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RESPONSORIAL PSALM: Ps 31:42. 5. 11

RESPONSE: I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble,  
and you fill me with the joy of  
salvation.

Happy the man whose offence is forgiven,  
whose sin is remitted.  
O happy the man to whom the Lord  
imputes no guilt,  
in whose spirit is no guile. Response.

But now I have acknowledged my sins;  
my guilt I did not hide.  
I said: 'I will confess  
my offence to the Lord.'  
And you, Lord, have forgiven  
the guilt of my sin. Response.

Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,  
exult, you just!  
O come, ring out your joy,  
all you upright of heart. Response.

(continued on back page)

## Lent 2021.

As usual Lent begins with Ash Wednesday.

Ash Wednesdays THIS week on the 17<sup>th</sup> February.

Masses will be held here at Denistone at:

9am and 7.30pm.

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This Ash Wednesday we will begin the season of Lent. The Church teaches that Lent is 40 days of fasting and almsgiving. It is a time to practice penance and make sacrifices. Lent ends after sunset Thursday. It is considered a time of preparation to celebrate the Lord's Resurrection at Easter. We imitate our Lord who spent 40 days in the desert without eating, in preparation to his ministry. Perhaps for us it should be a time of preparation before all the good works we intend to do in the church and society throughout the year. But above all it is an invitation to repent from sins as well, to make changes to our lives; to make amends for the wrong things done and it is a time to exercise the virtues and reconcile ourselves with God and others.

There is no conversion of heart, without first, following the appropriate steps which will help us to reach the new beginnings of conversion. Prayer is of course one of those. We all have to look for the Lord in prayer, stop concentrating too much on superfluous things, especially we should give up some social media and devote more time to the one who can give us eternal life. Reading the Scriptures and participating at extra Masses or saying the Rosary or praying the Stations of the Cross are some other ways we can practice prayer during this time.

Giving alms is another wonderful way of preparing for Easter. We shouldn't think only about ourselves; instead we should be concerned about the welfare of others, especially those who are in need in our world. Project Compassion through Caritas is a wonderful way of doing so; this is the Charity arm of the Catholic Church; and we imitate Our Lord who spent his ministry helping others.

Fasting is another way of bringing some self-control in our lives. This is not limited to abstaining from meat on Fridays and eating very little on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. But there are many other things we can do to help ourselves to have more self-control in our lives. Giving up some sleep time by getting up earlier; abstaining from sweets or something you particularly enjoy like watching TV or sports or luxuries.

In Lent we also recall our baptism, the day we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil; began a new life in Christ. The seed of eternal life.

As we continue to live through the pandemic and very disturbing and changing times it is more urgent than ever to practice Lent appropriately, coming before the Lord and humbling ourselves 3 times a day. 535.1\* n35.