

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS – June 28th 2020
Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary time Year A

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sandra Watkins: 0409 492 508
Fr Marcello Colasante 0416 194 825 Contact: St Columba's, Ballarat North 53 311 012
email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Information for special parish events (Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals)

Please contact Anne Beer on 5349 2168 or 0417 369 322

Parish Support:

A reminder that if anyone needs help with anything,
to please get in touch with one of our members below.

Gail Hall 0412 311 586 Bernadette Franc 0427 678830 Anne Beer 0417 369 322

Welcome to 'Our Community News' for June 28th 2020

If a common thread is to be found between today's First Reading (2 Kings 4:8-11, 13-16) and the Gospel (Matt 10:37-42), it probably lies in the idea of 'welcome'.

Note: Today's Community News email has an attachment: copy of 'The Saving Word'

RETURN TO MASSES DELAYED - A MESSAGE FROM FR MARCELLO:

As the restrictions for people assembling remain fluid and uncertain due to COVID 19, it will be necessary to defer recommencement until at least 26th July 2020. The government has extended the limit of 20 persons until Sunday 19th July 2020, at which time a further update will be provided. Once the limit is increased to 50, we can resume the Sunday celebration on the 2nd & 4th Sundays @ 8.30 am.

FATHER JUSTIN'S ONLINE MASSES FROM ST JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL:

Reminder: Daily Mass at 11.30am from St John of God Hospital.

Access by searching St Patrick's Cathedral in Facebook If you can't watch then, you can always replay it. <https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9>

RECENT DEATHS:

We continue to pray for all the victims to Coronavirus throughout the world.

ANNIVERSARIES:

Fred Platek, Jenny Hare, Kathleen Fay, Maureen Franc, Hannah Rogan

PRAY FOR ALL THESE FRIENDS OF OURS WHO ARE ILL:

Pat Byrne, Margaret MacDonald, Roger Molomby, Graeme Dawson, Blake Dridan, Fr. Adrian McInerney, Shelagh Mulcahy, Valda Murphy, and all those in need of prayer.

ROSTERS:

The newsletter roster will continue, but if any parishioners wish to contribute anything at all for inclusion, it will be greatly appreciated. This is a great way to keep our little community in touch. Just simply put your contribution in an email.

June: **Carmel Milenkovic** Phone: 0407320759 Email: carmelmilen@hotmail.com

July: **Bernadette Franc** Phone: 0427678830 Email: bernadette.franc.m@gmail.com

POSITION AVAILABLE

The Diocesan Pastoral Development Coordinator will develop and facilitate diocesan initiatives, programmes and activities to strengthen and support Diocesan and Parish life. Position information available from the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – Registrations now open

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. The next cycle begins July 12. Study is 5 weeks. Registrations open now until July 8. More information at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or email kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph. 0407 523 424.

Australian Catholic Men's Gathering

The Australian Catholic Bishop's Conference National Catholic Men's Gathering for 2020 is now being offered as an online event for registered participants on Saturday, July 31. The aim of the program is to inspire and encourage all Catholic men with a vision for personal discipleship, service and mission in the family, parish, diocese and the world. This modified program will be delivered in four pre-recorded sessions of approximately 1 hour in length. Each session will offer input from a variety of speakers and musicians, along with a response and questions for group discussion or individual reflection. The program offers flexibility so that you may participate individually or gather with others from your parish/diocese or men's ministry group. This is a free event. For the event program and registration information go to www.catholicmensgathering.com.au.

Sea Sunday Appeal – July 12

Sunday, July 12, 2020 is Sea Sunday, when the church prays for those who live and work at sea. There will be a national Appeal for Stella Maris, Apostleship of the Sea, the official maritime welfare agency of the Catholic Church. Donations will provide practical and spiritual support to seafarers in these challenging times of COVID-19. Please give generously. Go to bit.ly/seasundayaustralia

Plenary Council Update

The journey to the Plenary Council 2020 continues. While it's in a context more different than we could have ever expected, the need to pray, discern and listen to the Holy Spirit and each other is more important than ever.

- 📄 **New Assembly Dates announced:** Have you heard the news? We've locked in our new dates for the Plenary Council Assembly 1 and 2!. Read the full media release here: <https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/dates-locked-in-for-plenary-council-assemblies/#more-8501>
- 📄 **Discernment Papers:** The six discernment papers have been released and are available to be read. The National Plenary Facilitation Team will soon release resources to assist parishes and communities to explore each of the papers. Here in the diocese, we will endeavour to look at one paper for a month. For the month of July (you can start in June, of course), we will look at **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Missionary & Evangelising?** *'Mission' is God's initiative and proceeds from the Trinity, whose love overflows in creation and redemption. The Word and Spirit are present and active in the unfolding of the universe and in all human history, as evidenced in the goodness and truth found in all cultures and societies. The incarnate Son of God through his life, ministry, death and resurrection revealed God to us and redeemed us in a unique and unsurpassable way through his paschal sacrifice. His evangelising activity gave birth to the Church which is the visible manifestation of the Gospel command to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations" (Mt 28:19).* Have a read of the discernment paper, think about your parish and the diocese in general. We welcome any comments. Please send through to jane.collins@ballarat.catholic.org.au. [Read the discernment paper](#) [Visit the Missionary and Evangelising theme's page.](#)

Social Media Guide for Parishes

The Australian Catholic Media Council has launched a resource encouraging parishes to embrace Pope Francis' invitation to share the Gospel story as the Church in Australia - in person or online. The guide can be downloaded from the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au.

ST VINCENT PALLOTTI SCHOLARSHIP TRUST

Scholarships are offered to enable lay people to further their understanding and skills in leadership/ministry or a specialised activity, such as promoting faith enhancement, social justice and pastoral care. More information and applications forms are available at <https://pallottine.org.au/scholarships/st-vincent-pallotti-scholarship-for-lay-ministry.html>. Closing Date July 31, 2020.

EXPLORING THE WORD

To follow Jesus means putting other important relationships second. It means taking up the cross and perhaps facing the same fate that Jesus met—persecution, suffering, death—but remaining faithful leads to eternal life. In ancient times, a person's agent was seen to be the person themselves, and here Jesus is giving great dignity to the apostolate of following him by saying it derives from the Father himself through Jesus.

In the Scriptures, a prophet is a person who speaks for God. To be a prophet, one must have a very clear understanding of what God wants, and the task is to transmit that message to the people. There are many instances of the people rejecting the message of the prophets. Some scholars translate 'holy man' as 'just man' or someone who does the will of God. To recognise and welcome the truth is to be a disciple. The cost of discipleship may be high but the rewards are great.

- Tell stories of biblical characters and what it cost them to respond to God's will—forexample, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Jonah, Mary the mother of Jesus.
- Discuss modern figures who have paid a high price for their faith, such as Oscar Romero, Maximillian Kolbe and so on.

DID YOU KNOW?

Points of interest and Catholic lore

- At the time Matthew's Gospel was being written, Jewish families were being literally split by those who were making the decision to move away from traditional Jewish beliefs and follow Christ.
- Even though family relationships are vitally important, 'the first vocation of a Christian is to follow Christ'.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Share with each other stories about a time when you were made to feel welcome or you offered hospitality to someone else.

- How welcome do you feel in this journey?
- Have some people reacted badly to your decision to approach the Catholic Church?
- What does it mean to lose your life so you can find it?
- This week, make a special effort to be open and welcoming to someone you would not normally associate with. If you are able to, offer hospitality to someone.
- Repeat this often as a mantra this week:

Lord, as you welcome me, may I be open to welcome others.

SHARING THE TRADITION

A closer look at the Scripture of the day, to see how it makes more explicit God's word to us through the teachings of Jesus Christ

For the first three centuries of the Christian era, to be initiated by baptism into the new, spiritual family of Christ was to risk one's life. Christianity was a minority religion in a predominantly pagan world. At various stages, persecutions were carried out against Christians. To remain faithful at such times was very difficult, and those who chose Christ were strong indeed. After the Emperor Constantine was converted early in the fourth century, Christianity became the state religion of the Roman Empire. People flocked to be converted, not always for the right reasons. Numbers grew rapidly and the church spread and blossomed. With the gains in number, however, came the possibility of a loss in quality of conviction.

Were people really as committed to following Jesus as those earlier, persecuted Christians had been?

The modern western world is a very secularised place, where God has been replaced in some people's hearts by other gods —the quest for profit, individualism, consumerism. Pope John Paul II referred to these things as a 'new idolatry'. Numbers of practising Catholics are reducing in many Western countries, and we may become a minority again. Today many Christians face persecution of a different kind.

- Discuss ways in which people of faith are persecuted today in Western society.
- In some areas of the Middle East, persecution of minority Christians is rife and the cause of much suffering.
- Does the media have a role to play in this? In what way?
- What are some challenges you see in your parish or local area?
- The first Sunday of July is named by the Australian Bishop's as National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sunday.

You could reflect on the burdens and struggle which the Aboriginal people have undergone since settlement and seek ways to further the Reconciliation movement.

SYMBOLS AND IMAGE

In this text, Jesus praises those who offer hospitality, especially to those who proclaim the gospel. Even the simple symbolic gesture of 'offering a cup of cold water' speaks volumes about what a person believes in or holds as important. What are the small gestures we make each day that speak to others of the sort of person we are? Jesus also warns that to be a disciple can come at a cost. Taking up the cross and following in Jesus' footsteps may lead to places we would rather not go.

- Have you experienced your journey as a cross?

Alleluia, alleluia! / You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people. / Praise God who called you out of darkness and into his marvellous light. / Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 10: 37-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Anyone who does not accept his cross is not worthy of me. Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me.

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.

'Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me.

'Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man because he is a holy man will have a holy man's reward.

'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'

■ **The Gospel of the Lord.**

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Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

28 JUNE 2020

WELCOMING CHRIST

The attractive themes of 'welcome' and 'hospitality' running through today's readings sit a bit uncomfortably alongside the opening words of the Gospel, where Jesus starkly rules out 'preferring' family members to loyalty to himself.

The warning reflects the situation of the early church, where the experience, or at least the threat, of persecution was very real, and where some members of a family may have been Christian and some not.

In contemporary societies that are either majority Christian or tolerantly post-Christian, we may not face this challenge so sharply. If, however, we are comfortable in our world, largely sharing its values and aspirations, then some aspect of Christ's message is not getting through to us.

At this point, the theme of 'welcome' in the second part of today's Gospel comes into play. In Matthew's Gospel Jesus is from the start 'Emmanuel – God with us' (1:23). This sense of divine presence stands behind the statement: 'Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me; and those who welcome me, welcome the One who sent me'.

The stranger, then, who stands before us comes as an emissary and representative of Christ and, further, of the Father, who sent Christ to be the divine presence in our world. In dealing with this person, we are in some sense dealing with our God.

As never before, save perhaps immediately after World War II, are so many people being displaced through war, tyranny or economic misery. In the light of this mass movement, Christ's words about discipleship and welcome hold fresh challenge.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

2 Kings 4: 8-11, 14-16

A reading from the second book of the Kings.

That is the holy man of God, let him remain there.

One day as Elisha was on his way to Shunem, a woman of rank who lived there pressed him to stay and eat there. After this he always broke his journey for a meal when he passed that way. She said to her husband, 'Look, I am sure the man who is constantly passing our way must be a holy man of God. Let us build him a small room on the roof, and put him a bed in it, and a table and chair and lamp; whenever he comes to us he can rest there.'

One day when he came, he retired to the upper room and lay down. 'What can be done for her?' he asked. Gehazi (his servant) answered, 'Well, she has no son and her husband is old.' Elisha said, 'Call her.' The servant called her and she stood at the door. 'This time next year,' Elisha said 'you will hold a son in your arms.'

■ **The word of the Lord.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 88: 2-3, 16-19. R. v. 2

R. For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

1. I will sing for ever of your love, O Lord; / through all ages my mouth will proclaim your truth. / Of this I am sure, that your love lasts for ever, / that your truth is firmly established as the heavens. **R.**

2. Happy the people who acclaim such a king, / who walk, O Lord, in the light of your face, / who find their joy every day in your name, / who make your justice the source of their bliss. **R.**

3. For it is you, O Lord, who are the glory of their strength; / it is by your favour that our might is exalted: / for our ruler is in the keeping of the Lord; / our king in the keeping of the Holy One of Israel. **R.**



SECOND READING

Rom 6: 3-4, 8-11

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Having been buried with him through baptism, we shall walk in a new life.

When we were baptised in Christ Jesus we were baptised in his death; in other words, when we were baptised we went into the tomb with him and joined him in death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the Father's glory, we too might live a new life.

But we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him: Christ, as we know, having been raised from the dead will never die again. Death has no power over him any more. When he died, he died, once for all, to sin, so his life now is life with God; and in that way, you too must consider yourselves to be dead to sin but alive for God in Christ Jesus.

■ **The word of the Lord.**