

The West Wagga Wag

Issue 203

February 2020

Coming Events

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, Holy Trinity
- 6 to 7am daily;
- overnight from 9pm Friday through to 7am Saturdays

The Presentation of the Lord	Sun 2
St Blaise, Bishop	Mon 3
St Agatha	Wed 5
Sts Paul Miki and his Companions	Thu 6
St Josephine Bakhita	Sat 8
St Scholastica	Mon 10
Our Lady of Lourdes	Tue 11
Sts Cyril and Methodius	Fri 14
St Peter Damian	Fri 21
St Peter's Chair	Sat 22
Ash Wednesday	Wed 26

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The date for submissions for the next Wag is: **Wednesday Feb 26th.**

St Joseph's Family Catechetical School



On the 20th of January, 30 Primary aged children attended a three day Catechetical school at Holy Trinity Parish.

This Program was run by Mathew and Rose Greenrod and assisted by the Missionaries of Charity and the Brothers of the Confraternity of Christ the Priest.

This is the first year the program has run in the Parish.

The days started and finished in prayer and consisted of instructions on the faith, completion of worksheets, arts and crafts, dancing, games such as Bible bingo and opportunities for outside fun.

At the end of the three days the children presented posters that they had



created over the program and shared a bit about what they learnt. The feedback from the children was extremely positive, with a resounding consensus that they would all like to attend again next year.

PASTOR'S PAGE - NO GREATER LOVE!



What a summer we have had! The reality of bush fires has struck every one as we have followed the news and also experienced so much smoke in Wagga Wagga. Many of us have had to wait for news of loved ones who lived in the affected areas. I was relieved to hear after a week of uncertainty that my Aunt Jackie who lives in Mossy Point (next to Broulee) and my cousins survived with homes intact.

Here in the Wagga diocese, some of our parishes were affected. The PP of Tumbarumba chose to stay at the Church. Families evacuated have been staying with some of our parishioners. The Missionaries of Charity had a special morning in our hall to occupy children who spent a week away from their homes.

Wagga was noted to have been one of the most generous towns in Australia recently, and it was so encouraging to see the speedy response to appeals to support the fire services and those who have lost life and property. Lines of cars came to the Fernleigh Road SES centre, the International Hotel and then Kildare College bringing food and other supplies. All kinds of charities raised money, including

St Vincent de Paul who have guaranteed that all of this fundraiser will be distributed to those affected by these fires. Most especially our gratitude and admiration go out to those who have manned the fire trucks and risked their lives for others. The SES and RFS volunteers have been giving their time generously for years and years, often unnoticed. So many hours of training, being on call, and attending many other difficult, even heart-rending situations. We salute them all.

These times show that there is a lot of genuine love and service in our community. Especially the ultimate sacrifice reminds us of the love of Our Saviour who died to save us from another kind of fire, and has given us the commandment, "Love one another as I have loved you." I think times like these remind us of what is important, here and in the next life.

There have been accounts of direct answers to prayer. Mr Jefferies from Mallacoota described the sudden wind which sprang up and blew for the crucial five minutes to stop a wall of flames from harming the thousand people who had escaped to the beach. The Brearly family from Wingello, known to some of us, came home from fighting fires to find their home intact despite the trees and garden all around and even a creeper on their wall blackened. Michael had told the fire brigade (and his daughter who has been in the brigade for years) to abandon their house and save others since it looked impossible to save. They were stunned to find the white walls

and green roof untouched in a sea of soot.

The causes of the fires and the best way to prevent and battle future fires is not the subject of these words, but I want to thank God for bringing the best out in so many people through this trial. This suffering does not only show what is in us, but it can be the chance for it to grow. It is also a reminder that we all need to feed our inner life, and there is no better way to do that than to come closer to God. As we remember all the heroes of this bush fire season, I pray that they will experience the smile of our greatest Hero, Jesus Christ, and in their hearts hear Him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant"; may they recognize that in serving, they are being like Christ; and may this help them to open their hearts to become more like Him in other ways. "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter the joy of your Lord."

Let us also keep up our prayers for rain across our country, and that the mateship shown this summer will continue to grow into the future.

Fr Thomas Casanova
ecs

February Funnies



An airplane was flying from LA to New York.

About an hour into the flight, the pilot announced, "We have lost an engine, but don't worry, there are three left. However, instead of 5 hours it will take 7 hours to get to New York."

A little later, the pilot announced, "A second engine failed, but we still have two left. However, it will take 10 hours to get to New York." Sometime later, the pilot again came on the intercom and announced, "A third engine has died. Never fear, because the plane can fly on a single engine. However, it will now take 18 hours to get to new York."

At this point, one passenger said, "I hope we don't lose that last engine, or we'll be up here forever!"

Q: Did you hear about the two peanuts walking through town?

A: One was a salted!

Q. What is it called when a snowman has a temper tantrum?

A. A meltdown!

Q What do you call a famous fish?

A. A starfish.

Q. Why don't elephants need suitcases?

A. Because they already have trunks!

A set of golf clubs walks into a bar. "What'll you have?" "Nothing for me, I'm the driver."

At the doctor's office, a 20-something man was trying to make an appointment for a "Mrs. Brown". Try as he might, he just could not remember her first name. Frustrated, he left.. A few minutes later, I passed him outside the office on the phone. "Hey, Dad," he said. "What's Mum's first name?"

An elephant drinking from a stream spots a tortoise lounging on the shore. He grabs it with his trunk and flings it into the jungle. A passing zebra asks, "Why did you do that?"

"Forty years ago that very tortoise nipped my tail just for fun," the elephant said.

"Wow, forty years ago! How did you remember that?"

"Well I have turtle recall," replied the elephant.

A man goes to the doctor, concerned about his wife's hearing. The doctor says, "Stand behind her and say something and tell me how close you are when she hears you."

The man goes home, sees his wife in the kitchen, cutting carrots on the countertop. About 15 feet away he says, "Honey, what's for dinner?" Nothing. He gets halfway to her and repeats the same question. Nothing. Very concerned, he gets right behind



her and asks again "What's for dinner?"

She turns around and says "For the THIRD time, beef stew!"

The lion was proud of his mastery of the animal kingdom. One day he decided to make sure all the other animals knew he was king of the jungle. He was so confident that he bypassed the smaller animals and went straight to the bear.

"Who is the king of the jungle?" the lion asked.

"Why, of course, you are," the bear replied. The lion gave a mighty roar of approval.

Next he asked the tiger, "Who is the king of the jungle?"

The tiger quickly responded, "Everyone knows that YOU are, oh mighty lion."

Next on the list was the elephant. "Who is the king of the jungle?" the lion asked.

The elephant immediately grabbed the lion with his trunk, whirled him around in the air five or six times and slammed him into a tree. Then he pounded him onto the ground several times, dunked him under water in a nearby lake and finally dumped him out on the shore.

The lion — beaten, bruised and battered — struggled to his feet.

"Look," he told the elephant, "just because you don't know the answer is no reason to get upset."



Relics of St Therese of Lisieux visit Australia

For the first time in 18 years, the relics of St Thérèse of Lisieux, one of the most popular saints of modern times, are visiting Australia on a four-month pilgrimage with her parents, Saints Louis and Zélie Martin.

There was no shower of rose petals but hot red dust falling from the sky as St Thérèse of Lisieux arrived in Sydney on the 23rd of January.

Her flight from Singapore, the last leg of the journey here, had been delayed by a few hours while her parents had missed it altogether due to a “logistical issue”.

But joy overwhelmed any disappointment for the Discalced Carmelite nuns of Varroville as a van pulled up to the convent chapel and they were blessed with the first view of its precious cargo and presented with two bouquets of roses.

The southwest Sydney convent was the first and likely the quietest stop on the four month pilgrimage of the three members of one of the Catholic world’s most-loved families.



“Thérèse is feisty and will come whatever the conditions,” said the prioress Sister Jocelyn Kramer OCD.

“If she makes up her mind to do something she’ll do it. Maybe 40-plus degree temperatures, a howling gale with dust storms and bushfires don’t bother her in the slightest. But maybe her parents being older would rather come when conditions are a bit more sedate and easier for travelling.”

Nearly half a million people came out to venerate and pray with the saint alongside her remains in the 132kg glass-topped ornate reliquary when she first came to Australia in 2002

This time the ‘Little Flower’ and patron saint of missionaries

brings her mum and dad, Sts Louis and Zélie Martin, who will join their daughter in Sydney.

The pilgrimage is an initiative of Catholic Mission, partnering with Invoke funeral homes and memorial parks to bring the members of the Martin family to 17 dioceses.

Sister Jocelyn said “I really hope they will give heart to modern families who have lots of struggles and lots of difficulties. Here are people who understand their struggles and will support and intercede for them, who they can approach with their issues, and in their prayer ask for their help.”



St. Therese of Lisieux

1873-1897

*Our Lord needs from us
neither great deeds nor
profound thoughts. Neither
intelligence nor talents. He
cherishes simplicity.*

A Catholic understanding of Relics

The word relic comes from the Latin *relinquo*, literally meaning 'I leave' or 'I abandon'.

A relic is a piece of the body of a Saint, an item owned or used by the Saint, or an object which has been touched to the tomb of a Saint. Traditionally, a piece of the body of a Saint, especially that of a Martyr, may be with the permission of the local ecclesiastical authority used in solemn processions recalling the specific holy person

Isn't the veneration of relics optional for Catholics? Must the Catholic faithful really esteem the bodies of the Saints?

In the 16th Century, the Council of Trent responded to the claims of the reformers that both the veneration of the Saints and their relics is contrary to Sacred Scripture. The Council taught: "Also the holy bodies of the holy Martyrs and of the others who dwell with Christ . . . are to be honoured by the faithful."

There are several scriptural passages that support the veneration of relics. For example, the Israelites

took Joseph's bones when they departed Egypt (Ex. 13:19). The bones of Elisha came in contact with a dead person who then was raised to life (2 Kings 13:21). The same Elisha took the mantle of Elijah and fashioned a miracle with it (2 Kings 2:13). The Christians of Ephesus, by using handkerchiefs and cloths touched to St Paul's skin, affected the healing of the sick (Acts 19:12).

To venerate the relics of the Saints is a profession of belief in several doctrines of the Catholic faith:

1. The belief in everlasting life for those who have obediently witnessed to Christ and His Holy Gospel here on earth.
2. The truth of the resurrection of the body for all persons on the last day.
3. The doctrine of the splendour of the human body and the respect which all should show toward the bodies of both the living and the deceased.
4. The belief in the special intercessory power which the Saints enjoy in heaven because of their intimate relationship with Christ the

King.

5. Because of our connection in the communion of Saints: we as members of the Church militant or pilgrim Church, they as members of the Church triumphant.

The relics of the Saints and their veneration is another in the long line of treasures which Jesus Christ has given to His chaste bride, the Church.

These relics summon us to appreciate more profoundly not only the heroic men and women, boys and girls who have served the Master so selflessly and generously, but especially the love and mercy of the Almighty who called these His followers to the bliss of unending life in His eternal kingdom.

There are three classes of sacred relics:

1. The first-class is a part of the Saint's body
2. The second-class is a piece of the Saint's clothing or something used by the Saint.
3. The third-class is an object that is touched to a first or second-class relic

The 2020 Relics Tour –Family pilgrimage challenge

So what could a family pilgrimage experience look like practically? Following is an example:

1. Research the lives of saints Louis, Zélie, and Thérèse and get to know them.
2. Read about the concept of Pilgrimage in the Christian tradition.
3. Check out the itinerary of the Relics Pilgrimage and thoughtfully consider which one you will attend.
4. As a family, identify some prayer intentions which can be taken on pilgrimage and left in prayer at the feet of the saints visited and venerated.
5. Prepare as a family by reciting

a novena to saints Louis, Zélie and Thérèse. (Novenas are generally nine days in length).

6. Incorporate a 'Pilgrim Blessing' before and after the pilgrimage.
7. Consider walking a portion of the journey to visit the relics or visit during a more difficult and challenging time of the night.
8. Lunch together with a picnic or have dinner at a favourite restaurant where the family can just be together and enjoy each other's company prior to the pilgrimage. Maybe do the same after the pilgrimage.

It is a period of time in which we invite God to do something special in our lives.



Trust that God has a plan and wants to do something special with your family.

Trust, too, that saints Louis, Zélie, and Thérèse want to assist you in coming to know this unique plan more clearly, and that they will be forever more your special friends and guides on the great pilgrimage to heaven!

Prayer saved thousands in Mallacoota



David Jeffery, one of the “faces of Mallacoota” in recent bushfire coverage, is talking to *Eternity* amid the wreckage of his home town in the East Gippsland region of Victoria. But as neighbours drop by, whom he hasn’t seen since their world “turned black” a week ago, his voice is bursting with relief – and hope.

“Forget about doom and gloom – there’s too many great stories,” says Jeffery, referring to the “miraculous events” that spared the lives of many in Mallacoota, including Jeffery and his neighbours. While he is truly devastated for those who lost lives or homes in his small beach town of only 1000, Jeffery is just blown away by all who were saved – including thousands of visiting holiday makers.

Jeffery, owner of the Wave Oasis B&B in Mallacoota, became the international face of Australia’s bushfire crisis after being featured on BBC News and SkyNews, as well as the ABC, on January 1. Footage of Jeffery describing the narrow escape from the firewall bearing down from Mallacoota wharf, where thousands of people huddled for safety, has been shared all over the world.

Jeffery was — -incorrectly – labelled by some media as the “atheist who turned to prayer” when he asked God to change the direction of the wind as the fire

front approached, to push it back away from the wharf. This is precisely what happened, however Jeffery – who has been Christian for more than 25 years- only mentioned his former atheism to show he understands how ridiculous his story may sound to those who don’t believe in “the God of the Bible”.

But Jeffery believes it’s hard to argue that the experience, witnessed by hundreds if not thousands sheltered at Mallacoota wharf, was anything less than a miraculous answer to prayer. “There is no way that it was all just luck,” he asserts.

As news of the approaching fire reached Mallacoota in the early hours of New Year’s Day, Jeffery and his neighbours were preparing to defend their homes against “an ember attack”. It wasn’t until Jeffery received advice from a neighbour in the police force and a friend who was a former fire chief that fire balls were a real possibility, that he decided to leave – retreating to the wharf along with guests staying at the B&B and his pets – two dogs, a cat, roster and two rescue ducks belonging to his two children (who were, thankfully, safe elsewhere).

As the firewall loomed – which Jeffery says was reported to be 60 feet high and moving at 90 kilometres an hour – Jeffery and two older “prayer warriors” (along with many others around the nation) were praying.

“We could hear the roar. It sounded like a thousand freight trains coming at us. Then a huge gust, like someone had opened the door of a furnace, pushed us ... It went black as black. The smoke was so thick it was hard to breathe.”

At this point Jeffery, along with many others, thought “we were

going to die. If the Lord hadn’t answered this next prayer, we would have had 30 seconds.”

“I prayed, ‘Lord if you don’t push this [fire] back now, we need [wind] from the east.’ As soon as I said that, it started blowing from the east a little bit. Then I got louder and [the wind] got stronger. Then I got louder again and it got stronger again ...

“I felt it change. I noticed that the bolder I got, the stronger [the wind got]. I was yelling, ‘In Jesus’ name, thank you Lord for rescuing these souls. Push it back Lord, rescue us!’

“It was desperation personified. I did not care who heard me. I knew then that God was then doing what I was asking. Because if he didn’t answer then, we were dead.”

Noting that no easterly was forecast, Jeffery continues: “What God did was push [the fire] back from the east, which was impossible but he did it. He did that for five minutes, which broke [the fire front] enough to stop it from getting to where we were.”

Afterwards, as the smoke started to clear, the crowd at the wharf listened in horror as properties were consumed by fire and gas cylinders exploded.

“It was heart-sickening. You could see these intense flames. It was unstoppable. Wisely, the fireys weren’t even attempting to put it out.

“The fire wall was getting closer and closer to my house. We were about to lose everything. I could



Prayer saved thousands in Mallacoota Continued

actually hear locals saying ‘that’s the Wave Oasis going up.’

Jeffery says he was far more concerned about his neighbours, who had remained to defend their home, rather than his own property.

“Then I heard God say to me, ‘pray’. I started off with a pathetic little prayer ... Then within me, this faith rose up and said ‘who are you praying to?’ And I thought, ‘Yes! You’re the God of the Bible. Nothing’s impossible with you!’

“This was so impossible, but somehow God turned off the flames, like flicking off a switch. All the fuel was still there – the houses were still there, the grass was there.

“My neighbours – who are not Christians – were eyewitnesses and they tell me ‘God saved us’. They thought they were going to be annihilated because that fireball was coming straight at them. But the whole of Vista Drive [their street] got spared and the bush around us got spared. Hot embers went into the dry, long grass, big bits of bark and trees, but where we were praying for, right there, it was all spared ...

“There were no burn marks. There is honestly not a blade of grass

singed.”

Today, Jeffery is certainly not shying away from talking about God with neighbours in Mallacoota.

Standing alongside his neighbour Chris, who often walks his dog past Jeffery’s property, Jeffery says: “Chris and I have been talking about little things to do with Jesus for the past couple of years, but now we’re talking big things.” Jeffery has in fact spent the morning “explaining what it means to be a disciple of Christ”.

Referring to other neighbours too, Jeffery continues, “They all feel like the prayers saved them ... They’ve seen miracles. They’ve seen the supernatural – flames getting pushed back, they’ve seen the embers hit the grass and not burn, without even a singe mark.

“That’s literally Bible stuff – Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego [who were spared from the ‘fiery furnace’ in the biblical book of Daniel] ... We are in awe of what God’s doing.”

Jeffery describes their “miraculous” escape as “a mercy, because, honestly, I know the alternative eternity that Jesus talked about and he doesn’t want anyone to go there.” He is hopeful

this situation could serve as “a wake-up call” that “helps people realise that there is a God and he does love them, that the only safe place is behind that cross.”

In addition to talking with neighbours, Jeffery is now opening his property to feed and house police and other emergency services personnel. “Not only did this building not burn to the ground, but now it’s getting used in unbelievable circumstances,” he says. “This building [provides] an opportunity now for love to flow – that’s what I see it as.”

Out of this experience, Jeffery is determined to ensure that all the glory goes to God. He also feels compelled to offer this warning and encouragement to *Eternity* readers and those beyond: “It’s time for people to rise up and pray. It’s time to get serious about God and get back into reading his word.”



Relics Pilgrimage Carpool

– CARPOOL –



For those who would like to attend the veneration of the Relics of St Therese and her parents and are happy to provide transportation to others, or are in need of transportation themselves, please complete the form at the back of the Church, or contact our parish.

The proposed itinerary (TBC) is as follows:

St Therese Relics (Gundagai) - Tuesday 31st March

Departing 11:15am from Holy Trinity Church Carpark

Devotions 12:30-3:00pm at St Patricks Gundagai

St Therese Relics (Albury) - Tuesday 31st March Departing 6:30pm from Holy Trinity Church Carpark

Devotions: 8pm– TBC (Overnight vigil in Albury)

The West Wagga Wag

West Wagga Parish



Serving: Ashmont,
Collingullie,
Glenfield, Lloyd,
and San Isidore



Find the words below
hidden in the 225 letters
to the right.

KINGDOM	PURE
HUNGER	FILLED
THIRST	BLESSED
MERCY	POOR
HEART	MOURN
MEEK	INHERIT
EARTH	HEAVEN
SPIRIT	

The Beatitudes

"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me."
Matthew 5:11 (NIV)



S	T	H	I	R	S	T	G	V	H	M	Q	B	U	S
T	O	D	O	Y	R	G	P	R	E	E	O	A	F	L
K	T	T	Q	O	M	Y	L	B	Z	J	A	U	M	K
X	D	A	O	M	H	U	N	G	E	R	W	V	R	Z
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M	A	T	S	T	J	P	L	E	S	E	C	N	A	D
E	U	R	P	F	I	L	L	E	D	D	I	X	N	O
E	Z	F	T	H	S	B	P	X	R	I	P	L	Q	M
K	Z	H	U	H	U	C	J	L	H	O	H	C	M	R