

**Reflection on the Gospel-22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
(Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

After a lengthy detour over the past six weeks into the gospel of John with its focus on Jesus as the Bread of Life and the Bread of Wisdom, we return to Mark's gospel and a legal dispute about ritual purity. The parties to the dispute are Jesus, the Pharisees, and some of the scribes or teachers of the law. [It is worth noting that Mark's non-Jewish readers, at a later time and in another place, need to be given detailed information about certain Jewish traditions].

At issue for the scribes and Pharisees in the story is the failure of Jesus' disciples to respect their oral tradition, in this instance to perform ritual washings before eating. From their perspective, the disciples are not "walking" according to the tradition of the elders. For the Markan Jesus, "the command of God" is paramount, not some distorted interpretation of it. He offers a hard-hitting counter-critique of their attitude to law. He calls them "hypocrites" and informs them that the condemnation of the prophet Isaiah was intended for them. They have so distorted God's law, substituting their own observances for the "commandment of God" that their prayer amounts to nothing more than lip-service, their hearts are far from God, and their worship is worthless! For Jesus, there are criteria other than such observances for determining who is clean or unclean. He has already declared the leper clean (Mk 1:41-45). For Jesus, the "heart" is the locus of purity and impurity. For him as for all his people, the heart was the seat of the intellect and of morality as well as of the emotions. In the kin-dom of God, therefore, one's thoughts, desires, and intentions render one clean or unclean, not one's attention to hygiene. The latter is important of course, but is peripheral in the grand scheme of things. It is worth applying the criteria provided at the end of the passage to discover whether or not our "hearts" are near or distant from our God.

The real-life Pharisees of the first century were the respected teachers of God's law. It is imperative that stories such as we find in today's gospel are not used to denigrate the Jews or to pit Christianity over against Judaism. We have to keep reminding ourselves that time and again we are dealing with in-house debates between Jewish groups.

Finally, this episode, with its attention to ritual washing, raises the issue of the right use of water, that precious earth element without which there would be no life at all on our planet. Plastic free July this year alerted many of us to the problem that the plastic bottling of water has brought to the future of life on our planet. It may be time to buy a "Keep Cup" and reaffirm our commitment to protecting God's creation.

22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME — YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong
(The Parish of St Alipius, the communities of Ballarat East and Buninyong are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.)

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 9.30 am—1.30 pm
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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 3rd SEPTEMBER 2018**

MONDAY: No Mass
TUESDAY: No Mass
WEDNESDAY: No Mass
THURSDAY: No Mass
FRIDAY: No Mass

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	10.30 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	9.00 AM

23RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR B

READINGS First: Isaiah 35:4-7
Second: James 2:1-5
Gospel: Mark 7:31-37

RECENT DEATHS: Reilly Watts, Betty Stefanko.

ANNIVERSARIES: Raymond Askwith, John Alexander Askwith.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Aurora Ferrer, Patricia Harman, Leonie Sinnot, John Darroch, Maggie Brown, Margaret Meerbach, Eleanor Keating

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 6: M. Stewart©, M. Anderson, R. Reynolds.
Next Week: Team 7: K. Cummins©, J. O'Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck.

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 5,882.70
	Loose:	\$ 150.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>395.00</u>
		\$ 6,427.70
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 824.00



WELCOME TO BISHOP CONNORS

We warmly welcome Bishop Peter Connors who will be celebrating masses with us this weekend. Thank you for your generosity in ministering to us and sharing in our parish life!

PLENARY COUNCIL QUESTIONS — FEEDBACK

Feedback relating to the Plenary Council questions posed at last weekend masses will be posted at the back of the church next week. Thank you for your thoughts, they are much appreciated and will be passed on to the Plenary Council 2020. *Please keep your thoughts and suggestions coming!*

CARING GROUP

The next meeting of the Caring Group will be held on Friday 7th September at 10 am in the St Alipius Hall. All welcome.

CHILDREN'S LITURGY

Will be available this weekend at the Saturday Vigil Mass. Toddlers welcome with appropriate supervision.

DAMASCUS COLLEGE INFO SESSIONS FOR 2020 ENROLMENT

Interested families and students are warmly invited to attend information evenings on Wednesday 5th September at 5pm, or Thursday 25th October at 6.30pm. Open Mornings with tours will be held on Thursday 13th September, 9am – 10.30am, and Thursday 1st November, 9am -10.30am. Please register your attendance online via the Damascus College website www.damascus.vic.edu.au. Enrolment applications for Year 7 2020 close on Friday 15th February 2019.

THE SWAG

Copies of the Spring edition of *The Swag* are now available in the foyer. Please feel welcome to take a copy home to read and then return for others to share.

KERALA INDIA EARTHQUAKES AND FLOOD APPEAL

Many parishioners would be aware of the earthquakes and flood disaster that has hit Kerala, India in recent times. Caritas India is providing support for the people of Kerala. If you wish to make a donation, our Asia Emergency Fund can be accessed through the Caritas website www.caritas.org.au or phone Caritas on 1800 024 413.

BCSF ANNUAL APPEAL

A reminder that the Ballarat Clergy Support Fund Annual Appeal will be held as usual on the first Sunday of September. The BCSF Committee is very grateful for the support given each year to the promotion of this appeal, and requests your assistance again this year.

SEASON OF CREATION 1 SEP—4 OCT

Catholic Earthcare Ballarat Diocese is reminding all that the *Season of Creation* September 1st to October 4th (Feast of St Francis of Assisi) is an annual global Christian celebration of prayer and action to protect the environment. You are invited to join with us at the ecumenical service celebrating the start of the 2018 season being held at St Mathews Anglican Church, Wendouree (Corner of Howitt and Forest Street) on Sunday 2nd September at 2pm. Light refreshments to follow.

CHILD PROTECTION SUNDAY - SEPTEMBER 9

Each year the Australian Catholic Church dedicates the Sunday at the end of Child Protection Week as *Child Protection Sunday*. In 2018 the Australian Catholic Church marks Child Safeguarding Sunday on 9 September. Uniquely this year Child Protection Sunday follows on the heels of the formal response of the Australian Catholic Church to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and the release of the advice provided to Church Leaders by its Truth Justice and Healing Council. Child Protection Sunday affords an Opportunity for Dioceses, Eparchies, Religious Institutes and Ministerial PJPs to complement that National Catholic Response with factual information on how individual church entities are themselves active participants in the protection/safeguarding of minors and vulnerable adults. When the Australian Prime Minister offers the response of the Commonwealth Government in Parliament on 22 October we pray it may bring a further sense of how we, both as a Church and as a Nation have faced the terrible truth that we failed our children, but also as a church and as a nation we have now embarked on a new path.

JOY SPREADING IN BALLARAT

Stacey Atkins is the guest speaker at the next *Joy Spreading* event for young adults (18-30 yo) on Friday, September 14, 2018 from 6.30pm – 9.00pm at the Lake View Hotel, Ballarat. An opportunity for young Catholic adults to share ideas and views in a friendly environment. Free event. More info at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or phone 5337 7125.

COMPASSION WALK

Come join us in this community event promoting and celebrating compassionate actions in Ballarat on Sunday, September 16, 2018. This event is linking into the work of [Compassionate Ballarat](http://www.compassionateballarat.org.au), who are enrolling Ballarat as a [Compassionate City](http://www.compassionatecity.org.au). Participate in experiential activities as you walk around the lake and enjoy food and entertainment featuring many artists in the main area near the rotunda and Pipers by the Lake. Registrations at 10.00am for 10.30am start and concluding at 1.00pm. Register at <https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=404489>. For enquires please contact Steph via email compassionwalk.ballarat@gmail.com