



# Regina Coeli Parish

Beverly Hills - In the Archdiocese of Sydney



## Weekly Newsletter

### 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

### Palm Sunday 5 April 2020

#### Day 14 After Church Closure

I am hoping that counting with sadness the number of days since the church closure will increase the joy of meeting you all again, someday, as survivors of the “apocalypse”! But what exactly is it that we hope to have *survived* when the day of our reunion finally arrives? I think that we face a number of challenges: firstly, there is the pandemic itself, and then there is the collateral damage done to the fabric of our society as result of prolonged/extreme social distancing. Finally, there is the potential loss of faith! This is the first time in over a hundred years that Catholics in Australia have been denied access to public worship and the sacraments (not to mention just being able to pay a visit!). So, will we have survived the test of faith brought upon us by the “invisible enemy” during this strangest of times?

I would be lying if I said that my own faith has not been tested in the past fourteen days. For a start it has been rather depressing to celebrate Mass in an empty church day after day! I have a theory, based on personal experience, that celebrating Mass with people on a regular basis becomes, as it were, the spirituality of the priest. So, when that blessed privilege is suddenly taken away, it would be understandable for the priest to feel at least a little thrown off balance. But I am complaining too much and not addressing the deeper cause of the predicament. They say that desperate times call for desperate measures, but we would do well to be careful about what we mean by that. If by “desperate measures” we meant, for example, listening more to news than to the Word of God or paying greater attention to what is trending than to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, then, we would be in grave danger of turning desperate times into *hopeless* times. You can probably get a picture of what my struggle has been - no surprise there!

We live an incredibly *wired* world. Traditionally what wired us were things like telephone lines, power lines, Australia Post, etc. The latest is the National Broadband Network. But all these are merely the tip of the iceberg. If all of the ways in which we were *invisibly* wired (or wirelessly wired) could be made visible, then, we would surely find ourselves in the thick of an infinite cobweb. Perhaps it was no accident that when the internet first emerged they called it ‘World Wide Web.’ We are no longer just wired to 24-hour-news-cycles through television; it is all that and so much more to which we are wired through “smart” devices which have become like our extended body parts, without which we can almost feel as though we were missing a limb or two. Science fiction predicts that the devices that keep us hyper-wired will eventually become integrated into the human body. I hope science fiction is wrong about this, but in another sense I can see that we are already there. Our mind has become so dependent on constant input from technology that our own thoughts cannot easily be distinguished from the thoughts - or the data - which traverse and congest the virtual world.

What is trending in the virtual world, since we are so wired to it, probably impacts on us far more than we realise. The prevailing thoughts and feelings there become *our* thoughts and feelings. We tend to be suspicious of anyone who presents a different view and yet we are strangely unsuspecting when it comes to being influenced by that to which we are perennially wired. When panic is trending in the virtual world *we* panic, sensing exaggerated urgency where it does not exist. When doom and gloom are trending *we* struggle to keep doom and gloom out of our hearts and minds.

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## The Week Ahead

Sun 5 April  
Palm Sunday

**Private Masses by Fr Peter,  
offered for the whole parish,  
everyday at 7.30pm!  
(Except on Good Friday)**

Mon 6 April  
Holy Week

Tues 7 April  
Holy Week

Wed 8 April  
Holy Week

Thurs 9 April  
Holy Week

Fri 10 April  
Good Friday

**3pm Good Friday with the Archbishop  
On Channel 7**

Sat 11 April  
Holy Saturday

**7.30pm Easter Vigil  
Live-streamed from Regina Coeli  
(Please check the parish website  
for more information)**

Sun 12 April  
Easter!

**10.30am Easter Sunday  
with the Archbishop  
On Channel 7**



### To live-stream or not to live stream...

A number of parishes in Sydney (as a matter of fact, all around the world!), under the leadership of their zealous pastors, have started to live-stream Mass during the time of church lockdown, so as to allow parishioners to join in spirit, make spiritual communion and stay in touch with the parish. I have been seriously conflicted about whether to follow their example or not. There has been some interesting development.

**Channel 7 will be televising Easter ceremonies with Archbishop Anthony Fisher from St Mary's Cathedral:**

- \* **3pm on Good Friday**
- \* **10.30am on Easter Sunday**

I wish to promote these historic television broadcasts instead of live-streaming simultaneously. At first I thought I could therefore postpone the decision about live-streaming until after Easter, but then it occurred to me that the Easter Vigil might be a very meaningful time to try live-streaming. So, in all likelihood, there will be a link on the front page of our parish website, closer to the date, which will take you (fingers crossed) to the **first live-streamed Mass at Regina Coeli on Holy Saturday at 7.30pm!**

Dear Parishioners,

I hope everyone is staying safe and you are protecting yourselves, as well as your loved ones. Here is a poem to hopefully bring some joy into your new lifestyle. Keep having faith in Our God and know that we are all in this together. God bless.

- Stephanie -

### A Voice that Matters (By Stephanie Boccanfuso)

During these times of doubt, there are so many voices in your head.

Voices of Authority and your conscience is your route,  
but one is what you trust and read.

One by one each of them disappears,  
whilst the Shepherd calls you gently.

In unknown times like these can disrupt our peers,  
but He has the power to carry us relentlessly.

He can heal our hearts and minds, for our oath that binds:  
"Be strong, do not fear; God will come with vengeance and divine."

Loving your family, friends and the community,  
is the key to happiness and a revelation of a new trinity.

This is a rule and a voice we have to hear now,  
for as long as one could vow.

Pushing through new measures is nothing out of the ordinary,  
it is a concept of life whether it would on the contrary.

Through limits and testings you can find other ways to distract,  
but oneself might be troubled for what they extract.

He is your distraction of patience and compassion,  
He is the beauty of kindness and attraction.

Spare your thoughts on hope,  
it will bring an entire new scope.

Your prayers will be answered if you trust in Him,  
for our time is not so slim.

Both voices need to say their chapters, but one voice really matters.

### Share with us how you are going!

One of the surprising benefits of the church lockdown has been that a number of parishioners kindly wrote me an email. It dawned on me that each person shared with me, even if unconsciously, some helpful insight into what many are currently experiencing during the corona-pandemic. Here is an example (with permission from the author):

'I know that I am luckier than most people right now and I am thankful for everything and everyone I have however I can't help but feel really down about the current situation. I can't believe that this is happening to the world we live in. I feel for my young children, all the other kids and I worry about their future amongst other things. I know that there is a reason for everything and I will not stop praying for this pandemic to be over.'

- Marie Joy C.L. -

During the week I managed to get some prayer cards printed - 1000 of them! I hope to do letterbox drops during the next few weeks (if I can somehow identify parishioners' houses). One side of the card says, 'Please stay connected.' So, please do!

### Rosary Statue

**Mr Brian Moore**

**16 Maryl Avenue  
Ph: 9750 6992**



There is what they call a ‘feedback loop’ which can generate so much noise in the virtual world that it actually has real life consequences: for example, suppose there is a report about someone who panics, which in turn causes a number of other people to panic; now, there are multiple reports about people panicking, all of which go viral, and before we know it we are in the middle of mass panic, from which we will probably not come out unscathed. How did we end up in such a fragile and volatile situation where, if conditions were ripe, that to which we were collectively wired could easily turn our world upside down and throw it into chaos?

All of this highlights the vital importance of being wired to the *one thing necessary* rather than to a myriad of “fast” but insubstantial things. Granted, it is not easy for us to remain wired to God, or to deepen the holy connection, especially when there are so many seductive alternatives. Our dilemma is that, even though we deeply long to be wired to the One who is Love, we are at the same time *afraid* to take the risk of believing without seeing. So, we are tempted to turn to what we can see easily - what offers us instant access and the illusion of endless promises. But here is the problem: that to which we are easily wired only engages a small part of us (what I like to call the “neurotic” part of us) whilst leaving the rest of us substantially untouched/neglected; furthermore, being hyper-neurotically-wired actually blinds our inner sight and makes us forget who we truly are. Every now and then we come across an ‘apocalypse’ (a word whose origin means ‘revealing’) which exposes the true state of our interior poverty: anxious, confused, insecure, uncertain, vulnerable, manipulable...on the brink of despairing in the face of unexpected challenge.

But what if we could be deeply and securely wired to God? What would that look like? This weekend we celebrate Palm Sunday when we remember how Jesus suffered a complete reversal of fortune within a short space of time - one moment he was hailed as the Messiah, the next moment he was denounced by the crowd who shouted, ‘Crucify him! Crucify him!’ But this was to become Jesus’ hour of glory - his finest hour - due to his handling of the imminent Passion. Whatever Jesus had to face he did it with unwavering trust in God the Father; his heart was immovably rooted in trust - invincibly “wired” - such that he became unstoppable in humbly accepting death and joyfully rising to new life. For us to be wired to God is to enter into the relationship of love shared between the Father and the Son. Our faith is being tested during this most unusual time of church lockdown (among other things). But faith is not a mere exercise of the mind, far from it! I believe that faith is best described as a relationship based on trust. When we recognise faith as a blessed relationship, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit will welcome us, heal our wounds, teach us, etc., and nothing will be able to separate us; in other words, we will be well and truly “wired”! And then we might be able to say something like this:

‘The Lord has given me a disciple’s tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed. (Isaiah 50:4-7, 1st reading this weekend) - Fr Peter -

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

#### Streaming Services

- \* 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. If you are in need of assistance or would like to help, then, please contact me: [beverlyhillspriest@gmail.com](mailto:beverlyhillspriest@gmail.com) or 02 9554 8155

**Parish Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/Regina-Coeli-Catholic-Church-696738427074740/>

There has been no update except that I now have access to the page ‘Regina Coeli Catholic Church’ as administrator!

#### Online meetings

I had my first experience this week using Zoom and it certainly showed potential!

#### 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!*



## Gospel Mt 21:1-11

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*

When they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, saying to them, 'Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find an ass tied, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, "The Lord has need of them," and he will send them immediately'. This took place to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet, saying, 'Tell the daughter of Zion, Behold, your king is coming to you, humble and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass'.

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them; they brought the ass and the colt, and put their garments on them, and he sat thereon. Most of the crowd spread their garments on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the crowds that went before him and that followed him shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!' And when he entered Jerusalem all the city was stirred, saying, 'Who is this?' And the crowds said, 'This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee.'

## First Reading Is 50:4-7

*I did not cover my face against insult and I know I will not be ashamed.*

The Lord has given me a disciple's tongue. So that I may know how to reply to the wearied he provides me with speech. Each morning he wakes me to hear, to listen like a disciple. The Lord has opened my ear. For my part, I made no resistance, neither did I turn away. I offered my back to those who struck me, my cheeks to those who tore at my beard; I did not cover my face against insult and spittle. The Lord comes to my help, so that I am untouched by the insults. So, too, I set my face like flint; I know I shall not be shamed.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 21:8-9. 17-20. 23-24. R. v.2**

**(R.) My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?**

- All who see me deride me. They curl their lips, they toss their heads. 'He trusted in the Lord, let him save him; let him release him if this is his friend.' (R.)
- Many dogs have surrounded me, a band of the wicked beset me. They tear holes in my hands and my feet. I can count every one of my bones. (R.)
- They divide my clothing among them. They cast lots for my robe. O Lord, do not leave me alone, my strength, make haste to help me! (R.)
- I will tell of your name to my brethren and praise you where they are assembled. 'You who fear the Lord give him praise; all sons of Jacob, give him glory. Revere him, Israel's sons.' (R.)

## Second Reading Phil 2:6-11

*He humbled himself to become like us and God raised him on high.*

His state was divine, yet Christ Jesus did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are, and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross. But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus

and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

## Gospel Acclamation Phil 2:8-9

*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 other names.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!*

## Gospel shorter form Mt 27:11-54

Jesus was brought before Pontius Pilate, the governor, and the governor put to him this question, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' Jesus replied, 'It is you who say it.' But when he was accused by the chief priests and the elders he refused to answer at all. Pilate then said to him, 'Do you not hear how many charges they have brought against you?' But to the governor's complete amazement, he offered no reply to any of the charges.

At festival time it was the governor's practice to release a prisoner for the people, anyone they chose. Now there was at that time a notorious prisoner whose name was Barabbas. So when the crowd gathered, Pilate said to them, 'Which do you want me to release for you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?' For Pilate knew it was out of jealousy that they had handed him over.

Now as he was seated in the chair of judgement, his wife sent him a message, 'Have nothing to do with that man; I have been upset all day by a dream I had about him.'

The chief priests and the elders, however, had persuaded the crowd to demand the release of Barabbas and the execution of Jesus. So when the governor spoke and asked them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release for you?' they said 'Barabbas'. 'But in that case,' Pilate said to them 'what am I to do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all said, 'Let him be crucified!' 'Why?' he asked 'What harm has he done?' But they shouted all the louder, 'Let him be crucified!' Then Pilate saw that he was making no impression, that in fact a riot was imminent. So he took some water, washed his hands in front of the crowd and said, 'I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your concern.' And the people, to a man, shouted back, 'His blood be on us and on our children!' Then he released Barabbas for them. He ordered Jesus to be first scourged and then handed over to be crucified.

The governor's soldiers took Jesus with them into the Praetorium and collected the whole cohort around him. Then they stripped him and made him wear a scarlet cloak, and having twisted some thorns into a crown they put this on his head and placed a reed in his right hand. To make fun of him they knelt to him saying, 'Hail, king of the Jews!' And they spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head with it. And when they had finished making fun of him, they took off the cloak and dressed him in his own clothes and led him away to crucify him.

On their way out, they came across a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, and enlisted him to carry his cross. When they had reached a place called Golgotha, that is, the place of the skull, they gave him wine to drink mixed with gall, which he tasted but refused to drink. When they had finished crucifying him they shared out his clothing by casting lots, and then sat down and stayed there keeping guard over him.

Above his head was placed the charge against him; it read: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.' At the same time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.

The passers-by jeered at him; they shook their heads and said 'So you would destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save yourself! If you are God's son, come down from the cross!' The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked him in the same way. 'He saved others,' they said 'he cannot save himself. He is the king of Israel; let him come down from the cross now, and we will believe in him. He put his trust in God; now let God rescue him if he wants him. For he did say, "I am the son of God."' Even the robbers who were crucified with him taunted him in the same way.

From the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour, Jesus cried out in a loud voice, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you deserted me?' When some of those who stood there heard this, they said, 'The man is calling on Elijah,' and one of them quickly ran to get a sponge which he dipped in vinegar and putting it on a reed, gave it him to drink. 'Wait!' said the rest of them 'and see if Elijah will come to save him.' But Jesus again crying out in a loud voice, yielded up his spirit.

At that, the veil of the Temple was torn in two from top to bottom; the earth quaked; the rocks were split; the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead, and these, after his resurrection, came out of the tombs, entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people. Meanwhile the centurion, together with the others guarding Jesus, had seen the earthquake and all that was taking place, and they were terrified and said, 'In truth this was a son of God.'



## Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

As we prepare to enter the sacred time of Holy Week, we look again at the significance of Christ in our lives. Though he was really in the form of God, Jesus came in the form of a slave. We have a saviour who was crushed for our iniquities, nailed to a cross as a convicted felon, and there endured the sense of abandonment. We have a saviour who was finally lifted up and exalted precisely because he emptied himself of his divine privileges. Unlike conquerors who triumph by putting down their opponents, Jesus was raised up because he himself was first willing to be put down. We have a saviour who first offered himself for us and then continues to offer himself to us as an example to follow. As he was willing to empty himself for our sake, so we must be willing to empty ourselves for the sake of others.

The best way to enter Holy Week with Jesus is in the company of those with whom he has identified himself: the poor and the broken; the humiliated and the marginalised; those who suffer the abuse of others; those who never use rank to force their will. If we are to be saved, we must go where salvation takes place: in our streets and in our homes where violence rages; in the dark corners of life where despair holds sway; wherever the innocent are abused or the needy are neglected; wherever there is misunderstanding or fear or jealousy. We must go wherever Christ empties himself for our sake.