

8 APRIL 2018

DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY: Over the past couple of weeks I have drawn your attention to today's celebration of Jesus' Divine Mercy on this Divine Mercy Sunday. Pope John Paul II initiated this Feast when canonizing St. Faustina Kowalska on the 30th April 2000. So this is a very-recently introduced major feast. Our readings this day are all about mercy, trust and the forgiveness of sins. Locally, you are invited to attend the special celebrations, reconciliation and Mass this afternoon as per last week's invitation, which I repeat here... "Please come to Divine Mercy celebrations on 8th April at St. Bonaventure's Leura Catholic Church, Scott Avenue, at 3.00pm. Jesus said: The souls that will go to confession and communion on this day will obtain complete remission of all sin and punishment. There will be Confession, Benediction (4.20pm) and Mass (5.00pm). Frs. Carlos and Sean will officiate! You are further invited to extend the practice of Divine Mercy into the more general activities of your Catholic faith. This involves the daily recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet that has become a permanent daily feature in the prayer life of so many Catholics in this age.

HOLY WEEK/EASTER REVIEW: The last week of Lent, with its flow-in to Easter via the Triduum, attracted (for us) a great many local parishioners and visitors whose numbers were beyond my capacity to count at the time. Suffice to say that every Mass and liturgy drew numbers far beyond my expectations, with the exception of Thursday's Last Supper and Saturday's Easter Vigil Mass when only about 45 persons attended. However, Easter Sunday was a different matter entirely with attendances way above expectations. The 7.00am Mt. Victoria Mass, for the first time since we introduced this Mass, saw an overflow of people outside the church entrance. More than 65 attended with seating able to accommodate only 50 persons. Down in Megalong Valley, the 11.30am Mass attracted a very full house (capacity 30). As for the 9.30am Blackheath Easter Mass, I have no idea regarding numbers of people at that celebration. Perhaps 200? Your guess is as good as mine! As for attendance at the other liturgies, the fine, mild weather obviously had a positive influence on the numbers present. They, too, were above expectations!

EASTER: Everything went like clockwork during the week commencing with the collection of oils at Wednesday's Parramatta Cathedral Chrism Mass, right through to the 11.30 am Sunday Megalong Valley Mass. None of this just 'happened' by itself! Frances Huckstepp both planned and co-ordinated every 'event', with the very able assistance, support and involvement of too many people to individually name and thank here. In the end, as ever, it was you, our volunteers who carried the week unheralded, unsung and unequalled. And what about the flowers? Magnificent! The music group, too, was absolutely superb, as was Fr. Paul Hanna without whom this would have been a much, much tougher celebration to deliver. Thanks, Fr. Paul! Thanks Frances! Thanks everyone!

We must also never forget our reason for putting so much effort into making this Holy Week/Easter commemoration and celebration the obvious success it was! Thank God for God! Thank God for Jesus! We gave it our best 'shot' for Him – our Saviour! Yes, our best effort was our least on this occasion! And that's enough! Amen.

EASTER SUNDAY CAKE AND PLANT STALL: I still find it hard to believe that Marilyn and the other ladies raised a mind-boggling \$618.00 last Sunday. Quite extraordinary, everyone! Once again, many thanks for a superb effort and result!

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION: Tomorrow (9th April) is the post-dated Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, normally celebrated on the 25th March which was Palm Sunday this year. While there will be no Mass here, Mass will be available at St. Canice's, Katoomba at 10.00am.

God Bless! Fr. Bob

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**STAMPS, CARDS & CORKS:** Please save all your old cards, stamps & corks.

Julie OKeefe would like you to pass on all of the above & she will hand them over to be sent to Africa. Please discard the back part of all cards. There is a box at the back of the church, please just put all cards, stamps & corks in there for collection. Thank you.

**FOOTSTEPS OF ST. PAUL - PILGRIMAGE TO GREECE:** Fr Peter De Souza would like to invite you for a 14-day pilgrimage that he is leading. The group departs on 28th May, 2018, featuring Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Patmos, Crete, Santorini, Thessaloniki, Philippi, Meteora for an all-inclusive price of \$5690. This fare includes a 3 Night Cruise with all meals + Return Airfares + Local Transfers + Stay in 4 Star Hotels + All Breakfasts & Dinners. For enquiries & bookings call 0385 622 246 or email [pilgrimage@magiholidays.com.au](mailto:pilgrimage@magiholidays.com.au)

**BEING AND BECOMING A WOMAN - A Retreat for Young Women on Womanhood** following the example of MARY ~ 14-15 April, 2018

When: Saturday 14th April 10am - Sunday 15th April 2pm 2018

Where: Mount Schoenstatt Spirituality Centre, 230 Fairlight Road, Mulgoa 2745

Investment: \$130 - Registration and Payment by 8th April Contact: Sr M Julie BrCAR - 0408 738 334 or [juliebrcar@gmail.com](mailto:juliebrcar@gmail.com)

Mulgoa NSW 2745. Phone: 02 4773 8338 Ext: 236. Mobile: 0407 935 186

[www.schoenstatt.org.au](http://www.schoenstatt.org.au)

**MT CARMEL RETREAT CENTRE ~ Mt Carmel Retreat Centre, 247 St Andrews Road, Varroville, NSW, 2566.** 02 8795 3400. [retreats@carmelite.com](mailto:retreats@carmelite.com)

[www.carmeliteretreats.com.au](http://www.carmeliteretreats.com.au) *Journeying with the disciples of Emmaus:* Time to reflect with two "insignificant disciples" as they return (from Emmaus) to Jerusalem after meeting the Risen Lord. Presenter: Bishop Greg Homeming, OCD

April 13: 6:00 pm – April 15: 1:30 pm. Cost: \$250.00 (concessions apply)

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| HAPPY BIRTHDAY ~ 11 <sup>th</sup> Heidi Lamerton |
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| <b>EASTER THANK YOU ~</b> Thank you, Fr Bob and Fr Paul, for leading us during Holy Week and into the Easter season. A warm and heartfelt thanks also goes to the many people who contributed in so many ways to the Easter Liturgies. Your hard work, enthusiasm, and encouragement has enriched the Easter Journey for the Sacred Heart Parish community. Frances Huckstepp |
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| Please pray for the sick and their carers ~ Barry Bowden, John & Marion Crowley, Daisy Kiely, Kevin Madden, Maria Slater and John Tweedie. |
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