

St Joseph's Catholic Parish

Fifth Sunday of Lent
Year B, 17 March, 2024

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



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



The Basilica of Saint Francis in Assisi, Umbria, Italy.
(photo: Giorgio Art / Shutterstock)

This is a time to get on our knees and pray for peace

We ask God for genuine peace that surpasses all understanding to come swiftly to the lands that so many call home.

The men of Nineveh took the Lord seriously. They proclaimed a fast and held to it and asked everyone to do so, to repent and pray and sacrifice because they knew they were in the wrong. God did not destroy them.

We live in an age when we are destroying ourselves and destroying each other. With our words, with our deeds, with what we do, what we don't do, and what we pretend is not our affair. We keep pushing away the reality that our world is in deep peril, steeped in pain, injustice, suffering, and yes, sin.

It is not the time to point fingers at others. It is time to get on our knees, and with one voice, pray. We need to ask the 'Prince of Peace' to breathe on the whole world and send forth his Spirit so that we might know something of the peace God longs to give us.

Back in 2013, the new Pope Francis held a vigil for peace on 7 September. Leading up to it, he had asked Christians of the world to pray, even as the news cycle

flooded our hearts with the promise of what seemed like inevitable war. He asked Catholics to pray the Rosary, and overnight, the threat of a real war in Lebanon evaporated. Statesmen and leaders participated in the follow-up, but the swiftness felt like God holding all of us in his hands, calming all the rage that threatened.

Now, we again face what feels like a fire that will never be quenched in places like Gaza. We should join with all who value life, who understand that peace requires greater effort than wrath or rage, and pray for all hurt, for all hurting, and for genuine peace that surpasses all understanding to come swiftly to the lands that so many call home.

The Pope has asked the laity to take a more active role in propelling forth the mission of the Church. We should shoulder this burden, and like the Holy Father's namesake saint, seek to rebuild this broken Church, broken by scandal, neglect, indifference, sins and distractions of the world.

It will require us to be actual channels of God's peace, putting hope where there is despair, light where there is darkness, and pardon where there is injury. It will demand that we begin on our knees, praying for all who rage against us, for all we feel justified in raging against, praying until we know we've poured out all that kept us from God's grace, and from seeing our neighbors as God's beloved. We live in Christ and know something greater than the prophet Jonah here, so we should do no less if we want the world to know how great is our God.

Sherry Antonetti NCR

Easter Services 2024

Proston –

Wednesday, 27 March,
Holy Thursday Mass, 9.00am

Murgon –

Thursday, 28 March,
Holy Thursday Mass, 6.00pm
Friday, 29 March,
The Lord's Passion, 3.00pm
Saturday, 30 March,
Easter Vigil, 6.00pm

Wondai –

Friday, 29 March,
Stations of the Cross, 10.00am
Sunday, 31 March,
Easter Sunday Mass, 8.00am

Goomeri –

Friday, 29 March,
Stations of the Cross, 3.00pm
Sunday, 31 March,
Easter Sunday Mass, 6.00pm

Cherbourg (to be determined)

Holy Hour for Peace

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

Today's readings

Isaiah 50: 4-7; Philippians 2: 6-11;
Mark 15: 1-39

Response:

My God, My God, why have you abandoned me!

Gospel Acclamation:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! Christ became obedient for us even to death, dying on the cross. Therefore God raised him on high and gave him a name above all others. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, kind of endless glory!

Eternal value of the Cross

Although I understood offering up suffering, that understanding deepened through the messages of Jesus to Blessed Conchita Cabrera. Blessed Conchita (1862-1937) received mystical messages from Jesus – approved by the Church – offering profound insights into the power of suffering. The Mexican wife and mother of nine had founded a men's and a women's religious community and published 46 books sharing mystical messages to transform our lives in Christ.

Jesus spoke to Conchita directly, explaining the eternal value of the Cross and the communion of suffering. Through the Cross, Conchita was formed in Christ and received the 'highest grace of the Mystical Incarnation,' union with Mary, and entrustment of a spiritual motherhood of priests.

The Cross of Jesus was Conchita's signpost; the Crucified Lord was her model. A married laywoman, a mother, would arise to sound a trumpet and herald the power of the Cross like Saint Paul. This power cannot be stripped away by all the sin and evil in the world. As Paul teaches, "Where sin increased grace abounded all the more" (Romans 5:20).

Conchita wrote in her book, 'Message of the Cross', "It is of vital urgency to have a clear awareness of what the Cross of Christ means, of what it accomplishes in the mystery of the person."

In the Cross of Christ is our salvation and the invitation to join our suffering to his. She shared that a season of her own suffering had been so heavy that she thought she would die from it.

"The only solace I ever received was uniting my suffering to Jesus on the Cross. When I placed my pain next to Christ's passion, I gained perspective and purpose." She explained that

the Cross is a love story and through Christ's wounds, ours are healed and that when we suffer, Christ is mystically holding us. Suffering has meaning and value only when united to Jesus' cross.

Visions of The Cross

Conchita received visions of a heart on a cross, surrounded by flames, pierced by a lance and pulsating with love. Jesus explained to her that it was a continuation of the devotion to his Sacred Heart given to Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque (1647-1690). Through Conchita's messages from Jesus, the Apostleship of the Cross developed into a new school of spirituality.

Jesus told Conchita:

"I wish the Cross to reign. Today, it is presented to the world with my heart so that it may bring souls to make sacrifices. No true love is without sacrifices. Therein is the repose of the soul, the soul inebriated by love delights in its life. ... The essence of this work consists in making known the interior sufferings of my Heart which are ignored, and which constitute for me a more painful Passion than that which my body underwent on Calvary, on account of its intensity and its duration, mystically perpetuated in the Eucharist."

Jesus shared with Conchita that the world has known of the love of his Sacred Heart through Saint Margaret Mary and now through her, it would learn of the suffering of his heart.

"I say again, there must be a penetration into the Interior of this boundless ocean of bitterness and an extension of knowledge of it throughout the world, for by bringing about the union of the suffering of the faithful with the immensity of the sufferings of my Heart, for their suffering is mostly wasted. I wish them to profit from it by way of the Apostolate of the Cross for the benefit of souls and for consolation of my Heart."



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We pray for those who are sick:

Renee Elliott; David McIntosh;
Bob Ricketts.

Jesus wants the world to profit by uniting its vast suffering to the immensity of his suffering on the Cross. The message is rejected today. Jesus searches for men in women of all vocations to be brave in their witness to the power of the Cross. How often do we consider the interior sufferings of Jesus and offer consolation or reparation?

She pointed out that we should certainly pray for the alleviation of our suffering. But whatever suffering remains, if the healing doesn't come, then the offering of suffering in union with the Cross is a powerful act of love.

Patti Maguire Armstrong Patti NCR



There is still time to donate!

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, for all future generations.

Please donate to Project Compassion. 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.