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The Franciscan

Anglican Parish of St Francis Parkview

A SEASON OF

Easter



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RECTOR'S REFLECTIONS

DANGER: EASTER!

Shock, surprise, disbelief, awe, excitement, wonder... these are all emotions that are most commonly expressed within our Easter Story, but "danger"? Where does this fit in?

Jesus' resurrection "undoes" the violent machinations of the Jewish religious leaders, who felt fearfully insecure by Jesus's teachings, miracles and inclusive love, to the point of resorting to extreme measures. Without in any way "fighting" the system or the Roman occupation, he undermines their power simply by His presence, love and life-sap. Imagine such a person being set free into the world, the universe, someone who cannot be constrained, contained or neatly pinned down! This sounds positively "dangerous"! It certainly isn't "safe" for those who are set on building their own empires or ego-pedestals or religious boxes.

Pontius Pilate was a political "animal" through and through. So, any failure to quell unrest, no matter how obscure and no matter it being in the backwaters of the Roman Empire, was to put his career on the line and to earn the censure of Rome.

Through his judgment upon Jesus, his so-called "quelling" has had the opposite effect. In a way, he has lifted the lid and set the Spirit of Christ free to "disrupt" the world even more!

There is a fictitious quote, whose author is unknown, and is imagined as being said by Pontius Pilate's wife (whom legend names, Procla or Claudia) after Jesus' crucifixion: *I told him [i.e. Pilate] to wash his hands of that righteous man, but in breaking him upon the cross, Pontius did not destroy him. He only shattered the vessel, unleashing a spirit that was far too vast for Judea, allowing him to spill out, untamed, into the entire world."*

This untamed wildness and glorious power of Easter still cascades into the world with breathless wonder, and will continue to be a strong and lasting counterpoint to the wilderness of Lent!

**Christ is risen!
He is risen indeed,
Alleluia!**

Michelle Pilet

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FROM PANCAKES TO PALMS: A JOURNEY THROUGH LENT

SHROVE TUESDAY

Shrove Tuesday at St Francis on 17 February was a joyful and relaxed evening, bringing the parish together in the best way. There was plenty of laughter as pancakes were flipped and shared, with conversations flowing just as easily. It was a simple but meaningful gathering—one that created space to pause, connect, and prepare our hearts for the season of Lent ahead.



PALM SUNDAY

Palm Sunday on 29 March offered a meaningful moment to step outside the usual rhythm of worship and experience our faith in a more visible, shared way. As we made our way together through the streets, carrying palm branches, the procession became a quiet but powerful expression of remembrance and hope. It was a reflective and grounding way to begin Holy Week, rooted in both tradition and togetherness.



REFLECTION: RETREAT AND RESTORATION

BY DIANA LAWRENSEN

“VERY EARLY IN THE MORNING, WHILE IT WAS STILL DARK, JESUS GOT UP, LEFT THE HOUSE AND WENT OFF TO A SOLITARY PLACE, WHERE HE PRAYED.” (MARK 1:35)

In the Gospels Jesus frequently takes time away to reflect and restore. Sometimes he retreats to get away from the demands of ministry (Luke 5:15-16), sometimes it's to grieve as after the death of John the Baptist (Matthew 14:13) and sometimes it's in anticipation of grave suffering as in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:32). Perhaps, like me, you remember Jesus' actions and words being highlighted far more than moments of prayerful restoration? Often, we emphasize action over contemplation and yet they are inextricably linked. Our being informs our doing and vice versa. We need God to be in both and help us to keep them in balance.

I find the image of Jesus alone, resting or in prayer, comforting. His need to retreat and restore is not just an affirmation of his humanity but also his faithfulness and desire to draw closer to God. Our lives are filled with noise at every level from the alerts on our various devices to news feeds, the allure of social media, never mind the noise and whirl of traffic, the bustle of shopping centres and the entanglement of welcome and unwelcome calls on our time in such a way that it's hard to distinguish which is which. Yet, for many people the idea of stepping away from busy-ness and distraction is quite scary. What will be missed out on? What will it be like with just us for company?

What will our inner world reveal to us that we have been able to suppress, set aside, mask and ignore? It's interesting that while Jesus withdraws, he never considers himself alone. He is always in the company of his Father. Jesus takes time away so that he can experience God with him in his place of deepest need whether this is about restoration, sustenance, comfort or discernment. Perhaps the thought of resting in God's company also holds some trepidation? What will emerge if we really open ourselves up before God? What will it mean to realise God gazes at us with love till we gaze back and find our way to truly knowing and trusting that love with all things and in all places?



Retreats offer a chance for us to be with God alone and in community. On retreat we are with others who are also withdrawing and seeking God’s presence more completely even though we might not know them or speak to them directly.

At St Francis we foster contemplation with “mini retreats” like monthly meditations (4th Saturday) and Quiet Afternoons (2nd Saturday) with longer Quiet Mornings at the beginning of Lent and Advent, but we also encourage you to explore the idea of going on a longer retreat. As a possibility, I am going to the St Lucia Retreat Centre again in May this year to help to facilitate a directed rather than guided retreat. There is an option to go for up to 8 days (it can be less) or for a weekend.

A directed retreat is a silent retreat in which you meet with a spiritual director (like me) once a day and reflect on your journey with God. Your day is anchored in a structure of prayer experiences including walking in nature, creative expression, rest, nourishing meals and the tender and gracious exploration of your inner journey alive and in God. Retreats can be life-changing and a great gift.

All the information you may need for this retreat is on the flyer included here. It is possible to drive to St Lucia or fly to Durban and hire a car or fly to Richard’s Bay from where Pam and Rob at the centre can arrange a lift.

There are, of course, retreats closer to home. The Jesuit Institute offers a variety of excellent options of varying lengths.

<https://www.jesuitinstitute.org.za/retreats/> as does

<https://haphororoyouthretreat.org.za/> which Fabian knows well and is for everyone – all ages included!

I have also found it useful to explore some online insight <https://cac.org/online-education>

Mother Teresa famously said, "We need to find God, and God cannot be found in noise and restlessness. God is the friend of silence."

May the Easter season hold resurrection joy, love, light and hope. Diana

ST LUCIA RETREAT AND TRAINING CENTRE

20
26

Landscape Beyond Words

A Silent Directed Retreat

15-24 May (or 15-17 weekend option)

"There are no words for the deepest things. Words become feeble when mystery visits and prayer moves into silence. Silence is a fascinating presence. Without the presence of silence, no word could ever be said or heard. The best words are born in the fecund silence that minds the mystery...."

John O'Donohue

A gentle exploration of God's love and purpose for me, through silent prayer and reflection, facilitated by Pam Fatou-Mills and accompaniment by Diana Laurenson & Nonto Mhlongo

R8400p/p (R2200 for weekend option)

BOOK NOW

+27832930840 www.stluciaretrear.org

162 Mckenzie St, St Lucia, KZN, South Africa

Marist CENTRE



THE RISEN CHRIST IS ALIVE IN THE YOUTH

Over the years, I have been privileged to journey alongside young people, continually humbled by their potential, intelligence, and the possibilities they bring to our community.

As they search for identity, meaning, and spaces where they can truly belong, it becomes clear that God is at work in their lives. In them, I glimpse the hope of the Risen Christ in their energy, their questions, and their dreams.

I am grateful to see more children returning to Children’s Church, and for the new group of teachers who serve with care, commitment, and unity (thank you: Terri,

Zinhle, Melanie and Val, Lazanne, Kwezi, Naledi, Lesedi, Thando, and Laura).

The Church needs youth; their questions, their uncertainties, and their deep longing to love and be loved. In turn, our youth need faithful leaders, role models, and mentors to walk with them in the beauty and complexity of life.

The Risen Christ is alive among our young people, calling us to share life in abundance, to care for one another, and to be agents of hope – especially among the most marginalised.

The Story of Easter: The Empty Tomb

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been rolled away. (John 20:1)

A large rock that covered the entrance to the tomb
 A. door B. stone C. gate D. wall

The woman who went to the tomb early in the morning
 A. Martha B. Mary Magdalene C. Ruth D. Sarah

What had happened to the stone at the tomb?
 A. broken B. missing C. rolled away D. hidden

The tomb was found to be...
 A. locked B. empty C. full D. broken

Who appeared at the tomb to share the good news?
 A. soldiers B. priests C. angels D. disciples

What did the angels say about Jesus?
 A. He is sleeping B. He is lost C. He is risen
 D. He is gone forever

SEEN *and* HEARD



WELCOME TO THE NEW BISHOP

Welcome to the new Bishop of Johannesburg, The Rt Revd Dr. Sepadi Moruthane. We pray God's blessing on him and his ministry in the Diocese.

CONGRATS TO MICHAEL AND LAURA BAILEY

Michael and Laura Bailey were married at St Francis on Saturday 7 February! Congratulations and every blessing to them. Here they are with their parents Colin and Angela Wilson and Trevor and Felicity Bailey!



SERVING OUR PARISH: THE 2026 COUNCIL

At the Vestry meeting held on Sunday, 8 March 2026, the Parish Council for the year ahead was elected. Mymie Vos, Catherine Bell, and John Ridler will serve as Church Wardens, supported by Councillors Sue Armstrong, Ethan September, Euan Stein, Janette Webster, and Martin Pryor. Darryl McMullen and Patience Dlamini have been co-opted onto the Council, alongside ex-officio members Michelle Pilet, Cynthia Botha, Diana Lawrenson, James Martin, and Fabian Oliver. We thank all who have stepped forward to serve the parish community.