We continue this week with our series of reflections by parishioners as to a symbol that has meaning for them in relation to Lent or Easter. Thank you to those who have been willing to share with us their thoughts.

Lent is a time for reflection on our spiritual values....for taking stock of our personal beliefs. Isaiah 26:4-5 tells us to “trust in our Lord always for He is the everlasting rock.”

Too often we fall into the trap of taking the easy path and building our lives on unsound footings. Matthew 7:24-27 (The story of the wise and foolish builders – those who listen to God’s word but don’t keep it, build on sand, those who do listen, build on rock) warns us against the obvious and easy basis on which to construct our journey through life.

The sand appeals to us because it is plentiful and easily accessible.

We consider ourselves time poor, so most often we take the easy road and choose the sand on which to build our faith.

But, sand is assaulted by the constant trickles and unexpected tidal waves of the waters of life’s trials, weaknesses and temptations. Materialism, lack of respect for traditional ways, ingratitude, jealousy and self-centredness comprise the erosive trickle of water that undermines the shelter of our spiritual house.

The trickle of our baptismal water shines a light on the evils and pitfalls hidden in the sands and lying in wait to be exposed by daily living.

Matthew 7:24-27 clearly illustrates the vigilance we must maintain when building the foundations of our faith in God.

Lent is the time for us to focus our attention on, and assess the security of, our chosen pathways.

By Mary Bell
The symbol I have chosen for Lent is a father.
Lent is a time to reflect on where or why we have journeyed away from our God.
Was it in pursuit of material gain, were we seeking worldly fulfilment, have we simply become too busy, are we following the crowd? No matter the reason or how far we stray or where we wander, God our Heavenly Father is always waiting with open arms to welcome us back into his fold. Why?
We are reminded in the parable of the Prodigal Son, of the father who awaits his son’s return and when he does his reaction mystifies some. Why did he respond in this manner? The father loved his son and was eager to show that love and restore their relationship. He runs to greet his son and is so filled with joy that he doesn’t even allow the son to confess his misdemeanours. Nor does he question or lecture him; instead he unconditionally forgives him and accepts him back into the family.

This is how our Heavenly Father feels towards us when we repent. God loves us greatly, and patiently waits for us to repent so he can show us his great mercy. Not only are we forgiven, but he welcomes us as his children. He truly is, our loving Father.

Lent is a time to turn back to the Father; he waits with open arms for us.

By Kath Gore.

Please find the DRIVER REVIVER volunteer timesheet on the front table for 24/03.

Our next Parish Luncheon is on the 7th March at 11.30am. Please spread the word and invite people to come along to a simple social gathering. Jane Blomley is also seeking volunteers to help in the kitchen/serving or someone simply to help with the shopping. If you are able to give an hour or two, please give Jane a call on 4675 4132 or 0401 042 041. Thanks.

Communal Reconciliation
An opportunity for Communal Reconciliation will be available this Thursday (10/03), at 11.00am and 5.30pm.
Anyone wishing to receive individual reconciliation please advise Father Michael.

During this year of Mercy we are invited to participate in a “gentle revolution” through our tender and meaningful actions founded on our relationship with a forgiving God. One of the articles I read had 56 ways we can make our actions more merciful, so each week I thought I would share one with you:

Mercy Action # 38
Give the gift of peace to someone in the way you speak to them.
On Tuesday and Wednesday, Father Michael will be attending the Diocesan Inservice in Toowoomba, on the Year of Mercy. Wednesday (09/03) 5.30pm
Friday (11/03) 12.15pm

5th/6th March, 2016
SATURDAY EVENING: 6.00pm
SUNDAY: Daymar 8.00am & Weengallon 10.00am
12th/13th March, 2016
SUNDAY EVENING: 6.00pm
19th/20th March, 2016
SUNDAY MORNING: 9.00am
24th – Holy Thursday Mass – 6.00pm
25th – Good Friday – Stations of the Cross – 10.00am
Passion Play – 3.00pm
26th – EASTER VIGIL (Saturday) – 5.30pm
27th – EASTER SUNDAY – 8.30am

WE PRAY FOR Those who have entered your kingdom: including Danielle Brennen, Father Brian O’Dwyer, Margaret Beasley (Roma), Albert Knight, Sam Maiore (Roma), John Walmsley (St. George), Paul Zacka, Lyn Sutton, Thelva O’Shea, Darryl Hennessy, Bub Porter, Darrel Littlewood, Heather Glasser, Nancy Thurecht (Talwood), Anna Van Kuijck, Ray McKenna, Florence “Margy” Pavlicevich, Teresa Butler, Mark Batchelor, Ramon O’Neill, Frank Holland, Noel McGovern, Winston Thorne, Jill Welsh Field, Natalie MacPherson, Erin Laverty, Norah O’Brien, Father John (Jack) Clancy, Father Jeff Scully, Kay Coleman, Marion O’Leary, Matthew Palmen.

For all whose anniversary is at this time: including Donald Frith, Arthur McCall, Kevin Warby, Les Lutney, Ruth “Bub” Lutney, Kenneth Purcell, Jacob Webber, Kathleen Darcey, George Billsborough, Melissa Morrissey, Margaret Ash, Dulcie Saunders, Virginia Wilkie, Margaret Oliver, Bill Park, Arthur Gordon, Peter Spittles, Bronwynne Faddy, Paul FitzGerald, Betty “Topsy” Hunt, George Hartin, Michael Gibbs, Kevin Cook, Claire Park, Mia Beck, Jenny Marsh, Robert Ford, Barry Cook, Barbara Bendall, Ally Brennan, Arthur Gordon, Bill Bishop


If you would like to include the name of someone in these lists, please check with the person or family concerned and then phone Kath on 4671 5087 (Thursday 9am to 3pm).

Let us pray for all those clergy whose anniversaries occur during this month:
Rev Fr Dominic Burke (03/03/68) Rev Fr Joseph Skelly (10/03/70)
Rev Fr Kevin Ryan (12/03/11) Rev Fr Bernard Kane (13/03/11)
Rev Fr Ronald Walton (16/03/70) Rev Fr Patrick Brady (25/03/54)

Lord, be merciful to your servants, the Bishops and Priests of this Diocese, welcome them into the company of your Saints, in the Kingdom of light and peace. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
INTRODUCTION

This Fourth Sunday of Lent calls us to rejoice, and we hear profound reasons for rejoicing in the story of the prodigal son. We may make life choices that cause us great pain, but God is always there, waiting, ready to forgive and embrace us. How deep is God’s mercy? How long has it been offered to God’s people? We hear in today’s readings that the only limits are ours, if we choose not to accept the possibilities for newness that await us — always and ever.

First Reading
Joshua 5:9-12
God is merciful to the Israelites returning home.

Responsorial Psalm
Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Whoever is in Christ is in a new creation.

PRAISE AND HONOUR TO YOU, LORD JESUS CHRIST! I will rise and go to my father and tell him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. PRAISE AND HONOUR TO YOU, LORD JESUS CHRIST!

Gospel
The parable of the prodigal son.

Prayers of the Faithful
For the church, who is always in need of God’s mercy: that we may share that same mercy with others … remembering your mercy, we pray,

For those awaiting the relief of something new in the midst of war, violence and inhumane actions … remembering your mercy, we pray,

For all wandering or displaced people: the homeless, migrants and refugees … remembering your mercy, we pray,

For those who have suffered abuse, physical or mental at the hands of others, especially those who have been betrayed by the church … remembering your mercy, we pray,

For the grace to be generous and forgiving to those who have made mistakes or who have offended us … remembering your mercy, we pray,

For the needy, the sick and the dying among us; and for those who have died … remembering your mercy, we pray,