



St Thomas More's Parish

*St Thomas More's Catholic Parish, a welcoming people of faith,
lives out God's Mission, embracing love, justice and peace.*



*We acknowledge the Western Wakka Wakka, Giabul and Jarroair people,
the Traditional Owners who have walked upon and cared for this land for
thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual
attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to
this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.*

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Parish Council Email: parishcouncil@stthomasmores.org.au

Parish Website: www.stthomasmores.org.au

Parish Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/stmparishtwmba/>

First Sunday of Lent Year B: 20 – 21 February 2021

Readings: Genesis 9:8-15; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:12-15

Lent comes around each year and presents us with its usual challenge to take stock of our lives, to see more clearly what is in our hearts and to discover what might be calling us out of our comfort zones. It is a time to consider how we might respond to the pain of the world and of its inhabitants. It is a time for personal as well as group reflection, a time for entering into "the wilderness" and for grappling with the mysteries of life. It is a time of preparation for Easter when we will renew our baptismal vows and celebrate the greatest mysteries of our faith.

The gospel reading invites us to reflect on Jesus' forty-day experience in "the wilderness". Jesus is said to be "filled with the Holy Spirit" and, like so many human beings before and since, is "led by the Spirit" into the wilderness of life to be "tested" there. ["Tested" is a more accurate translation of the original Greek term than is "tempted"]. Forty is a symbolic number in Israel's story: the great flood lasts forty days and forty nights; Moses spends forty days and forty nights on the mountain of God; Israel wanders for forty years in the wilderness; King David reigns for forty years; the prophet Elijah travels forty days and forty nights in the wilderness on his way to the mountain of God.

The wilderness of Judah, with its unique desert flora and fauna, its wadis and waterholes, is ever so real. At the same time it functions symbolically in the narrative. In Israel's story, it is the place of testing for God's people: "Remember the long way that your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness... testing you to know what was in your heart" (Deuteronomy 8:2). Jesus now passes the tests that Israel failed in the wilderness.

Jesus is "with the wild beasts". This terse statement recalls the prophet Isaiah's vision of a future time of reconciliation and harmony when "the wolf will lie down with the lamb" (Isaiah 11:6-9). Jesus is presented as the one who ushers in that age of peace and healing of division. God's agents care for him in his time of testing: "angels minister to him". In this context, Jesus announces the coming of God's empire or reign. His message is to "repent" or to "think beyond" in a way that might turn lives around in God's direction, and to "believe the good news" that he is set to proclaim in word and action. At a time of growing divide between the mega-rich and the desperately poor, we might look back to our symbolic tradition and forward to ways of bringing good news to those mostly deeply affected by the inequities in our world.

Reflection by Sister of Mercy, Sr Veronica Lawson RSM, Theologian and Biblical Scholar

Parish Leader:.....Michael Bermingham
Priest Director:.....Michael O'Brien
Pastoral Council:.....Joseph Foley
Finance Committee:.....Tim Davis
Secretary:.....Donna Pugh
Secretary:.....Jenny Bartkus
School Principal:.....Michael Cash
APRE:.....Kristin Byrne
School Board:.....Karen Tobin
Parish Safeguarding Contact:
Sarah Holcombe – 0408 193 636

Parish Diary for This Week

Monday: 9.00am.....Mass STM
5.30pm.....Mass at St Pat's
Tue – Sat 7.00am..... Mass at St Pat's
Tuesday 9.30am.....Faith Ed
5.30pm.....Mass STM
Wednesday 9.00am..Liturgy of the Word
Friday: 9.00am.....Mass STM
9.00am.....Parish Playgroup

Next Sunday – 27 and 28 February 2021

Second Sunday of Lent Year B

Saturday 6 pm Mass

Sunday 8.30 am Mass

(Maximum 200 people at each Mass)

Readings: Genesis 22:1-2, 9-13, 15-18
Romans 8:31-34
Mark 9:2-10

Thought for the Week

In embracing the experience of poverty, those who fast make themselves poor with the poor and accumulate the treasure of a love both received and shared. (Pope Francis – Lenten Message 2021)

(We can now accommodate 200 at each Mass. Chairs have been rearranged and are 1 metre apart and there is now provision for two lines for Holy Communion, with distancing of 1 metre respected.)

February 2021 HAPPENINGS IN OUR PARISH/DIOCESE

Lenten Program 2021

The Lenten Program theme for this year is *Comfort*. Being part of a Lenten Group provides an ideal opportunity to be renewed in faith, hope and love. The program contains short daily reflections from Ash Wednesday 17th February to Easter Sunday. Groups discuss the Sunday Gospels through the beautiful art of the Masters and this year they include: Le Brun, Duccio, El Greco, Gaiquinto, Veronese, van Dyck and Burnand.

The program provides spiritual direction through reflection and discussion and helps us to prepare for the Sacred Triduum – the Last Supper, the Crucifixion, and the glorious Resurrection. If you are unable to be part of a group, but would still like to participate, you can follow the program on your own. The Book for the program is “*Comfort*” and is available from the Parish Office. The cost for the book is \$8.00.

The Lenten Groups for this year commenced last week at days and times listed below:

Tuesday: 7.00pm at 25 Piggott Drive – Jacinta Twidale -

Wednesday: 5.00pm in the Parish Office Meeting Room – Michael Bermingham

Thursday: 10.00am for Morning Tea in the Parish Office Meeting Room – Emmaus Prayer Group

Friday: 10.00am - c/- Madonna Wills - Telephone 4635 5485 for further information.

If you would still like to join a group, please contact Michael for details.

Little Black Books:

The Lenten Little Black Books are still available in the Church foyer. Cost is \$5.00.

Planned Giving Envelopes:

The next round of Planned Giving Envelopes are available in the Church foyer.

Project Compassion:

As we head into the Season of Lent, we are again invited to contribute to the work of Caritas through Project Compassion. Envelopes and boxes are available in the Church foyer.

Weekend Masses:

Remember - if you are unable to get to Mass or know of someone who is unable to get to Mass or if you need transport, please get in touch with the Parish Office. If you are feeling unwell, please do not come and avail of online Mass options.

Parish Newsletter:

Paper copies are available outside the front door of the Church. Please contact the office for copies to be delivered or posted.

Caring for Each Other:

As a community of faith, we are called to be aware of those around us in the community. Please keep in touch with each other and be particularly mindful of people who may be on their own. If you need assistance or know of someone who requires Parish assistance, please contact the Office.

Planned Giving and Parish Contributions:

Many thanks to those who continue to drop their Planned Giving Envelopes into the mailbox near the door to the Parish Office. Details below for online contributions through internet banking:

Account Name: St Thomas More's

BSB Number: 064786

Account Number: 514001500

Reference: Your Envelope Number (if part of Planned Giving) or Loose Collection (if not part of Planned Giving)

Phone us if you need to ask further about this option. Thanks also to those using the Tap and Go Pay point in the Church foyer

Transport Available:

Anyone who has no transport to attend weekend Mass can be assisted. Telephone the Parish Office (4635 955) to make your needs known and a Care and Concern member will follow up to arrange suitable transport.

Holy Week and Easter Ceremonies:

Details are on Page 3 about times for Holy Week and Easter Ceremonies and information about bookings for all Holy Week and Easter ceremonies via TryBooking as for the Christmas Masses.

Mass with the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick:

Will be held on Wednesday 17 March at 9.30am at St Thomas More's and at 5.30 pm at St Patrick's Cathedral. All welcome. Please think about anyone you may be able to assist with transport so that as many as possible may experience the blessings of this healing mass.

Second Rite of Reconciliation:

Tuesday 23 March at 9.30 am at St Thomas More's and at 5.30 pm at St Patrick's Cathedral. This is an opportunity to bring ourselves and our world to celebrate the forgiveness we need for ways we have failed to live our Baptismal Promises.

New to the Parish:

If you are new to the parish, please put your details in the book provided in the foyer and you will be provided with information regarding the groups and activities you may wish to be part of. If you want to be part of our Thanksgiving Program, please contact the Parish Office on 4635 9555.

World Day of Prayer:

A Service will be held at St Luke's Anglican Church, corner Ruthven and Herries Streets, Toowoomba on Friday 5th March at 10am. The service has the theme "Pray for Vanuatu". Details about registration are on the Parish Noticeboard.

LIVE STREAMED MASS:

Ongoing from St Patrick's Cathedral Toowoomba each Sunday at 9:00am. Use any of the following links:

[Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#) or [Website](#)

PLEASE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS:

Those who are ill: Bryan Flemming, Terry Tyers, Ned Sparksman, Allan Wills, Damian Wyvill, Sara Mehari, Scott Murphy, Michelle Halpin, Christine Prescott, Toni Fitzgibbon, Camille Taylor, Patrick McNamee, Janice Lockhart, Dodie McGrane, Val Sharpe, Mary Buttin, Rev Fr Brian Sparksman, James Babineau, Mort Edmiston, Arleen Hansen, Peter Webster, Monica Gleeson, Georgie Rose Allen, Alvina Denison, Bevan Devine, Brian Swords, Jean Denison, Terry McNamara, Pauline Anderson, Margaret Reis, Fr Don Murray, Gwen Jonkers, Dawn Stark, Tim Erbacher, Lesley Mullen. Ken Ryan, Donncha Boles (son of Christine Prescott), Catherine Dormer, Kev Ford, Maria Krulik, Joan Leonard, Benjamin Shelley, Andrew McGregor, Helen Gainey. We remember all who are ill with the Corona Virus.

Anniversaries: Fr Michael Hayes, Fr Michael Cronin, Fr Henry MacFarlane, Fr Brian O'Dwyer, Josie Whittaker
We pray for all who have died from the Corona Virus.

Mark 1: 12-15

Jesus was led by the Spirit
into the wilderness to be
tempted by the devil.

After fasting forty days and
forty nights, Jesus returned
to Galilee.

Giving 13/14 February

Planned	\$1208.00
Loose	\$173.55
Pay Point	\$100.00
D Debits	\$2570.00

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT HOLY WEEK AND EASTER THIS YEAR!!

In anticipation of additional numbers for services in our Church during Holy Week and Easter this year, we have decided to use again the TryBooking system that we used at the end of last year for the Christmas Masses.

In order to avoid confusion, all the services for the Easter Triduum will be on TryBooking and you will need to book in using that facility.

Details of service days and times, together with the TryBooking link for each service are as follows:

- Holy Thursday Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6 pm on Thursday 1 April:
Please book using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/BOXPJ>
- Stations of the Cross at 10 am on Friday 2 April:
Please book using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/BOXPQ>
- Celebration of the Lord's Passion at 3 pm on Friday 2 April:
Please book using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/BOXPV>
- Easter Vigil and Mass of the Lord's Resurrection at 6 pm on Saturday 3 April:
Please book using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/BOXPY>
- Easter Sunday Mass of the Lord's Resurrection at 8.30 am on Sunday 4 April:
Please book using this link: <https://www.trybooking.com/BOXQE>

Bookings open from midday on Saturday 27 February and will remain open until near to the day of each event. There will be a limited number of places at each Mass this year – a maximum of 300 at each Mass.

Therefore, YOU MUST BOOK YOUR SEAT ASAP!!

If you need help to book in, please contact the Parish Office on 4635 9555. If you book for an event and then are unable to attend, please talk to us in the Parish Office about cancelling tickets.

***WHILE WE MAY HAVE SOME SPACE FOR PEOPLE WHO TURN UP ON
THE DAY, PRIOR BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL TO MAKE SURE YOU GET A
SPOT!!
PLEASE LET ANY VISITORS KNOW!!***

Message of the Holy Father Francis for Lent 2021 (Part One)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem” (Mt 20:18). Lent: a Time for Renewing Faith, Hope and Love.

Jesus revealed to his disciples the deepest meaning of his mission when he told them of his passion, death and resurrection, in fulfilment of the Father’s will. He then called the disciples to share in this mission for the salvation of the world.

In our Lenten journey towards Easter, let us remember the One who “humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). During this season of conversion, let us renew our faith, draw from the “living water” of hope, and receive with open hearts the love of God, who makes us brothers and sisters in Christ. At the Easter vigil, we will renew our baptismal promises and experience rebirth as new men and women by the working of the Holy Spirit. This Lenten journey, like the entire pilgrimage of the Christian life, is even now illumined by the light of the resurrection, which inspires the thoughts, attitudes and decisions of the followers of Christ.

Fasting, prayer and almsgiving, as preached by Jesus (cf. Mt 6:1-18), enable and express our conversion. The path of poverty and self-denial (fasting), concern and loving care for the poor (almsgiving), and childlike dialogue with the Father (prayer) make it possible for us to live lives of sincere faith, living hope and effective charity.

1. Faith calls us to accept the truth and testify to it before God and all our brothers and sisters.

In this Lenten season, accepting and living the truth revealed in Christ means, first of all, opening our hearts to God’s word, which the Church passes on from generation to generation. This truth is not an abstract concept reserved for a chosen intelligent few. Instead, it is a message that all of us can receive and understand thanks to the wisdom of a heart open to the grandeur of God, who loves us even before we are aware of it. Christ himself is this truth. By taking on our humanity, even to its very limits, he has made himself the way – demanding, yet open to all – that leads to the fullness of life.

Fasting, experienced as a form of self-denial, helps those who undertake it in simplicity of heart to rediscover God’s gift and to recognize that, created in his image and likeness, we find our fulfilment in him. In embracing the experience of poverty, those who fast make themselves poor with the poor and accumulate the treasure of a love both received and shared. In this way, fasting helps us to love God and our neighbour, inasmuch as love, as Saint Thomas Aquinas teaches, is a movement outwards that focuses our attention on others and considers them as one with ourselves (cf. Fratelli Tutti, 93).

Lent is a time for believing, for welcoming God into our lives and allowing him to “make his dwelling” among us (cf. Jn 14:23). Fasting involves being freed from all that weighs us down – like consumerism or an excess of information, whether true or false – in order to open the doors of our hearts to the One who comes to us, poor in all things, yet “full of grace and truth” (Jn 1:14): the Son of God our Saviour.

2. Hope as “living water” enabling us to continue our journey.

The Samaritan woman at the well, whom Jesus asks for a drink, does not understand what he means when he says that he can offer her “living water” (Jn 4:10). Naturally, she thinks that he is referring to material water, but Jesus is speaking of the Holy Spirit whom he will give in abundance through the paschal mystery, bestowing a hope that does not disappoint. Jesus had already spoken of this hope when, in telling of his passion and death, he said that he would “be raised on the third day” (Mt 20:19). Jesus was speaking of the future opened up by the Father’s mercy. Hoping with him and because of him means believing that history does not end with our mistakes, our violence and injustice, or the sin that crucifies Love. It means receiving from his open heart the Father’s forgiveness.

In these times of trouble, when everything seems fragile and uncertain, it may appear challenging to speak of hope. Yet Lent is precisely the season of hope, when we turn back to God who patiently continues to care for his creation which we have often mistreated (cf. Laudato Si’, 32-33; 43-44). Saint Paul urges us to place our hope in reconciliation: “Be reconciled to God” (2 Cor 5:20). By receiving forgiveness in the sacrament that lies at the heart of our process of conversion, we in turn can spread forgiveness to others. Having received forgiveness ourselves, we can offer it through our willingness to enter into attentive dialogue with others and to give comfort to those experiencing sorrow and pain. God’s forgiveness, offered also through our words and actions, enables us to experience an Easter of fraternity.

(Part Two will be included in next weekend’s Parish Newsletter)