in the week. But for us it remains the day when we gather as a community to celebrate our relationship with God in Christ.

Unfortunately, over the past two years the COVID pandemic lockdowns have further eroded our sense of the community gathering on Sundays. We continue to face that challenge.

Technology has helped us to stay in touch with family and friends when we could not meet face to face, but it is a poor substitute for normal human contact. We all look forward to a time when we can again safely gather to celebrate the Eucharist together.

We are also about to return to what we call the Ordinary Sundays. It is a short-hand name for *Ordinary Time throughout the Year*.

The Liturgical Year of the Roman Rite of the Catholic Church is framed by the two great feasts: Easter and Christmas. The Liturgical Year begins with Advent, the season when we prepare for Christmas. Lent, which this year begins on 2 March (Ash Wednesday), will then lead us to the Easter Triduum and the Easter season.

In between the Advent-Christmas and Lent-Easter seasons are the Ordinary Sundays or Sundays in Ordinary Time.

The liturgical calendar was revised in 1969, following the reforms of Vatican II. After more than 50 years, we have become familiar with the term *Ordinary Time* for these “in between” Sundays.

Yet for some, the English word “ordinary” can give the impression that these Sundays are not important. One consequence has been a tendency to introduce theme Sundays such as “Social Justice Sunday” and “Marriage & Family Sunday” into the calendar.

While there are many important issues on which we need to reflect, the danger is that we lose sight of the essential meaning of Sunday.

We know that in many European languages, Sunday is called the “Lord’s Day” and from the earliest centuries it has been the day on which Christians have gathered to celebrate the Eucharist.

*Paul Crowley,
Parish Priest*