



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

Fourth Sunday of Easter 3 May 2020

About *flattening the curve* (Day 42 After Church Closure)

We have been told countless times that we must 'flatten the curve.' But what does that really mean? It seems that the meaning of flattening the curve has undergone an evolution of sorts. At the very start, flattening the curve meant *slowing down* the spread of the coronavirus. The height of global panic was probably when it was reported that, in the northern parts of Italy, the healthcare systems were on the brink of collapse, with some of the dying patients being turned away from hospitals because there were no more ICU beds for them. At the time the commonly cited mortality rate for the coronavirus was around 5% and the hospitalisation rate around 20%, which appeared to be well-supported by the dire situation of Italy where the rates were said to be even higher. When these rates were applied to entire populations in other countries the projections were truly catastrophic. For example, it was predicted that between 250,000 and 750,000 Australians would be needing ICU beds due to the coronavirus, even though there were only about 2200 ICU beds in the whole of Australia.

All this seemed a nightmare-scenario for every country including Australia. So voices calling for extreme restrictions proliferated around the world and governments listened (if not proactively push for "lockdowns" themselves). Again, it needs be remembered that the primary goal of these restrictions was to 'flatten the curve,' that is, to reduce the *peak* numbers of corona-infection in the hope that healthcare systems would not become overrun and that no preventable deaths would result from lack of healthcare resources. But there was never any claim or guarantee that flattening the curve would significantly bring down the *total* numbers of corona-infection in the long-term. In other words, yes, we could slow down the spread of the coronavirus and by doing so avoid rapid outbreaks, but could we actually *end it* so that it no longer spread at all? Or was it always going to be the case that the virus would eventually run its course until 'herd immunity' was reached?

Somewhere along the way the meaning of flattening the curve seems to have evolved into, at least for some people, 'eradicating the coronavirus' or, as it were, 'stamping out its existence.' It was as though the curve could not be said to have been "flattened" as long as the coronavirus was still around and there was still a risk of corona-infections rising again. Some even started to claim that any loosening of restrictions, whilst the coronavirus was still around, equated to *killing lives*. But, firstly, 'eradicating the coronavirus' was not what was initially meant by flattening the curve; secondly, the prospect of a highly contagious virus becoming extinct in the short-term seems unrealistic no matter how extreme the restrictions. This was why Scott Morrison tried to explain from the onset that we were in it for the long haul and that whatever we did we would have to do it for at least six months. Subsequently, however, Scott Morrison, under immense pressure from politicians, media and public, conceded to more extreme measures which would have been nearly impossible to maintain for six months.

In the meantime a number of new considerations have emerged. Firstly, there has been growing evidence that the rates commonly cited during the height of global panic were exceedingly higher than the actual rates of mortality and hospitalisation due to the coronavirus. The reason for this is simple. Generally speaking, testing has been limited to exclusive groups of people - usually those who had severe symptoms. Consequently, the mortality and hospitalisation rates among those who were sick enough to warrant testing were always going to be misleadingly high - 'misleading' because the vast majority of those who contract the coronavirus have either mild symptoms or no symptoms at all.

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The Week Ahead

Sun 3 May Fourth Sunday of Easter	8.30am	Parish Mass live-streamed On Facebook
Mon 4 May		
Tues 5 May	9:30am	Funeral Liturgy Nadia Hobeika RIP
Wed 6 May		
Thurs 7 May	9:30am	Funeral Liturgy Joseph Ghibely RIP
	7:30pm	Private Masses by Fr Peter, offered for the whole parish, hopefully everyday at 7.30pm!
Fri 8 May		
Sat 9 May	5pm	Parish Mass live-streamed On Facebook
Sun 10 May Fifth Sunday of Easter		

This week, in an email to Fr Peter regarding Covid 19 issues, I wrote, “*God works through so many different people and events in our lives. Actually, in this time of me not receiving God sacramentally, I have had the opportunity to reflect and see his presence in countless ways in my life, both in the past and also today. A real blessing.*”

Fr Peter has asked me if I would like to elaborate on my thoughts.

I’m in the habit of praying the *Daily Examen*, which I’m sure many of you are familiar with and also pray. This beautiful prayer given to us by St Ignatius of Loyola, has helped me see where God has been present in my day, and to be grateful for his many blessings. This is something at times I fail to see.

Since we have been in lockdown and unable to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, the *Examen* prayer has become particularly important to me, perhaps as I have had a greater need for God. Whilst praying *The Examen* I have looked at my day just lived, and also my past. This has allowed me to reflect on and see God shining through the kindness, friendship and care of countless people in my life, both now and those who have come and gone. I have seen His presence in the ‘ups’ and ‘downs’ of my present and past, through my family, friends and strangers.

These past days, God’s abundant love has also spoken to me more deeply through the warm sun on my face and beautiful gardens I see during my daily walks, the glorious sunsets and the gentle rain falling today as I write these few words. Also, the beautiful post resurrection appearances of Jesus in the scriptures have this year touched and spoken to me on a different level. As I have read of Jesus appearing to Mary of Magdala, the disciples on the road to Emmaus, and the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias where Jesus cooked them breakfast, I have been reminded that Jesus is walking with me always.

So, in the ‘dark night of my soul’, which I admit I have experienced again during these weeks of lockdown, I have gradually become more deeply aware of God’s majestic presence and unconditional mercy and love for me. I haven’t received God sacramentally; but my nourishment and blessings have come from a deeper and greater awareness of God’s constant spiritual presence in my life.

- Elizabeth Gooley -

the EXAMEN

The *Examen* is a method of reviewing your day in the presence of God. It’s actually an attitude more than a method, a time set aside for thankful reflection on where God is in your everyday life. It has five steps, which most people take more or less in order, and it usually takes 15 to 20 minutes per day. Here it is in a nutshell:

- 1 Ask God for light.
I want to look at my day with God’s eyes, not merely my own.
- 2 Give thanks.
The day I have just lived is a gift from God. Be grateful for it.
- 3 Review the day.
I carefully look back on the day just completed, being guided by the Holy Spirit.
- 4 Face your shortcomings.
I face up to what is wrong—in my life and in me.
- 5 Look toward the day to come.
I ask where I need God in the day to come.

Version of the Examen from A Simple Life-Changing Prayer by Jim Manney © Loyola Press

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Rosary Statue
Mr & Mrs Peters

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(Continued from page 1) For example, New York City is said to have over 170,000 people who tested positive. But extensive testing for antibodies against the coronavirus is showing that over 2.1 million New Yorkers may have already had it, most of them without even knowing it. That is over 12 times more than the official number of confirmed cases and about one quarter of the entire population of New York City. If it is true that the coronavirus is far more widespread than what the official numbers of confirmed cases indicate, then, it is also true that the actual rates of mortality and hospitalisation are greatly lower than previously believed (e.g. *lower than 0.5%* in terms of mortality rate would be a reasonable estimate). This, in turn, would drastically lower the projections which seemed so catastrophic when they were first made at the height of global panic.

Other considerations include the fact that warmer temperature and direct sunlight significantly weaken the coronavirus, as well as the fact that outbreaks are far more likely to occur in densely populated areas. These, aside from the fact that seriously skewed rates were being applied initially, help to explain why Australia has reached nowhere near the catastrophic numbers which were earlier predicted. Unlike the countries in the northern hemisphere which were coming out of their winter, we were coming out of our summer. Also, population density is not what Australia is known for - far from it, we bask in the freedom of personal space, of which there is plenty! Now that the curve has been well and truly 'flattened' in Australia (in the original sense of the word), there is every indication that some of the restrictions will start to be lifted. But it is obviously not true that the coronavirus has been "eliminated" (as loosely claimed by a certain prime minister in a neighbouring country). Furthermore, as our bodies are telling us right now, local temperatures are starting to drop significantly. So the question we are all dreading is, will there be a "second wave"?

We are learning to be conscious of hygiene more than ever before. We are also learning to interact with one another while maintaining reasonable social distancing. Most importantly, we are learning to be keenly aware of the need to protect those who are most vulnerable in our community (toward whom perhaps more resources should be dedicated). So I believe that we can and should resume *life*, instead of running from it, while also making sure that the lessons we have been learning are not forgotten but practiced to the best of our ability. My personal view, which the mainstream media by and large seem not to want to acknowledge, is that the coronavirus will continue to run its course, probably at a slightly faster rate as the restrictions start to be loosened and Australia enters its winter. This means that the corona-death-toll will also continue to rise, although hopefully at a moderate rate. Is this an outcome which must be stopped at all cost? Well, maybe, but only if we were willing to do the same for every death related to flu, cancer, alcohol/cigarette/drug, traffic, crime, etc., most of which we will not, could not stop *at all cost*.

Viruses are a fact of life, just as death is a fact of life. Our contemporary culture has been pathologically evading the subject of death and pretending instead that glossy images of beautiful and healthy faces/bodies encapsulated what human life was essentially about. But were we not persistently turning a blind eye not just to the fact that we always had the vulnerable (and often overlooked) among us but also to the fact that, in one way or another, it was only a matter of time before we too would come to be classified as one of the vulnerable? After all, no one is immune to death. Did you know that over 160,000 Australians die every year (between 1500 and 3000 from influenza alone)? This means that approximately 440 Australians depart from this world every day. Death is a fact of life we must learn to live with, just as the coronavirus is going to be, at least for a while, a fact of life we *can* learn to live with. St Mary MacKillop said, 'We are all but travellers here.' Our ultimate goal in life is not to prolong our stay here to the absolute maximum but to journey in such a manner so that the mercy of God may be revealed in us and through us. In other words, we hope to be led by the face of God's mercy - Jesus the Good Shepherd - every step of the way toward our true home in heaven! - Fr Peter -

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear...In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever.

Prayer of St Ignatius of Loyola

O Christ Jesus,
When all is darkness
And we feel our weakness and helplessness,
Give us the sense of your presence,
Your love and your strength.
Help us to have perfect trust in your protecting
love
And strengthening power,
so that nothing may frighten or worry us,
for, living close to you,
we shall see your hand,
your purpose,
your will through all things.
Amen.

Prayer for Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
I love you above all things and desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.
Saint Alphonsus Liguori

PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES

Many of you will be holding onto Project Compassion boxes and wondering what to do with them so here are a few options:

- Drop it off at the Parish Office during business hours
- Ring Jim Weeks 9554-3250 who will come & collect it off you
- Hold onto it until the Church re-opens

First Reading Acts 2:14, 36-41

God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ.

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: 'The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.'

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, 'What must we do, brothers?' 'You must repent,' Peter answered 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.' He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.' They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 22:1-6. R. v.1

(R.) The Lord is my shepherd;

there is nothing I shall want.

or

(R.) Alleluia.

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures where he
gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
2. He guides me along the right path; he is
true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your
staff;
with these you give me comfort. (R.)
3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the
sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil; my cup
is overflowing. (R.)
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow
me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for
ever and ever. (R.)

Second Reading 1 Pt 2:20-25

You had gone astray but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty.

This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he

took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 10:14

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;

I know my sheep, and mine know me.

Alleluia!

Gospel Jn 10:1-10

I am the gate of the sheepfold.

Jesus said: 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly,
I am the gate of the sheepfold.
All others who have come
are thieves and brigands;
but the sheep took no notice of them.
I am the gate.
Anyone who enters through me will be
safe:
he will go freely in and out
and be sure of finding pasture.
The thief comes
only to steal and kill and destroy.
I have come
so that they may have life
and have it to the full.'

**Reflection by Fr Michael Tate**

In Jesus' time, the shepherd lead from the front: the sheep followed the sound of his voice to reach good pasture. Jesus describes other voices who might try to mislead the sheep as 'thieves and brigands'.

In John's gospel, Judas, the *thief* from the common purse of the disciples, led a group of temple guards and Roman soldiers to take Jesus by force.

Barabbas was a *brigand*, a leader of an insurrection. Our Lord knew that armed rebellion against the Romans would lead to the destruction of Jerusalem.

So, Jesus is warning his followers against the seductive voices of those who advocate the use of violence.

In particular, the successor of Peter should echo the voice of Jesus the Good Shepherd and no other. Popes of the modern era seem to be listening more attentively to the Good Shepherd, as successors of St Peter who was instructed: 'Feed my lambs, feed my sheep'.

We could pause for a moment to attune our ears to the sound of the Shepherd's voice and follow Him so that He may lead us to pastures where we can have life, abundantly.

Alleluia!

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