



## MOYNE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

St Patrick's Parish, Port Fairy

Infant Jesus Parish, Koroit



# *Sixth Sunday of Easter*

Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May and Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2020

## CHURCHES RE-OPEN

Victoria's bishops say the State Government's decision to allow churches to open for private prayer for up to 10 people is a "gentle first step" as the state cautiously begins to lift COVID-19 restrictions

*"This opportunity for small gatherings and for some quiet moments of prayer in the sacramental presence of Our Lord is a gentle first step in the right direction, and rightly a moment of rejoicing for God's people."*

*"The conditions under which a church can be open include a collection of contact details (for the purposes of contact-tracing if it becomes necessary), strict monitoring of numbers, ongoing hygiene requirements, publicising the scheduled times for private worship, and public worship limited to ten people at a time."*

**St Patrick's Church in Port Fairy is now open for private prayers from 9:30am to midday on Sundays.**

**Infant Jesus Church in Koroit is open from 4pm to 6:30pm on Saturdays.**

## PRAYERS FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED



We commend to the Lord's mercy **Margaret Gleeson**, who died recently. Let's also pray in a particular way, for those who are dying of COVID-19, many of whom are unable to have their family and friends surround them as they would wish. May they, and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time, rest in God's peace.

## IN PLACE OF HOLY MASS

**Mass For You At Home** is broadcast on WIN at 6am Sundays, and on Foxtel's Aurora at 3am, 6am and 10am every day. It can be viewed online any time at: [www.mfyah.com](http://www.mfyah.com)

**Sunday Mass from St Joseph's, Warrnambool** can be viewed at: [www.tiny.cc/joe3280](http://www.tiny.cc/joe3280)

**Daily Mass with Pope Francis** (in Italian, with English dubbing) can be viewed at: [www.tiny.cc/vatican](http://www.tiny.cc/vatican)

**Weekday Mass at St John of God Hospital, Ballarat** can be viewed at: [www.stpatscathedral.weebly.com](http://www.stpatscathedral.weebly.com)

## **BISHOPS TO ENTRUST AUSTRALIA TO OUR LADY**

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect Australians' lives, including their worship, the Catholic bishops will entrust the country to the care of Mary Help of Christians on her feast day next week. At their recent plenary meeting, conducted using videoconference technology, they wrote a letter to the Australian faithful:

*“Australia has certainly suffered because of the pandemic, but not as grievously as some other countries. For that we thank God and we congratulate public health authorities and governments on their prompt and prudent responses.*

*“Australians in general have also shown the solidarity and good sense, the generosity and kindness needed in such a time. In our healthcare workers particularly we have seen an exceptional spirit of self-sacrifice, and for that we are all grateful.”*

*“Churches and other religious communities have played their part, which has meant the suspension of public worship and the closure of places of worship. This has been a real deprivation, and the bishops understand not only your anxiety about the virus and shutdown but more especially your deep desire to return to the sacraments and to resume public worship. There is a real hunger in this. It is something we all feel, and we long for the time when our hunger will be satisfied as together we return to the feast of the Lord.”*

*“Even when our doors are closed, our hearts are still open. The churches may not yet be fully open, but the heart of the*

*Church, which is the heart of Christ, is wide open. The celebration of Mass has never ceased. Though we and our brother priests cannot yet offer Mass with the people, we are still offering Mass day by day for the people – for all of you who are “flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone” (cf Genesis 2:23). The Church which is the Body of Christ still glows with the life of Easter, “thought to be dying, yet we are alive ... to be sorrowful, yet still rejoicing ... to have nothing, yet possessing everything” (2 Corinthians 6:9-10).*

*“At the heart of the community of disciples, there is always Mary the mother of Jesus. In this month of May, Pope Francis has urged us to look to her to intercede for us in this time of affliction; and to Mary we will entrust our homeland later this month, looking to a mother’s unfailing love. May she who is Health of the Sick and Help of Christians pray for us now, that we may see Jesus with her eyes, the eyes of Easter, and love him with her heart, which is the heart of faith.*

The bishops approved this motion:

**“That the Australian Bishops entrust Australia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary under the title Our Lady Help of Christians, seeking her intercession for the safety of all our people especially in this time of COVID-19 pandemic.”**

Our Lady Help of Christians has been the official patroness of Australia since 1844. Her feast day is celebrated on 24<sup>th</sup> May, which this year coincides with the Feast of the Ascension. The bishops agreed that the entrustment of Australia to Our Lady can therefore take place on the 24<sup>th</sup> or the 25<sup>th</sup> May.



## Reflection on this Sunday's readings

by Fr Francis Fernandez

### THE HOPE OF HEAVEN

During this forty-day period between Easter and the Ascension of Our Lord, the Church asks us to keep our eyes on Heaven, our final dwelling place, to which Our Lord is calling us. This invitation becomes more pressing as we approach the day on which Jesus went up to the right hand of his Father.

Our Lord had promised his disciples that in a little while he would be with them forever. *Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me.* [Jn 14:19-20] Our Lord has kept his promise in this period when he stays close to his loved ones. But this presence will not end when he goes up with his glorious body to his Father, because, by his Passion and Death he has prepared for us a place in his Father's house, *where there are many rooms.* [Jn 14:2] *I will come again, he tells them, and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.* [Jn 14:3]

The Apostles, who had been saddened by the prediction of Peter's denials, are comforted by the hope of Heaven. The return to which Our Lord is referring includes his second coming at the end of the world, and the meeting with each soul when it leaves the body. Our death will be just that: *a meeting with Christ*, whom we have tried to serve throughout our lifetime. He will bring us to the fullness of glory, the meeting with his Heavenly Father, who is also our Father. There in Heaven, where we have a place prepared for us, Jesus awaits us,

the same Jesus who is with us, who awaits us in prayer and with whom we have often been in intimate friendly conversation.

From our regular conversations with Our Lord is born the desire to be with him. Faith sweetens much of the bitterness of death. Our love for Jesus completely changes the meaning of that last moment which comes for everybody. *Those in love try to see each other. People in love have eyes only for their love. That's logical, isn't it? The human heart feels this need. I would be lying if I denied my eagerness to contemplate the face of Jesus Christ. I will seek your countenance, O Lord.* [St Josemaria Escriva.]

The thought of Heaven will help us to be detached from the things of this world and to overcome difficult situations. We make God very happy when we foster that theological virtue of hope, which is united with faith and love. There will be times when we need it a lot. At the time of temptation think of the love that awaits you in Heaven: foster the virtue of hope – this is not a lack of generosity. It will be likewise at moments of great sorrow and trial, and when we find it very hard to be faithful or persevering in our work or apostolate. The reward is a big one, and it is just around the corner, not long from now.

Meditating on Heaven, which is our destination, ought to spur us on to be more generous in our daily struggle, because *hope of the reward comforts the soul unto doing good works.* [St Cyril of Jerusalem.]

The thought of that final meeting of love to which we are called will help us to be on our guard in big things and in little things, giving them the finishing touch, as if each one were to be the last before we meet our Heavenly Father.

## Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – now open for new participants

Low-cost online study and formation for lay workers in parish and other ministries — employed or volunteers. Sacraments, Scripture, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, Leadership and more.

- Study over 5 weeks per subject.
- Study Cycle 4 begins May 24.

Registrations open now until May 13. More information is available at [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au), or e-mail Kim Butler at [kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au), or phone 0407 523 424.

## Heart to Heart e-Seminars

Archbishop Chris Prowse, Archbishop of the Canberra-Goulburn Diocese, is presenting these 30 minute e-seminars over four weeks, leading you into a deeper relationship with Christ during this time of isolation. Visit:

[www.catholicvoice.org.au/hearttoheart/](http://www.catholicvoice.org.au/hearttoheart/)

## Appeal from Pope Francis to pray the Rosary in May

Pope Francis has encouraged the faithful to “rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May.”

*“I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.”* (To see the prayers, visit <http://tiny.cc/FrancisMay2020>)

*“Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.”*

*Franciscus*

### WE ARE A CHILD SAFE PARISH

Our Child Safe Policies can be read at our church entrances and on our websites. Our safe-guarding officer is Peter Sanderson.

### NEXT SUNDAY: **SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

**First Reading.** Acts 8:5-8, 14-17. They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

**Second Reading.** 1 Peter 3:15-18. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

**Gospel.** John 14:15-21. “I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate.”

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