

## WELCOME

We are filled with Easter joy as we celebrate the great mystery of our faith: Jesus died and risen, alleluia! When we hear the wondrous stories of encounter with the resurrected Jesus, we are drawn to ask ourselves 'are we open to the newness that transforms' our lives.

As the Year of Grace concludes at Pentecost, you are invited to consider what graces you have received, what are the fruits of your 'contemplation of the face of Christ' and what wisdoms have you discerned for the journey that lies ahead. Invite the Holy Spirit to guide and enlighten you in this discernment.

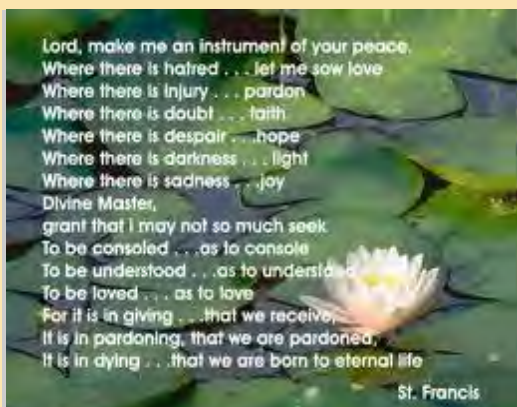
Mike Humphrys  
Archdiocesan Coordinator

### Prayer for Pope Francis

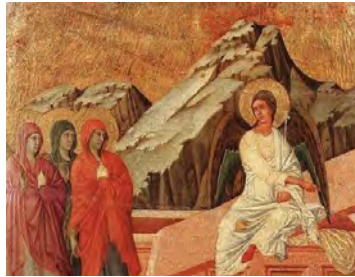


What prayer could be more appropriate for our new Pope than the Peace Prayer of St Francis of Assisi, 'the man of poverty, the man of peace and the man who loves and guards creation.'

(quoted from an address of Pope Francis to journalists explaining why he chose the name 'Francis')



## Easter Encounters



## Where do we meet Jesus ?

After the resurrection, Jesus met Mary and the other women in the garden near the tomb, Thomas and the apostles in the locked upper room, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and the apostles by the seashore. In each of these encounters, it took some time for them for their eyes to be opened to recognise Jesus.

What are the triggers that help us to see and greet Jesus in our midst ?

### Reflections of Pope Francis on the Easter Story

*Let the risen Jesus enter your life, welcome him as a friend, with trust: he is life! If up till now you have kept him at a distance, step forward. He will receive you with open arms. If you have been indifferent, take a risk: you won't be disappointed. If following him seems difficult, don't be afraid, trust him, be confident that he is close to you, he is with you and he will give you the peace you are looking for and the strength to live as he would have you do.....*

*Ask the Lord to give us a share in his Resurrection. May he open us to the newness that transforms, to the beautiful surprises of God. May he make us men and women capable of remembering all that he has done in our own lives and in the history of our world. May he help us to feel his presence as the one who is alive and at work in our midst. And may he teach us each day, dear brothers and sisters, not to look among the dead for the Living One. Amen.*

Excerpts from Pope Francis' Easter Vigil Homily which can be accessed at:

<http://www.zenit.org/en/articles/pope-s-easter-vigil-homily--3>

# NEWSLETTER INSERTS

## Jesus Christ, The Grace of God in Person

'But when the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us ...' so writes the author of the Letter to Titus (3:5). The author is speaking of the grace (graciousness) of God, offering us salvation (transformation), in and through the gift of his Son, Jesus.

Jesus is, in fact, the original sacrament, the original sign and instrument of God, the outstanding sign and instrument of God's loving, helping, healing, and transforming presence and action in the world.

Jesus' human words are the Word of God as well, and his human love is the embodiment of God's love for people, God's caring, accepting, forgiving, reconciling, liberating and transforming love.

Jesus was and remains the human face of God, God's humanity, revealing God's 'amazing grace' in dozens of human ways.

Brian Gleeson C.P. taken from National website at: <http://www.yearofgrace.catholic.org.au/>

## PENTECOST PRAYER

Veni Sancte Spiritus Sequence for Pentecost Sunday

*Come Holy Spirit,*

*and send from heaven a ray of light.*

*Come, Father of the poor.*

*Come, giver of gifts.*

*Come, light of hearts.*

*You are the best of comforters,*

*welcome guest of my heart, sweet refreshment,*

*rest in toil, coolness in the heat, solace in grief.*

*O blessed light,*

*fill the innermost hearts of your faithful.*

*When you are not near*

*there is nothing in us, nothing unspoiled.*

*Wash what is soiled, water what is dry,*

*heal what is wounded, bend what is stubborn,*

*warm what is cold, guide what has gone astray.*

*Give your sevenfold gifts*

*to the faithful who trust in you.*

*Give virtue its reward,*

*give us salvation when we die,*

*give us joy that does not end.*

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# Harvesting the Fruits

It is now time:

- to begin identifying and harvesting the fruits of the Year of Grace
- to ask 'what has the Spirit been saying to the Church here in Australia'
- to 'start afresh from Christ'.



The Year of Grace was conceived by the Australian Bishops as a call to pray daily for 'a new wave of grace ..... that our Church may be transformed, our relationships be healed and our nation grow in compassion and justice.'

Now is the time for each person, faith community and bishop to spend some time identifying the graces received, discerning the wisdoms for our future and harnessing the energy for the mission set before us. May we be attentive to the voice of the Spirit and 'believe the whisperings of God in our own heart' (St Mary of the Cross MacKillop 1868)



**National eConference on the Gospel of Mark** will be held on Thursday 16 May. For information Ph. (02) 9847 0726

## Some Suggestions for marking Pentecost Sunday as the end of the Year of Grace

- **Light the Year of Grace candle** for the final time
- **Pray the Year of Grace prayer** together (additional cards are available free from Year of Grace office)
- Include an appropriate **Prayer of Intercession** eg *That the Church in Australia will recognise and cultivate the blessings given to us during the Year of Grace, let us pray to the Lord*
- Include a **Ritual Action** such as:  
Give each person a piece of fruit as a symbol of the fruits of the Year of Grace that have been received

## Prayer Resources available

See Year of Grace website for details

