

## Reflection on the Gospel – Easter 2A (John 20:19-31)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Not so long ago we used to speak of the Sundays “after” Easter. The terminology has changed and we now speak of the Sundays “of” Easter. In other words, we now recognise that the liturgical readings and prayers for each Sunday between Easter and Pentecost invite us into different movements of the one great symphony of resurrection faith. Today’s gospel tells of fear and joy and blessing. We bring our present experience of pandemic into dialogue with all of this.

The first scene in today’s gospel has the disciples hiding behind closed doors “for fear” of those who had handed Jesus over to be executed by the Roman authorities. As supporters of someone executed on a political charge, they had reason to be fearful. Jesus appears among them, offers a greeting of peace, and tells them that he has been sent by God, his “Father”. They receive from him the gift of the Holy Spirit. He sends them in turn to bring peace and to mediate the forgiveness of God through the power of the Spirit. The story invites us as believers to place ourselves in the shoes of the earliest disciples. It invites us to be open to receive the gift of the Spirit, to emerge from behind the doors that close us in on ourselves and that prevent us from rising above the fear of reprisals in the pursuit of justice and peace.

The second and third scenes in today’s gospel focus on Thomas who was not with the other disciples when Jesus first appeared in their midst. Thomas seems to trust only his own experience. We all know people like Thomas. They test our patience because they seem to lack imagination. Then they make big statements when they come around to understanding what everyone else has known for a while. If we think, however, that those who hear in the first place are any better than Thomas, we need to note that the doors are still closed eight days later! The simple fact of knowing has not dispelled the fears. Even those who do believe and trust often need time to take the gospel message on board.

All three readings this Sunday affirm those who believe without “seeing”. In the reading from Acts, many who had not seen the risen Jesus are drawn to the community of faith-filled believers. The community addressed in 1 Peter have “never seen him [the Christ]” and yet they love him and are filled with inexpressible joy. In the gospel, we too are declared blessed: “Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe”,

As we continue to celebrate Easter, we join with the global community in celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> annual Earth Day on Wednesday of this week. The theme for 2020 is climate action. We have dispelled our fears, listened to the science on Coronavirus and taken courageous action. We might pray for the same courageous action to save our planetary home.

## ST ALIPIUS PARISH — BALLARAT EAST & BUNINYONG SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER — YEAR A, 19TH APRIL, 2020

*Our parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity  
of all children and vulnerable adults.*

**St Alipius' Parish Church**  
82 Victoria Street, BALLARAT EAST 3350

**SS Peter & Paul's Church**  
701 Fisken St, BUNINYONG 3357

### Contact Details

**Parish Office & Presbytery:** 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East 3350

**Hours:** 9.30am - 1.30pm Tues, Thurs, Fri

**Telephone:** 5332 6611

**Email:** ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

**Parish Website:** www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

**SAP Liturgy website:** www.sapliturgy.net.au

**SAP Liturgy email:** sapliturgy@gmail.com

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Jorge De Chavez OSJ

**Parish Coordinator:** Lucy O'Beirne

**Finance Officer:** Kerrie McTigue

**Funeral Ministry:** Carmel Flynn & Kathy Curran

**Child Safety Officer:** Roxanne Leed

**Liturgy Coordinator:** David Santamaria

### Some Online Mass Options & Resources for Prayer

**St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Ballarat:** Mass livestreamed daily at 11.30am via St. Patrick's Cathedral facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9>

**St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne:** <https://www.melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

Monday—Friday: 1.00pm Mass streamed live daily  
Sunday Mass: 11.00am or available as a recording

**Pope Francis' Daily Mass:**

[www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta.pagelist.html](http://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta.pagelist.html)

Masses celebrated with Bishop Shane Mackinlay, former parishioner, please go to:  
[www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au](http://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au)

**Prayer for Spiritual Communion:**

*“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.” Pope Francis*

**Prayer Resources**

- Ballarat Diocese Website: [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au)
- St Alipius' Parish Liturgy Website: [www.sapliturgy.net.au](http://www.sapliturgy.net.au)

### Next Week's Readings: Third Sunday of Easter — Year A

**First:** Acts 2:14, 22-33

**Second:** 1 Peter 1:17-21

**Gospel:** Luke 24:13-35

**Anniversaries:** Margaret Meerbach, Mary Murphy

**Unwell:** We pray for Kateri Byrnes, Carmel Doherty, Pat Hogan, Cathy Jones, Peter Martin, Letitia Simmons, Margie Wilmott and all who are unwell

## Keeping in Touch — Fr Jorge

Hello My Dear Parishioners,

It's been four weekends the last time we gather and break bread together to celebrate the Eucharist and we missed out welcoming together the Joyful Celebration of Easter, but non the less it does not diminish the gifts that this season brings.

We are now on the Second Sunday of Easter, The Risen Jesus appears to his disciples who are gathered behind closed doors and in fear, he gave them peace and breathed on them the Holy Spirit. Just like the disciples we are in fear and there are a lot of uncertainties because of the unprecedented times we are facing. May all of us receive the peace Jesus brings and be strengthened by the Holy Spirit that is given to us. This Sunday is Divine Mercy Sunday, may God's Mercy be upon us and the whole world.

I am with you all specially at this time and keeping you all in my prayers and masses. Let us keep safe, stay home, look after each other, we are all in this together, keep the faith prevent in prayer we will arrive on the other side together. I miss you all. God Bless!

Special Thanks to David and Maureen for organizing our Spiritual Communion every weekend and I am inviting you to follow our SAP liturgy website and join us in prayer at the comfort of your home. Here is my email and you may reply directly to me in this address: [jorge.dechavez@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:jorge.dechavez@ballarat.catholic.org.au).

Best Regards,

Fr. Jorge, OSJ

### A special message to our School Communities from our Principals

As we commence Term 2 with most students learning from home, the Catholic Education Office Ballarat would like to share this special video message with all of our families. Watch the video on the CEOB website [www.ceob.edu.au](http://www.ceob.edu.au).

### Good Friday Collection

The Good Friday collection for the Holy Land has been postponed until Sunday, September 13.

### Planned Giving Envelopes and Other Contributions

All envelopes can be posted through the mail-slot of the presbytery. If you would like to make a contribution electronically, please contact Kerrie McTigue (see Finance Section).

### 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. Study over three weeks (cycle 3 only). Begins April 19. Registrations open until April 8. More info at [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au) or email [kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au) or ph. 0407523424.

### SVDP Bread Run at St Alipius — Free Bread To Collect

Held at St. Alipius Parish Hall every Monday night from 7:50pm until 8:20pm. Please bring a bag, For more information call Gavin – 5334 7221.

St Vincent De Paul Call Centre — 5334 2844 lines open 24/7



# Thank you!



Caritas Australia would like to **THANK YOU** for supporting Project Compassion 2020. If you still have your Project Compassion box or set of envelopes at home, please drop them off to the presbytery mail-slot next week or visit [www.caritas.org.au](http://www.caritas.org.au) to make your donation online.

Through your generosity you will be empowering the world's most vulnerable communities to grow stronger and share their strengths with their communities to lift themselves out of poverty.

[www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion](http://www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion) #projectcompassion 1800 024 413

### Mercy Connect Ballarat/Bendigo Co-ordinator

Mercy Connect is a program within Mercy Works which recruits, trains and supports volunteers to mentor refugee students and their families as they settle in Australia. We are seeking a Co-ordinator of our Ballarat/Bendigo Mercy Connect Education project. The role involves connecting all volunteers with students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds in existing and potentially new primary and secondary schools across Ballarat/Bendigo. It also includes recruiting and training new volunteers. While providing assistance in the educational setting, the primary focus is one of mentoring and providing ongoing support and training. The Co-ordinator is required to liaise with schools in providing volunteers appropriate to the situation. A key focus will be expanding the project within the Bendigo region. It is a two day a week position and based in Bendigo. For further information <https://www.mercyworks.org.au/job-opportunities/>

### Matthew's Beatitudes and Catherine McAuley in Dialogue with Earth's Distress

Veronica Lawson RSM recently held a webinar exploring the Beatitudes and Catherine McAuley at this time of the Earth's distress. Watch the video here <https://vimeo.com/404735366>

### With Jesus in the Desert: A retreat for a time of isolation

The staff of Jesuit Communications have prepared a 14-day retreat for people who have to isolate themselves for 14 days during the Coronavirus crisis. The retreat has suggestions for each of the 14 days, though participants are free to follow it through or to pick out particular days. A shorter retreat that keeps the basic pattern could involve days 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14. Info: <https://www.pray.com.au/with-jesus-in-the-desert-a-retreat-for-a-time-of-isolation/>

### Thank You to Those who Contributed to Last Week's Collections

<b>Parish:</b>	Envelopes:	\$ 500.00
	Loose:	\$ nil
	Direct Debits:	\$ 585.00
		\$ 1085.00

**Presbytery:** \$ 208.00

For queries regarding Planned Giving please contact the Parish Finance Officer, Kerrie McTigue:

**Phone:** (03) 5331 2933

**Email:** [ballaratooffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au](mailto:ballaratooffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au)