



## St Bernard's Parish Belmont

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1st April 2018

Easter Sunday Year B

### Looking for a bigger life

There is a lot about religion not to like. Perhaps amongst other reasons, that is why many Australians love Easter for the holidays, the camping, the chocolate and the arrival of the football season, but quite happily avoid the churches. Few, if any think they are missing anything. To many of our fellow citizens, religion is a tired old womb, a repository of

boring and stagnant ritual, replete with overused themes and worn out formulas. All the men in dresses, the unctuous pieties, the silly party hats of bishops, confirm their worse suspicions – nothing to see here - no potency or life worth seizing hold of. Add the scandal of institutional sex abuse and it is a wonder the Catholic Church still has the support it has.

Such caricatures may be unfair, but it is true enough the hard secular Aussie soul has little or no time for institutional religion. A good holiday out under the Easter moon seems way better than the tedium of churchianity. Everyone after all is looking for a larger life. A larger life is more about bread than chocolate, but we only find this out the hard way. True enough, we may find church unutterably boring and tedious, but a life lived in distraction and pursuit of ephemeral entertainments is hardly likely to be a life lived generously, peacefully and in service of justice for all. Our tragedy is that quite often the churches have not much to offer the true pilgrim. We have proclaimed a dead Jesus of sorts, drained of passion and power to touch hearts, or free us from illusion. And with nothing left, but a sort of soulless materialism and vapid consumer code of conduct to go on, our eschewing of religion does not deliver us from 'lives of quiet desperation'. It is, as the American political activist Saul Alinsky wrote, we live 'huddled in a dreamless day to day existence, whose only purpose is the preservation of the illusion of security and safety'.

Life in all it's fullness is what Jesus and Easter is about, but finding and discovering that life takes some doing. Part of the core mystery of Easter is the discovery that a self-preserved life is no life at all. Easter is not some pastel sunrise or divine assistance available on tap. The way to it's depths is through the scandal and the affront of the cross. This amounts to an absurdly irrational revelation in the eyes of many. Not a super powerful God, insulated from our struggles and cares, but a humiliated God suffering with us, within us and for us.

For this God, death is not the last word. Even now, despite the ghastly cruelty Jesus endured, the cross reaches out and embraces all most nailed by injustice. The cross marks a decisive break through in human history. Precisely at the cross point is the resurrection point, where our God, in Jesus, deconstructs all the sacrificial and scape-goating mechanisms of evil. Even as it does so, it confronts all our agendas and scapegoating. It has a way of exposing our own blindness. Even this week when as a nation we get a tad histrionic about cricketers lacking morality, do we dare acknowledge how our treatment of children on Nauru has stripped the whole nation of any high moral ground? Can we truly believe in a God whose weakness makes a mockery of our claims to be strong? Can we allow this weakness to change our hearts?

Perhaps, perhaps not. But for all time now the cross marks a victory. Here is a love, an immense mercy and compassion, no amount of indifference and deceit will silence.

Fr Vincent Jewell PP





We welcome our RCIA candidate  
**Natasha Sampson.**

May God's blessing be on Natasha  
and may He hold her and her family  
in His care.

Special thanks to *Kristine Barker*  
who prepared Natasha during Len's absence.

We remember **Fr Bob Coghlan**  
who died last weekend. His funeral is this  
Wednesday 4th April, 11am at St Mary's.

*We pray for those who are unwell :*  
**Noelene Goonan    Vincent Daniels**  
**John Orders        John Condon**  
**Tulli Seabert** (6 yr old)

8th April **Divine Mercy Sunday** Holy Spirit Church Manifold Heights. 1.30pm concluding at 3.00pm  
with Holy Mass and Veneration of the Image. Enquiries Chris 0407 522 022

Tuesday 10th April at 6.15pm **Geelong Catholic Diners' Club** at Capri Receptions 258 Pakington St,  
Geelong West. Cost \$33.00. Guest speaker RSVP Michael Belleville at 0431 959 584 by Friday 6 April.

Special Prayers for **Mohammad Rahmani** and **Noura Kka**. May God hold them in the palm of his hand.

**Windfire Music Festival** 4 May—13 May at St Mary's. Visit [www.musicatthebasilica.org.au](http://www.musicatthebasilica.org.au)

**Please return Project Compassion boxes and envelopes as soon as possible.**

### Parish Office Hours

Mon : Closed  
Tues : Closed  
Wed : 8.30-1pm  
Thurs : 8.30-1pm  
Thurs pm—CLOSED  
Friday : 8.30-4.30

Please Note: Church  
**car park** gates are locked  
at 1.00pm each Sunday

### Week 2: 7/8 April

### St Bernard's Mass Times

Saturday: 6.00pm  
Sunday: 9.00 am and 10.30 am  
5.30pm at *St Mary's*  
Wednesday : 12 noon  
Friday: 12 noon  
Mass on the radio: 7.00am Light FM 89.9;  
10.00am Pulse FM 94.7

If you need a priest urgently,  
phone Fr Vincent  
0417 837 565

### St Bernard's Playgroup

*Tuesdays during  
school term.*  
9.00-10.30am  
in the Big Space,  
entrance Fryers Rd.  
**All welcome**

### Charismatic Prayer

1st (not 3.4.18) & 3rd  
Tuesday 10.00am  
in the Church.

Setting up for Mass	6.00pm	R & B Campbell
	9.00am	L Madden
	10.30am	J Ross M Charman
Eucharist Ministers	6.00pm	B Campbell U Emanuel N Edhouse S Foley J Spiteri
	9.00 am	M Walker M O'Brien P Lewis C Doyle B Poel
	10.30am	J Brdar M Gill A Buttigieg A Chirawu
Readers	6.00pm	S Kenworthy D Turnbull
	9.00 am	M Walker A Monk
	10.30am	T Gulli
PowerPointers	6.00pm	D & N Kavanagh
	9.00 am	K Marshall
	10.30am	Brdar Family
Musicians	6.00pm	Marg Tess L Eleanor
	9.00am	Kevin Harbison and group
	10.30am	Kevin Harbison and group
Book Nook	9.45am	F O'Reilly
Coffee Shop		Doris I Deidre F Mary M
Cleaners : 4		H Brislane J Ross J Wood
Flowers		Ann
Bread Roster: blue		L Dowling L & N Jaques C Raj G Mugavin J Harte R & J Gollan
Communion at home		D Turnbull—co-ord. Contact Office to arrange.

### Christian Meditation

Wed 7.30pm  
in the church

### Tai Chi : Fridays

9.30-10.30  
in the Church café

*Clairvaux are  
collecting Coles  
**Sports to School**  
vouchers.*  
*Please leave in box  
in the foyer.*

**The Good Oil,**  
monthly e-magazine  
of the Good  
Samaritan Sisters.  
[http://  
www.goodsams.org.a  
u/good-oil/](http://www.goodsams.org.au/good-oil/)

### This week:

Acts 10:34, 37-43 Ps 117:1-2,16-17,22-23  
Col 3: 1-4 Jn 20:1-9

### Next Week:

Acts 4:32-35 Ps 117:2-4, 15-18, 22-24  
1 Jn 5: 1-6 Jn 20:19-31