



St Munchin's Catholic School

9th April 2020

Dear Parents and Caregivers

We enter the most sacred days in the Church calendar without the opportunity to celebrate the sacred liturgies of our tradition. Let us remember that out of betrayal, crucifixion and death, God brought forth new life and a new way of living for millions of people who have walked this world after Jesus. In the generosity and kindness of others and in the care found in this community, God's love and hope shines forth. Covid-19 is bringing out the best in many of us and teaching us about the things that really matter in life. May these days to come and the crosses we carry, teach us patience and courage and help us find ourselves rising, with Jesus, to new ways of life that bring peace to our families and our world.

Prayer for Good Friday

Silent God,

Even in stillness,

You never abandon your people.

Your heart breaks open

in the extreme depths of human suffering.

We believe in your power

to bring life from situations of death.

May the whole world know

the transforming power of your love this Easter,

a love that brings light from darkness

and new life from death

With and in your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen

It certainly has been an unusual term and as it comes to a close let me once again thank the staff, parents and students of this community who have worked together to enable the best possible outcome for the First Term. I would also like to acknowledge the many parents who have expressed through word, through emails and even through gifts of food, how they have appreciated the considerable work-load that our staff have undertaken throughout these weeks. Your messages of thanks and your delightful contributions to morning tea have been truly appreciated by everyone here.

It was a surreal experience being at school over the last two weeks with so many children away and a number of our staff working from home. The corridors were quiet, the play equipment silent and the daily soundings of the school bell reminding us that some things about schools were the same, yet different.

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Our focus on teaching is certainly one thing that remains constant. The week of online learning during Week Nine exceeded our expectations with engagement and contributions from almost all of our students. We are currently reviewing your feedback from the survey distributed on Tuesday. If you have not done so yet, please take the time to add your thoughts and suggestions to assist us with planning as best we can for the new term after the Easter Break.

More information will follow during the coming break, but as it stands, plans are for students to resume remote learning for at least the next four weeks and most probably beyond that. This will re-commence on Tuesday, April 28th with the existing take home packs complimenting the learning that is being achieved online. During this week, plans will be made for you to collect the second lot of resources from school to assist with the teaching and learning going forward. You will be advised of this process in the coming weeks.

Also going home with this material, to the eldest member of each family from Pre Primary to Year Six, will be the 2019 School Annual. This will be a pleasant reminder of the normality of last year at St Munchin's.

The school's OSH service has continued to provide care and normality to a number of students and their families over the last few weeks. This service will remain open over the holidays, however the government's recommendation remains firm, and this urges that all children remain home unless parents are aligned to essential workplace criteria. If you do need to access the OSH vacation care during the holidays, please book in the usual manner.

The school calendar for next term as displayed on the school's web page includes many items which have been cancelled or postponed, however the Pupil Free days on the 29th May and the 2nd and 3rd of July will remain unchanged. On these days there will be no remote learning. The public holiday on the 6th June will also be a day free of teaching.

Prayer for Easter Sunday and the days to follow

Risen Jesus,

You are the light that the darkness
cannot extinguish.

You are the peace that the world cannot give.

Surround us with your peaceful Spirit
so that we may become bearers of peace and light for others.

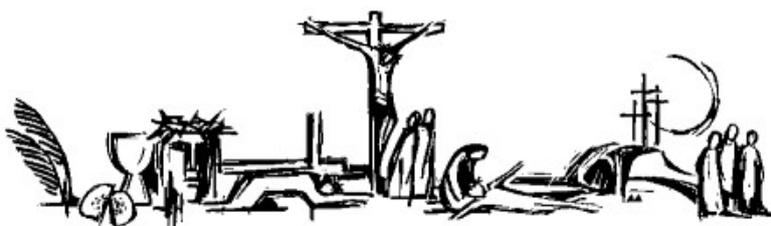
May we live a new life in you.

We ask this prayer in your holy name,

For are the Light of the World.

Amen

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I wish everyone a safe and holy Easter and I thank you again for your support throughout this term.

Joe Musitano
Acting Principal

The Way of the Cross: Everyone's Way of the Cross.

Clarence Enzler

Introduction

Christ Speaks: These fourteen steps that you are about to walk you do not take alone. I walk with you. Though you are you, and I am I, Yet we are truly one - one Christ. And therefore my way of the cross two thousand years ago and your 'way' now are also one. But note this difference. My life was incomplete until I crowned it by my death. Your fourteen steps will only be complete when you have crowned them by your life.

First Station ; Jesus is condemned to death

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: In Pilate's hands, my other self, I see my Father's will. Though Pilate is unjust, he has earthly power over me. And so the Son of God obeys. If I can bow to my Father's will, can you submit, even in the face of injustice?

I Reply: My Jesus, Lord, obedience cost you your life. For me, it cost as act of will; no more; and yet how hard it is for me to bend. Remove the blinders from my eyes that I may see that it is you alone whom I obey. Lord it is you.

Second Station: Jesus takes his cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: This cross, this chunk of tree, is what my Father chose for me. The crosses you must bear are largely products of your daily life. And yet my Father chose them, too, for you. Receive them from his hands. Take heart, my other self, I will not let your burdens grow one ounce too heavy for your strength.

I Reply: My Jesus, Lord, I take my daily cross. I welcome the monotony that often marks my day, discomforts of all kinds, the summer's heat, the winter's cold, my disappointments, tensions, setbacks, cares. Remind me often that in carrying my cross, I carry yours with you. And though I bear a sliver only of your cross, You carry all of mine, except a sliver, in return.

Third Station: Jesus falls the first time

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: The God who made the universe, and holds it in existence by his will alone, becomes a man, too weak to bear a piece of timber's weight. How human in his weakness is the Son of God. My Father willed it thus. I could not be your model otherwise. If you would be my other self, you also must accept without complaint your human frailties.

I Reply: Lord Jesus, how can I refuse? I willingly accept my weaknesses, my irritations and my moods, my headaches and fatigue, all my defects of body, mind and soul. Because they are your will for me, these "handicaps" of my humanity, I gladly suffer them. Make me content with all my discontents, but give me strength to struggle after you.

Fourth Station: Jesus meets His mother Mary

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: My mother sees me whipped. She sees me kicked and driven like a beast. She counts my every wound. But though her soul cries out in agony, no protest or complaint escapes her lips or even enters her thoughts. She shares my martyrdom - and I share hers. We hide no pain, no sorrow, from each other's eyes. This is my Father's will.

I Reply: My Jesus, Lord, I know what you are telling me. To watch the pain of those we love is harder than to bear our own. To carry my cross after you, I, too, must stand and watch the sufferings of my dear ones - the heartaches, sicknesses and grief of those I love. And I must let them watch mine, too. I do believe - for those who love you all things work together unto good.

Fifth Station: Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: My strength is gone; I can no longer bear the cross alone. And so the legionnaires make Simon give me aid. This Simon is like you, my other self. Give me your strength. Each time you lift some burden from another's back, you lift as with your very hand the cross' awful weight that crushes me.

I Reply: Lord, make me realize that every time I wipe a dish, pick up an object off the floor, assist a child in some small task, or give another preference in traffic or the store; each time I feed the hungry, clothe the naked, teach the ignorant, or lend my hand in any way - it matters not to whom - my name is Simon. And the kindness I extend to them I really give to you.

Sixth Station: Veronica wipes the face of Jesus

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: Can you be brave enough, my other self, to wipe my bloody face? Where is my face, you ask? At home whenever eyes fill up with tears, at work when tensions rise, on playgrounds, in the slums, the courts, the hospitals, the jails - wherever suffering exists - my face is there. And there I look for you to wipe away my blood and tears.

I Reply: Lord, what you ask is hard. It calls for courage and self-sacrifice, and I am weak. Please, give me strength. Don't let me run away because of fear. Lord, live in me and act in me and love in me. And not in me alone - in all of us - so that we may reveal no more your bloody but your glorious face on earth.

Seventh Station: Jesus falls the second time

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: This seventh step, my other self, is one that tests your will. From this fall learn to persevere in doing good. The time will come when all your efforts seem to fail and you will think, "I can't go on." Then turn to me, my heavy-laden one, and I will give you rest. Trust me and carry on.

I Reply: Give me your courage, Lord. When failure presses heavily on me and I am desolate, stretch out your hand to lift me up. I know I must not cease, but persevere in doing good. But help me, Lord, Alone there's nothing I can do. With you, I can do anything you ask. I will.

Eighth Station: Jesus speaks to the women of Jerusalem

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: How often had I longed to take the children of Jerusalem and gather them to me. But they refused. But now these women weep for me and my heart mourns for them – mourns for their sorrows that will come. I comfort those who seek to solace me. How gentle can you be, my other self? How kind?

I Reply: My Jesus, your compassion in your passion is beyond compare. Lord, teach me, help me learn. When I would snap at those who hurt me with their ridicule, those who misunderstand, or hinder me with some misguided helpfulness those who intrude upon my privacy - then help me curb my tongue. May gentleness become my cloak. Lord, make me kind like you.

Ninth Station: Jesus falls the third time

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.
People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: Completely drained of strength I lie, collapsed, upon the cobblestones. My body cannot move. No blows, no kicks, can rouse it up. And yet my will is mine. And so is yours. Know this, my other self, your body may be broken, but no force on earth and none in hell can take away your will. Your will is yours.

I Reply: My Lord, I see you take a moment's rest then rise and stagger on. So I can do because my will is mine. When all my strength is gone and guilt and self-reproach press me to earth and seem to hold me fast, protect me from the sin of Judas - save me from despair! Lord, never let me feel that any sin of mine is greater than your love. No matter what my past has been I can begin anew.

Tenth Station: Jesus is stripped of His garments

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.
People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: Behold, my other self, the poorest king who ever lived. Before my creatures I stand stripped. The cross - my deathbed - even this is not my own. Yet who has ever been so rich? Possessing nothing, I own all - my Father's love. If you, too, would own everything, be not solicitous about your food, your clothes your life.

I Reply: My Lord, I offer you my all - whatever I possess, and more, my self. Detach me from the craving for prestige, position, wealth. Root out of me all trace of envy of my neighbour who has more than I. Release me from the vice of pride, my longing to exalt myself, and lead me to the lowest place. May I be poor in spirit, Lord, so that I can be rich in you.

Eleventh Station: Jesus is nailed to the cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.
People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: Can you imagine what a crucifixion is? My executioners stretch my arms; they hold my hand and wrist against the wood and press the nail until it stabs my flesh. Then, with one heavy hammer smash, they drive it through—and pain bursts like a bomb of fire in my brain. They seize the other arm; and agony again explodes. Then raising up my knees so that my feet are flat against the wood, they hammer them fast, too.

I Reply: My God, I look at you and think: Is my soul worth this much? What can I give you in return? I here and now accept for all my life whatever sickness, torment, agony may come. To every cross I touch my lips. O blessed cross that lets me be - with you-a co-redeemer of humanity.

Twelfth Station: Jesus dies on the cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.
People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: The cross becomes a pulpit now – "Forgive them, Father You will be with me in Paradise.... There is your mother There...your son. I thirst.... It is complete." To speak I have to raise myself by pressing on my wrists and feet, and every move engulfs me in new waves of agony. And then, when I have borne enough, have emptied my humanity, I let my mortal life depart.

I Reply: My Jesus, God, what can I say or do? I offer you **my** death with all its pains, accepting now the time and kind of death in store for me. Not by a single instant would I lengthen my life's span. I offer you my death for my own sins and for those of all humanity. My God! My God! Forsake us not. We know not what we do.

Thirteenth Station: Jesus is taken down from the cross

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: The sacrifice is done. Yes, my Mass is complete; but not my mother's and not yours, my other self. My mother still must cradle in her arms the lifeless body of the son she bore. You, too, must part from those you love, and grief will come to you. In your bereavements think of this: A multitude of souls were saved by Mary's sharing in my Calvary. Your grief can also be the price of souls.

I Reply: I beg you, Lord, help me accept the partings that must come - from friends who go away, my children leaving home, and most of all, my dear ones when you shall call them to yourself. Then, give me grace to say: "As it has pleased you, Lord, to take them home, I bow to your most holy will. And if by just one word I might restore their lives against your will, I would not speak." Grant them eternal joy.

Fourteenth Station: Jesus is placed in the tomb

Leader: We adore you O Christ, and we bless You.

People: Because by your holy Cross, You have redeemed the world.

Christ Speaks: So ends my mortal life. But now another life begins for Mary, and for Magdalen, for Peter and for John, and you. My life's work is done. My work within and through my church must now commence. I look to you, my other self. Day in, day out, from this time forth, be my apostle - victim - saint.

I Reply: My Jesus, Lord, You know my spirit is as willing as my flesh is weak. The teaching you could not impart, the sufferings you could not bear, the works of love you could not do in your short life on earth, let me impart, and bear, and do through you. But I am nothing, Lord. Help me.

Conclusion

Christ Speaks: I told you at the start, my other self, my life was not complete until I crowned it by my death. Your "way" is not complete unless you crown it by your life. Accept each moment as it comes to you, with faith and trust that all that happens has my mark on it. A simple *fiat*, this is all it takes; a breathing in your heart, "I will it, Lord." So seek me not in far-off places. I am close at hand. Your workbench, office, kitchen, these are altars where you offer love. And I am with you there. Go now! Take up your cross and with your life complete your way.