

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! / God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son, / that all who believe in him might have eternal life. / Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

GOSPEL

Jn 3:14-21

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

God sent his Son into the world that we might be saved through him.

Jesus said to Nicodemus:

‘The Son of Man must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him. Yes, God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but so that through him the world might be saved. No one who believes in him will be condemned; but whoever refuses to believe is condemned already, because he has refused to believe in the name of God’s only Son. On these grounds is sentence pronounced: that though the light has come into the world men have shown they prefer darkness to the light because their deeds were evil. And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, for fear his actions should be exposed; but the man who lives by the truth comes out into the light, so that it may be plainly seen that what he does is done in God.’

✱ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL

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Breaking Open the Word

GOD’S LOVE, GIFT AND GRACE

On this *Lactare* Sunday (so called for the first word of the liturgy is “rejoice”) we find in the Letter to the Ephesians: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God” (2:8). To contemplate this statement is to begin to understand the generous mercy and love of God for each of us.

This reading follows 2 Chronicles that recounts the fall of Jerusalem, despite the compassion of God for the people, but then King Cyrus of Persia liberating the exiles. So as the passage begins in Ephesians we see the continuity with God, who is rich in mercy. Three times “grace” is repeated: “by grace you have been saved,” “the immeasurable riches of God’s grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” and “for by grace you have been saved through faith.” This reiteration accentuates the love of God and invites us to know that “we are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus for good works.”

John’s Gospel reminds us “God so loved the world that he gave his only son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life” (3:16). With his clear illumination of light and darkness, John affirms that “those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.”

How will we respond to God’s love, gift and grace?

Dr Rosemary Canavan



THE SAVING WORD

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT / B

10 MARCH 2024

FIRST READING

2 Chron 36: 14-16, 19-23

A reading from the second book of Chronicles.

The wrath and the mercy of the Lord are revealed in the exile and liberation of his people.

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, ‘Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation.’

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: ‘Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, “The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God be with him! Let him go up.”’

✱ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 136. R. v. 6

R. Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

1. By the rivers of Babylon / there we sat and wept, / remembering Zion: / on the poplars that grew there / we hung our harps. R.



2. For it was there that they asked us, / our captors, for songs, / our oppressors, for joy. / ‘Sing to us,’ they said, / ‘one of Zion’s songs.’ R.

3. O how could we sing / the song of the Lord / on alien soil? / If I forget you, Jerusalem, / let my right hand wither! R.

4. O let my tongue / cleave to my mouth / if I remember you not, / if I prize not Jerusalem / above all my joys! R.

SECOND READING

Eph 2: 4-10

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians.

When we were dead through sins, he brought us to life.

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ – it is through grace that you have been saved – and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God’s work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he has meant us to live it.

✱ The word of the Lord.

MASSES – MARCH 2024
WEEKDAY MASSES

Tuesday	12th	Narrogin Church	Rosary	5:00pm
Wednesday	13th	Narrogin Church	Mass	9:30am
Thursday	14th	Narrogin Church	Mass	9:30am
Friday	15th	Narrogin Church	Adoration	4:30—5:00pm
			Mass	5:00pm
			(Followed by Station of the Cross)	

WEEKEND MASSES

Saturday	16th	Wagin Church	Mass	6:00am
Sunday	17th	Narrogin Church	Mass	9:30am



4TH SUNDAY OF LENT
10TH MARCH 2024



Memory is 26 years old and lives in rural Malawi. As the eldest child in a low-income farming family, Memory had to take on many household chores and farming activities to support her parents. They struggled to pay for Memory's school fees and school supplies, and Memory often had to walk to school barefooted.

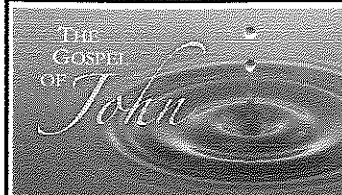
With the support of Caritas Australia and its partner the Catholic Development Commission in Malawi (CADECOM), Memory was able to enrol at a technical college where she learnt technical skills in carpentry. She undertook a three-year carpentry course, with CADECOM supporting part of her tuition and boarding fees.

Memory became the first female carpenter from her village. Today, she works as a carpenter at one of Malawi's largest hydroelectric power stations. With the income from her job, she can provide financial support to her family and inspire other young women in her community so that they may have the opportunity to succeed in a male-dominated industry.

Please donate to Project Compassion.

Together, we can help vulnerable communities face their challenges today and build a better tomorrow, *for all future generations.*

You can donate through Project Compassion donation boxes and envelopes available from your parish, by visiting caritas.org.au/project-compassion or by calling 1800 024 413.



Fourth Sunday of



"If we are inclined to feel demoralised at this point in our Lenten journey, we are invited by today's readings to find again the source of new energy and encouragement. In the midst of the deepest darkness the true Light shines! Old Israel finds that God's designs will not be frustrated by their foolishness and selfishness - the conqueror of the Babylonians sends them back to rebuild the temple. Paul announces to those who are in danger of losing their way the astounding truth at the centre of our faith - God's free gift to a lost world of new life in Christ: our redeemed humanity is God's 'work of art', we each have our part to play in the realisation of God's great designs.

"But it is especially in climax of today's readings, the words spoken to Nichodemus, by Jesus - the Light of the World - that all our darkness is dispelled! These words are perhaps the most quoted of the Gospels. Let us not take them for granted, but take them to heart and rejoice in the new life they bring: 'God loved the world so much that he gave his own Son, so that everyone who believes in him ... may have eternal life'. A world weighed down by the darkness of failure and selfishness must know, Jesus says, that he came from the Father, not 'to condemn' but to bring reconciliation and life."

From a homily on today's readings by Fr John Thornhill sm

ST MATTHEW'S PARISH MINISTRIES

	This Sun: 10th March 9:30am	Next Sun: 17 March 9:30am
Welcomer	George Family	M Silvestre
Liturgy Co-ordinator & Extraordinary Minister — Host	M Hetherington	T Wardell-Johnson
Reader	Z George	M McAuliffe
Minister for Home-Bound		Sr Sahaya
Music	C House	C House
Morning Tea	B Harris	
Counters	J Ong & R Hoskiin	T Lockwood & G Henry
Flowers	LENT	LENT

Parish Pastoral Councillors for St Matthew's Parish (contact)

Margaret Hetherington — 9881 4859	Email Address: hetherington65@gmail.com
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Phil & Rosanna Hoskin	Email Address: prhoskin@bigpond.com

Parish Finance Committee for St Matthew's Parish

Fr Abraham Chukwu — 0470 439 768	Email Address: frchukwu@gmail.com
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The Safeguarding Officer for St Matthew's Parish is:

Desi Wilkie — 0458 871 121 Email Address: wilks@westnet.com.au

Direct Credit: Roman Catholic Bishop of Bunbury Narrogin Parish

BSB: 086-006 Account: 84-729-6724

COMMUNITY GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

The Community Good Friday service will be in the town hall on Good Friday 29th March at 9:30am and St Matthews traditionally donate the hot cross buns for morning tea. An offering will be taken up to support our school chaplains, one of which we have at St Matthews. Please see Margaret for more information.



Words of Wisdom – Pope St Gregory

“The Holy Bible is like a mirror before our mind's eye. In it we see our inner face.
From the Scriptures we can learn our spiritual deformities and beauties.
And there too we discover the progress we are making and how far we are from perfection.”

DECEASED ANNIVERSARIES OCCURRED IN MARCH

We pray for our departed sisters and brothers especially:

*Margaret (Joan) Parker, Mary Rhodes,
Dolores Samson, Richard Hayes, Jo Baillie,
Peter Clohessy, Joan Hutton, Johannes Westdorp,
Zofia Gawel, Eva Rommer, Michelle George,
O'Dea Family & Julian Murphy*

*In Our Thoughts
& Prayers*



May their self sacrifice in life lead them now to be raised to eternal life in Christ.