

**Reflection on the Gospel-5th Sunday of Lent Year B
(John 12:20-33)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Today's gospel tells us that among those who go up to Jerusalem to worship at the feast of Passover are some "Greeks". The reference is probably to a group known in the early church as "God-fearers", although that designation is found only in Luke's second volume, the Acts of the Apostles. These people were a bit like RCIA candidates in relation to Judaism. They were certainly interested in Judaism and, because of their active interest in the Jewish faith and traditions, were possibly better informed about many of the Jewish traditions than those who had been members of the Jewish community all their lives. God-fearers seem to have been among the first Gentiles (non-Jews) to join the early Christian Jewish movement, i.e. the Jews who accepted Jesus as Messiah (or Christ).

For Jesus, the arrival of these God-fearing Greeks signals his "hour". Earlier in John's gospel, Jesus has insisted that his "hour" had not yet come. Now that his message receives global acknowledgement, or in the words of the Pharisees, now that "the world has gone after him" (John 20:19), he can announce that the hour of his glorification has come. Characteristically, Jesus uses a potent agricultural image to capture the transformative nature of his imminent death: like the grain of wheat, he must go into the earth and die in order to bear fruit. The same is true for his followers: to be concerned only with self-preservation is to "lose" one's life; to give one's life is to "keep it for eternal life".

Although the language is more explicit in John, the grain of wheat image echoes some aspects of the first reading from the prophet Jeremiah (31:31-34). Jeremiah presents the God of Israel as One who forgives and who is even prepared to forget the sins of the past. The people will be God's garden: the seed planted within them is God's Law. They will be God's own billboard: the law of forgiveness and mercy will be written in their hearts. John uses the "eternal life" metaphor in much the same way as the other gospel writers use the "reign of God" or "kin-dom" image. To keep one's life for "eternal life" has to do with living God's transformative vision for creation in the present so that it might one day be fully realised.

In John's gospel, Jesus' death is also his being lifted up in glory. The moment of his death becomes the moment of drawing "all" to himself. The "all" includes all people, but is not restricted to the human community. It also allows for an ecological interpretation: in his death and exaltation, Jesus gathers the whole Earth community into the mystery of God's redemptive and transforming love.

THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT—YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 19TH MARCH 2018**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	No Mass
THURSDAY:	No Mass
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

PASSION (PALM) SUNDAY, YEAR B

READINGS	Entrance: Mark 11:1-10
	First: Isaiah 50:4-7
	Second: Philippians 2:6-11
	Gospel: Mark 14:1—15:47

ANNIVERSARIES: Molly Forbes, Sr Kathleen Nolan RSJ, Bridget Curran, Susan Purcel, Nancy Murphy, Ellen Murphy, Gerald Roach, Michael Harrison.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Pauline Murphy, Maria Wilson, Aurora Ferrer, Patricia Harman, Leonie Sinnot.

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:	\$ 971.00
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>975.00</u>
		\$ 2,246.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 506.00



ABSENCE

Fr Peter will be away from the parish for a few days this week attending ISMAPNG Institute Ministries, Governance Forum and Diocesan Educational Leaders' gathering in Hopetoun.

LENTEN REFLECTIONS

On Thursdays during Lent the Parish offers an opportunity for Lenten Reflections on the Sunday Gospel. These will be held at 10.00 am in the Church meeting room.

LENTEN CARDS

Lenten cards are available to feed you on your Lenten journey.

PALM SUNDAY

If you are able to supply olive branches for Palm Sunday please contact the Presbytery/Parish Office on 5332 6611 and let Jim know how many.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE BUNINYONG

On Good Friday the Combined Churches of Buninyong invite you to join in their annual commemoration of the Passion and Death of Jesus. The readings and procession commence from the front of the Buninyong Town Hall at 8.30 am and conclude at the Labyrinth in the grounds of the Uniting Church shortly after 9.00 am.

A NAME

Can you think of an appropriate name for the presbytery, former presbytery, parish office, 84 Victoria Street? Write in a note, or email name with explanation, and we can see what emerges. Thank you.

WALK FOR JUSTICE FOR REFUGEES 2018

Palm Sunday, **25th March, 2.00 pm, State Library.** Meet at Ballarat station in time for the 11:18 am train to Southern Cross. See Notice Board for full details.

NEW VICAR GENERAL

Bishop Paul has announced the appointment of Fr Kevin Maloney as the Vicar General of the Diocese. After 5 years Fr Justin Driscoll has completed his term of Office. We express our gratitude to Fr Justin for his service and extend our best wishes to Fr Kevin..

EASTER MINISTRIES

If you are able to assist with any of the ministries at St Alipius Church during the Easter period will you please indicate on the form pinned to the Notice Board (i.e., Reader, Offertory, Minister of the Eucharist).

EASTER MASS TIMES

HOLY THURSDAY:	7.00 pm in Parish Church
GOOD FRIDAY:	3.00 pm in Parish Church
EASTER SATURDAY VIGIL:	7.00 pm in Parish Church
EASTER SUNDAY	9.00 am in Parish Church
	10.30 am in Ss Peter & Paul's B'yong

FAIRTRADE CHOCOLATE

Pope Francis said that "every person ought to have the awareness that purchasing is always a moral – and not simply an economic – act."

Are you buying and eating, or giving away Easter chocolate this year? It is estimated that up to 30 million people are trapped in slavery globally. The United Nations estimates that one in every three victims of human trafficking is a child.

Much of the chocolate we consume in Australia is made with cocoa beans picked by children, many of whom have been enslaved. These children don't even know what the cocoa beans are used for and they won't ever get to taste chocolate.

ACTION: Go the ACRATH website: <https://acrath.org.au/slaveryfree-easter> to find out more. Spread the word about slavery-free Easter chocolate and enjoy chocolate that carries any of the following symbols on the wrapper.

