

MINISTER'S MESSAGE

LENT: LEADING US TO EASTER

As I begin to write this, I am aware I have just begun to serve you in this Parish for the next few months. As *the new kid on the block* there is little time to truly get to know you and for you to know both my wife, Anne and myself and yet it is a precious portion of our Christian journey we make together as the cross and Resurrection loom more and more into focus.

With a theme like 'Lent Leading to Easter' my first thought went to a Bible study I began this year focusing on: 'The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not understood it.' During December this verse came strongly to me and now week by week in John's gospel we discover again how from the calling of the disciples onwards, the revelation of God's mercy and grace in Christ broke through the human ideas, biases, prejudices, bigotry and ignorance of those whom Jesus encountered. Yes, it is part of John's understanding of Light shining in the darkness.

However even in our selected readings for Lent I see this same breaking through of holy Light in the struggles and fears of our own times. In Lent 1 there was the focus on Jesus' baptism and Mark's brief story of the Temptation; both of which challenged us to look at our own commitment and remember how in times when the voices of indoctrination swamp us daily, the overarching mercy and grace of God is always there. Then, In Lent 2 there was the misunderstanding of Peter who rose quickly to the occasion exclaiming 'This cannot happen to You! You can't be killed.!' However, if Abram and Jesus had taken the easy, sensible way when there appeared to be no other, then life, namely God's life would have slipped through their fingers like water. And isn't it true how life can so quickly slip away leaving us with regrets over a wrong decision? And so, our journey moves on.

Prizing scripture from bible history and asking questions of ourselves is never easy. Such as where am I in this story? What is the darkness or the attitudes the Lord is seeking to break through on my road to the cross? Lent is about this for me? It's not flailing myself or giving up chocolate because I find it a journey of brokenness. Perhaps like Thomas who having spent so much time with Jesus never really 'got it' until that day when he fell on his knees before the resurrected Lord crying, '*My Lord and my God.*' Brokenness! The Light finally breaking through the darkness of his human understanding.

Personally, I was born in the old Selangor hospital in Nambour and spent most of the first twenty three years of my life living perhaps 10 kilometres from this church. (*I'm not such a new kid on the block after all.*) God never figured much in my family so I'm a bit of a black sheep you may say. However, every year has been like a Lenten journey from my conversion to the present. I was watching a neighbour's calf the other morning, only three hours old and struggling on wobbly legs to stand and find its way to the mother's udder. 'That's a bit like me,' I thought; somehow learning to stand and then somehow learning to face the tough realities of daily life. And yes, we'll wobble and fail many times. But we are not alone, are we? Perhaps it's in the wobbling and failing we are challenged and thrust back into the Presence of a loving Saviour who was broken for us and now offers us love and mercy. Perhaps it's on this Lenten Journey each of us may see our own failings more clearly and come to Good Friday and Easter overwhelmed again by the wonder of grace.

There is a benediction song you may well know: "***May the feet of God walk with you...and may the child of God grow in you.***" What a Lenten prayer as we walk this road together.

Blessings, Rev Glenn Ingram

Daily Prayers

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

We are part way through Lent so our prayers this month will take us on the 'Journey to Jerusalem,' from Ash Wednesday, through Lent to Easter Sunday.

DAY 1 – Our God of Lent,
God with us, as we take our first steps in the season of Lent, take us deeper into your love. take us into truth, that we may learn and grow.
Connect us to your grace and compassion, so that we may hold on to hope when we come to the place where we have to face our shortcomings.
Prayers come in different forms. Sometimes they are short breath prayers. Other times they are long conversations with God. Prayer has the power to move us beyond ourselves in to the world around us.
Lord of all, You are our God and we are your people.
You have given us life,
You have made us your own.
You have given us meaning and purpose.
You gift us with grace

DAY 2 – ASH WEDNESDAY

Our God of Ash Wednesday, just as the palms of praise and celebration of last Easter have turned to ash, we come into this time of reflection and preparation, with some sense of concern for our faith.

As we remember your sacrifice, as we hear of your love, as we listen for your call, awaken within us our discipleship afresh. May the passion of your living revive our devotion. May the sign of your cross lead us to repentance. May this time awaken our faith afresh. As we journey to the cross and beyond, may we take up our own crosses and follow you anew.

*With nails and wood they made it,
A trough for the cattle's hay,
It became the birthing cradle
For the Christ child born that day.*

*With nails and wood they made it,
A cross high on the hill,
His life a gift full of loving,
And yes, he is with us still.*

DAY 3 – Jesus, Walker of the Way, lead us again this Lent into deeper discipleship.

Mould us as your people as we remember your commitment to us; Wrap us in your new covenant of love, and walk with us on the way.

God of penitence and repentance, and God of forgiveness, we pray today for those seeking forgiveness and reconciliation – some find it hard to say they are sorry, while some find it hard to accept that forgiveness. Be with those who find it difficult to let go of the hurts that break up families and relationships.

Be with them all we pray so they may find that your Lenten way of penitence and forgiveness leads then into your loving care.

DAY 4 - PALM SUNDAY

Lord of the Way, Our God of Palm Sunday – God of rejoicing and celebration.

'I heard the shouting from afar, excitement all around, palm branches waving in the air, coats strewn upon the ground.'

We pray for those who are celebrating today – the birth of a baby, a milestone in life's journey, joy in a family reunion, renewed health and vigour, relief from anxiety and uncertainty.

Take us into your love again this Lent and draw us deeper into your compassion. Shine the light of your hope into our lives and renew a right spirit within us so we may live your love day by day.

'The king of glory had passed by, and I'd been there to see, I'd given him my only cloak, he gave his all for me.'

DAY 5 - Our God of Maundy Thursday – God of prayer and painful decisions, God of last meals and lost friends. We pray for those today faced with their own painful decisions – job uncertainty, farewells, last meals together, sense of betrayal and loss of trust, violence in families – may they be guided by Christ's steadfastness in prayer and make their own painful decisions safe in God's love and care. May we leave behind that which is unhelpful.

Help us to slip out of our selfishness into your way of service and as we journey to the cross and beyond, may we take up our own crosses and follow you anew.

DAY 6 - Our God of Good Friday – God of grief and anguish and suffering. We pray for those who are grieving, grieving for lost loved ones, grieving for loss of health and capacity. In this Covid time there are many people who are anxious and feeling helpless right across the world – some are caught in quarantine and others are blocked and can't get home, unable to see loved ones. Be with them, loving God, we pray.

Our God of Good Friday, open our hearts, open our souls, open our minds, open us up so we reach out to others and share their needs. As we listen to your story, reinvigorate our discipleship. renew our sense of call and purpose. Teach us who we are and restore us as your people

DAY 7 - Our God of Easter Sunday – God of resurrection and joy – God of new life for all. We pray that we will carry your resurrection joy in our hearts and souls, day by day and every day, sharing it with others and building our lives on it - Christ's wonderful gift of love.

We thank you, God of the Journey, for the new hope that comes through Easter – with times of repentance, times of rejoicing, times of painful decisions and Christ's final total sacrifice and death, and then times of resurrection and new life – all giving us the certainty of full life in Christ.

MISSION IS POSSIBLE

What were you doing on 20th July (21st in Australia), 1969? I know what we were doing: we were watching the historic moment when one man made his “giant leap” and walked on the moon (on a tiny black and white TV screen)! There were just three men privileged to be in the Apollo 11 Mission to the moon. And of the team of three, only two actually landed on the moon (Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin), while the third (Mike Collins) orbited the moon in the Command Module. But with any successful mission, there's always someone behind them. I've often wondered how many people were involved in getting men onto the moon, but was quite overwhelmed by the answer: 400,000!

Yes, that's not a typo! 400,000 plus another 20,000 providing industrial support (such as constructing the rockets, making spacesuits, preparing space-food for them!) (Check out the NASA website, “How NASA Teams work.” Interesting reading.)



So, the answer to the question: What does it take to fulfil a mission? In one word: **teamwork!** The Apollo programme involved an incredible range of people with wide ranging, different skills: scientists, engineers, computer experts, mission controllers, “rocket men”, medical teams, doctors, nurses, psychologists, even caterers and cleaners - thousands of people with incredibly varied skills and abilities. They all worked together to fulfil one single mission: to put a human person on the moon! (And eight of them died in the process!)

How did they do it? Here's just a couple of basic principles.

First, they each committed themselves to the same single principle: “For the benefit of all”. No one allowed their own particular interest to take priority over their common, overarching purpose. Each and every person, at whatever level, saw themselves as part of the final objective. The Astronauts themselves were chosen from America's “top gun” pilots, highly trained to be self-motivated, incisive decision makers, fully self-sufficient. However, when it came to the Apollo Mission, “It was tough to get people to work together... to become one we learned to check our egos at the door!” **Self**, took second place to the mission!

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We are not trying to put anyone on the moon, but do have a common mission: to share the good news of Jesus among the whole human race. Further, we have within our faith all the ingredients for working together to change the world, to transform it into a community of love, joy and peace. All we need is a sense of common purpose, big enough to over-ride any personal ego-issues:

“being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, *intent on one purpose*” (Phil. 2:2, NASB). With the right attitude, our **Mission IS possible!**

Second, they learned how to respect each person's differences. There was a positive approach to diversity. Each recognised the value of the other's skills. No one walks on the moon alone! Each one has a support team of thousands! Incidentally, the whole team of three in the Apollo 11 mission were committed Christians. They shared common values of respect, subjugating their own egos to the needs of the other, and a deep commitment to all that is good and honourable and right. I wonder sometimes whether we could learn from NASA, or whether, in the first place, NASA had learned how to use Christian principles!

Rev Graham Warne

Mission Control:
only a small,
but important, part
of the Apollo 11 team!!



**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF
FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE**

This land on which we live and worship is God's land and God's Spirit dwells here.

We acknowledge the Kabi Kabi people, traditional custodians under God of the Sunshine Coast and its hinterland.

We pay our respects and pray for their elders and all their descendants.

We are thankful that we can share with them in our community and nation.

We reaffirm our commitment to care for the land and participate in the reconciling journey, for God requires this of us.

NeXus

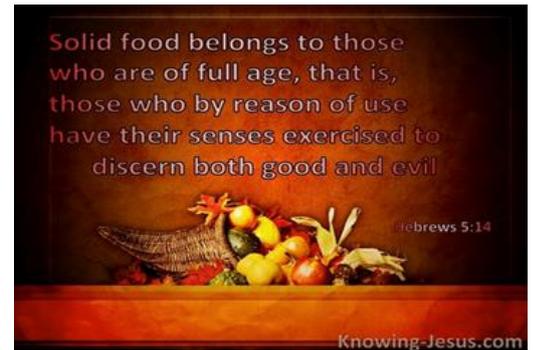
The **NeXus** between our mission and our spiritual power is the gathered congregation. While God comes to us by His Spirit thus transforming us by his grace, we are drawn into precious fellowship with each other.

As a congregation gathers for worship, it is being strengthened, then sent out again for a missional purpose.

In times such as these, this copy of **Nambour NeXus** is provided so that you may have resources to assist you in your personal or household worship of God, to assist you in growing your faith, and to encourage your concern and prayers for others.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF FOOD

Many of you will not know that I have a passion for those who are ageing; and in particular those who are ageing and living with Dementia! This is not idle for me as I have worked for many years with people walking through life in the confusion of what is Dementia - that is; those with the diagnosis and those caring for them. You might wonder at the title of this piece, but have you ever wondered why people get so worked up about food in aged care places or for that matter even when living at home? I would say, it's because what we eat, how we eat and who we eat with is loaded with meaning.



Take a moment to think about the place of food in your own life. Cast your mind back over the years. What is your 'comfort food'? When, where and how were meals eaten that created a deep feeling of home? What are the flavours of belonging, for you? When did you realise that what you ate and how you ate was different to others? What type of food, or aspect of eating with others, would you never give up? In this Lenten time many of us initiate the giving up of some food or other consumption; but when it comes to food and giving it up do you choose something that is of little value or meaning for you (if I was to give up a food on this basis it would be Brussel Sprouts! I do not like them); so is this really an effective participation in giving up or sacrificing.

Food in our life and in ageing has an incredibly significant role to play in our day-to-day living. It's a role that cannot be separated from the role of food and it's eating in the meaning in our every day. When we take a broader view of the purpose of food in our every day, we must not lose sight of how food and dining as a place reinforces our social and cultural life, it's place as an opportunity for dignity and well-being, as a place of rituals coated with implications such as comfort, caring, celebration and family ties. It speaks to our need for connectivity: with others, our faith heritage, nature and Yes even our relationship with God. What we eat gives us a chance to exercise power over what constitutes our very being. Food preparation and dining is a complex web of formal and informal rules that have been worked out in each person's particular life. People's preferences are not merely one flavour over another as if choosing a sweet in the store window. Food preferences are driven by a powerful system of cultural beliefs, traditions, values, practices and socioeconomic circumstance. As with spirituality, food beliefs are highly personal.

Ilsa Hampton CEO of Ageing Australia writes from an adapted definition from Michopoulou and Jauniškis's literature review of food spirituality, 'An innate sense of connection that a person can experience to and through food in regard to personal and social identity, culture and ritual, nature and the environment, body and soul, the mundane and the universal'. For me this identifies with my faith walk, as I have an innate sense of connection with Jesus whereby I believe as He sat with people over a meal it built a sense of personal and social identity; it set cultural rituals, it allowed people then and now to connect body and soul.

May you connect with Jesus as you walk this Lenten journey.

LENT EVENT

Since 1980 the number of people living on less than \$2 a day has halved.

Through [Lent Event](#), you have been part of that success story, taking action to help provide access to education, healthcare and income opportunities that have helped break the cycle of poverty.



COVID-19 and its economic impacts are now threatening those gains. The World Bank estimates that [150 million people](#) are expected to slide back into extreme poverty by 2022.

The season of Lent is an opportunity to reflect on the life of Christ, and re-dedicate ourselves to following in his way of justice and compassion.

What is Uniting World? Uniting World is an agency of the Uniting Church in Australia. We are a channel for connecting Australian people to God's work in the wider world.

Our Approach We translate rigorous sustainable community development principles through the lens of our Christian faith.

Faith is the heart language we share with our partners.

We work with and through churches, but our programs include all people regardless of their faith, sexuality, ethnicity, ability or gender and we seek out the marginalised and the vulnerable. We listen to the voices of the poorest.

We believe in solidarity not charity and we believe that local communities are best placed to identify the solutions to their own problems. We value the wisdom of our partners, their courageous actions and their passionate faith.

Donate directly on the web, or in our Donation Bowl

Pastoral Care Ministry

Rev Graham Warne 5478 9747

Eva Donaldson Lay Co-ordinator 5441 3381

Nambour Congregation Chairperson

Ian Woodward 5441 1069

Church Council Officers

(Ian Woodward) - Chair

Helen Staines - Secretary

Lyn Metelerkamp - Treasurer

Lynn Blackwood-Troyahn

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Office: open most Tuesdays and Thursdays

9.30AM to 2PM Jimmy Stewart 0411 314 306

DIRECT DEBIT/TRANSFER

To make your offering using DIRECT DEBIT/TRANSFER you will need to go to your bank or **use the internet banking service.** You will need the following information:

Bank: ANZ

BSB: 014010

Account No: 286751378

Thank you all for being generous people. May your giving become the power of love in the world.

CHURCH EMAIL

WEBSITE incl Sunday Worship Service

FACEBOOK

YOUTUBE CHANNEL

nambouruca@gmail.com

nambouruniting.org.au

www.facebook.com/nambouruniting.church

nambouruca.youtube

DAILY READINGS

MARCH 2021

Monday, March 1	Hebrews 1:8-12
Tuesday, March 2	Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19
Wednesday, March 3	John 12:36-43
Thursday, March 4	1 Peter 2:4-10
Friday, March 5	Acts 7:30-40
Saturday, March 6	Mark 9:2-8
Sunday, March 7	John 2:13-22
Monday, March 8	1 Corinthians 3:10-23
Tuesday, March 9	Hebrews 9:23-28
Wednesday, March 10	Mark 11:15-19
Thursday, March 11	Ephesians 1:3-6
Friday, March 12	Ephesians 1:7-14
Saturday, March 13	John 3:1-13
Sunday, March 14	John 3:14-21
Monday, March 15	Hebrews 3:1-6
Tuesday, March 16	1 Corinthians 10:6-13
Wednesday, March 17	John 8:12-20
Thursday, March 18	Hebrews 4:1-13
Friday, March 19	Hebrews 4:14-5:4
Saturday, March 20	John 12:1-11
Sunday, March 21	John 12:20-33
Monday, March 22	2 Corinthians 3:4-11
Tuesday, March 23	Acts 2:14-24
Wednesday, March 24	John 12:34-50
Thursday, March 25	
Annunciation of the Lord,	Isaiah 7:10-14, Philippians 2:1-11
Friday, March 26	Philippians 2:12-18
Saturday, March 27	Mark 10:32-34 & 46-52
Sunday, March 28 Liturgy of the Palms	Mark 11:1-11
Sunday, March 28 Liturgy of the Passion	Mark 15:1-47
Monday, March 29 Monday of Holy Week	John 12:1-11
Tuesday, March 30 Tuesday of Holy Week	John 12:20-36
Wednesday, March 31 Wednesday of Holy Week	John 13:21-32