

First Sunday of Lent (Year A) 1 March 2020

A Time of Preparation. The forty days spent by Jesus in the wilderness can be likened to the season of Lent. Jesus' time in the wilderness was a time of preparation for his ministry, a time in which he confronted the temptation to choose self and not the Father. For us Lent is a time of preparation for the feast of Easter. It is a time in which we are invited to examine whether the will of God is central to our lives.

Responsorial Psalm: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Gospel Acclamation:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Stations of the Cross Friday during Lent at 7.30pm
Lenten Group - Sundays of Lent begins 1 March at 3.30pm -4.30pm

Sacraments 2020

Confirmation - Saturday 30 May at 11am and 2.00pm
First Reconciliation - Saturday 8, 15 and 22 August at 2pm
First Holy Communion - Sunday 1, 8 and 15 November at 11am

Further details of times and places for classes can be found in the **Celebration of Sacraments 2020** pamphlet in the Church foyer.
Registration letters will be sent to local schools from **February 18**. From that date they will also be available from the Church foyer or you can contact Megan at the parish office on Mondays or Fridays.



First Sunday Morning Tea

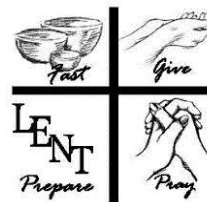
This Sunday our host group for Morning Tea after 9:30 Mass is the Parish Bulletin Team.

Try and stay after Mass and meet those generous people in our Parish who volunteer their skills to produce the Bulletin you read each week at Mass.



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Sunday Masses: Sat Vigil 5pm
Sunday 9.30am & 5pm
Weekday Masses: 9am Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri (or Fri 9.15am school Masses)
Tuesday evening 7.30pm
Reconciliation: Sat 3.30 – 4.30pm
Adoration: Mon & Fri 6-9pm, Tues 5.45pm – 7.15pm,
Sat 3.30 - 4.30pm, Italian Cenacle: Mon 9.30am
Holy Hour & Cenacle: Wed after 9am Mass, Fri 9.30am
Baptisms: 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month at 11am by appointment.
Weddings: by appointment. Contact Parish Office.



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After being baptized, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert where he was tempted by the devil.
Matthew 4, 1-11

One thing I learned this last week was from an article I read about Elvis Presley. Despite his wealth, his celebrity status and his reputation for being drug-dependent, Elvis, like the rest of us, was on a search for God. As a youngster, he regularly attended a Pentecostal church in which his father and some of his uncles were deacons. Moreover, his love for gospel music came from his mother who carried him on her back as she worked picking cotton during his early childhood. Later, he left the church in which he had grown up because of what he regarded as its racial prejudice and oppressive fundamentalism.

Many of us have sat in hairdressers' salons and listened to the homespun wisdom of the man or woman cutting our hair. Unable to escape, we have endured everything from political propaganda, to criticism of our nation's leaders and even recipes for curing common colds.

Elvis' long-time hairdresser, Larry Geller, was interested in philosophy and religion and introduced him to books on Hinduism, Buddhism, the Jewish religion, transcendental meditation and yoga. When Elvis died, he was well into a book on the Shroud of Turin. Clearly, he connected comfortably with Larry Geller and from time to time confided to him that he really wanted to find God. He revealed to Geller that he was repeatedly drawn to something Matthew, in his Gospel, attributes to Jesus: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter into the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 19, 24).

Elvis had grown up in poverty, so when success, fame and wealth came his way, he was mesmerised by them. Still, he kept returning to that verse in Matthew. He wanted God, but could not let God find him. Yet he knew that he needed to share his wealth and he became a legend, not just for his singing but also for his generosity.

(Note: Elvis is an anglicised version of the Irish *aillbe*. St Ailbe is the patron of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cashel & Emly. Legend has it that St Ailbe (the name in Irish means living rock) baptized St David, the patron of Wales. There still exists a parish of St Elvis, in Pembrokeshire, Wales).

I suggest that looking at the life of Elvis Presley is an appropriate way to start Lent, for it is like looking into the mirror. Looking at Elvis is really looking at ourselves. There is something/someone for whom we, too, are searching but we cannot quite let go of what within us is holding us back. Though neither the writer nor the readers of these weekly reflections are wealthy celebrities, we all have something of "the rich young man" in us. There is something in all of us which we are reluctant to relinquish. Lent is an invitation to each of us to look within ourselves, to identify what is blocking us from letting into our lives the only One who can set us free. Still, we hesitate to let Jesus get too close to us, afraid that he might ask for more than we are prepared to give.

If we prefer to focus on Matthew's story of Jesus being tempted by the devil in the desert, we will risk having our comfort disturbed in a different way. That's because every story we encounter in the Gospels is an invitation to participate. They shake us out of the comfort of being mere spectators. So today's account of the tussle between Jesus and the devil draws us into a reflection on the limitations of our own humanity, as it highlights the fact that one of the consequences of Jesus being like us in everything except sin was that he, too, had to struggle with temptation. In the process, Matthew shows how, in responding to the devil, Jesus relied on his deep knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. All three of his responses to the challenges put to him can be found in Deuteronomy:

- *God humbled you, made you feel hunger, and then fed you with manna which neither you nor your ancestors had ever known, to make you understand that human beings live not on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God* (Deut. 8, 3).
- *Do not put your God to the test as you tested him at Massa* (Deut. 6, 16).
- *Your God is the one you must fear, him alone you must serve, his is the name by which you must swear* (Deut. 6, 13).

Calling All Youth – Are you a high school student in year 7 -12??
Would you like to be part of something really exciting?
We are looking for a small group of teens to be part of the planning process and running of a future Youth Group here at St Ambrose.

We would like you to bring your ideas and opinions to a forum we will hold with Fr Brian and Fr Chaminda on Sunday night after 5.00pm
Mass on 1st March from 6.00pm – 7.00pm.
Tell us what you would like to see happen in our parish for our young people.

Why should you come? Meet some of your fellow young parishioners and make new friends. Be part of something new and exciting. Gain experience in being part of a leadership team (what a great thing to have on your resume)!

Contact the parish office if you are interested or if you would like more information.

Looking forward to seeing you make a difference in 2020.

St Ambrose Parish Youth Team.

If you have any board games that are no longer used but still in good condition (no missing parts), that can be donated for a games night, could you please leave them at the parish office.

A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney

Abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with a crime are the police. If you – or anyone you know – have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org or call (02) 9390 5810 or You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance.
The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police



Congratulations to Lorenzo Uchino and Sophie Baker who we recently welcomed into our faith community through the Sacrament of Baptism. Please keep these Lorenzo and Sophie and their families in your prayers.

**PASSIONIST
FAMILY GROUP
MOVEMENT**



SEEKERS PARISH FAMILY GROUP

Recently our group enjoyed a short walk around the Bicentennial Park followed by a picnic breakfast. It was a perfect occasion to spend time with each other and get to know those we see in the Church each week.

How can we love one another if we don't know those we see in the Church each week? If you would like to come along to our next gathering please ring for more information.

Kerry & Paul 9736 3686

Visit Of The Relics Of St Thérèse Of Lisieux and Her Parents

The National Pilgrimage of the Relics of Saints Thérèse, and her parents, Louis and Zélie, is returning to the Archdiocese of Sydney in March. Please see parish noticeboard for the itinerary of the relics and take this opportunity to venerate the relics of one of the Catholic Church's most popular saints and her parents who helped nurture her faith.

We have highlighted the venues closest to us.

What's On

Sun 1 March	Parish Morning Tea following 9.30am Mass 3.30pm – 4.30pm Lenten Group 6.00pm – 7.00pm Youth Group gathering following Mass
Wed 4 March	Canada Bay Museum Tour – 10am
Thurs 5 March	9.15am Catholic Schools Week Mass 2.00pm VASA meeting – Parish House
Fri 6 March	Australian Church Women – World Day of Prayer - Ecumenical Service 10.30am – Burwood 7.30pm Stations of the Cross

If today's readings do nothing else, they reflect to us our inclinations to try to make ourselves look better than we actually are. While the first reading puts the focus on Adam and Eve, it reveals how we, too, so easily resort to pretence, to blaming others and to papering over our personal weaknesses. We all want to look good in public, yet we can be house devils and street angels. What's more, the world of advertising encourages us to put on facades. A Nike advertisement, for example, once asserted: "Good clothes won't laugh at us behind our backs."

I believe that the key to understanding Matthew's story of Jesus being tempted in the desert is to be found in the first reading from Genesis. While Adam and Eve had just about everything one could wish for, they succumbed to the urges that have plagued human beings for as long as they have been in existence. While the devil gets the blame for being the seducer, they rebelled against the fact that they were dependent on the God who had loved them into life. They wanted to go it alone. They deluded themselves into thinking that more and better were within their reach. They experienced the urge to have what every human being after them has craved: power, possessions and independence. They ended up thinking that they could gratify their own desires. They didn't want to have the limitations of being human.

In stark comparison, Jesus resisted the temptation to go it alone. The incarnation meant that he was flesh and blood like all of us, experiencing the same urges and desires for gratification, yet he accepted all the limitations of being human and dependent on God.

In today's second reading from Romans, Paul brings it all together very neatly by pointing out that sin found a place in our world through the action of one man who deluded himself into thinking he could be self-sufficient. Adam rejected the limitation of being human and dependent. In contrast, Jesus embraced the limitations of being human and resisted every urge for self-gratification. He knew that, as a man, he depended totally on God.

The world in which we live rewards us for what we achieve, how we perform in public, how successful we are in our careers, how wealthy we are. Yet, whatever our status, whatever we produce or whatever we earn, we know that we can be driven by our urges for power, independence, status and possessions. Lent is a time to look into the mirror of our lives, to decide whether we are choosing what our world rewards or what God asks of us. As the prophet Micah reminds us: "This is what God asks of you: only this, to act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with your God (Micah 6, 8). A pretty good way to venture into Lent!



Please remember in your prayers the following
for whom Masses will be offered.

Recently Deceased: Brian Clark, Salvatore Tornatato, Kathleen Greene Ireland, Reno Farrugia

Anniversaries: Sarina Vartuli, Loretta & Alexander Steuerwald, Filomena & Giuseppe Agostino, Ted & Laura Merlino, Jo MacCarthy, John Ferranda, Benito Portelli

Others: Fr Kevin McGovern, Patrick & Margaret Egan, Veronica & Anne Gough, Mario Iannacito, Angelo Iannacito, Mabel & Kevin Rice, Peter Waters, Helen Timpanaro, Paul Broderick, Harry O'Hara, Eugene & Aileen Morris, Laura Merlino, Harriet David, Michael Culligan, Angelina Camuglia, Dr Leonado Dimaculangan, Jennifer Bast, Doug Kemp, Carmel Cullinan, Francesca Vizzari, Anthony Zovaro, Eric Pewal, Chris Elliott, Paola Pilosio, John Ferranda, Olivero Vendramin, Thomas Murickananickal & Kochappan, Joseph, Anna Nguyen, Gordon Bridges, John Baptist Nguyen, Giuseppe Rubbo, Teofilo Zamora, Paul, Filomena Agostino, Marie Madeleine Danev, Nicola Betro, Margaret Sharpe, Tamam Koloj, Helen Timpanaro, Mario Gemin, John Ryan, John Kennedy, Antoinette Constable, Ludivina Green, Agata Rodi, John Baptista Zammit, Catherine and John Manning, Joe and Mary Mangion, Rema Flannery, Margaret Jean Sharpe, John Pomroy, Mary Vanzella, Gaetano Patamia, Mark Tadino, Francisco Abas, Isidore Lopez Maza, Ruby Madera, Boyd Germy, Caoile Families, Iannacito, Funaro & Di Iorio Families, Guiseppe & Maria Idiotta, Whiteford Family, Culligan Family, Cootes Family, Zammit Family, DeBono Family, Moses Family, Nancy's Family, Dahdah Family, Wheeler & Higgins Families, Morson Family, Abraham, George & Cherote Families, Kennedy and McGovern Families, John White, June Bates, Dorothy Vantwest, Thelma & Stephen Muller & Family, Solomon Family, Merrell, Bourke, Gielis & Shields Families, deceased members of St Vincent de Paul Society, dearly departed souls and all souls in Purgatory.

Please pray for the sick especially:

Imogen Warner, Rosaria Natalina Patamia, Felice Minutillo, Charlie Rossini, Kelly & Ursula, Giuseppina Algozzino, Peggy Kerr, Viru, Fr Paul Boyers, Kevin McGrath, John and Betty Gattenhof, Esther and Terry Tully, Gary and Leslie Mc Grath, Rosa Mastro, Tanya Greenaway, Gianna, Matthew, Luisa, Zia Pina, Grace Comare, Veronica Rutherford, Sean Peters, Elizabeth Esguerra, Juliet Walsh, Barbara Wayne, , Marilyn Deguara, Elijah, Adrian Vanzella, Matthew Chan, John Rodrigues, Belinda Nicholls, Nan Peters, Carmela Smigliani, Shinta Widzaza, Alan Borg, Rosa Maria Santos, Bhupinder Tamber, Rebecca Sinclair, Marina Arasaratnam, Teresa Domalewski, Adel Abraham, Anne Vassily, Gloria Clark, Kim Long, Bob & Marion Merrell, Terry Murphy, Stacey Spencer, Joanne Ford, David, Celia and Gomes Family, Warwick Cook, Louise, James Anthony Manassa, June Corcoran, Rosina Morson, Celina Shaw, Laurence O'Connell, Sam Carroll, Dr Bede Muller, Robert Carey, Carmen Zammit, Mario Bianco, Rochelle Rodrigues, Kevin Desouza, Pat Toohey, Charmaine Yu, Anne Collins, Anna Viteznik, Adrian Walker, Lauren Wedd, Sara Benjamin & Family, Peter Weinfeoe, Ivy Ross, Dr Siri Kannangara, Maria Rosa de Angelis, Frank Zappia, Cecily Culligan

Special Intention: Gomes Family

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**
GO FURTHER TOGETHER

First Sunday of Lent
1st March 2020



Indigenous minorities in the Philippines face regular discrimination and disadvantage. Manide woman, Shirley faced challenges supporting her children and sending them to school. With Caritas Australia's support, Shirley's life has been transformed.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to help people like Shirley, and her children gain confidence and respect within their community.

Let's Go Further, Together. You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, (which are now available in the church foyer and Burke Street side entrance) or by phoning 1800 024 413 or by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion



**INVITATION TO HELP SHARE PARISH MOWING
AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

For most of the year a small group tries to do the mowing generally about once a fortnight. This currently involves a commitment of once in about three months.

You are invited to share in this role to keep the Church Surrounds in neat order.

Being on the Mowing Roster involves bringing your own equipment to the Church and mowing the surrounds including the footpath verges.

Waste can be put into the Green Waste bins located at side of the Presbytery Garage. The mowing takes about half an hour.

Broadly, you can meet your mowing commitment within a few days before or after the rostered date at a time convenient to you, while obviously avoiding regular Mass times and deferring to weddings / funerals of which you may not have been aware.

If you are willing and able to help or would like more information, please contact the Parish or Paul Wijngaarden on 02 9736 3686

Invitation to St Ambrose Parishioners.

Please join friends for a tour and morning tea at the Canada Bay Museum. Items that showcase our local history such as Arnott's and the Victa lawn mower and a collection of war memorabilia, firefighting equipment, office and household items, toys, glass and china will be on display. It will be an interesting and enjoyable morning.

Address; 1 Bent Street, Concord. (Near the senior Citizens' club)

Time: 10.AM- Wednesday 4th March

Admission free: (Donations welcome.)

Marion Ryan: 97432544 or 0433 994 456

Jeanette O'Hara: 97433409 or 0408 870 528



AUSTRALIAN CHURCH WOMEN – WORLD DAY OF PRAYER 2020

You are invited to World Day of Prayer, an ecumenical service,

Sponsored by Australian Church Women Inc

Theme: – Rise! Take up your mat and walk!

Service prepared by the women of Zambebewe

Friday 6 March, 10.30am

St. Paul's Anglican Church Church
Burwood Road, Burwood

**Catholic Women's League is a member of
Australian Church Women Inc.**

LENTEN CONCERT - 'ASHES TO EASTER' with Peter Kearney.

Sunday 8 March, 3.00pm in St. Mary's Church, Concord. Peter Kearney is an Australian Catholic songwriter/singer and guitarist whose hymns and songs include 'Fill My House' and 'The Beatitudes'. His 'Ashes to Easter' concert weaves songs and stories and reflections on Lenten themes and looks ahead to Holy Week and Easter. Mainly for adults though upper-primary and older students could also enjoy. Free admission.

Comment: "A beautiful Lenten reflection ... prayerful and spiritual a worthwhile part of our Lenten journey".

Our Catechists!



**'How beautiful are the feet of those who bring
"Good News"'**

We recently celebrated Catechist Sunday.

It is the day we acknowledge over 1900 catechists (or scripture teachers) who generously give their time to teach the Catholic Faith to over 27,000 primary and high school students in the 320 public schools situated in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

We recognise their response to their baptismal call to evangelise, the voluntary nature of their generosity and their love for the children in a work which is often unseen and unrecognised yet crucial and rewarding. In our St Ambrose Parish we have 9 catechists teaching 210 Catholic children in our 3 local public schools - Concord West, North Strathfield and Victoria Avenue Public Schools. Each class is 30 minutes long and you can volunteer as a teacher or a helper in the classes. We are however more in need of teachers.

Classes are held as follows:

Strathfield North Public School – Wednesday mornings

Concord West Public School – Tuesday mornings

Victoria Avenue Public School – Tuesdays 11.45 to 12.15pm

You will receive training, lesson manuals, books and all necessary resources and support from the Archdiocese plus great friendship/support from other catechists.

So why be a catechist?

1. Share JESUS with others.
2. Contribute to your parish and community.
3. Have the opportunity to deepen your personal faith.
4. Meet new friends who will support you.
5. Great opportunity to work your mind and attend workshops and quality training courses

Please email sacraments@stambrose.org.au
or call the Parish Office 97431023