

# Our Lady of Dolours

**CHURCH:** Corner of Kirk St. and Archer St.  
**PARISH OFFICE:** 94 Archer St.  
 PO Box 1446 Chatswood NSW 2057  
**PHONE:** (612) 9410 9000 **FAX:** (612) 94121282  
**EMAIL:** office@chatswoodparish.org.au  
**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:** www.chatswoodparish.org.au  
**PARISH OFFICE HOURS:**  
 Monday to Friday 9.30am - 4.30pm

## PARISH MASS TIMETABLE

**MONDAY TO FRIDAY** - 9am and 12.15pm  
**SATURDAY** - 9am and 5.30pm (Vigil)  
**SUNDAY** - 7.30am, 9am, 10.30am and 5.30pm  
**PUBLIC HOLIDAYS** - 9am only  
**KOREAN MASS** - 7pm; 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Sun. of month.  
**FILIPINO MASS** - 12noon; 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of month.

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**FAMILY MASS:** 9am each Sunday  
**CHILDREN'S CHOIR** at 9am Family Mass on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month.  
**KIDS' WORD:** Children's Liturgy of the Word at 9am Family Mass on 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday during school term. Begins in Church and moves to Meeting Rooms.  
**YOUTH MASS:** 5.30pm each Sunday

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**RECONCILIATION:** 9.30am - 10.30am each Saturday. Any time by request.  
**MORNING PRAYER:** 8.45am Monday to Saturday  
**ROSARY** 9.30am Monday to Saturday  
**EXPOSITION:** 9.30am - 10.30am each Saturday  
**NOVENA: OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP** - Saturday 10.00am with **BENEDICTION** 10.30am  
**ANOINTING OF THE SICK:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of month at 12.15pm Mass. Also during any weekday Mass before surgery or medical treatment, or any time by request.  
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**BAPTISMS:** See the brochure in the Church Foyer, go to our website (above) or contact the Sacramental Minister.  
**WEDDINGS:** Contact a priest or sacraments minister. For a marriage/anniversary blessing at Sunday Mass contact Maria & Joe Woods 94113451.

## CELEBRANTS FOR SUNDAY MASSES

	14/15 February	21/22 February
Vigil 5.30pm	^Vince Casey	Clem Hill
7.30am	Clem Hill	Claude M.
9.00am	#Vince Casey	Vince Casey*
10.30am	Claude M.	Claude M.
12.30pm	Baptisms (VC)	----
5.30pm	#Vince Casey	Clem Hill
^ Marriage blessings		
#Anointing of Sick *Kids Word & Baptisms		

## YEAR B

**6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**  
**15<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2009**

## READINGS

**First Reading:** Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46 shows what it meant to be a leper.  
**Responsorial Psalm:** I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.  
**Second Reading:** 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1 Paul urges his listeners to be imitators of him as he was of Christ.  
**Gospel:** Mark 1:40-45 shows Jesus curing the leper.

## NEXT SUNDAY'S READINGS

22 February 2009 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday Ord. Time  
 Is 43:18-19, 21-22, 24-25; 2 Cor 1:18-22; Mk 2:1-12



## READINGS FOR WEEK DAYS

**MON** Gen 4:1-15, 25; Mk 8:11-13  
**TUES** Gen 6:5-8, 7:1-5, 10; Mk 8:14-21  
**WEDS** Gen 8:6-13, 20-22; Mk 8:22-26  
**THURS** Gen 9:1-13; Mk 8:27-33  
**FRI** Gen 11:1-9; Mk 8:34 - 9:1  
**SAT** Heb 11:1-7; Mk 9:2-13



**With Our Lady of Dolours, we pray for:**

- Sick:** Nora Long, Peter Lau  
**Recently Deceased:** Victims of Melbourne fires  
**Deceased Anniversary:** Kristene Thompson, Marko & Mara Stanich, Maria Gussing, Rosina Russo, Giorgio Circosta, Elisabetta Rosina, Salvatore Papallo, Bill & Vivian Mooney, John Patrick Smyth, D Raju, Helen & V Arockiaswamy, John Prax  
**Baptism:** Callum Richards  
**Wedding:** Arlene Donaire & Christopher Young

**WITHIN THE PARISH**

**ST VALENTINE'S DAY**

We will have a special blessing of all engaged and married couples at the 5.30pm Vigil Mass this Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February, followed by drinks in Meeting Room 1. Come along and celebrate your sacrament of love with the parish.

This occasion, organised by the Celebrate Love, is part of the celebrations marking 17 years since Celebrate Love was introduced into Australia. Congratulations!

**WORLD DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE SICK**

In our parish we are celebrating the World Day of Prayer for the Sick (WDS) with celebrations of the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick **at 9am and 5.30pm Masses today**, Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> February and **after the 12.15pm Mass this Friday** 20<sup>th</sup> February. Instructions will be given before each Mass for those who wish to be anointed.

The Sacrament of the Sick is only for those who have some serious illness, are preparing for surgery or are frail with age. You should only be anointed once in these days to mark WDS.

**JOURNEY TO WHOLENESS**

This series with a five steps approach tying in the healing power of praying with Scripture to the Sunday's gospel. It will be published each Sunday until Lent begins.

**MERCY COLLEGE OPENING MASS**

for 2009 will be celebrated on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 9am in the parish church. All are welcome to attend.

**OLD PRIMARY OPENING MASS**

will be celebrated on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February at 12.15pm in the parish church. All are welcome to attend. The Sacrament of the **Anointing of the Sick** will follow immediately after this Mass.

**VICTORIA BUSHFIRE APPEALS**

- **Vinnies NSW** is standing behind its Victorian counterparts in supporting the **Victorian Disaster Appeal**, which will provide practical assistance to the countless families devastated by the bushfires which have ravaged the State. This will be an unprecedented effort.

As the full extent of the tragedy is still emerging, Vinnies NSW advises that the best way to help is by making a financial donation to the **Victorian Disaster Appeal** through [www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au) or by calling 131812.

St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria will use all money raised to provide emergency relief and long-term assistance to the communities affected by this tragedy to help them rebuild their homes and lives.

Good quality clothing and appropriate material goods should be delivered to the Vinnies Shop in Victoria Avenue, Chatswood for eventual distribution in Victoria.

- **Victoria Bushfire Appeal Fund**  
To donate to the Victoria Bushfire Appeal Fund, call 1800 811 700.
- **Red Cross**  
To donate blood call 13 14 95.
- **To Volunteer Your Services**  
The Victorian Government has established a registration process for people wanting to volunteer in bushfire relief. To register as a volunteer go to the Go Volunteer Victorian Appeal website or call the Volunteering Australia hotline on 1300 366 356.

**HOME ROSARY** will be held on Friday, 20 February at 415/15 Barton Rd, Artarmon at 7.30pm. Please phone: 9967 2601. All welcome

## **WELCOME**

to Fr Vladimir Achalas who has only this week arrived in Australia from the Philippines. Vlad will be living in the parish for a few weeks. Please make him welcome. Vlad has written a little about himself:

"I am a Filipino missionary priest from The Society of Our Lady of The Most Holy Trinity (SOLT). Bishop David Walker has invited the SOLT to establish a mission in the Broken Bay Diocese.

I have been a priest for 15 years. In the Philippines I have worked in various ministries such as a parish priest, a rector of our college seminary, a theological lecturer and a contemplative servant.

The Society of Our Lady is composed of the three vocations in the Church: priests, sisters and lay apostles. Our main aim is to work together as an Ecclesial Team in areas of deepest apostolic need around the world."

## **PARKING**

Since the end of last year we have 32 new car spaces available in Kirk St for parking at Sunday Masses. If you have not used the new car park before, try it before you go home. When the car entrance gate is open the pedestrian gates are closed but unlocked. The car exit gate will open automatically whenever a car approaches.

This new car park is for school use only during the week. It was built and paid for by the Catholic Schools Office at a cost of over \$400,000 to provide parking for the teachers. We thank the CSO for their generosity in allowing us to use the car park on weekends. We are not able to use the car park at night because of neighbours' concerns about the glare of the safety lighting.

From Monday to Friday the area behind the parish office is reserved for staff, delivery and service vehicle parking. The driveway gate is opened by parish staff when they arrive in the morning and locked when they leave in the evening.

Please note that all the parish car parks are only guaranteed to be open when there are services on in the church and they may need to be locked after these services are finished. (That is code for don't leave your car in the church car parks when you go shopping or you might find the car park locked when you return.)

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> February at 7pm.

## **SOCIAL ACTIVITY - "BINGO ON THE BOAT" - Sunday, 19 April 09**

Your OLD Social Committee is organising "BINGO ON THE BOAT" on our beautiful Sydney Harbour. This three-and-a-half hour cruise includes morning and afternoon tea, BBQ lunch and Bingo. The



boat departs from Star City Wharf at 11.15am. The cost is approximately \$40.00 per person.

We can only go ahead with this if we have sufficient numbers. So, if you would like to join in this fun activity, please contact either Linda Cowell on 9419 5914 or Judith Ryan on 9419 8310 by Sunday, 1 March 09 to register your interest.

Watch this space...!!

## **CHILDREN'S SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM 2009-2010**

We had a *great* turn-out of parents for the Sacraments Information Night last Tuesday. Thank you to all involved. If you missed out, there are a number of ways to 'catch up' on the information: 1) spare parent info packs are available from the Kirk St foyer of the church; 2) ask another parent who attended; 3) phone program co-ordinators Tanya 9415-1533(H); Mary 9904-7771(H); or sacraments minister Teresa 9410 9027(W). State school catechists may also like to take a parent pack for their information.

Enrolments for the first sacrament, Confirmation will be taken 2nd August, however the information is given early to help families plan their busy year.

## **ADULT CONFIRMATION**

is organized for adult Catholics who missed out on this sacrament when they were growing up. This ceremony is with the Bishop at the diocesan Cathedral on Pentecost Sunday. An information night will be held Tues 24 Feb, 7.30pm, Parish Meeting Rm 1. Enquiries: Teresa 9410 9027.

# ~ O.L.D. ie S. ~

(Our Lady of Dolours, Seniors ~ Over 55's)

**World Day of Prayer for the Sick** ~ we ask our parishioners to include in their prayers those that have received one of our St. Peregrine prayer shawls.

Please pray for ~

Hazel,	Tony,
Betty,	Jim,
Anna,	Jan,
Rebecca,	Kerry,
Louis,	Jack,
John,	Gwen,
and Julie.	



## Snippets from the Past ~

“Alt’s Eleven – This was the unofficial label affixed to a group of 11 volunteers from O.L.D. parish who responded to the call to men of the parish to undertake a course of study to become an Acolyte. Fr Alt, who was then an assistant priest within the parish, was given the task of guiding them through to their commissioning. From this small beginning, well over thirty years ago, this work has prospered until today where we have over 100 Ministers of Communion as they are now called. Our Lady of Dolours parish was amongst the frontrunners of Australian Catholic parishes called by the Holy Spirit to this special work. Not only assisting the priests when called upon to do so, but also taking the Eucharist to the sick and disabled in homes, nursing homes and hospitals within the Parish.”

*Thank you to Mr Viv McKenzie.*

Our parish has grown considerably since the days of Fr. Alt and many more Ministers of Communion are required today than previously. If you would like to be a part of this special group of parishioners please contact Gerard Ryan on 9419 8310.

## Bridge 4 Fundraising for Filipino Community

~ Do you play bridge and can get a group of 4 together? As well as playing bridge \$35 will get you lunch including a glass of wine, coffee and tea. It is being held at St. Aloysius College oval hall, Tyneside Avenue, Willoughby on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March from 11am to 3pm. Please call Jenny Carter on 0407 977 180 to book your table.

## Discount to Parishioners

Arnaud Dumond & Vincent Le Gall will be performing classical and Flamenco duets inspired by universal Spanish music at St. Patrick’s Church Hill on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm. Tickets are \$25 or \$20 concession/pensioner. Please contact Godelieve on 0404837363 for more information and purchase of tickets.

Seniors enquiries or just for a chat call Danka on 9410 9030 or [danka@chatswoodparish.org.au](mailto:danka@chatswoodparish.org.au)

## SOCIAL JUSTICE MINISTRY

The first 2009 meeting of this Ministry will be on Wednesday next, 18<sup>th</sup> February, commencing at 7pm in Meeting Room 3. As we look afresh at our Ministry, we welcome all to join us in our efforts to put Catholic Social teaching into practice.

**Bible Workshops: something new for Lent**

## ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE WORD

**Three Tuesday evenings during Lent.**

**3, 17 & 31 March. 7.30-9.30pm. Meeting Rm 1.**

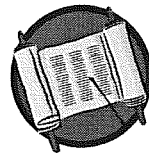
Facilitators: Teresa Pirola and Fr Vince Casey

“Archaeology of the Word” is a method for exploring the Scriptures, based on ancient Jewish biblical traditions that formed Jesus. It was introduced to parish audiences by Br Jack Driscoll, cfc, of Bat Kol Institute, Jerusalem, during his 2008 visit. In these workshops we review the method, hone our skills and apply them to three Old Testament texts which are read in the Easter Vigil each year: Creation (Gen 1.1-2.2), The Sacrifice of Isaac (Gen 22.1-18), Crossing of the Red Sea (Exod 14.15-15.1).

Come to one, two or all three. All welcome! Cost: gold coin donation. RSVP at the parish office 9410 9000 or [office@chatswoodparish.org.au](mailto:office@chatswoodparish.org.au).

## “A YEAR WITH TORAH”

**This week's Torah Portion is Exodus 21:1 - 24:18**



Following on the heels of the Ten Commandments, this week’s Torah portion spells out how the Israelites are to live in community and before their God. The specific cases in this passage were obviously common problems that caused disputes—they highlight issues of justice and fairness that brought discord among the people.

Those parishioners who are following this schedule of Torah readings may be pleased to know that the “Light of Torah” leaflets, which has been monthly up until now, will continue on a weekly basis in March. In fact, the March issues are already available in the church foyer – see the Bible Education brochure stand.



## ADULT EDUCATION and FAITH FORMATION

### *Food for the soul*

Take time to browse the leaflets available at the back of the church including this month's 'Word of Life'.

### *World Day of Prayer*

An ecumenical day of prayer will be held on Friday 6 March at 1.30pm. This year's focus is PNG and the theme is 'In Christ, we are many members, yet one body'. Mark the date - more details next week.

Any enquiries regarding Adult Ed please phone Suzanne on 9410 9032 or ring or text 0415 820 494 or email [suzanne@chatswoodparish.org.au](mailto:suzanne@chatswoodparish.org.au)

## youth @ chatswood

Years 7-12



you're at home, there's nothing to do, you're bored out of your brain ... and your Mum offers for you to fill time by

cleaning the bathroom, or your Dad suggests you do homework (doesn't matter if you've already done it)?! Well, if you're in years 7-9, SPIRO has got something on a couple Sunday afternoons a month to fill that seemingly never ending weekend tedium. On **1 March** we'll be kicking off with a bit of fun and frivolity here at the parish meeting rooms/OLD playground (weather pending). Be sure to come over, bring some mates, and put an end to Sunday afternoon boredom!

More info ring/text 0421191965 or contact [spiro\\_at\\_chatswood@hotmail.com](mailto:spiro_at_chatswood@hotmail.com)



Young Adults 18-30+

### *Rewired-Rejigged*

A 4 week program leading up to Easter will be held on Saturday afternoons from 14 March at St Thomas's Willoughby. Keep the date free to come along and check it out. More details next week.

Any enquiries regarding Youth/Young Adults please phone Suzanne on 9410 9032 or ring or text 0415 820 494 or email [suzanne@chatswoodparish.org.au](mailto:suzanne@chatswoodparish.org.au)

## READERS



We need more Readers (Lectors) to join us in proclaiming the Word of God at the Sunday Masses. A new roster will be prepared very soon, so get in early to become part of this important ministry.

Would you like to take part in the Gospel Reading on Palm Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> April and/or during the Holy Week Triduum - Holy Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>, Good Friday 10<sup>th</sup>, and Holy Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April? Enquiries to Monica Cotter 9412 1323 TODAY.

## ASH WEDNESDAY

This day which marks the beginning of Lent is on 25<sup>th</sup> February. Masses and the distribution of ashes will be at 7.45am; 9am; 12.15pm and 7.30pm. While we are encouraged to attend one of these Masses and to receive the ashes, it is not a day when we are obliged to attend Mass. (Note: we are obliged to attend Mass each Sunday and for the feasts of the Assumption on 15<sup>th</sup> August and Christmas on 25<sup>th</sup> December).

## LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUPS

Are a great way to reflect on the Gospels, and to prepare for Easter. If you would like to form a group or join a group, please ring Monica Cotter (9412 1323) quickly for more details, as Lent starts with Ash Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> February - just over 2 weeks away!

## Outside the Parish

### *Serra Welcomes You in 2009*

Our first Mass is at Sacred Heart Church, 2 Richard Porter Way Pymble on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 6.30pm followed by a light meal. All Catholic men and women are welcome.

Contact Terry Scanlan 9488 7295 or 0438 887 295 or [terry\\_scanlan@bigpond.com](mailto:terry_scanlan@bigpond.com)

### *Misa Faka - Taioisi Kakai Tonga 'o e Taioisi 'o Broken Bay*

All Tongans are invited to our Diocesan Mass on the 22nd of February at Waitara Parish in Yardley Ave at 1.30pm. The Mass will be celebrated by Fr. Silito Tupou, followed by the election of a Diocesan Committee to serve the Community and the Diocese. Both the communities from the Central Coast (Toukley) and the Northern Beaches (Manly) will share in the participation of singing at this Mass. For more information please contact Kiliti Na'ati on 4340 5951, 0414 631 962.



In recent years, the following prayer has been prayed many times by parishioners and friends of this parish for loved ones facing serious illness. You may like to pray it for a friend or family member in your own circles, inserting their name where 'N' appears.

### **A prayer for a loved one who is ill**

Father,  
Your love surrounds  
and sustains us;  
each day of our lives;  
in the good times and bad,  
in suffering and in health.

United in prayer  
we bring before you now  
our friend 'N'.  
We ask you to fill him/her with the  
power of the Holy Spirit  
to strengthen him/her  
to face the path ahead  
as he/she confronts this illness with  
hope and confidence.  
We ask you to guide the doctors,  
comfort 'N's family,  
gift 'N' with good friends,  
heal him/her of every trace of this  
illness, and restore 'N' to full health.

We trust Father that you hear our  
prayer and that you are responding  
even now in loving and hopefilled ways.  
We make this prayer through Jesus  
Christ. Amen.

**Mary, Our Lady of Dolours,  
pray with us for 'N'.**

**Note: a copy of this prayer  
is available to take home -  
see basket at the front of  
the church today.**



# Journey to wholeness

## The Healing Power of the Sacrament

As with all the sacraments, the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick invites us into a sacred encounter with Jesus and his body, the people of the Church, becoming one with him.

### **Anointing of the Sick**

When a Catholic is seriously ill, or is facing surgery or hospitalisation, the Church offers an anointing of the person with oil in a sacred ritual of healing called Anointing of the Sick.

This rite is one of the seven Sacraments of the Church. The sign of the sacrament is the laying of hands followed by an anointing on the forehead and hands with the oil of chrism, accompanied by the words:

'Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord who frees you from sin, save you and raise you up.'

The biblical roots of this sacrament are clear (e.g. see Mark 6:13; James 5:14-15) and it has been practised since the earliest days of the Church. It is part of our way of continuing the healing ministry of Jesus. The healing offered by the anointing is forgiveness of sins, hope, inner peace, sometimes physical healing, and an assurance of God's steadfast care, even in death.

In the past this sacrament was kept strictly for those close to death. However, since the Vatican II renewal of the 1960s the Church has encouraged more frequent use of this sacrament for serious health issues which are not necessarily life threatening. As with all the sacraments, this anointing has significance for the whole Church community. It reminds us of our call to wholeness. It deepens our awareness of our call to be a sign of salvation to the world. Wherever there is brokenness and pain, we are to be instruments of Christ's healing touch.

### **This Sunday the Church celebrates World Day of the Sick 2009.**

Today, as in the days of Jesus, we bring our sick members to Christ that he will especially touch their lives with hope and healing. For the seventeenth year running, the Church celebrates a World Day of the Sick.

Please pray for all our sick sisters and brothers in our midst, and for those bed-ridden or unable to be here today. We remember with gratitude their courage and faith, their families and carers. We pray for doctors, nurses, paramedics and all health and medical personnel dedicated to their care. They are the healing hands of Christ!

### **Think about it**

Do you believe that Jesus can heal?  
Who has been a friend to you on your own healing journey?

### **Pray Act**

Teach your children about the healing power of Jesus in everyday situations as they arise. E.g. let's say your child falls over and grazes his/her knee. As well as applying the appropriate medical and emotional aide, lay hands and pray for healing. Although this is not the Sacrament, it is an expression of our faith community's healing way of life which gives the Sacrament its proper context. The 'big' symbols of our parish church are connected with the 'little' symbols of our homes.

### **Further Reading**

"On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering", Landmarks leaflet no.9  
Limited copies available from church foyer.

# Faith amidst the Flames

## INTRODUCTION

Once again, in the midst of a scorching summer, Australians are called upon to battle the devastating effect of bushfires.

It is a time of immense suffering and sacrifice.

But we are not alone in this struggle.

Not long ago we celebrated the birth of Emmanuel, the Saviour born in Bethlehem. He is the same Saviour who died on a cross and who rose to new life, and his name means 'God-is-with-us'.

Jesus came to show us that God is always with us:

in our suffering,  
in our hope,  
in so many tangible acts of goodwill and salvation which fill our lives.

In sympathy with all who have lost their family members and friends, their homes and livelihoods, let us gather to remember and proclaim our faith as we pray (all respond):

**'Our God is with us':**



We pray for all who have died, now safe with God, and for their families and the survivors of the fires who in shock and grief now struggle to accept their loss. May those who mourn and are traumatized by the Black Saturday disaster be sustained by the love of Jesus reaching out to them through the compassionate kindness and generosity of their families, mates and fellow Australians. We pray:

*Our God is with us.*



We pray for those who are fighting fires: the fire-brigades and the many volunteers and agencies who assist their efforts. We thank God for those who risk their own lives for the salvation of others as we pray:

*Our God is with us.*



We pray for those burdened by unimaginable losses and who have found themselves like refugees in their own locality. We thank God for the many gestures of practical aid and the emotional and spiritual support offered by the Australian community as we pray:

*Our God is with us.*



At a time like this we stand in awe of the power of the elements - fire, wind and water - with the capacity to destroy as well as to save, and we are reminded of our vulnerability as human creatures who inhabit the vast Australian landscape. We come before our Creator with humility and trust in our hour of need as we pray:

*Our God is with us.*



Knowing that bushfires are often the result of arson, we come before God painfully aware of the presence of evil and sickness in the world. We ask to be fortified in God's unquenchable love and justice as we seek the most appropriate response to wrongdoing. We pray:

*Our God is with us.*



We give thanks to God for the blessings in our lives, especially the gifts we so often take for granted until they are in danger of being taken from us: the gift of family, friends, a home, our possessions. Most of all we praise God for the gift of life itself as we pray:

*Our God is with us.*



We pray for people all over the world affected by natural disasters, often of mammoth proportions. By meeting our own hardships with hope we join in solidarity and faith with the whole human family as we pray:

*Our God is with us.*

We pray for....



*(Continue with your own prayers of thanksgiving and petition)*

*Our God is with us.*

*Close with a prayer or song which holds special meaning for your family/community at this time.*

### **Some ways to use this prayer sheet:**

- At the start or end of a family meal
- At a parish gathering
- With any group of friends or neighbours. Adapt the material as necessary.
- Add symbols to your sacred space: Two blackened sticks in the form of a cross. Or a symbol of hope such as a bowl of water, a green leaf. Or a symbol of sacrifice like a firefighter's helmet, a crucifix.
- As you pray, bring to mind specific names, faces, communities affected by bushfires at this time.
- As an extension of this prayer time, is there a practical gesture this family / community could offer to assist victims of bushfire?

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# realpeople

the Gospel in everyday language

at a  
glance

In today's readings:

From ancient Israel's liturgy guide. Lev 13:1-2,44-46

Do everything for the glory of God. 1 Cor 10:31-11:1

Heal you? Of course I want to! Mk 1:40-45

Next week:

Jesus: merciful healer.  
Is 43:18-19,21-22,24-25;  
2 Cor 1:18-22; Mk 2:1-12.

Jesus heals  
the man  
with leprosy



6 ORDINARY  
SUNDAY

Have I ever felt  
like a 'leper' -  
alienated,  
shunned?

## in a nutshell

In ancient Israel, leprosy became a symbol of sin. The required quarantine isolated the unfortunate sufferer. In touching and healing the leper, Jesus breaks social and religious taboos, revealing the relentlessness of God's love. No matter what our sinfulness and isolation, God seeks us out and longs to heal us.

## One Monday

I arrived at school Monday morning to find my class of fifth graders unusually solemn. Almost as one they blurted out the news that the father of one of the boys had been found dead half an hour ago. Immediately I went to the principal's office.

'It's about Mr James' I said to Julie, our principal.

'Julie nodded. 'He committed suicide this morning. I'll come and speak with the children in fifteen minutes.'

True to her word, Julie entered our hushed classroom. 'These are a couple of precious things from my office,' she began as she placed two items on the desk. 'This is my own prayer candle and this is my small table crucifix. I am going to leave these things in your care for a short while.'

Then she began to talk to the children. Yes, it was true that David was absent because his father had just died, she said. We need not be concerned *how* he died. Whatever happened to Mr James, the most important thing to remember is that David has lost his father. We need to be there for David and support him in his time of loss and sadness...

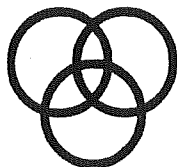
After school that day, I was sharing a coffee with the grieving James family in their living room. There was a knock at the door. It was one of the boys from my class. Wayne had made a card and the children had signed it to be given to David. A short while later there was another knock at the door. This time it was young Grant. He held a cake his mother had made. Ten minutes later Peter appeared. He had a computer game for David to use. And finally, there was young Mark - a casserole for the family.

Four boys from my class had come - on their own - to show their care for David and his family. Far from being scared off by the sense of failure engendered by suicide, these courageous boys had responded with compassion.

## Great Jubilee

In this Year of Great Jubilee be generous in your compassion.

- Focus less on fearful situations and more on the healing love of Jesus.
- Do what you can - no matter how little it seems.
- Teach your children to be courageously compassionate.



## Far from home

During my extended stay in Europe (four years) I often felt like a stranger to the human race. My struggle with the language, not to mention the loneliness of being so far from home, was difficult to bear.

Early in my time there I went to Sienna to learn Italian. The day I arrived I walked the streets for what seemed like hours, trying to find the boarding house where I was due that day. Night was falling, my bag was heavy. I tried to phone the boarding house, however I failed to make myself understood over the phone. My anxiety only aggravated my difficulty with the language. When I tried to approach some people in the street to ask for help, they just looked at me like I was an idiot, a rude tourist or both.

Finally, a woman came by who was altogether different. Although she spoke very little English she took the time to figure out what I was trying to do, made the phone call for me, called a taxi to take me to my destination...and even smiled!

In that smile I felt human again.  
(Robert)



## Think . Pray . Act

As the body of Christ, there are many situations to which we can bring the compassion of Jesus - if we want to.

Think and pray about this statement.

What gesture of love and care do you feel drawn to make?

