



St Brigid's Marrickville

In the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia

One Family, Alive in Christ

Est 1886. Under the Pastoral Care of the Passionists since 1887

392 Marrickville Rd (PO Box 237), Marrickville NSW 2204

Tel: 02 8577 5670 Fax: 02 8577 5679

Email: parish@stbrigid.org.au Web: www.stbrigid.org.au



Facebook: [St Brigid's Marrickville](https://www.facebook.com/StBrigidMarrickville)

Administrator: Fr Erick Niyiragira CP (pp@stbrigid.org.au)

Sr Elena Daton CP (elena@stbrigid.org.au)

Sr Elenita Flores CP (elenita@stbrigid.org.au),

Fr Thomas Nguyen CP (thomas.thanh@stbrigid.org.au)

Fr Dominic Samamba CP (dominic@stbrigid.org.au)

Deacon Christopher Roehrig (christopher@stbrigid.org.au)

Sue King (SRE Co-ordinator/Safeguarding) catechetics@stbrigid.org.au

Jenny Solo youthministry@stbrigid.org.au

Parish Secretary: Ms Terrey Trethowan (9.30am - 4pm)

We stand at the Crossroads of life for many people

Fourth Sunday in Lent —Year A 21/22 March 2020

4th Sunday OF LENT:

Readings at Mass

First reading: 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

In the presence of the Lord God, they anointed David as king of Israel.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 22(23)

The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

Second reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

Rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Gospel: John 9:1-41

The blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

'As long as the day lasts

I must carry out the work of the one who sent me; the night will soon be here when no one can work.

As long as I am in the world I am the light of the world.'

Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man, and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored. His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we do not know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

Jesus said:

'It is for judgement that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may see and those with sight turn blind.'

Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, 'We are not blind, surely?'

Jesus replied:

'Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, "We see," your guilt remains.'

SUNDAY REFLECTION

SEEING IN THE DARK: 4TH SUNDAY OF LENT A

You and I belong to a Christian community of stories and storytellers. In the telling of the stories of Jesus especially, our own stories are told. As we identify with the people in those stories, with their distress, anger, anxiety, hopes, fears, struggles, sadness and joy, we too make living contact with our Saviour. We are challenged by his words, supported by his love, and healed by his touch.

Today's gospel reading is the story of Jesus the Light of the World. It's the story too of the blind man. It's our story too. Three stories are interwoven and interconnected.

The blind man has lived in a world of darkness from the day he was born. He has never seen his room, his table, his chair, his bed, his door. He has never seen flowers, or trees, or children. He has never seen anything or anyone. Besides, he is poor and without any means of support. With nothing like an invalid pension to ease his distress, he is reduced to begging in the streets. His struggle for survival is aggravated by contempt, insults, and abuse from others.

'Leading Lights' in his town are baiting him with their ignorant accusation: 'Your blindness was caused by your sins.' Even after his blindness is plainly cured, they keep up their sneers: 'What you allege just didn't happen. This Jesus fellow is a sinner. Sinners cannot cure people. Anyway, you weren't blind in the first place. You were just faking it' All through his ordeal the patient sufferer never loses his cool, and replies to every accusation with the unvarnished truth. And through it all he grows in his appreciation of the greatness of the one who helps and heals him.

At first, he sees in Jesus a man with special powers, one who can smear mud on a blind person's eyes and make the sufferer see again. Next, he comes to see that Jesus is a prophet, a messenger of God. Finally, he recognises Jesus as his Lord and King, and bows down and worships him.

As the blind man's story unravels bit by bit, the story of the greatness of Jesus is also told. He speaks and acts as the light shining in the darkness, one which will never be put out. He repudiates the prejudice that physical blindness is caused by sin. He speaks of getting on with God's healing work while there is daylight is left to do it. He sees the urgency of the blind man's plight and goes to the rescue immediately. He ignores the ignorant and foolish chatter

of his enemies. And when the man he delivers from blindness is expelled from the synagogue, Jesus seeks him out, and empowers him to develop a livelier faith, a surer hope and a deeper love.

Where do we find our own story in all this? For each of us - old, middle-aged, or young - the blind man's story is the story of our becoming Christians, by means of both faith and baptism. In the early days of the Church, when people were baptised as adults rather than children, baptism had the name 'The Enlightenment'. At our baptism, our priest lit a candle from the Easter Candle, symbol of the Risen Lord, and handing it to our father or godfather for us, said: "Receive the light of Christ." 'Receive the light of Christ.'

Even as the story of the blind man's enlightenment shows us the influence of Jesus on the blind man's honesty, courage, determination, faith, hope and love, it also shows us what it means, as the ritual for Baptism puts it, to 'walk always as a child of the light'. It means nothing less than seeing, feeling, judging and acting, as Jesus himself has done. It involves asking again and again that WWJD question: 'What Would Jesus Do?'

In Peter Shaeffer's play Equus, the psychiatrist remarks: 'I need a way of seeing in the dark.' In today's gospel reading, St John leaves us in no doubt that Jesus is that way. We are hopelessly blind if we think that we've got life all figure out, or that we've got it all together, and that we don't need Jesus to enlighten us, and show us a purer, better, more genuine and more generous way of living.

In the light of the gospel today, each of us might surely want to say to Jesus: 'Lord Jesus, how much blindness is there still left in me? How much selfishness do I still display? How much insensitivity, how much prejudice, how much snobbery, how much self-righteousness, how much hypocrisy, how much pride, how much contempt for others? Lord Jesus, just how many blind spots do I have?'

And each of us might want to pray three famous short prayers: - 1. 'Lord, that I may see, Lord, that I may see.' 2. Lord Jesus, give us the grace to see ourselves as others see us.' And 3. 'Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word, and my soul shall be healed.'

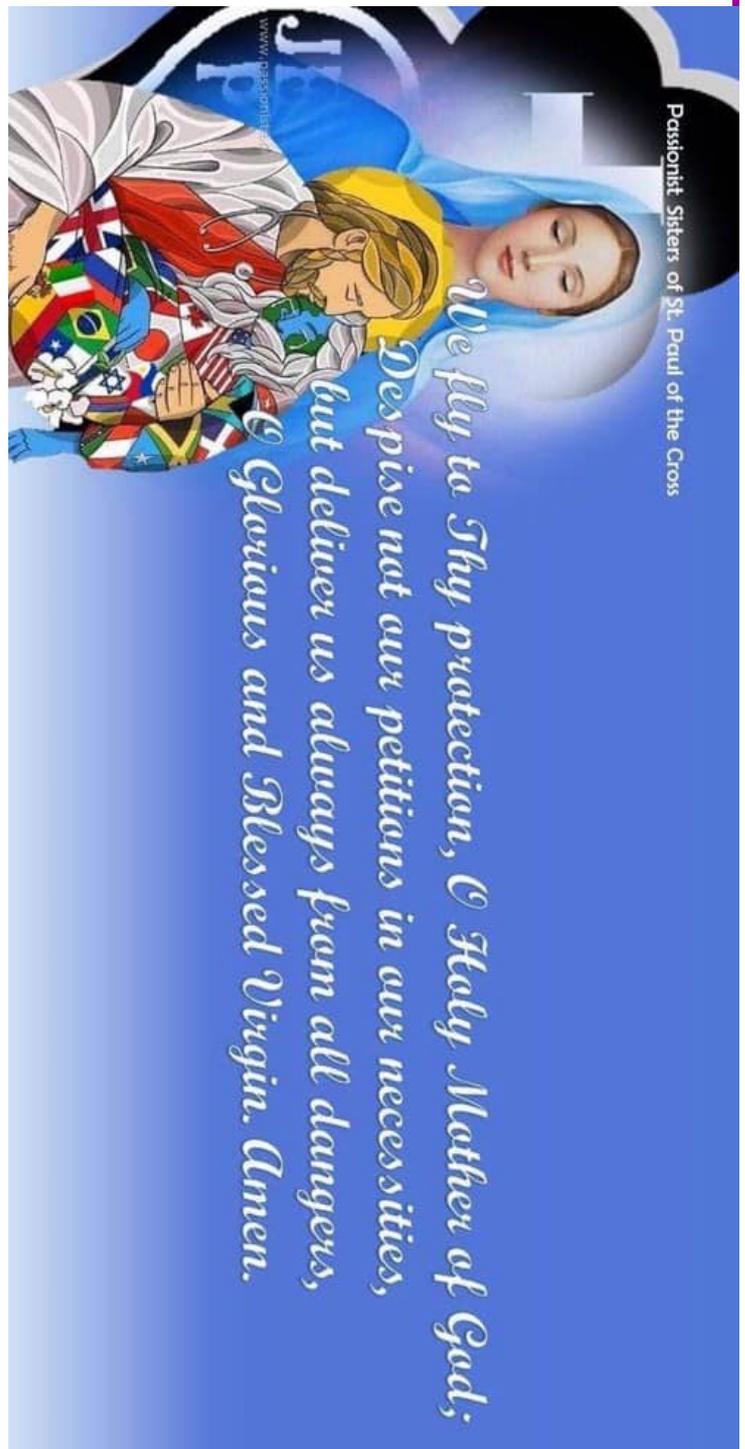
bgleesoncp@gmail.com

Links to access prayers and Masses

www.sydneycatholic.org/coronavirus-updates

https://vimeo.com/user109760034/review/399352865/bb8fd7dd34?fbclid=IwAR3m4OFYMzLw1haT3rArgR7jW2fAAdlnvjkCJOV45TqI4_vZCgRzvmfsmJY

<https://www.ewtn.com/radio/podcasts/daily-mass-ENMASS>



Dear Parishioners

As you are aware, Australia is facing an unprecedented time of great challenge. The COVID19 virus and societal responses that are expected of us are testing us at many levels.

As a parish we have taken into account the realistic application of safe distancing, the logistics of limiting entry into the church; the supervision of an open church, minimising the risk for our parish especially our most vulnerable parishioners and considering the safety of the Passionist community.

For this reason we have decided to close the church beginning today Saturday 21st March. This has been a hard decision to make but one which we feel is in the best interests of the whole community at this time. We are hopeful of being able to open the church for personal prayer in coming weeks but want to ensure that we have time to put into place the processes that we must have to ensure the safety of the community and any visitors

Our webwebsite www.stbrigid.org.au and our Facebook page St Brigid's Mar-rickville will be the way in which any updates will be communicated. As well as this a variety of prayer resources and links to mass on line and other supports etc will be made available. If you have no access to social communications please call us or email us your phone number or your email on ph. 02 8577 5670 email: pp@stbrigid.org.au

We ask you to spread the word to people whom they know.

We appreciate that this is going to be a very difficult time for our community and we also understand that it is a constantly changing time in terms of the advice we are receiving. We must support each other with care and compassion, trusting always that God is with us and will see us through this challenging time.

We thank you for your support and ask for your prayers for our community at this time.

From...

Pastoral Letter to Pastors and People of the Archdiocese of Sydney in a Time of Pandemic 18 March 2020

Worshipping in spirit and in truth

“The world as we know it is being turned upside down—at least temporarily— as many get sick and some die from COVID-19, and so much of ordinary life is put on hold.

“What do the great Lenten gospels require of us at present? Several instructions have already come from health authorities and the Church. **Outside gatherings of more than 500 people and indoor gatherings of more than 100 have been forbidden...**

In due course the public celebration of Mass may have to be suspended. Should this take place, **EVERYONE EXCEPT priests is dispensed from attending Sunday Mass: you can keep your Sunday holy by praying at home, reading the Scriptures of the day, watching Mass on television or online.**

OTHERWISE YOU ARE DISPENSED...

Our enforced “retreat” from the world can be an opportunity to grow closer to God and more prayerful...

To help people to maintain their physical health and spiritual life through this crisis, the Archdiocese has a page on its website. For latest updates, prayers and spiritual resources, and to watch Mass online visit

<https://www.sydneycatholic.org/coronavirus-updates>

**Anthony Fisher
Archbishop of Sydney**