

Sunraysia Catholic Communities

Parish Office: 5021 2872 Fax: 5023 0337
257 Eleventh Street Mildura
P.O. Box 10037 Mildura, Vic 3502
Presbytery Mildura: 5022 9959
Presbytery Red Cliffs: 5024 1966
Parish House Merbein: 5025 2716
parish@sacredheartmildura.org.au
www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parishes

Newsheet: Week 18



Fr. Michael McKinnon PP Fr. James Kerr Fr. Pat Flanagan

Parish Secretary: Carmel Russo

Office Hours: Tues - Fri 9:00am—4:00pm

Sacred Heart
Mildura

Our Lady of Lourdes
Werrimull

St. Francis Xavier
Irymple

St. Joseph's
Red Cliffs

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
Merbein

*The Sunraysia Catholic Communities are committed to ensure the safety of all children and vulnerable people in our care.
Child Safety Officers:- Mildura—Christine Slattery, Merbein—Kevin Aston, Red Cliffs—Bernadette Gardner*

MILDURA

Recent Deaths: Vincenzo Pileggi, Giovanna Rizzuto
Anniversaries: Carmela Cirillo, Godofredo Tac-an, Karen Belej

RED CLIFFS

Anniversaries: Domiano Brizzi (10 year anniversary),
John Barbham (Hamilton)

MERBEIN

Anniversaries: May 5th Henry Jay, Jack McDonald; 7th Cosimo
Dichiera.

*(Only immediate family members of the deceased are permitted to arrange anniversary
Masses.)*

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

*If you want a sick person prayed for, ask their permission. Names will be
included for the duration of one month after which family or friends can request
more time.*

Mildura: Janelle Carney, Bill Antonie, Vincenzo Pileggi, Fr
Denis Dennehy, Vince Alicastro, Teresita Eliquen-Dy
(Manila), Melita Suppa, Celia-Dy Dela Tena, Perla
Tuionisio, Lily Chung, Lorna Kearney, Sandra McCarthy,
Brian Ramsey, Hailey Crossan, Geraldine Brunner, Albis
Dy

Merbein: Frank Chandler, Mary Avery, John Dorman

Red Cliffs: Bill Antonie, Martin Cameron, Maureen Lee,
Edna Chua, Lily Flanagan, Barry Crosbie, Brendan Bell,
Caterina Brizzi, Marie Adams, Reynaldo Chan, Albis Dy,
Roman & Joe Dy, Robert & Elizabeth Young, Maurice
O'Connor

**Bulletins are available outside
Churches.**

Our Parish Schools

Sacred Heart Mildura Principal: Des Lowry 5023 1204

St Paul's Mildura Principal: Vince Muscatello 5023 4567

OLSH Merbein Principal: Narelle Gallagher 5025 2258

St. Joseph's Red Cliffs Principal: Mark Gibson 5024 1654

St. Joseph's Secondary College Mildura

Principal: Marg Blythman 5018 8000

4th Sunday of Easter / Year A 2nd & 3rd May 2020

LITURGY OF THE WORD

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles 2:14. 36-41

On the day of Pentecost Peter stood up with the Eleven and addressed the crowd with a loud voice: 'The whole House of Israel can be certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ.'

Hearing this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the apostles, 'What must we do, brothers?' 'You must repent,' Peter answered 'and every one of you must be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise that was made is for you and your children, and for all those who are far away, for all those whom the Lord our God will call to himself.' He spoke to them for a long time using many arguments, and he urged them, 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation.' They were convinced by his arguments, and they accepted what he said and were baptised. That very day about three thousand were added to their number.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22:1-6. R. v.1

(R.) The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

1. The Lord is my shepherd there is nothing I shall want. Fresh and green are the pastures where he gives me repose. Near restful waters he leads me, to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
2. He guides me along the right path; he is true to his name. If I should walk in the valley of darkness no evil would I fear. You are there with your crook and your staff; with these you give me comfort. (R.)
3. You have prepared a Banquet for me in the sight of my foes. My head you have anointed with oil; my cup is overflowing. (R.)
4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me all the days of my life. In the Lord's own house shall I dwell for ever and ever. (R.)

If you still have your Project Compassion box or set of envelopes at home, please bring them to the Sacred Heart Parish Office asap.

APPOINTMENT OF FR JAMES TO SWAN HILL

We congratulate Fr James on his appointment as Parish Priest to Swan Hill. Perhaps it's not news we'd wish to hear at this time, but the move will not take place until enough restrictions have been lifted to allow normal ministry to be exercised within Parishes. So in the meantime we'll continue to enjoy his company and to appreciate his generous contribution, even in these times when so many restrictions are placed upon us.

A Beautiful message from Holy Father Pope Francis



He says, "Rivers do not drink their own water; trees do not eat their own fruit; the sun does not shine on itself and flowers do not spread their fragrance for themselves. Living for others is a rule of nature. We are all born to help each other. No matter how difficult it is.... Life is good when you are happy; but much better when other are happy

because of you."

Let us all remember then that every changing colour of a leaf is beautiful and every changing situation of life is meaningful, both need very clear vision. So do not grumble or complain, let us instead remember that Pain is a sign that we are alive, Problems are a sign that we are strong and Prayer is a sign we are not alone!!

If we can acknowledge these truths and condition our hearts and minds, our lives will be more meaningful, difference and worthwhile!!

FINANCIAL MATTERS

A huge thankyou to those able to continue contributing - to our 1st & 2nd Collection, your support is greatly appreciated.

STREAMING from 5:30pm
Saturdays continues
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpujOBwu7YYU-LzjhmqE_VQ

Or go to the Parish Website:
Sacred Heart Parish Mildura
Please pass on this

information to family and friends.



We continue to make available via streaming our Masses to those who are able access them via internet. We are very grateful to Rob Klarich for this initiative. **For those without internet or Foxtel, there is a Mass telecast each Sunday morning on channel 10 at 6:00am**, although it is not necessarily the Mass of the particular Sunday that its telecast.

GOSPEL REFLECTION—Sr. Veronica Lawson rsm

Sheep were domesticated in Palestine some eight thousand years ago. In biblical times, shepherds would lead their sheep out to graze by day and bring them by night to a communal enclosure or sheepfold, the entrance to which was guarded by a gatekeeper. Shepherds knew their sheep and their sheep knew them. Thieves would have to scale the wall of the enclosure and watch for the chance to get away with a few of the sheep. The loss of even a few sheep was a deeply personal loss for the shepherd and the shepherd's family. Furthermore, the personal relationship between sheep and shepherd made theft a traumatizing experience for the sheep. Little wonder that the biblical tradition is replete with ovine images.

In John 10, Jesus directs a parabolic image of sheep and shepherds and thieves to the religious authorities of the previous chapter. They fail to understand, mainly because they are hostile and choose not to understand. While they claim to shepherd God's people, they do not even know them and have no capacity to lead them. Jesus is, by contrast, both shepherd and gate for the sheep: such are his identity claims. The former claim becomes explicit later in the chapter when he states, "I am the good shepherd." It follows his twice repeated claim, "I am the gate". The "I am" in these claims echoes God's self-revelation to Moses in the burning bush. Jesus contrasts the access he provides as "the gate" with the unauthorized access gained by others "who have come before" him, namely the religious authorities. They gain access to the sheepfold on false pretences and lead God's flock into pastures that fail to satisfy.

In Psalm 23, God is the shepherd of Israel who leads the people into nourishing pastures and restores life to the depths of their *nephesh* or being. *Nephesh* is the Hebrew word used in Genesis 2 for the life that God breathes into all beings. God leads the people in the way of justice or righteousness. Psalm 118 sings of God's gate through which the just or righteous will enter and give thanks. As the gate to the little sheepfold, Jesus is the way into safety and the way out to life-restoring pastures. In other words, he is the gate to abundant life. As shepherd, he monitors the movement of the sheep so that they are not tempted to stray along the paths of unrighteousness and destruction.

Finally, Jesus makes a claim about his mission: "I have come that they (the sheep) may have life and have it abundantly". This has a particular resonance at a time when so many lives are threatened by Coronavirus and when life has changed dramatically for the whole Earth community. Abundant life for all is our deepest desire and we must search to discover what that means in uncharted territory. As usual, the gospel text is multi-layered. The images pulsate with life and energy. They invite to vigilance on the one hand and hope on the other. They offer yet another way of celebrating Easter.



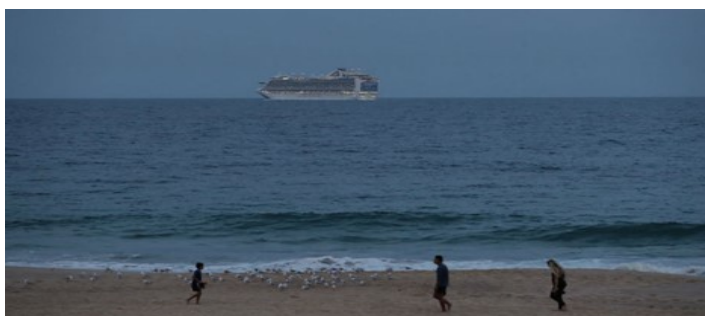
WE NEED TO GO BEYOND AUSTRALIANS FIRST THINKING

We have done a lot right as a nation during the pandemic, but on the whole we have not treated foreigners as well as we might have. The inequality of treatment has been in evidence during the twin health and economic crises brought on by COVID-19.

Foreigners who have found themselves stuck in Australia and, strangely, Australians stuck overseas have been among those who have been largely forgotten. Responsibility for these omissions has largely rested with the federal government.

Through its generous JobSeeker and JobKeeper programs, the government has attempted to support the economic circumstances of Australian citizens and industries. Simultaneously, the health emergency has been addressed effectively through closure of all but essential businesses, international and domestic border controls and enforced social distancing. This health response has largely caused the economic crisis.

There are many categories of foreigners in Australia holding a variety of visas, some specific to categories such as New Zealanders. These include workers, students, refugees and tourists. Old and young, they come from virtually every country in the world. Some are on their own, while others are with some other family members. Most are a long way from home. Those in work are found in just about every sector of the economy. Their economic circumstances vary from the relatively comfortable to the absolutely desperate.



Looking after their welfare is undoubtedly a moral obligation, given that we share a common humanity of greater value than any national citizenship. Welcoming strangers is a deeply held humanist and religious value.

Welcome also should be seen as a reciprocal social obligation given that at any time, and certainly during this pandemic, in just about every category bar refugees there are Australian citizens in similar situations spread around the world.

In various ways caring for these strangers in our midst is also in our national self-interest. Our economy needs the continued participation of foreign workers. International travel restrictions preventing crucial immigration over the next twelve months means that it is in our national economic self-interest for them to remain in Australia, with adequate income support, if they wish to do so.

Yet during the crisis their needs have been largely neglected and their welfare has often been treated as of secondary importance at best. This general point can be illustrated in various ways.

Those directly in the Australian workforce have often worked in temporary or casual jobs, many in the hardest hit sectors such as hospitality and retail.

International students, another important category which forms a huge export industry, have usually supplemented their income through casual work of the above kind. A smaller category, but high profile, has been those

thousands of foreign workers trapped on cruise ships stuck in Australian waters.

In all cases the go home ASAP treatment of these foreign workers has been dismissive and unworthy.

Generally this has been demonstrated through their exclusion from the various income protection schemes. But, even worse than this, lying behind these policies has been an attitude of exclusion and off-handedness. It has been an Australians First policy by Team Australia.

The treatment of the foreign workforce of the notorious Ruby Princess, for instance, was hard-hearted. They were shunted off to Port Kembla with too little attention given to their obvious health needs. Many were COVID-19 positive. The eventual departure of the ship from Australian waters was ordered with almost breathless anticipation.

A footnote to our treatment of foreigners in Australia has been the patchy attention given by our government to those Australians caught overseas working, travelling or cruising. Some notably good steps were taken but there was also plenty of neglect. Many still overseas but wanting to return need assistance desperately. The market option seems to have been given priority when other governments, like the UK, have taken more extensive direct care of their offshore citizens. If it wasn't for efforts by private businesses and groups the situation would have been much worse. An opportunity for international collaboration in caring for travellers around the world was missed.

It is not too late for the nation to insist that the federal government lifts its game in this regard. Already some state governments and charities, as well as individual employers, universities and communities, have begun to recognize the limitations in our care and begun to fill the gaps. Much more needs to be done or our national reputation as a caring nation will suffer irreparable damage.

John Warhurst is an Emeritus Professor of Political Science at the Australian National University and Chair of Concerned Catholics Canberra Goulburn. He is a PC 2020 delegate from the Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn.

JOINING THE MASS FROM HOME

We've been really pleased with how well parishioners have responded to our streaming of the Mass. Here are some helpful tips from the Philippines about how we might maximise our participation from home.

1. Prepare yourselves well for the Mass. Do not watch it with a cup of coffee in hand.
2. Before the Mass, read the scripture readings to prepare yourselves better to hear them once they are proclaimed.
3. Have a moment to think of what to thank the Lord for and what to offer him during the Mass.
4. Remember that you are praying with many fellow Catholics not only in your parish but all over the world..
5. It would be good if the whole family are together.
6. Do not just watch the Mass, join in it with your prayers, responses and singing.

At the time of communion, say a spiritual communion. Here is a spiritual communion suggested by Pope Francis: "My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart ... I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You,"

Second Reading

A reading from the first letter of St Peter 2:20-25

The merit, in the sight of God, is in bearing punishment patiently when you are punished after doing your duty. This, in fact, is what you were called to do, because Christ suffered for you and left an example for you to follow the way he took. He had not done anything wrong, and there had been no perjury in his mouth. He was insulted and did not retaliate with insults; when he was tortured he made no threats but he put his trust in the righteous judge. He was bearing our faults in his own body on the cross, so that we might die to our faults and live for holiness; through his wounds you have been healed. You had gone astray like sheep but now you have come back to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

The Gospel of the Lord.



Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;
I know my sheep, and mine know me.
Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John 10:1-10

Jesus said: 'I tell you most solemnly, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold through the gate, but gets in some other way is a thief and a brigand. The one who enters through the gate is the shepherd of the flock; the gatekeeper lets him in, the sheep hear his voice, one by one he calls his own sheep and leads them out. When he has brought out his flock, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow because they know his voice. They never follow a stranger but run away from him: they do not recognise the voice of strangers.'

Jesus told them this parable but they failed to understand what he meant by telling it to them.

So Jesus spoke to them again:

'I tell you most solemnly,
I am the gate of the sheepfold.
All others who have come
are thieves and brigands;
but the sheep took no notice of them.
I am the gate.
Anyone who enters through me will be safe:
he will go freely in and out
and be sure of finding pasture.
The thief comes
only to steal and kill and destroy.
I have come
so that they may have life
and have it to the full.'



POPE FRANCIS' MAY INTENTION

We pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

In most of the history of the Catholic Church deacons have been mainly symbolic. Their distinctive mission was largely taken over by priests, with the result that people approved to be ordained as priests were made deacons a short time before their priestly ordination. Their role in church life was confined to ritual, in which they had a minor part. They effectively were symbols of the higher rank of priests in the church.

When Pope Francis prays that deacons may be an invigorating symbol for the Church, he may have in mind reversing the past emphasis on what deacons could not do, and so focusing on what in a healthy church they might do and be. In this hope he builds on the work of Vatican II, which reintroduced deacons as a life-long ministry with a responsibility for leading prayer, preaching and taking responsibility for church communities where there was no priest. The Council had in mind particularly remote communities, prisons, hospitals and similar congregations of people on the edge of church organisation.

This approach to deacons takes us back to the appointment of the first deacons in the early church. The preaching of the apostles attracted people to follow Jesus as Christians and to become part of the Church. As a result the apostles carried a double responsibility for preaching and for caring for the poor and needy among the new converts. They appointed deacons to take care of the practical needs and commitment to the needs of the poor in the local congregations. Stephen, soon to be the first recorded Christian martyr, was one of the first deacons. The care of the poor was the first responsibility of the early deacons, and remained so. The Christian congregations were distinctive in helping both their own and other poor people. In time they took on some of the responsibilities of welfare agencies today. The deacons' role necessarily expanded beyond personal charity to require administrative and financial skills. These roles became centralised under bishops and clergy, with the result that in the Western church deacons became a relic with a purely liturgical role.

Pope Francis does not explain what he means by saying that deacons should be an invigorating symbol for the church. But from his priorities as Pope we can imagine that he wants service to the Word and the poor to be responsibilities taken up by all Catholics and not reserved to Bishops and priests. He wants to bring together in the Church the care for the poor and the prayer life of the church 'The church will be like a field hospital on the battlefield and not a place to find quiet from the struggles of the world.'

In this vision lay people would have much larger role with a deeper sense of their own mission modelled on the deacons in the early church.

Deacons themselves would embody this role. They would not be seen as an add-on to the ministry of the Church. They would lie at its centre, which is to preach the Gospel to the poor. In the Church, bishops, priests and deacons would have their own distinctive place, united in their service to Word and the poor.

