



# ST JAMES' PARISH

St James Muswellbrook  
St Thomas Aberdeen



We acknowledge the traditional owners who cared for this land for thousands of years and their descendants who have maintained these spiritual connections and traditions.

## PARISH CONTACTS

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Office Hours: Tue - Fri 9.30am – 2.30pm

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT – YEAR A

26 February 2023

### First Reading

**Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7**

A reading from the book of Genesis

The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned. The Lord God caused to spring up from the soil every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden.

The serpent was the most subtle of all the wild beasts that the Lord God had made. It asked the woman, 'Did God really say you were not to eat from any of the trees in the garden?' The woman answered the serpent, 'We may eat the fruit of the trees in the garden. But of the fruit of the tree in the middle of the garden God said, "You must not eat it, nor touch it, under pain of death".' Then the serpent said to the woman, 'No! You will not die! God knows in fact that on the day you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods, knowing good and evil.' The woman saw that the tree was good to eat and pleasing to the eye, and that it was desirable for the knowledge that it could give. So she took some of its fruit and ate it. She gave some also to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realised that they were naked. So they sewed fig-leaves together to make themselves loin-cloths.

**Responsorial Psalm Ps 50:3-6. 12-14. 17. R. see v.3**

**(R.)** Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offence.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin. **(R.)**
2. My offences truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;

what is evil in your sight I have done. **(R.)**

3. A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. **(R.)**
4. Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervour sustain me.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise. **(R.)**

### Second Reading

**Rom 5:12-19**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned. Sin existed in the world long before the Law was given. There was no law and so no one could be accused of the sin of 'law-breaking', yet death reigned over all from Adam to Moses, even though their sin, unlike that of Adam, was not a matter of breaking a law.

Adam prefigured the One to come, but the gift itself considerably outweighed the fall. If it is certain that through one man's fall so many died, it is even more certain that divine grace, coming through the one man, Jesus Christ, came to so many as an abundant free gift. The results of the gift also outweigh the results of one man's sin: for after one single fall came judgement with a verdict of condemnation, now after many falls comes grace with its verdict of acquittal. If it is certain that death reigned over everyone as the consequence of one man's fall, it is even more certain that one man, Jesus Christ, will cause everyone to reign in life who receives the free gift that he does not deserve, of being made righteous. Again, as one man's fall brought condemnation on everyone, so the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified. As by one man's disobedience many were made



sinner, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous.

**Gospel Acclamation Mt 4:4**

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!  
No one lives on bread alone,  
but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.  
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

**Gospel Mt 4:1-11**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew  
Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to turn into loaves.' But he replied, 'Scripture says:

Man does not live on bread alone  
but on every word that comes from the mouth of  
God.'

The devil then took him to the holy city and made him stand on the parapet of the Temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down; for scripture says:

He will put you in his angels' charge,  
and they will support you on their hands  
in case you hurt your foot against a stone.'

Jesus said to him, 'Scripture also says:

You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'

Next, taking him to a very high mountain, the devil showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. 'I will give you all these', he said, 'if you fall at my feet and worship me.' Then Jesus replied, 'Be off, Satan! For scripture says:

You must worship the Lord your God,  
and serve him alone.'

Then the devil left him, and angels appeared and looked after him.

**REFLECTION by Fr Victor**

Lent is a forty-day penitential season spent preparing for Easter. Forty is symbolic indicating a special time spent preparing before a substantial encounter with God. During Lent, emphasis will be laid on conversion. In effect "Lent is a favourable season for deepening our spiritual life through the means of sanctification offered us by the Church: fasting, prayer and almsgiving".

Our gospel this Sunday sees Jesus being led into the desert. It opens with the words; The Spirit drove Jesus into the wilderness (desert) and remained with him for forty days. Why was Jesus led or driven into the desert?

The desert in Jewish history is very important. When God freed and saved the People of Israel from slavery in Egypt, they spent forty years in the desert. They wandered and sometimes got lost as they tried to find their way to the Promised Land. This was not an easy journey for them. At times they lost faith in each other and in God.

It is no surprise that we begin Lent with Jesus in the desert. Like his ancestors, he too is tried, tested, and tempted. However, Jesus refused to give up or give in so quickly or so easily. He was tempted with the false gifts of power, prestige, and wealth. His power and identity come from God. Jesus knows who he is, where he comes from and where he is going on his own journey.

As we begin our own Lenten journey, we need to recall and remember that we are not setting out on this journey on our own. God is with us walking by our side. When we are tempted, we need to follow the example of Jesus. He did not rely on his own strength. He turned to God and asked for help which he received. We will not be able to walk the Lenten journey on our own. We need to realise that like Jesus, we too need God's help, support, guidance, and protection. Whenever we feel tired or ready to give up or give in, we need to turn to God for encouragement. We know that God will be with us during Lent as God was with Jesus when he was in the desert. God will never leave us alone.

**Stay Healthy, Stay Safe and Stay Blessed!**



**DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?**

In the words of Pope Francis:

- Fast from hurting words ... .. say kind words.*
- Fast from sadness ... .. be filled with gratitude.*
- Fast from anger ..... be filled with patience.*
- Fast from pessimism ... .. be filled with hope.*
- Fast from worries ... .. trust in God.*
- Fast from complaints ... .. contemplate simplicity.*
- Fast from bitterness ... .. fill your heart with joy.*
- Fast from pressures ... .. be prayerful.*
- Fast from bitterness ... .. fill your heart with joy.*
- Fast from selfishness ... .. be compassionate to others.*
- Fast from grudges ... .. be reconciled.*
- Fast from words ... .. be silent so you can listen.*





## **THE CONVENT!**

The painting is done, the new blinds and carpets are in and we are looking forward to parish groups utilising our newly refreshed venue. Available for meetings, cuppas, etc. Please contact the office to book your event and dates. We may need to review what events will be suitable at this stage. We do not have a stove/kitchen but if there is interest in utilising events needing a kitchen, we may progress to install a large oven and update the old kitchen in the near future.

## **menALIVE WEEKEND FOR MEN**

Real men don't do church? Wrong, but living out your faith can be pretty tough, and most of us need help. If you are a bloke over 18, consider this: On the 25 and 26 March, experienced leaders from the menALIVE team will be running a menALIVE weekend in Toronto for Catholic men. Come along and be inspired, encouraged, and rediscover God's purpose for your life. Details and registration forms are available in the church foyer. The cost is \$50 per person, with lunch and dinner on Saturday provided. Enquiries, phone Phil McWilliam (0408 88 0408), Col Gwynne (0409 047 644), or Toronto Parish Office (4959 2777).

## **HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND PRACTICE OF SYNODALITY - FREE ONLINE COURSE OFFERED BY BOSTON COLLEGE**

Through an online platform you will have access to a series of pre-recorded videos during the months of February and March 2023.

"Synodality is not the chapter of a treatise on ecclesiology, and even less a fad, a slogan or the new term to be used or manipulated in our meetings. No! Synodality expresses the nature of the Church, its form, its style, its mission."

Pope Francis. To register go to:

<https://formaciononline.bc.edu/en/home/>

## **MIDDLE EAST EMERGENCY APPEAL**

Caritas Turkey and other Caritas agencies are responding to a series of powerful earthquakes in southeast Turkey and Syria, where thousands of lives have been lost already and the death toll increases by the hour.

Caritas Turkey are on the ground coordinating with local authorities and other organisations to see how they can best assist. Your generous support can help provide emergency relief to help families recover and rebuild from disaster. Visit [www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/turkey-and-syria-earthquake/](http://www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/turkey-and-syria-earthquake/) or call 1800 024 413 toll free to provide much needed support to the Middle East by donating to our Middle East Emergency Appeal.

## **PRAYING THE GOSPELS**

You are invited to connect and pray with each other across the Diocese from your own home.

God speaks to us through the words of the Gospel and then through artist's images of the Gospel message. Join us each Wednesday 5.00 - 5.45pm.

Zoom link: <https://mncatholic.zoom.us/j/68191395109>

Password: 316071

For more information contact:

[rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:rose.mcallister@mn.catholic.org.au)



FIRST SUNDAY OF  
LENT  
25<sup>TH</sup> AND 26<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY



After losing her father when she was just 10 years old, **Laxmi** was at risk of falling further into extreme poverty. But with the support of our partner Caritas Nepal, Laxmi joined a child's club, became a leader in her school and is now a mentor to other children in her village.

**Please donate to Project Compassion 2023.**

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 available from your Parish, by visiting [caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion), or by calling 1800 024 413.

Photo: Richard Wainwright/Caritas Australia

## **MISSION: CHANGE THEIR LIVES ... AND YOURS.**

Communities in Africa, Asia or the Pacific are seeking Australians from a variety of professions and trades to share their skills with those who have less opportunity to develop their talents. Explore 35 positions by scanning the QR code below. On our website you can also see news including stories from those currently supported in Timor-Leste, Samoa, American Samoa, and Thailand.

Please enquire further about potential assignments for you or someone you know:

**RING:** 02 9560 5333 or 0422 472 567.

[www.palms.org.au](http://www.palms.org.au)



Palms Australia



## **aMeN caMiNo**

The aMeN CaMiNo offers an opportunity to become a local pilgrim in your own diocese, to encounter God through nature, to escape from the busyness of life and to connect with others. During this one-hundred-kilometre experience you will walk with others over a variety of terrain, exploring bush, beach, lake and mountains. As the days pass and you experience self-emptying, an awakening of the senses is heightened, allowing you to fully immerse yourself in the wonder and awe of God's creation. There will be many moments to reflect, pray, journal and be still, all within our very own Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. For more information, visit:

[www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/amen-camino/](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/amen-camino/)

Expression of Interest close on 24 February:

<https://forms.office.com/r/ZysE5V5Fiy>

## Weekly Mass Diary

Monday 27 February	Tuesday 28 February	Wednesday 1 March	Thursday 2 March	Friday 3 March	Saturday 4 March	Sunday 5 March
						<b>SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT</b>
10.00am <b>Funeral Mass of Mollie Hofman</b> St James Muswellbrook		9.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	11.30am <b>Adoration and Benediction</b>  12.05pm <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	9.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook  5.30pm <b>Stations of the Cross</b> St James Muswellbrook	9.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook  5.30pm <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook	10.00am <b>Mass</b> St James Muswellbrook
	4.30pm <b>Stations of the Cross</b>  5.00pm <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen					8.00am <b>Mass</b> St Thomas Aberdeen

## Minister Roster Sunday 5th March 2023

1st Sunday of the Month	Readers	Cantors	Musicians	Gifts	Extraordinary Ministers	Altar Servers	Sacristan
5.30pm <b>Saturday Muswellbrook</b>	Can you fill this position?	C. Hayes	Sr. Dorothy	J. Toohey R. Wood		R. Panis	C. Hayes
	Can you fill this position?						
8am <b>Sunday Aberdeen</b>	T. Hobbs	J. Lonergan	C. Bowen				M. Hamilton
10am <b>Sunday Muswellbrook</b>	M. Kempis	Can you fill this position?	K. Mason	Can you fill this position?			K. Goodwin
	Can you fill this position?						
<b>Counters</b>	Kay and Brian Mason						

### MASS AND PRAYER REQUESTS:

**We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ:** Iris Spittles, Pauline Coleman, David Curran, Pat Hogan, Abbie Sweeper, Kym Mason, Melanie Hoch, Kim Goodwin, Anne Hugo, Margaret Blake, Rodrigo Canete, Helen Tumbers, Hilda Carey, Lucrezia Casia, Anne Rawson, Enrique Tuazon, Vinitia Fernando, Maree Bible, Kirsty Munn, and Kellie Shaw.

**Recently Deceased:** John Walmsley, Mollie Hofman, Beryl Smith, Luke Shea, and Victoria Diputado

**Anniversary:** Jackie Partridge

**Privacy Laws.** All parishioners are encouraged to pray for the sick. Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

*St James and St Thomas - Pray for Us*

### BULLETIN

Please contact the Parish Office on 6543 1167 if you have any notices for the bulletin, or alternatively email:

[muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au)

The Parish bulletin can be accessed on our website: [muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au](http://muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au).

or on our Facebook page: **Catholic Parish of St James Muswellbrook**

Please email [muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:muswellbrookparish@mn.catholic.org.au) if you would like the bulletin emailed to you each week.

### SAFEGUARDING THE MOST VULNERABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Please visit our 'Safeguarding' page to access a range of safeguarding resources: [muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au](http://muswellbrookcatholicparish.org.au)

Have a complaint or wish to provide feedback? Visit: [officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/](http://officeofsafeguarding.org.au/feedback/)

**"Our mission is to spread the Kingdom by being an alive and informed Community, united as one family in care and consideration for each other in the love of God."**