

# Voice from the Vicarage 3rd March 2022

Dear All,

What a lovely evening Tuesday was in 'The Lamb'. Thank you to those who produced a large batch of pancakes as, in the age old tradition, we did our bit to help the world begin Lent with a little less flour! Those who were present at the end of the evening joined in the saying and singing of the ancient late night 'Office' of the Church known as Compline. I for one, found it moving to be praying in 'The Lamb' in this way, and look forward to our Sunday @ 6 praise and study experiment there which begins on the 13th March.

*No 'smudging' at Christ Church!* +

A really good number of folk made their way to one of the three masses for Ash Wednesday yesterday. Indeed the overall number present was the largest for a considerable number of years. After the 6.30 pm mass a couple remarked on the very definite crosses firmly marked on the foreheads of all who came forward for the 'ashing'. Nothing timid about it they said, "No black smudges" at Christ Church!

As you might imagine, marked + as we were, a number of folk who came into 'The Lamb' were reminded of the significance of the day as I served them coffee or Donna served them food. One, I suspect rather lapsed catholic, told me he'd forgotten it was Ash Wednesday and felt a little guilty about tucking into his bacon butty. Of course he couldn't resist it!

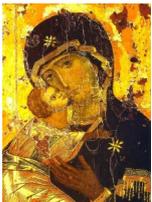
May the marks on our foreheads be more than skin deep, and may yours and my 40 days be fruitful for our own soul's sake, and in our witness among those with whom we have to do.

*The return of the common Cup*

Now that masks need not be worn in church (though certainly can be if you're more comfortable wearing one) it seems appropriate to offer the Precious Blood again. So last night I invited any who wanted to do so, to receive in 'both kinds'. Grace abounds, and the 'fullness' of the Sacrament is to be found in the consecrated Bread alone, so please, if you would prefer not to go to the chalice, don't feel any pressure to do so. No one will be, or should be noticing. Indeed last night people simply made their own choice.

**It's extraordinary isn't it what a week or so can bring?**

We are surely reeling at the events in Ukraine and wonder what the future might bring for them, and indeed for the wider world. It was very good yesterday to join in prayer with so many throughout the world in praying for peace. A copy of the icon of Our Lady of Vladimir, also known as Our Lady of Kyiv beloved by both Ukrainians and Russians was in the church. It was to the city of Kyiv that the original icon was given as a gift in the mid 12th century, before it was removed to Vladimir by a prince who some years later had his troops sack and pillage the city of Kyiv....



***May Our Lady, who surely weeps to see her children at war, pray for Ukraine and indeed pray for Russia.***

Meanwhile so many folk in our own land are facing such tempestuous weather, and so much destruction as a result. Pray for Qld and NSW.

SUNDAYS @ 6 in 'The Lamb' from Sunday 13th March

An hour of praise and study, followed by simple refreshments.

All welcome... Want to be involved? Have a word with +L or Deacon Jack



*Pancakes and prayer... a godly combination*

*Things to look out for in Lent..*

Each week there will be a podcast on the parish website of the 'seven minutes on..' talks given at the 6.30 pm Thursday Eucharist.

This week: Father Russell, **'Seven minutes on being a pilgrim'**

Also each week I will produce a reflection on Our Lord under his title **'The Good Shepherd'** based on the 23rd psalm. The day it's 'up there' might vary so I'll send out an email notifying.

For those who were not able to be there, and perhaps as a reminder to those who were, I began my homily last night with words of St Paul from the first reading: *'As dying, yet fully alive'* (2 Corinthians 6:9), and with a sentence summing up a chapter in a book on gratefulness I'd be given that day:

*That you have not died is not sufficient proof that you are alive...*

Be more fully live this Lent by praying a little more, fasting from something which you are aware has assumed a place in your life it doesn't deserve, and giving a little more— money perhaps, but certainly more of your heart..

Easter Day will be all the more sweet as a result!

***And finally,*** I've had a wonderful email from our Judith Harbour, now working at the Murrupurtitjanuwu Catholic primary school on the Tiwi islands north of Darwin (Try pronouncing that after a couple of drinks. Actually might be easier after a couple of drinks!) What an adventure she seems to be having. Stories of long rains, wellies, rampant covid and snakes! Makes life in Brunny seem a little tame! I'll print the email off and put it on the noticeboard so anyone can have a read.

Hope to see you Sunday. +✍