Parts of the Mass: the Penitential Act at the Eucharistic Celebration

At the beginning of Mass, after the Sign of the Cross and the priest's greeting, we are invited to pause and acknowledge our sins. This moment is called the Penitential Act. It may pass quickly, but it has a beautiful purpose: it helps us come before God honestly, humbly, and with trust in his mercy.

At its heart, the Penitential Act is an act of humility. The worshipping community recognises that it comes before a holy and merciful God not as perfect people, but as sinners in need of grace. This is not meant to create fear or shame; rather, it opens the heart to honesty, conversion, and healing. By admitting our sins, we stop pretending that we are self-sufficient and allow God's mercy to become the foundation of our worship.

The Penitential Act should not be confused with the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is a general confession of sinfulness made by the community at the beginning of Mass, but it is not sacramental absolution. Catholics who are conscious of grave sin are still called to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving Holy Communion. Nevertheless, the Penitential Act is a real and meaningful plea for mercy, especially in relation to daily faults and venial sins, and it helps prepare the soul to participate more fully in the Mass.

The Roman Rite provides several forms of the Penitential Act. One familiar form is the Confiteor, beginning with "I confess to almighty God," in which the faithful acknowledge sins committed "in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do." Another form uses a short dialogue asking for the Lord's mercy and salvation. A third form includes invocations addressed to Christ, with the response "Lord, have mercy" or "Christ, have mercy." On some Sundays, especially during Easter Time, the blessing and sprinkling of water may replace the usual Penitential Act as a reminder of Baptism.

The words "Lord, have mercy" express both sorrow and trust. They are not simply a cry of guilt; they are a prayer of confidence in Christ, who reveals the mercy of the Father. The ancient Greek phrase "Kyrie eleison" means "Lord, have mercy," and it has been prayed by Christians for centuries. In the Mass, this prayer reminds the faithful that God's mercy is not distant or abstract, but active, personal, and offered through Jesus Christ.

The priest introduces the Penitential Act by inviting the faithful to acknowledge their sins and prepare themselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. This preparation is important because the Mass is not an ordinary gathering. It is an encounter with Christ in the Word proclaimed, in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and in Holy Communion. By beginning with repentance, the Church teaches that true worship requires a converted heart.

Next time we pray the Penitential Act, we might try not to rush through it. It is a chance to bring the past week before the Lord: the words we regret, the kindness we failed to show, the moments when we placed ourselves before others. In that quiet moment, we can ask God to renew us and prepare us to celebrate Mass with open hearts.

God of All Generations,

As we honour NAIDOC Week, we give thanks for the enduring legacy of culture, faith, and tradition carried through the lives of Elders past - storytellers, trailblazers and wisdom-keepers.

We pray with gratitude too for Elders present, who continue to lead with courage and compassion, guiding us on the path of truth-telling and reconciliation, nurturing the next generation with strength and grace.

And we lift our eyes in hope to the promise of Elders emerging - visionaries of a future yet to be shaped, a future of justice, unity, and healing. A future where the next generation walks forward in strength, with purpose and pride. **Amen.**

OUR LADY OF FATIMA PARISH

Acacia Ridge | Algester
Calamvale | Parkinson
| Larapinta | Pallara

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PARISH OFFICE

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MASS TIMES

Tue: 5:30pm—Holy Mass
6:00pm Eucharist Adoration
Wed | Thurs | Fri | Sat 9 am
Saturday 4.30pm (Vigil)
Sunday 9am & 5pm

CONFESSIONS

Tues: 6:00pm to 6:30pm (or by appointment)

BAPTISMS

3rd Sunday of the month 10.15am

PIETY STALL

1st Sunday each month

SCHOOLS

Our Lady of Fatima School
www.ourladyoffatima.qld.edu.au
07 3275 1152
pacaciaridge@bne.catholic.edu.au
St Stephens School Algester
www.ststephens.qld.edu.au
07 3711 4911
palgester@bne.catholic.edu.au

Please check out our Parish Webpage and Facebook Page for regular updates.

LIKE US ON facebook

Greetings to all,

In today's gospel, Jesus interestingly invites us, "Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest," then he goes on to say "My Yoke is easy, and my burden light." A yoke is a heavy wooden collar that farmers placed around the necks of their oxen to pull the plow. So how could placing a yoke around our necks be easy? A burden is something that weighs us down, makes it difficult to walk, and in time causes pain. So how could a burden be light? It is clear that Jesus is trying to tell us something about burdens, suffering, and difficulties. But what is it that he is trying to say?

I think the key to understand Jesus' invitation, is the word, "my." Jesus does not say that every burden in life will feel easy. He does not promise that suffering will disappear or that our problems will suddenly be solved. He says, "My yoke is easy." In other words, he invites us to stop carrying our burdens alone. He asks us to bring them to him, to let them become his burdens too.

All of us know what it is like to carry something heavy. Sometimes it is grief. We love someone deeply, and then we lose them through death, distance, or rejection. We wake up in the morning and feel the ache again. We wonder how we will keep going. In those moments, Jesus says, "Come to me." Not because the sadness is unreal, but because we were never meant to carry it by ourselves. Each time the pain returns, we can hand it to him again.

Sometimes the burden is responsibility. Perhaps we are caring for an ageing parent, a sick spouse, a troubled child, or someone who is difficult to love. We can feel tired, resentful, guilty, and overwhelmed all at once. Jesus does not scold us for feeling that way. He simply invites us to bring the whole truth to him: the love, the anger, the exhaustion, and the fear. When we let him carry it with us, we may find enough strength for today, even if we cannot see the whole road ahead.

And sometimes the burden is our own ageing, weakness, or uncertainty about the future. We notice that we cannot do what we once did. We say goodbye to people we have known and loved. We wonder what lies ahead. Jesus does not give us a detailed map, but he gives us himself. He asks us to place our future into his hands and to trust that we are still loved, still useful, and still held by God.

So perhaps the good news today is not that life will be easy. It is that we do not have to carry life alone. When our burdens remain only ours, they can crush us. But when we bring them to Jesus, he carries them with us, and little by little, what once seemed unbearable can become bearable. What once felt like the end can become a path towards grace. "Come to me," Jesus says. And today, he means you and me.

Have a blessed week,

Fr Dang

To receive the Parish eNewsletter, please email to acaciaridge@bne.catholic.net.au

Sacramental Program 2026

Sacrament of Confirmation (for Grade 3 and above)

ENROLMENT via WEBSITE: OR Scan QR code to enrol

LAST DAY TO ENROL: 20th July, Monday

INFORMATION EVENING: 29th July, Wednesday, 6pm-7pm

RITE OF ENROLMENT: 1st August, Saturday, 4:30pm (Vigil Mass)

OR 2nd August, Sunday, 9am (Mass)

CONFIRMATION FORMATION CLASSES:

5th August, Wednesday, 6-7pm

19th August, Wednesday, 6-7pm

26th August, Wednesday, 6-7pm

REHEARSAL: 2nd September, Wednesday, 6-7pm

CONFIRMATION CELEBRATION MASS: 9th September, Wednesday, 6pm

Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Parish
fatimaacaciaridge.org.au
sc.acaciaridge@bne.catholic.net.au

Parish Youth Group Bible Studies

Our parish youth group is holding Bible study sessions every fortnight after the 9 am Sunday Mass. These gatherings are a wonderful opportunity for young people to grow in faith, reflect on the Word of God, and connect with one another in a welcoming and supportive environment.

All young people of the parish age from 15 or older who would like to be part of the program are warmly welcome to join. For more information, please contact our Youth Coordinator, Lawrence Auva'a, at auvaal@bne.catholic.net.au.

Sacrament of Confirmation Registrations

Families of children in **Grade 3 or older** are warmly invited to register for the **Sacrament of Confirmation** as part of the 2026 Sacramental Program.

The program will launch on Wednesday night, **19 July, from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm** at our Church.

We encourage families to take this opportunity to support your children as they continue their journey of faith and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Please register your child by scanning QR code or if you have any question please contact Ms Seivland Poh: sc.acaciaridge@bne.catholic.net.au

IN GRACE FRIENDS

Join us for a Morning Tea on Thursday, 9 July, 9:30am at Parish Office/ Presbytery. Bring a plate of food to share and a friend.

Catechism Class

Dear parents, An ongoing catechism class every Sunday during school Term for 30 minutes after the 9 am Mass at Our Lady of Fatima parish in Acacia Ridge. For more information, please contact Sr. Hanna MC. Ph: (07) 3252 4441 if interested.

Have you signed up? Why Flocknote?

Parishioners and visitors are invited to scan the QR code to sign up and register with the parish. If you have any questions, please reach out to our parish office : acaciaridge@bne.catholic.net.au

Safeguarding News

The Safeguarding Commitment for the Archdiocese of Brisbane and Our Lady of Fatima Parish is: Zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and strives to safeguard all who interact with its ministries & services. Special priority is given to the safety & wellbeing of children & adults at risk. In an emergency, please call the Police 000 or information can be provided to STOPline anonymously. Phone: 1300 304 550 Email: AOB@stopline.com.au Online: www.bnecatholic.stoplinereport.com https:// brisbane-catholic.org.au/safeguarding/safeguard/

Saint of the Week: St Augustine Zhao Rong and His Companions

St Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions, known collectively as the Martyrs of China, stand as powerful witnesses to faith, courage, and perseverance. Their feast day is celebrated on 9 July, honouring 120 Catholics who were killed for their faith between 1648 and 1930. They included priests, religious, catechists, parents, children, workers, and missionaries, representing both Chinese Christians and foreign-born missionaries who served in China.

Christianity reached China in ancient times and developed in different ways across the centuries. At various moments, Christian communities were permitted to practise openly; at other times, they were forced underground. Missionaries such as the Jesuits worked to learn Chinese language and culture, while local believers gradually formed communities of prayer, teaching, and service. Yet Christianity was sometimes viewed with suspicion, especially when it became associated with foreign powers and political tensions.

Augustine Zhao Rong was born in 1746 in Guizhou, China. As a young man, he served as a soldier in the Qing dynasty. His life changed when he was assigned to guard and escort a Catholic missionary, Bishop John Gabriel Taurin Dufresse, who had been arrested during a period of persecution. Augustine was deeply moved by the bishop's patience, courage, and fidelity in suffering. Through this encounter, he became interested in Christianity, received baptism, and took the Christian name Augustine.

After his conversion, Augustine studied for the priesthood and became one of the first Chinese-born diocesan priests. He ministered faithfully to Catholic communities, especially in Sichuan and surrounding regions, encouraging believers during dangerous times. In 1815, during renewed persecution, he was arrested and pressured to renounce his faith. He refused. After torture and imprisonment, he died as a martyr, giving his life rather than abandoning the Gospel.

The companions of St Augustine Zhao Rong were not all from the same background or time period. The 120 martyrs included 87 native-born Chinese Catholics and 33 foreign-born missionaries. Among them were bishops, priests, religious sisters, catechists, lay men and women, parents, young people, and children. Some were killed during earlier waves of persecution in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; many others died during later anti-Christian violence, including the Boxer Rebellion around 1900.

The witness of St Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions is important not only because of their suffering, but because of the faithfulness they showed in the midst of fear, pressure, and misunderstanding. Their lives remind Christians that holiness is lived in many forms: in family life, public service, teaching, ministry, and quiet perseverance. They also show that the Christian faith took root in China through the courage of local believers as well as missionaries.

These martyrs were canonised together by Pope John Paul II on 1 October 2000. Their feast day on 9 July invites the Church to remember the cost of discipleship and the strength of hope. St Augustine Zhao Rong and his companions continue to inspire believers to remain faithful, to respect the dignity of every culture, and to bear witness to truth with courage and love.

NAIDOC Mass

Join the Archdiocese of Brisbane for a celebration of faith and culture as we mark 40 years since Pope St John Paul II's visit and 50 years of NAIDOC.

Walking Together in Christ brings our community together to honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures. This Mass reflects on the lived spirituality of First Nations Catholics and our shared journey of reconciliation and faith.

Following the Mass, you're invited to the Hanly Room for a celebration of community, culture and faith featuring local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural expressions

When: Sunday 5 July | 9:45am

Where: Cathedral of St Stephen