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Catholic Church - Diocese of Wollongong

St. THOMAS MORE PARISH, RUSE

welcomes you

Parish Priest: Fr Michael Healy

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER - YEAR A

3rd MAY 2020



FIRST READING - Acts 2:14, 36-41.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: 'The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.'

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, 'What must we do, brothers?' 'You must repent,' Peter answered 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.' He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.' They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

The Word of the Lord.
 (R.) Thanks be to God
RESPONSORIAL PSALM
 (R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
2. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. (R.)
3. You have prepared a banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. (R.)
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. (R.)

SECOND READING - 1 Peter 2:20-25.

A reading from the first letter of St Peter.

The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty.

This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Word of the Lord.
 (R.) Thanks be to God
GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
 Alleluia, alleluia!
 I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
 I know my sheep, and mine know me.
 Alleluia!
GOSPEL READING - John 10:1-10.
 A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus said: 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly, I am the gate of the sheepfold. All others who have come are thieves and brigands; but the sheep took no notice of them. I am the gate. Anyone who enters through me will be safe:



he will go freely in and out and be sure of finding pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full.'
 The Gospel of the Lord.
 (R.) Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My **Jesus**, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You **into my soul**. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unit myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.
 Amen.

PRAYERING FOR OUR WORLD, AMIDST COVID-19

Gracious God, We give thanks anew for your providence and presence. We prayerfully seek your grace, amidst COVID-19 here and overseas. We pray for those in need of healing. We pray for your peace with those who are anxious or grieving. We pray you will continue to strengthen and sustain all those who are serving in response. We pray for your Holy spirit's discernment amidst the many choices and decisions facing our national, community and medical leaders. We each might see quickly what more we can do to help those who are vulnerable. This prayer for our nation in the family of nations, with all that is on our hearts, we gather now and pray through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

REFLECTION - by Fr Michael Tate.

In Jesus' time, the shepherd lead from the front: the sheep followed the sound of his voice to reach good pasture. Jesus describes other voices who might try to

mislead the sheep as 'thieves and brigands'.

In John's gospel, Judas, the thief from the common purse of the disciples, led a group of temple guards and Roman soldiers to take Jesus by force.

Barabbas was a brigand, a leader of an insurrection. Our Lord knew that armed rebellion against the Romans would lead to the destruction of Jerusalem.

So, Jesus is warning his followers against the seductive voices of those who advocate the use of violence.

In particular, the successor of Peter should echo the voice of Jesus the Good Shepherd and no other. Popes of the modern era seem to be listening more attentively to the Good Shepherd, as successors of St Peter who was instructed: 'Feed my lambs, feed my sheep'.

We could pause for a moment to attune our ears to the sound of the Shepherd's voice and follow Him so that He may lead us to pastures where we can have life, abundantly.

Alleluia!

mtate@bigpond.com



ST. THOMAS MORE PARISH DIRECTORY



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STEWARDSHIP

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER YEAR A

Jesus says,
 "I came that they may have life,
 and have it to the full."

Good stewards are grateful
 for the gift of life and joyfully
 share their abundance
 with others.

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

10th MAY 2020

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER YEAR A

1st Reading:
 Acts 6:1-7.
 They elected seven men filled with the Spirit and wisdom.

2nd Reading:
 1 Peter 2:4-9.
 You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

Gospel Reading:
 John 14:1-12.
 I am the way, the truth, and the life.

HUMOUR CORNER

JOB INTERVIEW

Reaching the end of a job interview, the Human Resources Officer asks a young engineer fresh out of the Sydney University,

"And what starting salary are you looking for?"

The engineer replies, "In the region of \$125,000 a year, depending on the benefits package."

The interviewer inquires, "Well, what would you say to a package of five weeks vacation, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching Superannuation fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years, say, a red Corvette?"

The engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?"

The interviewer replies, "Yeah, but you started it."

SAINT OF THE DAY
ST JOHN OF GOD



St John of God was originally a soldier who fought for Spain against the French and the Turks. Around the age of forty, he repented his former life and converted to a life of service to God. In 1539 he bought a house and gave shelter and care to the sick and needy. After his death, John's followers formed a Religious Order of hospitalers, the Brothers of St John of God. He is the patron saint of nurses, hospitals and the sick.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER
Year A



3rd May 2020

PARISH MESSAGE FROM FATHER MICHAEL:

In this bulletin, you will find the Scripture Readings for today, 4th Sunday of Easter. The Gospel (John, 10.1-6) describes the relationship between Jesus and us like the relationship between a Shepherd and his sheep. The comparison is rather difficult for us to grasp in our Aussie Scene. Many years ago, I stayed with a family of sheep-farmers in Western NSW, who owned about 15,000 sheep. *Imagine trying to count 15,000 sheep!* Today's Gospel scene of sheep-farming in Israel at the time of Jesus is certainly very different, where a sheep-farmer on average would own 15 sheep. Sheep, as we know, are very dependent and vulnerable animals, totally relying for their well-being on being shepherded. The Shepherd in Israel would know each of his sheep by name, would lead, feed and protect them. Sheep that strayed from their Shepherd were prey to thieves, wolves and weather hazards. The Gospel, describes Ruse Parish as "The Sheep of Ruse", who are "Shepherded" by Christ, the Good Shepherd. He knows each of us by Name, He leads, guides and directs us by His "Way of Life". He tries to protect us from danger, and feeds and nourishes us with the "Bread of Life". Like any stray sheep, we can get lost on our journey of faith, we can often go astray, disregarding our Shepherd, sometimes without being aware of it. But even if we, like "stupid" sheep, do go astray, He goes to look for us and is anxious to bring us back to the flock, because He is the "gate of the Sheepfold". Over the past few weeks of disturbing times, we can easily identify with today's Gospel. We greatly miss our weekly "Encounter" with our Shepherd at Mass, where we met with our Shepherd each weekend, heard His Word (His voice), where we were encouraged to feel part of the flock, to persevere, and to be fed by Him with the Eucharist. No wonder, the present situation leaves a big gap in our lives. But we must not forget that this is only temporary, and that He still "Shepherds" us in a different way. We look forward to being able to meet Him and each other again when the restrictions cease.

Please pray with me that when that time comes, that our former "flock" will come back together again, that we may not be missing many "stray sheep". Please God.

I will continue to offer Mass daily for each and all of you and lets all pray for each other every day.

God Bless you all *Fr Michael*

PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

"St Thomas More Parish, Ruse, is a Christ-centred Catholic Community that is committed to living Gospel Values, united by faith as we bring God's Kingdom to life. Our Mission is to welcome all, and respect and support each other in our spiritual journey. We encourage the gifts of people in building our community.

"Anymore who welcomes you, welcomes me and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me."
Matthew 10:40

UPDATE FROM THE DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG:

NOURISH YOUR FAITH AT HOME: New Section of DoW Website: www.dow.org.au/covid-19/nourish-your-faith-at-home. During these times of uncertainty, and isolation, nourishing our faith becomes even more important. Through spending time with God and with one another we find the hope, comfort, guidance and certainty that our loving God and Father wants to share with us. Jesus wants to be with us and care for us during these days. On this page there is resources for: participating in Masses and other Liturgies and Prayer Gatherings, Sharing Faith with Others in the Community etc.

ADORATION LIVESTREAMED WEDNESDAY NIGHTS: The NET Team are hosting Holy Hour every Wednesday at 6.30pm. This will be time set aside for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Via: Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/cymdow/> and Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/wollongongnetteam/>

THE DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG WEEKLY PODCAST: 'The Journey' - 3 May 2020: Listen in this week as we hear the 2nd in the Easter Series of Gospel reflections from Fr Mike Delaney, mother Hilda Scott from the Abbey and other short talks from some of Australia's best Catholic presenters as we celebrate the Easter season in isolation. etc. Uploaded every Friday for free download: www.jcr.org.au

MASS ONLINE AND OTHER SPIRITUAL RESOURCES: During this period of time where Masses in the diocese are suspended, it is important to know that you have not been abandoned by the Church. Members of the faithful are urged to keep holy the Lord's Day by making an act of Spiritual Communion (read far column), a well-established devotional practice of uniting one's self in prayer with Christ's sacrifice when circumstance prevent one from receiving holy Communion. Mass online is available at www.dow.org.au and on the diocese's Facebook page with Bishop Brian Mascord and other priests from the diocese. **Other resources include:**

Daily Mass from St John the Evangelist Catholic Parish, Campbelltown, Tuesday-Sunday Masses from Our Lady Help of Christians, Rosemeadow, 7pm Mass and Sunday 10am from Mary Immaculate, Eagle Vale, All Saints, Shellharbour at 7am and Tuesday-Fridays, St Francis Xavier Cathedral, Wollongong at 12.10pm, St Pauls', Moss Vale, Tuesday-Sundays at 8am Mary Mother of the Church, Macquarie Fields. Saturdays 5pm and Sunday 10am Mass from St Mary MacKillop Catholic Church, Oran Park. **Mass for You at Home** is available across the Ten Network on Sundays at 6.00am and any time on Ten Play. **Daily Mass on demand** is available at CathNews YouTube channel

PARISH COLLECTIONS: With the current situation it is imperative that you please keep up your weekly contributions, as the Parish runs on a limited budget and without these regular contributions to both the First and Second Collections, we will be in real financial difficulties. For this reason, I strongly encourage parishioners who currently give by envelope to change to Direct Debit or Credit Card contributions (please read following notice on how to arrange this or contact the Parish Office) to ensure the regular income of the parish continues. **I Thank you.** Otherwise, please drop your Planned Giving Envelope Contribution into the secure letter box outside the Church in Acacia Ave, each week. Please don't forget the first collection for the sustenance of the clergy (as we still have to live too!) For this collection please place your donation in a plain envelope and mark it 'FIRST COLLECTION' and drop it in the secure letter box outside the Church in Acacia Ave. **Thank you once again for your continued support of our Parish of St Thomas More, Ruse.**

ELECTRONIC PARISH PLANNED GIVING: During this period of time where Masses in the diocese are suspended, parishes are urgently needing the ongoing financial support of parishioners more than ever, as their overhead costs will not change. As the vast majority of parishioners give physically to their parish in the first and second collection baskets during Mass, we are encouraging all parishioners to join the electronic parish planned giving program. The Diocese have created a page with 2 simple options for parishioners to give to their local parish electronically. You can view the page and forms at the following link: www.dow.org.au/plannedgiving. If you have any questions about the form, please don't hesitate to contact the CDF Wollongong: Trevor Kellam at trevor.kellam@dow.org.au

THE PARISH BULLETIN: If you know of anyone that would like to have a copy of the Parish Weekly Bulletin **emailed** to them, could you please ask them to contact the Parish Office.

Have you "checked in" on another parishioner this week to say "Hi!"?

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY: Is available online at <https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/catholic-weekly-newspaper-online/>

CARITAS AUSTRALIA would like to THANK YOU for supporting Project Compassion 2020. If you still have your Project Compassion box or set of envelopes at home, please return them this week or visit www.caritas.org.au to make your donation online. www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion #projectcompassion 1800 024 41

FOR ANY PARISHIONERS: who would like to have their birthdays and/or wedding anniversaries included in the Parish Bulletin, please contact the Parish Office: 4628 2967 or email: ruse@dow.org.au. **Parishioner's Birthday this coming week:**
2nd: **Mike Young**
5th: **Gwen Harris**
6th: **Joanne Griffin**

PLEASE PRAY FOR: All the people who have died in this current pandemic and the recently deceased and whose anniversaries that occur at this time: Mary Writer (Annniv), Fr Pat McAuliffe (R.D.), Romy Cruz (R.D.), Joy Cullen (R.D.), Dawn Neville (R.D.), Aileen Graham (R.D.), Marie Pollard, Cathy Wiggins, Barbara Fetterplace, Michael Bartley, Winifred Minogue, Fr Anthony (Tony) Daly, Ladislav Feher, Beryl Ford, Olga Saulig, Jim McKenzie, John Read, Bobby Cameron, Alice Harris, Marguerite (Marg) Davis, Maree Laming, Jay Jablonskis, Deborah Rix, Bernard Hoffmann, Maurya Hutton and Maria Cabonara. **May they rest in peace**

PLEASE PRAY FOR: For all the people who have coronavirus and the **many** sick in our Parish Community including: Kenny Wilson, Antonio David, Hannah Kavanagh, Eileen Hughes, Mary Dolan, Frank Byron, Sean Scanlon, Kellie Brandes, Brian Harris, Francisco Carmona, David Minogue, Daphne and Edmund Pew, Steve Foreman, Luke Van Der Burg, Briege Glover, Fr John Whitty, Elaine Hoffmann, Ellen Healy, Patricia McInerney, Betty Berthon, Brenda Baker, Moria Harris, Betty Byrne, Rosa Santos, Aimiti Seufatu, John Hill, Freda and Wilfred Miranda, Beryl Purcell, Jeannie and George Nicholson and Mary Fredericks.

THANKYOU: To the Parishioners, who have been ensuring our Parish Grounds and gardens are maintained. Your continued support of our Parish is greatly appreciated by all. **Thank you**

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL: Please contact the School Office on 4625 6561, for information for School Enrolments for 2021. The link to read our Parish Catholic Primary School newsletter is: <https://stmdow.schoolzineplus.com/schoolnews?nid=43>

CathFAMILY: Brings you a selection of activities, eg: prayer rituals, crafts etc for free from their website. <https://cathfamily.org/cathkids-faith-unlimited/> A weekly interactive experience with a 2-minute animated reflection on the Sunday reading, questions to stimulate discussion, a simple activity and prayer. Visit www.cathfamily.org especially during this time of COVID-19 social distancing especially if children are unable to attend school.

FAITH CIRCLES: free small group resource. The weekly Faith Circles resource is available free to download at www.faithcircles.dow.org.au or have it sent to you each month via email subscription.

A "spiritual Communion" can be made when a person cannot actually receive the Body and Blood of Christ.

SPIRITUAL PRAYER:

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

