



Mary Immaculate Parish Bulletin

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PALM SUNDAY OR THE PASSION OF OUR LORD – year A

29th MARCH 2026

The Sacrament of Penance – Confession – Reconciliation. (Part Five) The Second Rite of Reconciliation

Fr Leo Mifsud OMI

Throughout Holy Week our parish will be celebrating the Second Rite for Reconciliation several times, i.e., next Wednesday, on Good Friday and on Holy Saturday morning. The Second Rite of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, which is sometimes referred to as Communal Reconciliation has been around for over 50 years. Yet relatively few people have experienced celebrating it with their communities. It is meant to be a wonderful opportunity to experience communal reconciliation which 'shows more clearly the communal nature of penance'. (Sacrament of Penance #22) Typically, it is celebrated during Lent and Advent, in preparation for the Church's major feasts and which are seen as times for repentance and renewal.

Is this a different sacrament to the face to face confession? No essentially it is the same. The necessary elements for a valid sacrament are present, i.e., contrition, confession, absolution and penance, as explained in the article last week. But somehow it feels different. That is because the focus is on the effects of sin on the whole Church and its members. This week I would like to demonstrate how each of these elements are present in this Second Rite and how celebrating as a Church community can open a new dimension of God's loving mercy to us.

The Gathering

As with all Liturgy, the Rite begins with a 'gathering of some sort', usually by a singing of a hymn or at least a formal entrance of the celebrant/s. This gathering is more than being physically present, for it calls for a purposeful planning with hearts and minds aligned to what 'we' are about to celebrate. We have come together to pray, seek forgiveness and celebrate our unity in Christ.

Opening Prayer

The readings are chosen to prompt us to think about our needs of God's mercy, more specifically, how we have sinned and how our sins effect and damage our relationships, with God and with the community. The Word of God is proclaimed to the community, not only a personal reflection but we hear the Word through the community present, i.e., we are taken into the community experience of sin. The homily emphasises our need for repentance and God's readiness to show us his mercy.

Examination of Conscience

After the homily we are guided through an examination of conscience. The assembly reflects together on where and how they have fallen short of their baptismal commitment to follow Christ. Then, in preparation for our individual confession we pray together the Act of Contrition which may sometimes be exchanged with the "I Confess".

The confession

The priests now move to appropriate points around the worship space in such a way that penitents can be seen but not heard by others. Those who wish to confess their sins approach one of the priests.

The individual confession does not begin with the 'sign of the Cross' or 'bless me father', because the confession should be a flow-on from the rest of the Liturgy.

As with the First Rite (face to face) the sins mentioned should not be an itemised list, complete with a back-story of the how and wherefores. The confession should indicate that the penitent has identified areas in their life which are a challenge. For example: Instead of confessing 'I had an argument here'; and 'a quarrel there'; 'I spoke harshly to someone', etc, you could simply confess 'I lack compassion or patience with others'. Of course, in cases where there are grave sins, these need to be confessed.

Keeping others in mind

While no restriction is placed on the individual's confession, good manners and common sense dictate that people limit the time they spend with confessors. Anyone wishing to spend more time for personal spiritual guidance should avail themselves by going to a First Rite, such as a Saturday morning or if there are large numbers during weekly confession time, making an appointment with a priest.

It is a moving experience to witness fellow Catholics humbling themselves by publicly approaching a confessor for forgiveness. As they do, there are two things to be aware of: Firstly, as we wait for our turn, we are meant to be praying for the others present that they will know the fullness of God's grace and mercy. Secondly, that we are being prayed for, so that we may be encouraged to open ourselves to God's mercy.

continued on next page ...

Thanksgiving

After the confessions, the ceremony concludes with a proclamation of praise, a prayer of thanksgiving and a blessing. These are integral to the celebration, not an optional extra! In some celebrations I have witnessed people leaving after their own confession. This is NOT right because it shows a complete lack of understanding of the Liturgy, let alone of respect for the rest of the congregation.

The second form of the sacrament of penance is a communal liturgical celebration from beginning to end.

Regulations for Good Friday

Good Friday is a day of Fasting and Abstaining from meat.

On **Fridays of the year AND Fridays of Lent**, the practice of penance is fulfilled by performing any one of the following:

- prayer – for example, Mass attendance; family prayer; a visit to a church or chapel; reading the Bible; making the Stations of the Cross; praying the rosary.
- self-denial – for example, not eating meat; not eating sweets or dessert; giving up entertainment to spend time with the family; limiting food and drink so as to give to the poor of one's own country.
- helping others – for example, special attention to someone who is poor, sick, elderly, lonely or overburdened.



Launch of the International Eucharistic Congress 2028

The Australian Church is setting out on the journey toward the International Eucharistic Congress, Sydney 2028 (Eucharist28), a great time of renewal and transformation centred on encountering the Eucharistic Lord.

In preparation, Australian Catholics will enter a Year of Prayer - March 2026, focused on rediscovering Our Lord's love in the Blessed Sacrament. The theme, ***This is My Body, Given for You***, calls us to deeper faith, generosity and mission. Learn more about the way ahead at eucharist28.org.



Manaini's Story



PROJECT
COMPASSION

In remote northern Fiji, life has always been a struggle for 44-year-old Manaini, a mother of six and grandmother of two. Holding back tears, she shared,

'The things I worry about the most is my kids' education. The requirements that need to be met are hard for me to try to achieve with my daily income.'

'Our Legacy of Light:

A History of St Patrick's College, Campbelltown, is a book by Francesca Musico Rullo and Joanne Cavallin documenting the 185-year history of St Patrick's College for Girls, Campbelltown, NSW. It chronicles the school's journey from 1840 as a community-run, Irish-Catholic school to its role as a modern Catholic school for girls. Drawing on archival records, photographs, and personal recollections, the book provides a valuable insight into both the school's history and its place within the broader Macarthur community. The book is published by the Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society and can be purchased in either hard copy or e-book at its website <https://www.cahs.org.au/>

Footsteps of St. Eugene de Mazenod Charism Pilgrimage 2026

This pilgrimage will take us to key Oblate sites in Paris, Aix-en-Provence, Marseille, and Oblate General House in Rome, where we celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Oblates. The pilgrimage will be spiritually led by our Provincial, Fr Andrew Chen OMI. Other Oblates will be on the pilgrimage, including Fr. Didier. **When:** 21 June – 2 July 2026

Indicative Cost: \$8,300 (land only, twin share)

Registrations close **17 May 2026**.

For more information visit:

<https://omi.com.au/charism-pilgrimage> OR scan QR

or contact Emma Rice

at erice@omi.com.au | 03 9805 8834



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Try Alpha

Alpha is a Safe Space to explore Life, purpose and the Christian Life, ask questions and share your point of view

Alpha is free and everyone is welcome. Starting with dinner at 7:00pm

Wednesday 15th April
Mary Immaculate Parish Hall
61 Emerald Drive, Eagle Vale

Got questions?
Ivanka: 0449 528 609
May: 0416 157 294

Urgent Need for Foster Carers

Could you open your heart and home to a child in need? There is an urgent need for foster carers in our community. For over 30 years, CatholicCare has supported carers to provide vulnerable children with a loving, safe home and a brighter future. Foster carers receive comprehensive training, regular case worker support, and a carer allowance for the child day-to-day needs. If you've ever considered fostering, now is the time. **Call:** 1800 967 894 **Email:** fosteringfutures@catholiccare.dow.org.au We will support you every step of the way.

13th APRIL Life in the Spirit Seminar - 9 week series

As part of **Bible Study & reflection group**. Which meets **Mondays at 10am** at the Meeting Room. OLMC Parish, 193 St Andrews Rd, Varroville
For more details Nelli Rafidi 0411965526 or Parish Office 96037373

Come & Join!

18th April - Diocesan Youth Sports Festival

Young people ages 15 - 35 are invited for the very first Diocesan Youth Sports Festival
When: **Saturday 18 April 2026** Time: **9.30am – 3.30pm** Where: **Holy Spirit College, Bellambi**
Cost: **\$50 per team | \$10 per person**
Form a team of 7+ to compete in a fast-paced round-robin tournament. The twist? **Teams vote on the main sport of the day**, so register early and get training! Prefer something lower intensity? **A table tennis competition** will run throughout the day with plenty of chances to jump in.
Morning tea and a **BBQ lunch are included**, and the day will finish with **Mass celebrated by Bishop Brian** at St Columbkille's Church in Corrimal.

19th APRIL Appin Massacre Memorial

This year is the 210th Anniversary of the Appin Massacre which occurred on 17 April 1816. Our annual memorial service will be held on Sunday, **19 April 2026 at Cataract Dam from 11:00am – 3:30pm**. We would like to encourage everyone to come to the Appin Massacre Memorial as a sign of respect for the Dharawal people who were killed in the Massacre on the 17 April 1816, and to the descendants of the survivors.

It is a family friendly day. The day begins with a free sausage sizzle. We encourage bringing a hat, sunscreen, water bottle, and walking shoes for the short walk down the hill from the picnic ground to the dam wall. Some event buses will be available for those unable to walk. Once there, we hold a short ceremony, including a smoking ceremony, dancing by local Aboriginal dance groups, and didgeridoo playing. It is important that we continue our efforts at truth telling and reconciliation.

20th & 21st APRIL - ASIST Workshop

8.30am - 4.30pm both days - Location: 36 Harbour Street Wollongong, NSW 2500
CatholicCare is an accredited provider of LivingWorks Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). It is two-day in-person workshop where you'll learn how to recognise when someone may be thinking about suicide, and how to provide a skilled intervention and develop a safety plan with the person to connect them to further support.
To book call Rita Maher on 0458 472 983 or email ritam@catholiccare.dow.org.au

Tuesday 21 April 7-9pm CAMPBELLTOWN - Formation Pathway | Leading People Well

The conversation you avoid today becomes the conflict you manage tomorrow.

Every leader eventually discovers the same thing.

The most difficult part of leadership is not vision, planning, or organisation. It is people.

Our next Formation Pathway evening will focus on the practical side of

leading people well. The session will explore several areas that often determine whether teams thrive or struggle, including:

- handling conflict constructively
- having honest and respectful conversations
- setting clear expectations and responsibilities
- supporting the people entrusted to our leadership

If you are involved in any form of leadership or ministry, this evening will offer practical help for one of the most important parts of leadership: caring for and guiding people well. All are welcome. **To register: Dow.sh/fpapril2026**

ALSO AVAILABLE @ WOLLONGONG; ZOOM Wednesday 22 April 7-9pm

Jamberoo Abbey Retreats April to June. Go to our website for more information and how to register.

We would like to enable as many people to attend our retreats. If you require assistance with the registration cost, please don't hesitate to contact us at onlineretreat@jamberooabbey.org.au.

10 - 12 April 2026 Lord, Teach Us to Pray: The Aramaic Prayer of Jesus

(Cottage Weekend Retreat) In this contemplative retreat - exploring the Lord's Prayer in its original Aramaic. Retreat Cost: \$150 + accommodation cost.

18 April 2026 - Day Retreat - He is risen! This is a retreat for youth and young adults aged 16 - 35. The Lord is risen! Let us come and spend time sitting at the tomb and wait for his voice to call our name. Retreat Cost: \$60 (*Limited space available*)



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PLEASE PRAY FOR-



SICK: Lisa Farnhill, George Kowalik, Adrian Banks, Christine Debski, Ana Villagonzalo, Pinky Arenas, Evelyn Arenas, Lachlan Abood, Jaetan Noyeaux, Willow Morrison, Charbel Aziz, Pauline Iacono, Margaret Roberts. Fr John Pickering,

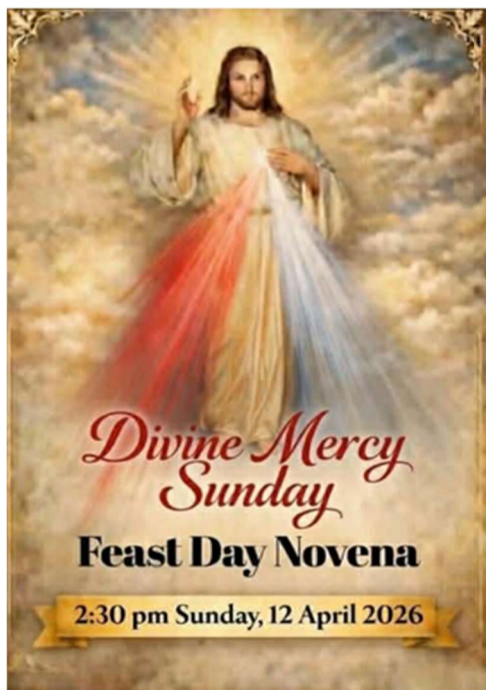
THE DECEASED: Please pray for the repose of the souls of **Emmanuel Vella, Paul Zammit and Lena Xerri and Pierre Rambert** whose anniversaries occur at this time and all Holy Souls. May they rest in the peace of the Lord.

Pope Leo's monthly intention for APRIL: For priests in crisis

Let us pray for priests going through moments of crisis in their vocation, that they may find the accompaniment they need and that communities may support them with understanding and prayer.

MASS INTENTIONS 28th – 4th April. 2026	
Sat 5.30pm Sat	For the anniversary of death of Emmanuel Vella
SUNDAY 8.30am 10.00am 5.30pm	For Petra Vujevic and Ivan Vujevic on their birthdays. For the People of the Parish (Pro Populo) For the People For Simon Semrani and family
Mon. 9.00am	For the anniversary of death of Paul Sammut and Lena Xerri
Tues. 9.00am	For the soul of Pierre Rambert
Wednesday. 9:00AM 7:30 PM	For the Holy Souls SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION
Thursday. 7:30 PM	HOLY THURSDAY – NO MORNING MASS MASS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER
Friday 10:00am 11:00am 3:00 PM	Stations of the Cross SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD
Saturday	NO MORNING MASS SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION 7:00 PM THE EASTER VIGIL

HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE	
Tues. 31 st March - Mass of the Holy Oil at 6:30 PM at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral,	
Wednesday – SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION –7:30 pm <i>Please note:</i> Wednesday Mass will be moved to 9:00am	
HOLY THURSDAY – 7:30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper Followed by Adoration in the Hall.	
GOOD FRIDAY 10:00am - STATIONS OF THE CROSS 11:00am – SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION 3:00pm – THE PASSION OF THE LORD	
HOLY SATURDAY 10:00am – SECOND RITE OF RECONCILIATION 7:30pm - EASTER VIGIL - with the Blessing of the Fire	
EASTER SUNDAY 8:30am and 10:00am Masses – No evening 5:30pm Mass	



Divine Mercy 9-day Novena
Day 1 – Good Friday- 4:30 pm
Day 2 – Holy Saturday – 10:00 am
Day 3 – Easter Sunday – 11:00 am
Day 4 – Mon. 6th April – 9:30 am
Day 5 – Tue. 7th April – 9:30 am
Day 6 - Wed. 8th April – 6:45 pm
Day 7 - Thur. 9th April – 9:30 am
Day 8 – Fri. 10th April – 9:30 am
Day 9 – Sat. 11th April – 10:00 am
Divine Mercy Sunday
12th April - 2:30 pm

Please note:
 The Holy Hour run by the Filipino Group will not be held on **Saturday April 4th** (1st Saturday of the month)

Marriage Enrichment Weekend
 Come and join us on 19-21 June 2026
 at Mount Carmel Retreat Centre, Varroville, NSW –
Book online at www.wwme.org.au
 or contact Terry Mahony on 0490 774 419 or nswbookings@wwme.org.au

WEEKEND MASSES
Saturday Vigil 5:30pm
Sunday 8:30am | 10:00am | 5:30pm.

WEEKDAY MASSES
Mon & Tue: 9:00am / **Wednesday:** 7:30 pm
Thurs. & Fri 9:00am / **Saturday:** 9:30am
FILIPINO MASS – 2nd Sunday- 4:00pm.
HOLY HOUR First Saturday will NOT be held on the 4th April.

RECONCILIATIONS:
Saturday 10:00am to 11:00am
 (with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament)

DEVOTIONAL TIMES
ROSARY: BEFORE the weekday Masses.
DIVINE MERCY Chaplet- Fridays after 9am Mass
 First Fridays – with Benediction
 Meetings - 4th Friday @ 6.30pm (in Madigan room)

BAPTISMS by appointment.