



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

3rd March 2024



Third Sunday of Lent Yr B

Readings next weekend 4th Sunday of Lent— 2 Chronicles 36:14-16. 19-23, Ephesians 2:4-10, John 3:14-21

Reindeer Games

I hate crowds, at least most of them. I'm okay at football games, where a crowd has bracketed its sanity for a couple of hours for a cathartic release. But I hate those crowds that are caught up in a fever that feeds off group think, be that a cultural fad, a political ideology, a religious fundamentalism, an unconscious racism, a misguided nationalism, or hype of any kind. I fear such a crowd because, irrespective of whether its voice is coming from the right or from the left, conservative or liberal, one hears in it echoes of intimidation, crucifixions, lynchings, holocausts, assassinations, wars, suppression of other voices, and (today) teenage suicides from cyber bullying. Crowds take various modalities, but their bent and their energy are invariably the same.

One of my favorite authors is Czech novelist Milan Kundera who, like me, hates crowds. In them, he sees something he calls "the great march", namely, a blind, mindless march toward a totalitarianism of some kind or other. Crowds with an ideological intent always end up there.

But this raises a question: What about crowds (marches, demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins) that have led to helpful social, political, and even moral change? What about the crowds Gandhi inspired? What about the crowds that followed Martin Luther King? What about the crowds that helped end apartheid in South Africa? What about the crowds that gather around *Black Lives Matter*? What about the folks that gather round a just cause and go to prison for their actions? Aren't those good crowds?

Yes, they are, but they are good precisely to the extent to which they are mindful and not mindless; that is, they are good to the extent that they are not caught up in a fever of group-think and their focus is on healing a sick situation as opposed to hating and crucifying whatever opposes them. That is why in such a crowd, both in its leader and in its overall ethos, you don't see hatred and violence.

Admittedly, you do see hatred and violence even within these crowds because a crowd by the very fact that it is a crowd will invariably have its rogue elements. But the hatred, violence, and anarchy you see then is not representative of that overall crowd. The Gandhis, the Martin Luther Kings, the Nelson Mandelas, and the Dorothy Days are the real face and ethos of any crowd which is genuinely bent on moral change. But not all crowds are mindful and so it's hardly a surprise that Jesus' crucifixion was incited by a crowd (ironically by the same one who just five days earlier was chanting that he should be their king). Crowd energy is fickle and mindless. That is why crowds are to be feared, irrespective of whether they are idolizing you or hollering for your crucifixion.

I'm not much of a poet, but sometimes something just lends itself to a different kind of language. So, stealing some lines from an old (mindless) Christmas song and adding my own little commentary, allow me to express my feelings about crowds in an attempt at a poem – which in good conscience you may disagree with.

Reindeer Games

*Rudolph, the red nosed reindeer; Had a very shiny nose
And if you ever saw it, You would even say it glows.
All of the other reindeer; Used to laugh and call him names.
They never let poor Rudolph, Join in any reindeer games.
Then one foggy Christmas eve, Santa came to say:*

*Rudolph with your nose so bright, Won't you guide my sleigh tonight?
 Then all the other reindeer loved him, As they shouted out with glee ...
 Rudolph smiled ...
 and then said reflectively:
 Forgive, dear friends, my reluctance
 To see this affection. Separate from the cruelty
 Mock difference – Crucify him!
 Exult triumph – Make him king!
 Hype is hype, Hysteria, Mindless and blind, Self-serving
 A reindeer game, With the crowd forever amazed and chanting
 Whether for a coronation, Or a crucifixion.*

Fr Ron Rolheiser OMI

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL WHO VOLUNTEERED WITH THE TREE CUTTING AND REMOVAL OF WOOD AND SPREADING OF MULCH ON THURSDAY 29th FEBRUARY.. *Austral Tree Services Pty Ltd. 8283 3802*

Special thanks to Roman, who actually did all the organizing and liaising with Austral Trees, who did a wonderful job. Roman also managed the volunteers along with Barry, our resident gardener. Roman organized the signs, letter drop to neighbours and school, witches hats etc, all to comply with safety issues. They also had a surprise helper, well I think that is what he did?????? And I must thank our new Catholic Safety Officer, Rina, who organized all the paperwork for the jobs at hand. A well organized team effort



Congratulations

Deacon Luan came to celebrate his happy moments with our parishioners.

He was Ordained a Deacon on Friday 16th February in Melbourne. Photos are available from the Oblate web page.

He was very happy to share celebration with our parishioners, especially Fr James and Fr Josh, with whom he studied with in Melbourne.

We wished him God's Blessings and will continue to pray for his vocation. Of course, special thanks to Mirella!



Oblate Youth SA
(all youth 16-30 are welcome!)



Youth Mass & Dinner

Sunday 10th March
 St Pius X, Dernancourt
 5:30pm Mass, Dinner to follow

Games Night

Tuesday 19th March
 St David's, Tea Tree Gully
 6:30pm - 8:30pm

Good Friday

Friday 29th March
 St David's, Tea Tree Gully
 More Info coming!

DIARY DATES

OBLATE FORMATION WEEK

All our priests will be on formation session from 4th through to 8th March. Please keep them in your prayers at this time. Liturgy of the Word with Communion at 9.15am each morning.

MONTHLY GARDENING GROUP

Meet every first Monday of every month to do a general clean up of the gardens around the church from 10am

DE MAZENOD FAMILY GATHERING

This Monday 4th March at 6pm with shared dinner

VINNIES MEETING

The next St Vincent de Paul meeting is Wednesday 6th March at 7pm. New people thinking of volunteering are most welcome to attend this meeting. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month.

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

PARISH LENTEN GROUP

Held in the Gerard Room from 7pm to 8pm, every Thursday during Lent.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

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

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED

CHILDREN'S LITURGY FEBRUARY 2024

If anyone is interested in becoming a leader, at either St David's church at 10.30am Mass Sunday or Our Lady of Hope Chapel at 9am on Sundays, please contact Amanda Bartels by email – gfdb@bigpond.net.au with your contact details.

CHILDREN'S/YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHOIR

If you would like to join the children's/young people's choir, Parents, please email – Amanda Bartels gfdb@bigpond.net.au with your contact details.

ALTAR SERVERS

If your child has received their First Communion and Confirmation and would like to serve at Mass, please contact Fr James.

De Mazenod Family Monthly Gathering



Meeting Monday 4th March. Join us for a shared meal/fellowship, in a relaxed environment. After sharing a simple meal and friendly conversation, we get to learn more about St Eugene De Mazenod, the Founder of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate—our Parish Priests. We meet on the first Monday of each month from 6-8pm in the church foyer. We are planning additional 'Get Togethers' throughout the year at other times for those who cannot come Monday evenings. Keep watching for updates in the Bulletin. This is an open invitation to everyone in our Parish. For further information—Joan 0407441126

SCRUTINIES FOR R.C.I.A.

Over the next three weekends, the Elect: Peta, Lynette and Yoin and their sponsors together with the Candidates: Nate, Emma, Carly and Michael and their sponsors, will join us at Mass and be invited to come forward after the Homily, where the parish community will pray with them on their journey towards the Easter Vigil. Please keep these people in your prayers.

