



**LENT:** Last Wednesday (Ash Wednesday) spiritually, we moved from ‘Ordinary Time’ to ‘Lent’. Even after these first few days of Lent we should already be progressing in our Lenten endeavours in what is for most of us the major penitential effort for this year. Over the next 36 days we will have many opportunities to join Lenten activities that will help us form an ever-closer relationship with God and each other – a time when we seek to revise, renew and reset our priorities in this life. Lent is that special period of the year when the liturgies are particularly framed to support us as we self-analyse where we are at, where we want to be, and how best to reach that goal. Yes! Lent is a time for action!

A reminder, too, that all Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence from meat, except Good Friday which is both a day of fast and abstinence for those to whom it applies. On another tack, I also remind you that every Catholic is obliged under pain of mortal sin to receive the Sacraments of both Reconciliation and Holy Communion at least once a year between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday which this year falls on 16 June.

Finally, during Lent the “Alleluia” is omitted in Mass, even when celebrating Solemnities and Feasts. The “Gloria” is not said during this period – its next use being Holy Thursday, 18th April.

**CARITAS** (Project Compassion): As ever, Caritas is our key charity and fund-raiser for this year with donations being received throughout the Lenten/Easter period. Through Project Compassion, you and I have a unique opportunity to help Caritas Australia to support those far less favoured than us by helping to reduce their poverty, promote justice for them and uphold the dignity that is the right of every living human being. All the Caritas literature, including Project Compassion boxes are to be found dispersed around the church today. If you haven’t already done so, please take one home with you, fill it with your spare coins, and return same to us at Easter. By so doing, you will be assisting more than you could imagine those severely deprived, dispossessed and suffering people/families in many countries around the world. Thank you for caring! Thank you for your generosity!

*PS. I have been advised that the pancake ‘rush’ netted almost \$100 last Sunday. They were great! Thanks everyone for your extra effort this time around – those who cooked, and those who bought and ate!*

**“RETREATS”:** First, be advised that Fr. Rowe from Western Australia (no relation to Marilyn/Paul), local Sue Russell and their group have leased our St. Paul’s Mt. Victoria church for a Retreat this coming week from 11 – 15 March. They ‘bed-down’ at the local ‘Lutanda’ Conference Centre. This will be a welcome fourth year for this hiring.

Second, eventually it had to happen! I am supposed to go on ‘retreat’ once a year at an approved location. I always choose the ‘Abbey’, the Benedictine Jamberoo Retreat Centre. However, I am presently a little overdue for such a retreat as my last visit there was in 2015. So, I will be absent all of this coming week from Monday to Friday (11 – 15 March), same as the Mt. Vic arrangement. Therefore, the next Mass here after today will be next Saturday at 9.00am. However, arrangements are being made to open Blackheath Church each day I will be away. Hope that helps a little! Emergencies only (and I do stress that point) should be directed first to the office, then to 0417 355 479.

**MEGALONG ‘PARTY TIME’:** Yesterday, from about mid-afternoon, a very mixed ‘family’ group from the Katoomba area converged on the Megalong ‘tea rooms’ for afternoon tea and a social get-together. I joined them during that celebration and all had a terrific time. Then the twenty plus party adjourned to St. Joseph’s Church where Mass was celebrated from 6.00pm. As practice makes perfect, they want to do the same thing again in the Spring. We’ll be there!

God Bless! Fr. Bob

PARENTS' ROOM: The Sacristy, which contains a few books and toys, is available for parents when young children are restless. We hope this makes it a little easier for you and your littlies.

### BALANCING THE BOOKS WITH BALLADS

Pat Drummond is holding a one night only concert on 30th March 2019 at the Sacred Heart Hall, 167 Wentworth Street, Blackheath.



From 7.00pm, Pat will take us on a journey of his well documented songs about real people and places, drawn from interviews gathered on his erratic tours across Australia and present a composite picture of our country and her people.

Tickets are \$10.00 and are available after Mass today or at the Parish Office (Wed-Fri. phone 4787 8540) . Tea/Coffee and cakes are included. Get in early for your tickets for a great evening. Pat is holding this concert to assist our Parish ministries and financial commitments for 2019.

**Free counselling:** Contact Linda on 0417 659 479 for supervised counselling sessions as part of her Bachelor of Counselling Degree practical placement. These will be conducted in the Hazelbrook area. Limited places and sessions apply (max. 4 sessions per person).

Our recent collection for The Catholic Foundation was \$1260.00. Thank you to all of our parishioners. Fr. Bob

Please pray for the sick and their carers: *Barry & Madeleine Bowden, John and Marion Crowley, Barbara Grieves, Kevin Madden, Maria Slater, Frank Mackrell, Marie Johnson, Trennah Portelli and Pat Fraser*

### ✠Rest In Peace✠

14th March Pete Juhas

### Working Bee ~

Wednesday 13 March 8am

Our next working bee is on Wednesday morning 13 March from 8am. Come and work with our maintenance team and help maintain our beautiful grounds.

Please bring a sunhat and garden gloves. Call Lance on 47878096 or John on 0407 288 957 for further information, or just turn up on the day.

### Anniversaries

13th Pope Francis  
(Became Pope in 2013)



### Happy Birthday

10th Joe Blansjaar

16th Fr Bob Sheridan (b 1933)



### Cosmology Spirituality Morning ~

The next Cosmology Spirituality morning will be held at the Good Samaritan Community House, 3 Valley Road, Wentworth Falls on Friday 15th March 10 am till noon. The Preface and Chapter One of the new book, “The Way of the Wind” by Bruce Sanguin will be discussed. There will be a time of prayerful silence in our garden. Morning tea will also be part of the program. New friends are very welcome. Enquiries Sr. Jacinta 4757 2290

### Earth Ministry Project ~

Creating a Green Heart in our Parramatta Diocese. 12 copies of Pope Francis’ Encyclical Laudato Si will be available from Sunday for borrowing. A handout with a focus on Creation for Lent is available; daily suggestions for reducing plastic use are included as well as a prayer for our earth. Sue Martin very much enjoyed her time with our parish community last Sunday .and appreciated the warm hospitality extended by all to her and the work of this new and vital ministry.