



Sunday 26th February 2023

Parish Priest: Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priest:** Fr. Martin Tanti

Parish Pastoral Associates: Sandy Starbuck & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

The Partnered Parishes of:

St. Mary's

204 Grimshaw St.,
Greensborough, 3088

Parish: 9435 1543 **Presbytery:** 7036 9329

Email: Greensborough@cam.org.au

Website: www.cam1.org.au/greensborough

Secretaries: Francesca Olofsson & Sharon Prosser

Mass Times

Tuesday to Friday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday: Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 5.45pm-6.15pm before evening Mass

Parish School Principal

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**
principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au

Sacred Heart & St Peter's

25 Gipson Street,
Diamond Creek 3089

Parish: 9401 6361

Email: DiamondCreek@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek

Secretary: Pat Guatta

Mass Times

Wednesday & Friday: Mass 9.15am

St Peter's: 1st & 3rd Saturday 7.15pm

Sunday: Mass 9.00am

Reconciliation Times

Friday: 9.45am to 10.15am

Parish School Principal

Mr. Jim O'Sullivan **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**
principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au

St. Thomas the Apostle

251 Diamond Creek Road,
Greensborough Nth 3088

Parish: 9434 7373

Email: greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth

Secretary: Lisa Leahy

Mass Times

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.00pm

Sunday: Mass 10.30am

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 9.30am to 10.00am

Parish School Principal

Mr David Delaney **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**
princi-

THE CELEBRATION OF MASS IN OUR PARISHES



Grant, almighty God, through the yearly observances of holy Lent, that we may grow in understanding of the riches hidden in Christ and by worthy conduct pursue their effects.

First Sunday in Lent Year A, 26 February 2023.

<https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/reflection-lent-1-year-a>

Sacred Heart, St Mary's & St Thomas the Apostle are all members of the Diamond Valley Deanery.

Diamond Valley Deanery

www.diamondvalleydeanery.org.au

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

www.cam.org.au



Our Partnered Parishes respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to the Elders past and present.

PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

LENTEN THEME 2023-Open our eyes to see...

Lent is the liturgical season for prayer, reflection and contrition for any wrongdoing we have made in our lives as we prepare for the joyous season of Easter.

The theme for this year, ***Open our Eyes to See***, is a challenge to us: it is perhaps easier and more comfortable for us to go along with our lives as they are, to resist the urge to take time for reflection and to consider if life is really meaningful, and then to take steps to change. For Christians, a meaningful life is one based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, who tells us to open our eyes and ears to the Word of God. To be able to “see” requires us to open our hearts, to God, to our neighbours, to those in need, those marginalised and forgotten by our society. It requires faith, courage and love, love of God and of all human beings made in his image. In our world, so often wracked by wars, natural disasters and economic and social challenges, we need to have our eyes open, to see what we are called to do in the name of Jesus.

Open my eyes, Lord, help me to see Your face; open my eyes, Lord, help me to see.

Open my ears, Lord, help me to hear Your voice; open my ears, Lord, help me to hear.

Open my heart, Lord, help me to love like You; open my heart, Lord, help me to love.

(Jesse Manibusan)

WEEK ONE

Open our eyes to see beyond deception

Today is the first weekend of Lent and we pause to reflect.

In the Gospel today Jesus withdraws into the wilderness to fast and pray, preparing for his mission. There he is tempted by the devil, to turn away from the Father and to walk a path of selfishness: to seek physical comfort and pleasure, power and wealth, and to display arrogance and pride in being the Son of God. Jesus sees clearly the purpose of the devil, rebutting his evil with the Word of God. He condemns and rejects temptation, placing the love and service of God at the centre of life.

Temptation to move away from the pathway to the Kingdom is ever present in our lives. Let us remain clear sighted and committed to our faith, trusting in God and rejecting those choices that seek to deceive us and pull us away from God’s presence.

‘Open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’ Acts 26:18

POPE FRANCIS LENTEN THOUGHT

Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you.

FAITH CIRCLES, is a simple but powerful program which centres on reflection on the Gospels. The aim of the Faith Circles program is to provide opportunities, in small groups of approximately 6-10, for parishioners to reflect on the upcoming Gospel of the week. Through this reflection, participants are able to think about how the reading relates to their own lives, to discuss the teaching that Jesus was sharing with us and so grow in their own faith in a safe and welcoming environment.

There is a Faith Circles group for parishioners of our three parishes. It meets weekly via Zoom, for approximately one hour on a Tuesday evening, beginning at 7 pm. If you are interested in trying out or joining the program, please contact Cathy O’Brien via email: cathyob757@gmail.com

LENTEN PROGRAM - You are invited to join the Scripture Study Group for meditation & scripture reflection led by Dr Susie Hii commencing on 1st March over zoom each Wednesday at 7.30pm for 5 weeks. All are welcome.

Please call Jo: 0411 045 572 or Michelle: 0432316777 for more details.

A JOURNEY TO FREEDOM: Join us for a 4 week free zoom, Bible study with daily reflections. For those who seek Liberation... to be freed from “Egypt”, then purified in the “Desert”, and invited into the “Promised Land”. Thursdays, 8.00pm-9.30pm. Commencing on the 23rd February, 2nd, 9th and 23rd March.

Book before the 22nd February at <https://www.trybooking.com/CFNKH>. In order to receive the course booklet by email.

A FREE course from The Way Prayer Group, Greensborough North. For further information contact: Emilia, Phone: 0418 120 902 or

E-mail: emilia.sacchetta@bigpond.com

PROJECT COMPASSION 2023



First Sunday of Lent 25 & 26 February



Laxmi, 16, lives in in Jajarkot, a remote district in Nepal where almost half of the population live below the poverty line. Tragedy struck when Laxmi was 10 years old and her father passed away. Her father worked hard to pay for his children's education and after losing him Laxmi was at risk of falling further into extreme poverty.

With the support of our partner Caritas Nepal, Laxmi joined a child's club at her school where she was encouraged to resume her education. Through the child's club, Laxmi developed the skills and confidence to become a leader, advocating for clean water taps at her school.

Laxmi is now excelling in her studies and working towards her dream of becoming a civil engineer. She continues to be involved in the child's club, serving as an advisor and mentoring the next generation of young leaders at her old school.



Please donate to Project Compassion 2023.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow ***For All Future Generations.***

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion, or by calling 1800 024 413.

Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

REFLECTION



Nelson Mandela said that education was the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world. There are plenty of people who would agree with him. One of them is Oprah Winfrey who said that education was the way to move mountains, build bridges and to change the world. Today's readings certainly suggest the value of reading. The story from the Book of Genesis comes from pre-history. It has often been misunderstood to suggest that sin entered the world through one woman. This is not true. On the contrary, the readings tell us that the world is good. When humans try to overstretch their boundaries, trouble follows and the experience of beauty and harmony is threatened. We need to choose our teachers. Are we going to listen to God or the serpent? In our modern world, the serpent takes many forms. There are many threats to the harmony of the human race and the beauty of our

natural environment. Likewise, today's story of the temptations in the wilderness from Matthew's Gospel shows us that some lessons are difficult. Jesus actually teaches the devil. He tells the evil one that God is in charge. Jesus has to decide which voices he will follow. He has to learn that some ideas may not be as good as they sound. All the kingdoms of the world, Jesus learns, are no substitute for an honest and life-giving relationship with God. Each week during Lent, Caritas Australia asks us to think about a special story. The story focuses on someone who has benefitted from your generosity through Project Compassion.

This week, we hear about 16-year-old Laxmi who lives in a remote part of Nepal. Your help has enabled her to overcome family hardship to pursue her education. She was tempted to give up on school. But Project Compassion enabled her to follow a more positive direction and to realise what she could achieve for her community by becoming an engineer. The evil spirit will always get us to focus on what we don't have. The spirit of light will show us what is truly possible.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S

Vision Statement "To be a vibrant Christian community engaging with the world"



PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 9am-5pm, Thursdays and Fridays 10am-4pm. Please send any bulletin contributions to greensborough@cam.org.au by 2pm Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend combined bulletin. Thank you

OUR LENTEN ENVIRONMENT During Lent, our worship space is simplified with no flowers or greenery in the church or Gathering Space representing the barren desert where Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. This is symbolic of the Lenten Season when we are encouraged to pare our lives back to the basics and look into the depths of our hearts with honesty - only then can we truly see our need for repentance and change.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS DURING LENT Three Stations of the Cross services are available on our parish website during Lent – one based on the *Gospel of St Matthew*, another are *Mary's Stations*, and there is a video *Way of the Cross* with images of the Stations at Our Lady of Good Counsel Church in Deepdene carved by Austrian immigrant Leopoldine Mimovich.

CHOIR PRACTICE FOR HOLY WEEK Choir Practice for Holy Week Ceremonies will take place on **Tuesdays 7,14,21,28 March and 4 April** in the Church from 1-3 pm. Dom LaFerlita our talented Saturday night pianist will accompany us. The Liturgy is the centre of the Church's life and music adds another dimension. It is three years since we have had live music for Holy Week and you would be made very welcome. No experience necessary. Please consider joining us for these ceremonies. Contact Megan Mitchem via email: mamitchem@gmail.com if you would like to be part of the choir so that music can be organised for you.



PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR ST. PATRICKS DAY CELEBRATION ON WEDNESDAY 15TH MARCH AT 10.30AM in the gathering space. Entry \$10.00 per person. Bookings weekend of 11th/12th March after Masses. Enquiries Maureen 9435 5906 Lucy 9435 6990. All welcome



LADIES AUXILIARY We are seeking knitters to assist with knitting beanies and/or fingerless gloves. Patterns and wool are available on the table in the gathering space this weekend.

SUNDAY CATECHIST CLASSES for primary school children attending Government Schools are now commencing at 9.00am in St Mary's School. Classes are for children from Grades 3 to 6, include the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation, and are held during each term. All enquiries - Geraldine - 0438 148 896

READING WITH PARISHIONERS PROGRAM Do you have a weekday morning free? St Mary's School is looking for parishioners who are able to spare 1-2 hours on a weekly basis to listen to children read in the junior school. All volunteers will need a Working with Children's Check. Training will be provided at the beginning of the 2023 school year for parishioners who would like to be a part of the program. If you're interested please contact Bec Mellerick on 0402064081 or via email rmellerick@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au

CHILDREN'S LITURGY AT 10.00 MASS. We would love to be able to offer Children's Liturgy at 10.00 Masses once again. To do this we will need at least 4 volunteers to run a session 1 a fortnight or 8 to run it weekly. Training will be provided and you will be well supported. If you think this is something that might appeal to you, Please contact **Geraldine on 0438 148 896**. Child Safety protocols require a current Working with Children & Police check.

Pope Francis on the Lenten Fast—Do you want to fast this Lent?

Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope
Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.

Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.
Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

Fast from worries and trust in God.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S CONTINUED

SILENCE IN LITURGY God addresses us through the scriptures. But silence is what helps us discover the meaning and power of these words, letting them 'sink in' and be absorbed into our minds and hearts. In addition to the short periods of silence observed by the Reader after the first and second readings, we will again have a period of silent reflection following the Homily. **The first collection** will be taken up after this period of reflection.

THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY: The prayer shawl ministry meets in the Gathering Space 10am - 12pm on Mondays. Enquires: Maureen Leahy—0407 687 517; Anne Fleming— 0409 234 326 .

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT: First Friday of month, after 9.15am Mass to 3pm. Spend whatever time you can. All Welcome.

ARCHDIOCESE AND COMMUNITY NEWS

A MESSAGE FROM AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED AUSTRALIA: HELP SYRIA. *Aid to the Church in Need* (ACN) has launched an emergency appeal for the people in northern Syria desperate for help following the devastating earthquakes. ACN is begging for funds to support their long-time local project partners on the ground in Syria. To read more about what ACN is doing and to make an offering please visit: www.aidtochurch.org/syriaearthquake

CHANGE THEIR LIVES ... AND YOURS. Communities in Africa, Asia or the Pacific are seeking Australians from a variety of professions and trades to share their skills with those who have less opportunity to develop their talents.

Explore 35 positions by scanning the QR code below. On our website you can also see news including stories from those currently supported in Timor-Leste, Samoa, American Samoa and Thailand. Please enquire further about potential assignments for you or someone you know: RING: 02 9560 5333 or 0422 472 567. WEB: www.palms.org.au

PLEASE JOIN CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE TO CELEBRATE 50 YEARS OF THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION at the Sung Celebration of Evening Prayer Guest Speaker Dr Graeme Blackman AO *Chancellor of University of Divinity* Date: Sunday 5th March 2023 at 3.30pm Location: St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne Enq: sarah.styring@ctc.edu.au or Ph 9412 3333.

LENT 2023 WITH THE CATHOLIC GUY BRUCE DOWNES: Lent is a time when we can grow closer to God and prepare our hearts for the true meaning of Easter. Be inspired. Be refreshed. Be renewed! For 40 days you will receive a short, practical and inspiring video in your inbox every morning to help you make this Lenten journey more powerful and prayerful. This program is Free and you can sign up here: <https://BruceDownes.org/Lent23> Go to BruceDownes.org for more information.

CARITAS APPEAL FOR THE SYRIA & TURKIYE EARTHQUAKE:

You can help communities affected by the Syria and Turkey Earthquake.

Our partner Caritas Syria and other Caritas agencies on the ground are coordinating with local authorities and other organisations to see how they can best assist.

Your generous support can help provide emergency relief to help families recover and rebuild from disaster.

<https://www.caritas.org.au/news/latest-news/caritas-agencies-respond-to-catastrophic-turkey-and-syria-earthquake/>

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE : Enrolments are still open for Semester 1 at CTC. We have areas of study that may be of interest such as: *John Henry Newman and the Church in the Nineteenth Century*, which is to be held by Zoom on twelve Saturdays from 10am – 1pm (AEDT). *Pastoral Leadership for a Safe Church*, semester 1 Intensive over 4 Saturdays commencing 4th March.

Undergraduate Study Options, you can study from anywhere in the world now that CTC is offering online options. For more information contact: registrar@ctc.edu.au or visit: ctc.edu.au

A CONTEMPLATIVE SPACE (monthly via Zoom with two in-person sessions), 2nd Friday of month starting March-November from 10 am – 12pm (AEDT) with Leslie Hanger.

An invitation to take time out and nurture your soul in a contemplative space. These monthly gatherings offer opportunities for meditation, personal reflection and time for sharing. The sessions will be held online except for May and November when the group will meet in-person at Heart of Life. This is a great opportunity to develop connections with others and support each other's contemplative journey. Join us for individual sessions or book for the entire 9 sessions commencing with 10 Mar 2023. Cost: \$25 per session or \$200 for the series. Book and pay by 6/3/23 via www.heartoflife.melbourne.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PERSONALITY TYPE: Gifts Differing (in-person event), Saturday 18 March from 10 am – 3.30 pm with Peter Malone msc. Our graced selves, praying, communicating...This is a Myers Briggs reflection day. Attendees can complete the Personality Type Indicator form on the day. Cost: \$60 (BYO lunch). Book and pay by 15/3/23 via www.heartoflife.melbourne.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SACRED HEART & ST PETER'S



BAPTISMS: we pray for Anthony and Mia who were welcomed into Sacred Heart community in February.

THANK YOU to those who donated to the **Caritas Earthquake Appeal**. There will be another Leaving Collection this weekend.

VOLUNTEER WORK: Diamond Creek St Vincent Paul are in need of a treasurer. Home visitations are not mandatory and attending monthly meetings would be appreciated if available.

Please contact Ray on 0413185722 or by email ray.belli57@gmail.com

LENTEN PRAYER AND REFLECTION SESSIONS will be held at Sacred Heart on Tuesday evenings at 7.00pm beginning on Tuesday 21st February 2023. This evening group will especially support our catechumen in his preparation for the sacraments at Easter. Please register with the office.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER SERVICE - FRIDAY, MARCH 3rd, 2023 at 10:30 am at SACRED HEART CHURCH, DIAMOND CREEK. The World Day of Prayer is a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice. The theme for 2023 is I HAVE HEARD ABOUT YOUR FAITH based on Ephesians 1:15-19 and has been prepared by the Christian Women of Taiwan. Our guest speaker will be Sarah Puls, a Good Samaritan Sister. We will be joined by parishioners from St John's Anglican Church and the Uniting Church. It would be wonderful to see as many people as possible from our partnered parishes plus any family members or friends joining us on this day. There will be a collection to help the immigrant brides of Taiwan via the inter-church organisation. Help will be needed to set up the Morning Tea at the back of the church and serve the tea and coffee. Could everyone coming please bring a plate to share with our visitors? With thanks, Marg Farrell 0402 656 994.

PLAQUE FOR FR TAO: We are accepting donations from our community towards a plaque in the Garden of Reflection at Diamond Creek. Please place envelopes in the Parish Pastoral Council Suggestion Box at the back of the church. Thank you.

CHURCH CLEANING ROSTER: We are trying to get enough helpers together to begin a new cleaning roster here at Sacred Heart. Please contact Marg Farrell or Wendy McEvoy if you are available margfarrell1951@gmail.com 0402 656 994 wmcevoy@hotmail.com 0438 154 759.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Suggestion box at back of church. Email: ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com

THERE WILL BE A LEAVING COLLECTION FOR THE CARITAS EARTHQUAKE APPEAL AFTER MASSES THIS WEEKEND.

SENIOR MOMENTS:

Wednesday 1st March lunch 12pm at Diamond Creek Hotel.

Wednesday 15th March lunch & scrabble 12pm in Parish Office.

ROSTERS

Saturday 4th March St Peter's 7.15pm

Reader: E. Gittins **Commentator:** Aminda

Eucharistic Ministers: P. Leonard, Dharshanie

Sunday 5th March Sacred Heart 9am

Reader: D. Botica **Commentator:** F. Ledda

Eucharistic Ministers: R. Belli, T. Sirianni

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Katie Pittle, Catherine Leonard, Peter Mejak, Joan Moran, Bridie Burke, Thomas Keenan, Mervyn Bourke, Jacob Draper, Kath Rickard.

We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of February that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Nese Roberts, Leanne Lynch, Judy Vincent, Mary Crothers.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS

BAPTISMS: Please pray for Henry, Andreas, Teddi, and Sonny who are being baptised later this month.

GREENSBOROUGH INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL: The Greensborough Inter-Church Council exists to encourage people from the community with a wide range of Christian beliefs to come together to provide support to each other and the community in general. They work together on various events throughout the year, particularly leading up to Easter and Christmas, and raise funds to support members of our community in need. St Thomas has not been represented on this Council for the last two years, however it is important that we stay involved in this important ministry. Enquiries can be made to the St Thomas Parish office.



Rosters for Weekend 4th & 5th March 2023

Saturday 6.00pm

Reader: P. Carty **Commentator:** A. Fernando **Eucharistic Ministers:** M. Bedford, L. Cart, K. Salm

Set Up: M. McKenzie

Sunday 10.30am

Reader: J. Kerr **Commentator:** M. Kenny **Eucharistic Ministers:** F. Landy, A. Letzia, C. O'Brien

Set Up: J. Kerr

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Next Meeting, Wednesday 15th March, 7.00pm. Email: stthomasppc@gmail.com

The Parish Pastoral Council met on the 15th February and addressed the following matters.

- The meeting began with a prayer and a moment of silence in remembrance of Father Tao. We also remembered the Ash Wednesday bushfires which occurred 40 years ago.
- We welcomed the new school Deputy Principal Jo Nolen and had a very productive discussion about how the school and broader parish may work collaboratively together and strengthen our connections.
- Possible areas to develop as we reach out to others: Prep Parents Connection nights; engagement with St John of God Accord
- We acknowledged the impact of the loss of Father Tao on Father Steven and Father Martin, both personally and on their workload. We offered our support and any help we could give.
- Fr Steve provided a further update on the development of an Umbrella Pastoral Council for the three parishes.
First meeting: 3rd May
- The Liturgy Teams of the three parishes will work this year to develop a Liturgy of Lament/Atonement in response to the hurt and damage caused by sexual abuse in the Church.
- There was also discussion on how we may better inform parishioners about, advertise and promote parish events.
- In the next meeting members will consider key areas to focus on for the year ahead.

St Thomas prayers are asked for the following Parishioners:

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Miran Kasalo, John Iacobucci, Andelko Korculanin, Estelle Smooker, Tina Butera

We pray for those who have died including and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of February that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Fr Peter Fulton, Mary Crothers, Francesca Serrao, Reginald Chircop,, Sanico de Carlo, Brian Kenny, Nick Buttifant, Giuseppe Piccolo, Eddie Scully, Leslie Lowe, Kevin Phin, Rosemary Schneider, Alfonso Nguyen, Maria Nguyen, Vito Zuccula

MELKITE CATHOLIC EPARCHY

Bishop Robert Rabbat's Syrian Earthquake Appeal. Please donate now: The recent Syrian earthquake has hit people who were already displaced in a region that has been devastated by more than a decade of civil war. Yet again, we are seeing people fleeing and desperate for shelter in freezing conditions. We want to help provide that light in the deepest darkness, to get through this devastating Disaster. All donations are tax deductible. For a receipt please email mcf@melkite.org.au or contact on 02 9750 5514.

MCF DGR Appeal Ref: Syrian Appeal BSB: 062784 ACCOUNT: 100011493



Lectionary Art and Reflection by Jenny Close There are many ways to interpret 'wilderness'. In one view a wilderness is a hot, dry desert, sparse in vegetation and wildlife. It is a forbidding place for human beings and a place where human control means little. In another view it is a jungle, verdant and burgeoning with animal life. Again human control means little because nature is so powerful. In both cases the untamed land is fearful but fascinating. In the wilderness strange and wonderful transformations can happen.



First Sunday of Lent, Year A

26 February 2023

First Reading Gn 2:7-9; 3:1-7

Creation of our first parents, and sin.

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 50:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. see v.3

(R.) Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness. In your compassion blot out my offence. O wash me more and more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)
2. My offences truly I know them; my sin is always before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned; what is evil in your sight I have done. (R.)
3. A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)
4. Give me again the joy of your help; with a spirit of fervour sustain me. O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare your praise. (R.)

Second Reading Rom 5:12-19 (or Shorter form Rom 5:12, 17-19)

Where sin increased, there grace abounded all the more.

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous

Gospel Acclamation Mt 4:4

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Gospel Mt 4:1-11

Jesus fasted for forty days and nights.

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge, and they will support you on their hands in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Jesus was offered three shortcuts for his ministry. Firstly, exceptional powers to satisfy his own needs (bread out of stones). Secondly, when he needed to take risks, angels to keep him safe. Thirdly, when he wanted to change the world, absolute political power.

These were the Temptations of Christ, but also for us. If you or I are tempted to sin, we will find the marks of this threefold pattern. We want the whole world to change to satisfy us, or we want to take stupid risks and come out unscathed, or we want to exercise total power over others.

How can we try to follow Jesus without the shortcuts of the fantasy world which the Devil may offer? Note that Jesus resisted each temptation with: 'It is written'. The forty days of Lent are a perfect opportunity to read what 'is written' in the Gospels about the episodes and pattern of the life of Jesus Christ.

We could pause for a moment to find what is written and to imitate what we find. That is how the Devil is defeated.

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