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Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation. Mark 16:15

## Into the wilderness

*Welcome to Proclaim, a regular newsletter to help keep parish leadership teams informed and inspired as they proclaim and live out the joy of the Gospel.*

As we set out again into the Lenten wilderness, we might be forgiven for feeling that we've never really left it. The task of bending our lives and ministries to the demands of the pandemic has felt, at times, uncannily like a Lenten discipline, testing and refining our faith, stripping our lives back to the essentials. (The English word *quarantine*, interestingly, derives from the Italian *quarantina*, meaning 'forty days'.) Overlay our COVID weariness with the harrowing news of war in Ukraine and the devastating floods at home and it's not surprising that Ash Wednesday has had a special poignancy for us this year. As we contemplate the current state of the world, the reminder that we are dust feels especially immediate and true. In Lent, our illusions are stripped away to reveal our limitations and vulnerability; we feel our need of Jesus in our bones.

In this issue of *Proclaim*, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli, in his [homily for the first Sunday of Lent](#), reminds us that however much we might crave certainty and resolution, the journey to Easter cannot be 'binged' or rushed; instead, he encourages us to take slow, deliberate time with Jesus. We also celebrate last Sunday's [Rite of Election](#), where catechumens and candidates from more than 30 parishes took a significant step on their journey towards initiation in the Catholic Church. And in the spirit of Lenten self-examination, we seek your feedback on this newsletter, inviting you to take a few minutes to [respond to a short survey](#).

At those times when the world feels like a wilderness—exhausting, daunting, unpredictable—we rest in the knowledge that Jesus is here with us, revealing our great need and

always meeting it with an even greater love and grace.



## We want to hear from you

The *Proclaime*-newsletter aims to keep parish leadership teams informed and inspired as they proclaim and live out the joy of the Gospel. This month, we are seeking honest feedback from our readers to help us achieve this goal. Please take a few minutes to complete our short survey.

[Take the survey.](#)



## There is no 'binge' option for Lent

As Archbishop Peter A Comensoli reminds us in his homily for the first Sunday of Lent, these forty days are a time to unite ourselves with Jesus, and to walk his path from temptation to grace. 'We cannot reduce the time for this journey, just as Jesus could not', he says. 'There is no "binge" option when it comes to the living of our lives in Christ, whose own timeline passed through his passion and death, and onto his resurrection.' Instead, we are encouraged this Lent to take the time to walk slowly and deliberately with Jesus 'toward a deeper commitment in trust'.

[Read more](#)



## Rite of Election 2022

Hundreds gathered at St Patrick's Cathedral last Sunday, the first Sunday of Lent, for the annual celebration of the Rite of Election. The Rite is an official step in the journey of those preparing to receive the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) at Easter. With more than 30 parishes represented, the gathering was a welcome sign of a Victorian community coming back to life after the onset of the pandemic, as well as a significant opportunity for catechumens and candidates to commit themselves publicly to their Lenten journey of discernment and preparation.



[Read more](#)

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## CLOSING SOON: Submissions for Synod

The Holy Father has called the Church to a global journey of communion, participation and mission, with submissions received to form part of a listening process that will culminate in the Synod of Bishops in Rome in October 2023. Hundreds of submissions from across the country have already been made through the national online portal, along with responses that have also been sent directly to dioceses. *The final date for submissions through the [online portal](#) is Sunday 13 March.*

Don't miss out on this chance to take part in a global conversation about the Catholic Church!

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## Lenten and Easter resources

Seeking nourishment on your Lenten journey? The latest in *The Summit Online's* series of 'useful links' libraries provides a selection of useful and engaging [Lenten and Easter resources](#) and articles from around the web to help parishes, groups and individuals (young and old) to enter more deeply into these inspiring seasons.

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## Save the date: Patrick Oration 2022

Join us on the feast of St Patrick (17 March), patron saint of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, for the third annual Patrick Oration, to be delivered by Archbishop Peter A Comensoli. This year's Oration is of special significance as 2022 marks 125 years since the consecration of the iconic St Patrick's Cathedral, the spiritual home of the people of God in Melbourne. This year also marks 175 years since the establishment of the Diocese of Melbourne.

Due to current pandemic regulations, this event is by invitation only but will be broadcast to Community TV Channel C31 (channel 44 on digital TV) and livestreamed on the Archdiocesan YouTube Channel ([www.youtube.com/archmelb](http://www.youtube.com/archmelb)).

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