



Tea Tree Gully Parish - St David's Catholic Church

Incorporating - Our Lady of Hope Chapel - Greenwith

8264 4694

Under the care of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate

email: pp@stdavidsttg.org.au

10th March 2024



Fourth Sunday of Lent Yr B

Readings next weekend 5th Sunday of Lent— Jeremiah 31:31-34, Hebrews 5:7-9, John 12:20-33

Aging as a Natural Monastery

What is a monastery? How do monasteries work? Saint Benedict (480-547 AD), who is considered the founder of Western monasticism, offered this counsel as an essential rule for his monks: *Stay in your cell and it will teach all you need to know*. Properly understood, this is a rich metaphor, not a literal counsel. When he is telling a monk to stay in his cell and let it teach him what he needs to know, he is not referring to a literal monk's cell in a monastery. He is referring to the state of life in which a monk or anyone else finds himself or herself.

Sometimes this has been expressed in Christian spirituality as being faithful to *your duties of state*. The idea here being that if you are faithful in love and in good heart to the situation in life in which you find yourself, life itself will bring you to maturity and virtue. For example, a mother who gives herself over in selflessness and fidelity to raising her children will be brought to maturity and altruism through that process. Her home will be her monk's cell and she will be metaphorically the Abbess of the monastery (with some very young monks) and staying inside that monastery, her home, will teach her all she needs to know. She will be raising children, but they will also be raising her. Motherhood will teach her what she needs to know and will turn her into a wise elder, a biblical and archetypal Sophia.

The process of aging is a natural monastery. If we live long enough, eventually the aging process turns everyone into a monk. Monks take four vows: poverty, chastity, obedience, and perseverance. The process of aging, which moves us (seemingly without mercy) toward marginalization, dependence on others, away from an active sex life, and into a living situation from which there will be no escape, in a manner of speaking, imposes those four vows on us. But, as Saint Benedict counsels, this can teach us all we need to know, and has a unique power to mature us in a very deep way. Monks have secrets worth knowing. So does the aging process.

This can be particularly instructive vis-à-vis how we can make our final days and our death a more radical gift to others. In the first centuries of Christianity, martyrdom was seen as the ideal way for a Christian to end his or her days here on earth. It was seen as a radical way of imitating Christ and giving your death away as a gift. Of course, this had to be rethought after Christianity became the state religion and emperors no longer martyred Christians. What followed then were various attempts at doing this, metaphorically martyrdom. One fairly popular way of doing it was that, after raising their children and reaching retirement, a couple would leave each other and each would go off to a separate monastery and live out the rest of his or her life as a monk or a nun.

Classical Christian mystics speak about how in the last phase of our lives we should enter something they call the *dark night of the spirit*, namely, that we proactively make a radical decision grounded in faith to move into a situation in life where we can no longer take care of ourselves but must trust, in raw faith, that God will provide for us. This parallels Hindu spirituality which suggests that in the last, fully mature stage of life we should become a *sannyasin*, a holy old beggar.

I suspect that most of us will never proactively cut off all our former securities and, on purpose, place ourselves in a situation within which we are helpless to provide for and take care of ourselves. But this is where nature steps in. The aging process will do it for us. It will turn us into a *sannyasin* and put us into the *dark night of the spirit*.

How? As we age and our health declines and we find ourselves more marginalized in terms of having a vital place within society, we will progressively lose our capacity to take care of ourselves. Eventually, if we live long enough, for most of us it will mean moving into an assisted facility, which is in effect a natural monastery.

What an apt metaphor! An assisted living facility as a natural monastery. The metaphor is also apropos for what it means to (by conscription) enter the *dark night of the spirit* and what it means to be a holy old beggar, a *sannyasin*. In essence it means this: When someone is in an assisted living facility, irrespective of whether he or she is a millionaire or a pauper, the rules are the same for everyone. Since you can no longer take care of yourself (and indeed you don't have to) you live a monastic life of obedience and dependence. In assisted living, you live by the monastic bell and you die as a holy old beggar.

Fr Ron Rolheiser OMI

NEXT WEEKEND - 16TH & 17TH MARCH EASTER ROSTERS IN FOYER

Please place your name on the Roster at the Back of the Church Foyer on the large notice board, if you can help with ministries for the Easter Services.

Extra-ordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, Collectors, Ushers, Commentators and Readers will be required for certain Masses. For Holy Thursday Mass at 7pm, volunteers for 'washing of the feet' will be required.

People reading at Palm Sunday and Good Friday and the Easter Vigil, will be contacted by the office during this week and readings will be emailed to you to practice.

Oblate Formation

held in Brisbane with Bishop Tim Norton about interculturality and with Fr Chris Rayan about preaching in the present context.

You may recognise quite a few faces in this photo



DIARY DATES

REGIONAL 2ND RITE OF RECONCILIATION

To be held at St David's Church Wednesday 13th March at 7pm

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

At Saturday Evening Mass 16th March at 5.30pm

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Held every Friday evening at St David's beginning at 7pm

WIDOW/ERS MASS

Thursday 21st March at 11am with a shared lunch

FAREWELL FOR FR JOSHUA

This will take place after the 10.30am Mass Sunday 7th April. Please bring a shared plate for morning tea.

There will be some Pizza slices and 'real' coffee being made in the kitchen for this event.

LENT AND EASTER 2024

Monday 11th March—Public Holiday—Adelaide Cup: Morning Mass at 9.15am

Wednesday 13th March

Regional 2nd Rite of Reconciliation at St David's Church from 7pm

Friday 15th March

Stations of the Cross at 7pm

Saturday 16th March

Anointing of the Sick at the 5.30pm evening Mass

Tuesday 19th March

Oblate Youth Games Night at St David's with practice for Good Friday

Thursday 21st March

Widow/ers Mass at 11am with a shared lunch

Friday 22nd March

Stations of the Cross at 7pm

Saturday 23rd March

Set up for Palm Sunday after the 9.15am Mass— volunteer helpers required

Sunday 24th March

Palm Sunday

Monday 25th March

Chrism Mass at St Francis Xavier Cathedral 6pm

Thursday 28th March

Holy Thursday—No Morning Mass—Set up for evening at 10am. Help required

Mass of the Last Supper at 7pm with Adoration until 10pm

Friday 29th March

Good Friday—Stations of the Cross at 10am led by the Oblate Youth

Good Friday Passion—3pm

Saturday 30th March

Set up for Easter Vigil at 10am—Help required

Easter Vigil commences at 7pm followed by a shared supper

Sunday 31st March

Easter Sunday Mass at 7am and 10.30am and 9am OLOH

Sunday 7th April

Divine Mercy Sunday and Fr Joshua's Farewell after 10.30am Mass

TEA TREE GULLY PARISH

Parish Office Phone: 8264 4694 Email: secretary@stdavidsttg.org.au Web Page: <https://www.stdavidsttg.org.au>
Church Office & Presbytery: 2-4 Vizard Rd, Tea Tree Gully 5091 facebook.com/ttgparish
Our Lady of Hope Chapel: Cnr Golden Way & Golden Grove Rd, Greenwith. Contact via St David's Parish Office

STAFF

Priests: Fr James Jeyachandran OMI - Parish Priest (pp@stdavidsttg.org.au)
Fr Joshua Nash OMI—Assistant Priest (jnash@omi.com.au)

Office Manager/Secretary - Denise Crawford - secretary@stdavidsttg.org.au
Church Sacristan - David Reynolds - contact via Parish Office

Child Safe Contacts: St David's Church - Amanda Bartels - contact 0414255458 or Parish Office

OLOH - Leah Tunks - contact 0431049947 or Parish Office

CH&S Officer:- Rina Borlace— contact Parish Office

MASS TIMES

St David's Church **Weekday Mass times:** Monday - Saturday 9.15am Rosary - 8.50am daily
Weekend Mass times: Saturday Vigil - 5.30pm, Sunday 7.00am & 10.30am
Our Lady of Hope Chapel: Sunday 9.00am

Reconciliation: Saturday morning after Morning Mass and Saturday evening from 5pm- 5.20pm.

Exposition: first Saturday of the month after morning Mass



We are a 'Child Safe'
Organisation

Mass Intentions and Feast Days for week commencing

9 March 2024

Saturday 9: 9.15am - Lino Goegan—RIP

5.30pm: - Scott Moffat - RIP

Sunday 10: 7am: for the people of the parish

9am:

10.30am - Angela Busato -RIP (1 month)

Monday 11: 9.15am - Peter Kusters -RIP

Tuesday 12: 9.15am – Ewa Pawliszewski -RIP

Wednesday 13: 9.15am—

Thursday 14: 9.15am: Kevin & Maya Perry -RIP

Friday 15: 9.15am - Prayer Book Intentions

7PM - Stations of the Cross

Please pray for the sick of our Parish:

names are on the list for a short period, unless parish is notified

John Williams, Judith Murray, Ros Rimmer, Bob Culshaw,
Gloria Grew, Ron & Clare Cashin, Sally Perry, James Perry,
Pauline Read, Brenda Crawford, Colleen Wallace,
George and Mary Willcox, Cathy Cullen

DECEASED ANNIVERSARIES

Freda McNulty, Tony Callus, Denis Walker, Michael Rigney,
Ray Shanks, John Dowling, ?Rachel English, Edith McClennan,
John Hall, Ralph Quirk, Melville Jonas, Fiora doray, John Carty,
Mary Fitzpatrick, Dan Davies, Edgar Green, Evalyn Milford,
Jacoba & Peter Kop



Vinnie's TTG Conference.

FOOD ITEMS REQUIRED: TINNED FRUIT, SPREADS, 1LTR LONG LIFE MILK,

TUNA, TINNED SOUP

There is a huge need for assistance in South Australia. In 2023, 22,780 companions received help (16,201 males, 18,835 females and 23,122 children). We have also had a very busy start to 2024 with the Vinnies Assistance line receiving 5,335 calls in the first eight weeks of this year, a 5% increase on last year.

Whilst most agencies and support services closed over the Christmas period, Vinnies continued to provide assistance via its "Christmas Conference", with volunteers dealing with calls from all around South Australia. Between 18th December 2023 and 25th January 2024, 1000 calls were taken resulting in 3,284 companions receiving assistance.

We continue to rely on your generosity and prayers to be able to do this work.

Wasim Saman, *President TTG Conference*

Baptisms: Saturday 16th March at 11am

Ollie Owen Ronald Tiller, son of Tristan & Alana

Sunday 17th March at OLOH

Samantha Jane Gale, daughter of Dylan & Samantha

Cleaners Roster: 14-16 March - Group 2

please come to the Parish Office to collect keys—

Linen for March - R Davey

please take dirty linen, at least twice per week

Counting Roster: Next Weekend –17/3- Group 4

Morning Tea Hosts: 17 March

St David's - Luisa & Joseph

OLOH - Maynard, Samarzia

If you would like to help with any of these ministries, please contact Parish Office. Remember you must obtain a Police Clearance to volunteer at the church.