

Our Lenten Theme Song:

HEAL ME, O GOD

(Gregory Norbet)

(USED WITH PERMISSION,

WORD OF LIFE INTERNATIONAL LICENCE NO. 2201)

**Heal me, O God; create a new heart in me,
Save me, O God; with light of your presence.**

Heal me, O God; and raise me to new life.

You alone are my hope.

Deep in the night reveal your wisdom,
teach me to live a life that is holy.

Save me, O God, you are my refuge;
put in my heart a faith strong and searching.

Be with me now, lifting each burden;
you are my hope, my strength for the journey.

As you have shown mercy and kindness,
so may I grow in living compassion.

Strengthen my faith, melt my indifference;
set me afire with Spirit's anointing.

Help me extend peace and forgiveness,
knowing so well my failings forgiven.

Pilgrimages to Fatima, Avila and Lourdes

Fr John Boyle from Castle Hill Parish is leaving for Europe on June 9 and taking a 15 day pilgrimage to Fatima, Avila and Lourdes, then a second pilgrimage immediately following the Visitations of Mary pilgrimage called Graces of France. This 13 day pilgrimage will visit Paris, Lisieux, La Salette, Taize, Turin and other sites in France. You are invited to join Fr John on one or both pilgrimages.

Brochures are available from Harvest pilgrimages 9390 5460 or www.harvestpilgrims.com or talk to Fr John on 9634 2622.

Spirituality in the Pub

Wednesday 10 March

7.30pm - 9.00pm

'Cries from the Heart'

Guest Speakers

Catherine Hammond

Writer, Educator, Long time member of Catalyst for Renewal

Mark Macleod

Children's Author,
Latest Publication - 'God is ...'
Involved in multimedia work and Judge for Literary awards.

Gardners Inn Hotel
255 GW Highway Blackheath
Bistro meals at 6pm

Information: Elizabeth 4787 6198

HOME MASS will be celebrated by **Father Isaac Koi** at the home of Louise and Laurie Noyes, 8 Days Crescent, Blackheath on **Wednesday, 10th March**, at 7.30pm. All Welcome.

You are warmly welcomed to attend a **Reflection Morning with Fr Michael Whelan SM**

"Does God love us more when we are virtuous?"

Sacred Heart Church Hall, Blackheath from 10am to 1pm.

Come and enjoy the reflection, silence and solitude in peaceful surrounds. Entry by donation. Morning tea provided. No need for bookings.

A Joint Venture of Aquinas Academy and Catalyst for Renewal



Third Sunday of Lent

PROJECT
COMPASSION 10

To bring about the kingdom of God, we must be transformed within ourselves and our community. This week's story takes us to East Timor where Domingas is being supported in a Caritas-funded Family and Community Violence Prevention Program.

Domingas, like many women in her community was the victim of violence and abuse. The program has provided her with ongoing counselling and a small grant to enable her to build a business and give her economic independence.



Your donation to Caritas Australia's Project Compassion helps to support women survivors of violence and to work for just relationships.

Project Compassion boxes and Gift Pack envelopes are available at each of the Church doors.

Reflection on Sunday's Readings

Exodus 3:1-8. 13-15 *This is what you must say to the children of Israel:*

"I am has sent me to you."

Corinthians 10:1-6. 10-12 *All this that happened to the people of Moses in the desert was written for our benefit.*

Luke 13:1-9 *Unless you repent you will all perish as they did.*

Moses' encounter with the burning bush in Exodus reveals to us God's compassionate heart and response to His people, "I have seen..." "I have heard..." "I am well aware..." and "I mean to deliver." The God of the covenant is faithful to his plan to return his people to the Promised Land.

Our baptismal experience is our ongoing exodus from sin and selfishness, to grace that enables us to be like God doing deeds of compassion and justice. We are reminded not to take for granted what we have been promised and to use our gifts to deliver our oppressed brothers and sisters to the Promised Land.

The perception that the suffering of innocent people is God's punishment for their sins, is challenged in today's parable of the gardener who is willing to nurture and feed the tree so it may bear fruit. We need to liken our lives to the tree asking ourselves, "Are our lives fruitful?"

The story of Domingas from East Timor is the parable alive. Like the gardener, the PRADET program funded by Caritas Australia, nurtures and provides a 'safe place' for survivors of violence. It empowers women to talk and speak out about their experience giving them hope. The program also provides community education to help reduce violence, standing in solidarity with those who have experienced this trauma.

One Last Chance

Whenever we read the gospel about giving the unfruitful fig tree one last chance to bear fruit, I think of my youngest brother, Kris.

My Mum stopped working after I was born so, for most of their married life, my parents only had Dad's moderate income as a teacher. Nevertheless, by living frugally they managed to provide their six children with a good education. It was a great help that we all won scholarships. However, when Kris was in his first year at university he so thoroughly enjoyed his newly-won freedom that he flunked his first exams and lost his scholarship. Dad got so upset about this that he told Kris he was not going to spend any more money on his education. He told him to leave university and find himself a job. After much ado, Mum eventually managed to persuade Dad to give the boy one last chance. Kris made a big effort to study the subjects he had screwed up, resat his exams and passed with flying colours.

It was only while swotting so hard to make the most of his 'one last chance' that he discovered his special love for French literature. He got so interested in it that after taking his master's degree he decided to do a PhD. No one could have been happier and prouder than Dad on the day his youngest got his doctor's degree.

Kris is now a successful and happy professor of French literature who greatly enjoys introducing others to the world he nearly failed to discover himself. I have often wondered what kind of life he might have had if he had been forced to drop out after screwing up those first exams. (Elisabeth)



Forbearance

During nine years of drought, the majestic tree in our front garden continued to cling to life, but last summer's extreme heat burned it to a crisp. The tree surgeon we consulted pronounced it dead. 'It will have to be cut down,' he said. I began to wonder sorrowfully what we could plant in its place. It had been a spectacular, much loved tree. And then...I noticed a halo of the faintest green on its crown. 'Wait,' I said. 'Let's give it a go for a while. Let's see what happens.' We did. The rains came, and Spring has come. Our tree wears a full head of rich green on its way to recovering, not its former glory, but a brand new one. So do we find that the evergreen Spirit of God needs our forbearance, and our hope, in order to work its will. (Rose)

It is the Lord who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. (Psalm 102:3-4)

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~♥~ Happy 43rd Anniversary **Jenny & Lindsay Inman** for 11th March ~♥~

DAILY LIFE WITH GOD: A series of 3 evenings exploring this theme from the perspectives of three different spiritual traditions: Vedanta, Christian and Muslim. To be held over three Mondays, March 1, 15 and 29, 7.30pm – 9pm, at the Grail Centre, 22 McHatton St, Nth Sydney. Tel: 9955 3053. A stimulating and spiritually nourishing program. You and your friends are warmly invited. Suggested contribution: \$15 per session, or what you can afford.

Letter to Women
from the Catholic
Bishops of
Australia
available in
the Church today.
Please take a copy.

Come and hear the Academy Singers perform **Vivaldi's 'Gloria'**
Today at 3.00pm in St Hilda's Church, Ratoomba St, Ratoomba.

SANTA SABINA COLLEGE is pleased to offer **Scholarship and Bursary opportunities** to assist students for **Years 7 & 9 (2011)** in entering the College. Scholarships with a focus on Academic, Creative and Performing Arts and Global Citizenship will be offered to students who demonstrate ability in these areas. Bursaries are also made available by the College to assist students whose families require financial support to enter the College.

Come and visit Santa Sabina College at our Open Day on Friday 19 March from 9am to 12pm. Hear Kate Clancy, our College Principal, at 9am and 10.30am in the Lecture Theatre on the Secondary Campus and visit our beautiful campuses: Primary School, Santa Maria del Monte (K-5); Martin de Porres Middle School (years 6-7); Santa Sabina Secondary School (Years 8-12); and Mary Bailey House Early Education Centre (9.30am-11.00am). To discuss enrolment, scholarship and bursary opportunity at Santa Sabina College, please call our Co-ordinator, Ms Margaret Molloy, on 9745 7030 or enrolment@ssc.nsw.edu.au

FAMILY CONCERT FUNDRAISING FOR OUR PARISH TODAY!!!

A once ever for the Upper Mountains, the fabulous **Peter and the Wolf** and other crowd-pleasers for all ages, including **Gypsy Airs** to raise you to your feet, lots of fun and surprises from actor **Tony Cugin** and the **Bay Quartet**. Today at **2.30 pm, in the Community Hall**. 20% of ticket price for this concert or full subscription to our Parish.

Bookings: www.mca-tix.com.au or 1300 306 776. To register as Sacred Heart Fundraiser participant: mail@chamberconcert.org.au 4787 6425 or at the door. Program details: www.chamberconcert.org.au or see the noticeboard outside.

A NEW BEGINNING: Beginning Experience is a personal encounter weekend for those who are grieving the loss of a partner through death, separation or divorce. Closing the door to the past gently by getting in touch and dealing with the feelings resulting from the end of a relationship is an important part of making a new beginning. The Next Beginning Experience Weekend is on April 9-11th 2010. For information and an application, please contact Lee (02) 9449 5317, Lynn (02) 4627 2084 or Kevin (02) 4984 2738

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP: On 20 April, our group will have been meeting for 12 months! We have members coming from Springwood to Mt Victoria, and places in-between, as well as a few from Sydney! If you would like to experience this ancient and gentle form of prayer, come and join us on Monday mornings at 10:30, @ 227 Leura Mall, Leura. Sessions last one hour, sometimes less, consisting of some teaching, meditation and discussion. There is also a session at Blackheath @ 4pm on Saturdays if that is more convenient. For more information, please contact Barbara : 4787 6032