



ST. PAUL'S
CATHOLIC PARISH
CAMDEN

ST. ALOYSIUS
CATHOLIC PARISH
THE OAKS

ST CLARE'S
CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY
NARELLAN

ST JOSEPH
THE WORKER
CATHOLIC
COMMUNITY
OAKDALE

Dear Parishioners at The Oaks and Camden

RE: WEEKLY MESSAGE FOR WEEKEND 20/21 FEBRUARY 2021

Spiritual Insight

At various times during his pontificate, Pope Francis has called on Catholics to go to Confession during Lent to experience God's healing love.

"We can receive God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance because there the fire of God's love consumes the ashes of our sin. The embrace of the Father in confession renews us inside and purifies our heart."

Before going to confession, Pope Francis recommended that people should stand in front of the Crucifix and contemplate Christ on the cross.

While looking at the crucifix, the pope said one can repeat the following prayer: "*Jesus, you love me, transform me.*" After welcoming God's love and crying in front of the cross, receive God's forgiveness in Confession.

"The ashes we receive on our foreheads should affect the thoughts passing through our minds.

"If I live only to earn money, to have a good time, to gain a bit of prestige or a promotion in my work, I am living for dust," he added. "That is not why we have been put in this world. We are worth so much more. We live for so much more, for we are meant to make God's dream a reality and to love."

The pope said that the earthly goods we possess will fade away, but the love we give to our families, to our work, in the Church, and in the world will remain forever.

"Ashes are sprinkled on our heads so that the fire of love can be kindled in our hearts,"



Covid-19 and Registrations for Mass

No changes since last week. This is really encouraging news. Masks are not mandatory but still encouraged. It remains necessary to register in advance. And all our parishioners are asked to be particular about sanitising hands and wiping seats afterwards. Our attention to these details so far has been exceptionally strong. There remain, however, two substantial concerns.

1. The first is people who register and don't arrive. The Sunday 5:00 PM Mass last weekend, for example, was booked out well in advance but only 160 out of 200 registrations attended Mass.

2. The second concern is double bookings. There have been various instances when one member of a family registers all members. And then without checking, another member of the same family also registers all members.

Please be thoughtful of other parishioners. Committing to Mass well in advance has not been our tradition. But these are extenuating times and – in the interests of the common good – we're asked to make all necessary adjustments. Thanks in anticipation.



Weekend Masses (Covid-19 capacity of 200 for each Mass at Camden)			
Saturday 20 February		Sunday 21 February	
9:00 AM	Parish Mass	7:30 AM	Parish Mass
		9:00 AM	Parish Mass
		10:30 AM	Parish Mass
4:30 PM	Parish Vigil Mass	5:00 PM	Parish Mass
6:00 PM	Parish Vigil Mass		
Oakdale – Saturday 5:00 PM (72)		The Oaks – Sunday 9:00 AM (36)	



Sacrament of Penance Programme

By this time most of the activity pages in the workbooks should have been completed. If there remains unfinished pages because of difficulty, please feel most welcome to email the parish office. Within a few days, the answer(s) will have been provided in return email.

Hopefully, the children – along with parents and carers – will have memorised the Act of Contrition perfectly. This prayer should be able to be recited comfortably and confidently.

Families will be asked to remain behind after Mass this weekend for about five minutes to test the children.

BTW: There are about 180 candidates enrolled in the Sacrament of Penance programme. Because of numbers of this magnitude, the cooperation and commitment of all our parents and carers are really quite essential. Thanks

School Enrolments

Magdalene, St Clare's and St Paul's are now enrolling for next year. Please visit the school websites for more information. It's important to be extra mindful that demand is again expected to be far great than supply. It's really important not to overlook the closure dates.



Departing Clergy ~ Father Anthony

It's with a heavy heart that we will be bidding farewell to Father Anthony Crook at the end of this month. Father Anthony arrived in September last year and has made a deep impression with the high quality of his priestly ministry and the relaxed way in which he has related to a great number of our parishioners.

Having three priests in Camden over the past six months was a luxury and a little anomalous considering the many needs across the diocese. Father Anthony won't be moving too far away, however, having been assigned to Oran Park with special care for the dear people of Leppington.

Our best wishes are extended to Father Anthony as he enters a new phase of his priestly ministry.



Departing Clergy ~ Father Joseph

Father Joseph will also be moving on to new challenges after Easter, most likely on Easter Monday. More will be said closer to the time of departure, but Father Joseph will be missed. Since arriving, he has radiated warmth and helpfulness. The man is a true priest with a heart of gold. The parishioners in the large parish of Nowra will be blessed by his presence.



Drone

Special request for assistance is being extended to any of our parishioners who own and operate a drone. This would not normally be regarded as a typical request but in this new digital and pandemic age, parish needs are evolving quite considerably.

If able to help, please contact the parish office as soon as possible. The use of a drone is expected to be comparatively minor job with just a few minutes of aerial video required. Alternatively, if parishioners are aware of a high-quality professional service, then please advise the parish office at your earliest convenience.



Bush Fires

It's now been over 12 months since large parts of NSW were incinerated by ferocious bush fires. But the memories of those most severely affected remain as strong as ever. As a parish, we continue to remain mindful of the suffering experienced by so many, especially at Oakdale. A collection of gift vouchers is available to anyone still recovering. Please notify the parish office if you know of any families who might appreciate such a gift.



Church Wardens and Collections

Over the years, the presence of church wardens has always been one of the really important ministries in parish life. These people have a comparatively modest profile but have provided an invaluable service by attending to the collections.

Collections in the traditional form will be re-introduced at Mass from the beginning of March. This procedure will be greatly assisted by four wardens at each Mass. Women and men are both encouraged to assist especially if normally in attendance at the same Mass.

The handles of the collection bags will be wrapped with sanitised cloth. Our parishioners may choose to bring and wear their own gloves at this time, or grab a cloth upon entering the church.

Collections at The Oaks and Camden have declined dramatically over the past 12 months. The offerings to the first collection are now well below the amount required to support the clergy whose actual monthly stipend is less than the aged pension. Please resolve to be financially supportive of the priests with a contribution to the first collection of \$10 each week.

Those who know a priest personally would most likely find him to have a rather humble lifestyle with, perhaps, an occasional meal at a club or pub. And priests would generally not be considered as strong contestants in a fashion contest!

Our parishioners can reverse this situation of reduced parish income by increasing offerings and by volunteering to be a warden. Please contact the parish office if able to assist.



Celebrants for Weekend Parish Masses

20/21 February

Saturday

Camden	9:00 AM	Father Anthony
Camden	4:30 PM	Father Joseph
Camden	6:00 PM	Father Joseph
Oakdale	5:00 PM	Father Anthony

Sunday

The Oaks	9:00 AM	Father Anthony
Camden	7:30 AM	Father Michael
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Michael
Camden	10:30 AM	Father Joseph
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Anthony

27/28 February

Saturday

Camden	9:00 AM	Father Joseph
Camden	4:30 PM	Father Anthony
Camden	6:00 PM	Father Anthony
Oakdale	5:00 PM	Father Michael

Sunday

The Oaks	9:00 AM	Father Joseph
Camden	7:30 AM	Father Anthony
Camden	9:00 AM	Father Anthony
Camden	10:30 AM	Father Joseph
Camden	5:00 PM	Father Anthony