



Regina Coeli Parish

Beverly Hills - In the Archdiocese of Sydney



Weekly Newsletter

Fifth Sunday of Lent 29 March 2020

Liturgy Times

SUNDAY:

8:30am, 10:00am.

Children's Liturgy during school term

TUESDAY: 8:30am Adoration, 9.15am Mass

WEDNESDAY: 7:00am

THURSDAY: 9:15am

FRIDAY: 8:30am Adoration, 9.15am Mass

SATURDAY: 9:00am

(Adoration and Reconciliation after Mass)

5:00pm (Vigil Mass)

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Saturday: 9:30-10:00am; 4:25-4:50pm

Day 7 A.C.C. (after church closure)

There is now a new "calendar" (A.C.C.) which works by counting the days since the historic and nationwide church closure on 23 March 2020. Who would have seen this coming? Who would have anticipated that something as small as a virus could have altered our world so drastically and so rapidly? Parish bulletins used to be, for me, an extra way of communicating to parishioners. But now it is pretty much the only means of communication (for the moment anyway). And I don't even know who, if any, is paying attention!

How has your life been since the day of church closure? Perhaps it feels a little surreal now that no one can go to church even if they really want to? For me, it dawned on me at the end of last Monday (my day-off) how surreal it was that the church would be eerily quiet, every day, who knows for how long? I have made an enquiry about the possibility of leaving the side-door open whilst keeping the inside-door locked up (using a chain) so that no one can go into the main part of the church. In this way, I thought, parishioners would be able to make a quick stop and find comfort in being able to look into their beloved church through the glass. Unfortunately, the answer I received was 'no' (it might risk forming a gathering of people which is not allowed). In hindsight, I wondered if it would have been better for me to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission ;)

Here is one thing I am intending to do during the church lockdown: **I will strive to celebrate Mass everyday around 7:30pm so that those who look up will see the church lit and know that Mass is being celebrated for the whole parish! Perhaps you might like to engage in a spiritual activity around the same time e.g. praying the rosary as a family.** We can never overstate the significance of what is happening when Mass is being celebrated - how Christ, without whose divine love the world is certain to be lost, becomes present truly and substantially. Nevertheless, even I, as a priest, can often feel ill-prepared to receive the Eucharist in a fitting manner. As I said in my "last" public homily, being intimate with the Lord takes time and patience because it requires us to learn to look at things (especially ourselves and one another) the way God looks at them. Perhaps the enforced church closure is gifting us with the time and patience we need in order to be able to open our eyes to our own inmost need for the love of God.

When it comes to 'quiet prayer' - the key to the secrets of our own heart - we will not always get it perfectly right. In the past seven days I have had some retreat-like moments as well as some wildly undisciplined moments which were marked by embarrassing surges in 'Screen Time'! But I hope never to give up, always remembering that, pandemic or not, we are still in the purifying season of Holy Lent. Who knows what remedy might be found along the way and what treasure might be in store for us at the end of a sincerely pursued journey?

- Fr Peter -

Pastoral Team:

Fr Peter Kwak PP

beverlyhillspriest@gmail.com

Parish Office Address:

5 Tarrilli Street

Postal Address:

PO Box 100

Beverly Hills NSW 2209

Telephone: 9554 8155

Email: reginaparish@gmail.com

Web: reginacoeliparish.org.au

The Week Ahead

Sun 29 Mar
Fifth Sunday
in Lent

Mon 30 Mar

Tues 31 Mar

Wed 1 April

Thurs 2 April

**Private Masses by Fr Peter,
offered for the whole parish,
hopefully everyday at 7.30pm!**

Fri 3 April

Sat 4 April

Sun 5 April
Palm Sunday

Churches are
not being
closed.
Buildings are
being closed.
You are the
church! You are
to remain open.

Please pray for...

Recently Deceased

Sam Pirotta, Giuseppe Graniero, Luigia (Gina) Ponticello

In Loving Memory

Jusuf Susanto Oentojo, Jovito Canonizado, Carmela Cutelli

Please remember those who are in ill health especially:

Beven Kelly, Ann Mc Dowell, Christopher McDowell, Damiano Serravalle, Michelle Makin, Pat Johnson, George Dagher, Mrs Saba, Josephina Algozzina, Geraldina Civitarese, Pat Mortimer, Greg Weekes, Mrs Donald Burch, Mary Daniels, Geoff McDowell, Elena Mura, Mr TD (Terry) Wall, Kim Delaney, Mary Emery, Lauren Sotano, Sam Hy, Mary Sortwell, Georgia Brown, Luke Compton, Paul

Life Ascending Meetings

Third Thursday at 7:30pm
Second and fourth Fridays after the 9.15 Mass.

Parish Secretary

Mrs Margaret
Doherty-Brady
9554 8155
Tues 8:30am – 1:30pm
Wed & Fri 10.30am-
3.30pm
Business Manager
Mr Peter Crawford

Sacramental Coordinator/

PSSO
Mrs Elizabeth Gooley
9554 8155
reginasacramental@gmail.com
Tuesday **and** Thursday from
11.30am - 3.30pm

School Principal

Mr Chris Egan
Asst. Principal
Mr Peter Busch
REC
Mrs Elizabeth Webster

A “controversial” message I (Fr Peter) shared with other priests this week, which might give you an idea of where I stand:

It is politically incorrect of me to say this but things are starting to look up as far I am concerned! There is an emerging view that the coronavirus is even more widespread than we think, but the majority of those who are actually infected have not been tested because their symptoms are mild or non-existent, or they simply have not volunteered to be tested for some other reason; plus, the resources for testing are limited, although less so in places like Germany or Australia where more rigorous testing has been conducted and the fatality rate has been found to be around 0.5%! This means that the commonly used fatality rate (above 4%), as well as the rate of critically ill cases (above 15%), has been significantly exaggerated. The same would be true in regard to the long-term projections, based on those rates, put out by the mainstream media. Yes, the coronavirus is very serious and we would do well to exercise reasonable social distancing, but things are not as catastrophic as we have been led to believe at times! It will be fascinating for us to look back on all of this in hindsight and wonder, ‘How on earth...?’

Rosary Statue

Miss Betty Meaney

19 Bundara Street
Ph: 9150 8788



Last Weekend 22 Mar 2020		Attendance	
2nd Collection \$0		5PM	
1st Collection \$0		8.30AM	
		10AM	
		Total	<300

Funerals during the corona-pandemic

There were supposed to be three funerals at Regina Coeli this past week. When the government ordered church closure and then allowed funerals to be celebrated with up to ten attendees, two of the funerals were cancelled - they went straight to the cemetery. The only one which went ahead was for the response of the soul of Giuseppe Graniero.

I recognised neither the name nor the photo of the deceased. But I immediately recognised his wife - Anna - who was now a widow. There was enough familiarity between us to warrant, let's say, a more personal approach to the situation, but we all had to be restrained by the rules of 'social-distancing' which are now written everywhere in invisible paint. There were exactly ten attendees. Even close family members had to be "approved" by the funeral company in order to attend. The worst part, as far as I could tell, was that even the small number who were able to attend had to physically spread themselves out, instead of being able to console one another in a truly human manner. I hope that more can be done for the grieving once the pandemic is behind us. The following is from the one of the two daughters, Tania Fiumara:

Giuseppe Graniero born in 1940 in Frosinone Italy, proudly an Australian citizen since 1976 and a member of the Beverly Hills Community for 15 years, died on March 16, 2020 in the care of St George Hospital. Giuseppe lived a full life with his wife Anna and daughters Maria & Tania. He worked hard to provide for his family and enjoyed the company of many friends including those who are members of the parish. He will be missed by all.



Some suggestions from parishioners at Regina Coeli during the church lockdown:

Streaming Services

No, not another Netflix! A few parishioners wondered if mass at Regina Coeli could be live-streamed. One parishioner wondered if my homilies could be recorded and uploaded on the parish website. In principle I am open to doing something online, but not straightaway ;) For now, I recommend streaming services offered by these other parishes:

- * St Mary's Cathedral Sydney <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZxfrykD8iSWExFBdM7fpRg/featured>
- * Our Lady of the Way North Sydney <https://www.youtube.com/user/cathnews> (Alternatively, you can go to their website <https://www.northsydneycatholics.com/> and follow the link)
- * St Declan's Penshurst Parish <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMUpiYTtBvI-1M3Uj-3b9Vg/featured> (Alternatively, you can go to their website <http://www.stdeclanspenshurst.org/> and follow the link)

Outreach during the pandemic

It is critically important is that social-distancing does not become social-isolation. We are concerned especially about those in our parish who might be more vulnerable to becoming isolated, in more ways than one, during the challenging time of extreme social-distancing. I was edified that about three parishioners expressed their concern in regard to this issue way before I myself got around to thinking about it! We need two groups of people:

- * Those who are in need and can acknowledge, humbly and graciously, that they need assistance.
- * Those who are willing to help the isolated in our community by checking on them and/or by helping them with things like shopping.

If you belong to either of the two groups, then, please do not hesitate to contact me: beverlyhillspriest@gmail.com or 02 9554 8155

Parish Facebook

I have "resurrected" my Facebook account in case I might decide to manage the parish Facebook page which was set up by Fr Paul Smithers. There has been no activity on the 'Regina Coeli Catholic Church' Facebook page for the past two years, but that could change. I am not sure how committed I would be to this, but it would be great for parishioners to utilize it.

Online meetings

Even though we are discouraged from having gatherings of any kind, it is still possible to organize virtual gatherings – rather futuristic! 'Zoom' has been recommended as a possible online forum. But the issue here is that online meetings requires all the participants to be tech-savvy!

Other online resources

- * A comprehensive list of online resources from the Archdiocese of Sydney <https://www.sydneycatholic.org/coronavirus-updates/prayer-resources-for-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>
- * For youth <https://www.facebook.com/SydneyCatholicYouth/>
- * Daily missal <https://universalis.com/>
- * Sacred Space prayer site (the Irish Jesuits) <https://www.sacredspace.ie/>
- * Preachers Exchange prayer site (Dominican preachers) <https://www.preacherexchange.com/>

Please keep the suggestions coming!

First Reading Ez 37:12-14

I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 129. R. v.7

*(R.) With the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption*

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading. (R.)
2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you. (R.)
3. My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than watchman for daybreak.
(Let the watchman count on daybreak
and Israel on the Lord.) (R.)
4. Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity. (R.)

Second Reading Rom 8:8-11

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he will give life to your own mortal bodies.

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

Gospel Acclamation See Jn 11:25. 26

*Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord;
whoever believes in me will not die for ever.
Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!*

**Gospel Jn 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33-45
or longer form Jn 11:1-45**

I am the resurrection and the life.

The sisters Martha and Mary sent this message to Jesus, 'Lord, the man you love is ill.' On receiving the message, Jesus said, 'This sickness will end not in death but in God's glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.'

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judaea.'

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.' 'Your brother' said Jesus to her 'will rise again.' Martha said, 'I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said:

*'I am the resurrection and the life.
If anyone believes in me, even though he dies
he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me
will never die.
Do you believe this?'*

'Yes, Lord,' she said 'I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.' Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, 'Where have you put him?' They said, 'See how much he loved him!' But there were some who remarked, 'He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man's death?' Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, 'Take the stone away.' Martha said to him, 'Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.' Jesus replied, 'Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

*'Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer.
I knew indeed that you always hear me,
but I speak
for the sake of all these who stand round me,
so that they may believe it was you who sent
me.'*

When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, 'Lazarus, here! Come out!' The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, let him go free.'

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.



Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

As a metaphor, death can stand for many things. The prophet Ezekiel witnessed the death of the nation. The gospel reports the death of Lazarus. Although Paul refers to the mortal character of our physical bodies, he is more concerned with spiritual life and death. Death attacks each one of us in all three of these ways. We are all mortal and subject to physical death; we are all sinners and must deal with the implications of spiritual death; we are all subject to the consequences of social sins such as terrorism, violence, group hatred, greed and ecological exploitation. The question before us is whether or not we are going to allow death to reign in our lives and in our communities.

All three readings for this Sunday, as well as the psalm response, point out our inability to raise ourselves out of the deaths that afflict us. In the passage from Ezekiel, it is God who promises to open the graves of the people; the people are helpless to do anything. The psalmist cries to God from out of the depths of pain and helplessness. Acknowledging human propensity to sin, Paul credits the Spirit of God with transforming death into life. Finally, it is Jesus who calls Lazarus out of the grave and returns him to his life. We can see that God does not leave us to languish in our various deaths. Instead, God offers us new life out of the tombs. All of this is accomplished through the mercy and compassion of God.

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