

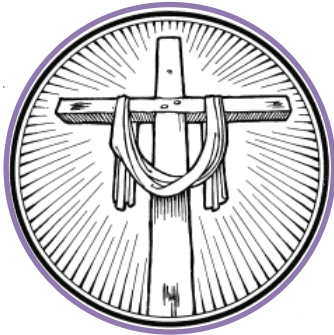
St Joseph's Catholic Parish

Second Sunday of Lent
Year B, 25 February, 2024

Embracing the communities of
Cherbourg, Goomeri, Murgon,
Proston and Wondai



Unity in diversity ... being one in Christ through Baptism!



Pope Francis:

Lent is a time to 'Encounter Wild Beasts and Angels'

Observing that during the 40 days in the desert Christ was in the company of both "wild beasts and angels," the Pope reflected that when we enter this symbolic "inner wildness," we too "encounter wild beasts and angels."

These wild beasts assume a deeply symbolic meaning in our "spiritual life," and so "we can think of them as the disordered passions that divide our heart, trying to take possession of it. They entice us, they seem seductive, but if we are not careful, we risk being torn apart by them".

Expanding upon this idea of disordered passions, we can conceive of them also as the various vices, such as the lust for wealth or the vanity of pleasure. They must be tamed and fought; otherwise, they will devour our freedom.

In order to confront these vices that afflict each and every one of us, we need to go into the wilderness to become aware of their presence and to face them – and Lent is the time to do it.

While it is imperative to undertake this journey of self-examination, we are not alone: We are aided by the angels, who are God's messengers, who help us, who do us good.

The Lenten Cure for Secular Optimism

"I hate Lent," people who grew up Christian have said to me. Some described Ash Wednesday as the worst day of the Church year. They often said it angrily, as if they were reacting to an insult or a slander, or to abuse.

That shocked me. I was a new, discovering the Church year for the first time. I liked the fact that the year included several weeks in which you worked at seeing the truth about yourself and your need for God's grace. The whole thing was really cool and here were people with a lot more experience of Lent than I had telling me they hated it.

I'd grown up in the complacent optimism of secular modern liberalism. It was a world of high ideals, and beliefs about what people and society could and should be. As the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman said, "The good society is the one that knows it is not good enough."

I knew how inadequate an understanding of human nature the secular optimism assumed. It slipped too easily from an idea of what people could be to a conviction about what they are. They, or I should say we, seemed to feel that we were as good as our ideals. (Something that is true in the Church as well.)

Worse, we felt we were good because we had such high ideals, and even worse than that, that we were better than the normal run of human beings, who were not so enlightened

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Sunday Mass Times

Murgon

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Sunday	8.00am

Wondai

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Saturday	5.00pm

Proston

every	Saturday	9.00am
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Goomeri

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Sunday (except 5th Sunday)	6.00pm

Gayndah

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	1st, 3rd, 5th	10.30am
every	2nd, 4th	9.00am

Cherbourg

WEEK	DAY	TIME
5	Sunday	4.30pm

Weekday Mass Times

12 noon, Wednesday, Gayndah
5.00pm, Wednesday, Wondai
9.00am, Thursday, Murgon
9.00am, Friday, Castra

Eucharistic Adoration for Peace

Wondai, 4.00pm to 5.00pm,
every Wednesday,
before Mass

Today's readings

Genesis 22: 1-2, 9-13, 15-18;
Romans 8: 31-3; Mark 9: 2-10

Response:

I will walk in the presence of the Lord
in the land of the living.

Gospel Acclamation:

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus
Christ! From the shining cloud, the
Father's voice is heard: this is my
beloved Son, hear him. Glory and praise
to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

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as we. It was a religious conviction no one saw as religious. It was a claim to righteousness.

This was mostly vanity. Sometimes it was a cover for acting badly. People who feel themselves enlightened above the common race of men have a reason not to think about, or even to care about, how they live.

They, or again we, can speak grandly of their love for everyone and condemn those they think don't love everyone the way they should, and then betray a friend to get in with the important people, or bully a student or a secretary, or offload their responsibilities to others on the government, or in other ways act very badly. The reality of their lives didn't seem to matter.

For christian realism

This explains in part why I loved hearing "you are dust and to dust you shall return."

On Ash Wednesday and through the whole season of Lent the continual reminders that you are not the person you'd like to think you are, and most of the time thought you were.

But the people who surprise me are those who seem to experience Lent as if they were being dragged from a lovely summer picnic in the park into a dungeon with torturers eager to punish them when they hadn't done anything. Torturers, I gathered, who often looked like Mum and Dad, their childhood parish priest, the nuns and teachers at the parochial school, and other people who claimed to speak with the authority of God Almighty but spoke solely of judgment and did not speak with his mercy.

Someone robbed them of the ability to hear Lent's particular truth.

I would say, if anyone asked, that the Church year offers different seasons with different purposes and those who can't enjoy Lent can enjoy other seasons. God offers many ways to himself, because his fallen, fractured

people need them. Maybe they should skip the Ash Wednesday service (it's not a holy day of obligation), do the bare minimum of fasting the Church requires, and choose disciplines that turn them outward, like giving more to the needy and reading more Scripture. We Catholics battle through Lent like boot camp and then, well-trained, we graduate with a big party. We gain some useful knowledge in boot camp. Except for some weekly exercises, like eating a special diet on Fridays, we were free until we had to go back into training the next year.

One thing I've thought to do is to think of the Risen Lord whenever I do anything specifically Lenten. A small act of attention, but a helpful way of seeing the whole thing, the way a movie begins focused on a person and then pulls back to show the whole countryside so that you see something of the whole story of which he's a part.

And the whole story, of which Ash Wednesday and Lent express a part, is amazing.

David Mills NCR



After the birth of her children, 22 year old Ronita was at risk of having to leave school permanently. But, with the support of Caritas Australia's partners in the Philippines,



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We pray for those who are sick:
Annette Duff; Renee Elliott; Glenda Geraghty; David & Trish McIntosh; Gregory Marrinan; Bob Ricketts.

she resumed her studies and secured a job at a call centre to support her family.

"I have now graduated senior school and I am so proud of myself," she said. "I feel hopeful for the future... Now it's not impossible for me to achieve my dream... Thank you."

Please donate to Project Compassion.

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.



February 2024

For the terminally ill.

We pray that those with a terminal illness, and their families, receive the necessary physical and spiritual care and accompaniment.