

**Reflection on the Gospel-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
(Matthew 5:38-48)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Today's gospel is a continuation of Jesus' teaching on the sort of righteousness, the right relationship and justice, to which his followers are called in their living of the Law. The law of Moses (Exod 21:24, Lev 24:20 and Deut 19:21) included a law of retaliation designed to make punishment for wrongdoing to persons or property proportionate to the offence. It was quite enlightened legislation at the time. In a series of striking images, Jesus invites his followers to go far beyond the strict application of the law and to embrace a new way of thinking about and acting towards those who injure them/us. Relinquishing your right to compensation is one thing. Giving more of your property to one who has stolen from you is quite another. Do we take this teaching literally or do we simply embrace the spirit of non-retaliation that seems to be at the heart of this teaching? A too-easy amnesty does not always bring justice. Last week's gospel reminded us that there is to be no place for uncontrolled anger or murderous thoughts in our hearts. Both that teaching and this seem to be about taking responsibility for how we live. Harboursing anger can have disastrous consequences for oneself as well as for others. It tends to skew our capacity for right judgement. What happens *to* us may be beyond our control. What we do with what comes our way is for us to decide. Jesus makes it clear that we have choices in the face of life's struggles. The disciple is called to choose the way of assuming personal responsibility and refusing the way of retaliation.

The final example or antithesis in the list of six that Jesus offers in the Sermon on the Mount is the most confronting of all: there are to be no limitations on love. Loving one's enemies is quite a challenge, on a personal as well as a global level. We learn the hard way that we cannot change others. We can only change our attitudes and approaches to them. Venerable Catherine McAuley, founder of the Mercies, wrote that her sisters "never to let the sun go down on their anger". I used to wonder how they managed that. Over recent years I have found that praying quite deliberately for those who give us a hard time or cause us grief is by far the most effective way of retaining one's peace of mind and of expelling retaliatory thoughts. For me, it is a matter of gently bringing these people to mind, of breathing in the loving kindness or *chesed* of God that suffuses the universe and of breathing it out for them. That enables me to think of them in kindly ways and act towards them without rancour, even when the sentiments are not reciprocated.

BULLETIN FOR THE 7th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

Telephone: 5332 6611

Fax: 5332 3303

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 20th FEBRUARY 2017**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
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

8th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

READINGS -	First:	Isaiah 49:14-15
	Second:	1 Corinthians 4:1-5
	Gospel:	Matthew 6:24-34

RECENT DEATHS: Natale Rizzuto, Mark Fox.

ANNIVERSARIES: Jack Gittings, James Curran, Helen Dondoy, Jimmy Calistro, Mary Blood, Lucy Wolfe, Mr & Mrs Harasimowicz, Bruno Van Dooren.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter McDonald (Ocean Grove), Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 7:** K. Cummins ©, J. O'Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck.

Next Week: **Team 8:** B. McKeegan ©, M. Ridsdale, K. McKeegan.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,395.00
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>490.00</u>
		\$ 2,185.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 768.00

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS—DIOCESAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

The Diocese of Ballarat is calling for nominations for the 2017 Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC). The DPC is a consultative and advisory body to the Bishop. More information is on the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.au under Services & Agencies, or phone Amanda in the Diocesan Office on 5337 7125.

MEDITATION

“Stopping brings me to the ‘now’ of today”.

Before turning on the computer, opening the door, getting into the car, answering the phone, let me stop, pause and breathe, mindful, at peace.

Stillness: Sister Stanislaus Kennedy

CHOIR FOR MASS OF THE OILS—2017

Singers and musicians are invited to join the music group which is being formed for this Mass on Monday, 10th April, 2017. Practice times will be advised. Please contact Julie Boyd at the Pastoral Ministry Office to register your interest at: julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au

AINARO TIMOR-LESTE FUNDRAISING BUSH DANCE

Saturday, 25th March at Donegan's Farm, Gordon from 6.30—11.00 pm

Proceeds to Health Student Scholarship Fund.

Enquiries to: Desley 0429 075 173 or Barry 0409 458 053.

See Notice Board for further information.

NAZARETH HOUSE AUXILIARY ST PATRICK'S DAY COFFEE PARTY

Friday, 17th March at 1.30 pm in the Nazareth House Hall. All welcome.

FAITH SEEKING UNDERSTANDING IN THE COMTEMPORARY WORLD

Venue: Mercy Gathering Room, Gent Street, Ballarat East. Dates: 16th March; 27th April; 18th May; 22nd June; 20th July.

Sr Veronica Lawson and Fr Barry Ryan invite parishioners to sign up for five two-hour sessions on the meaning of faith commitment in the contemporary world. Simply contact Sr Veronica by email (veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au) or by phone (0408 392 297) before 20th February. Kindly provide contact details and indicate whether you wish to enrol in the afternoon sessions (1.00-3.00 pm) or the evening sessions (7.00-9.00 pm). Donation to cover costs is \$20. Note that this is a new course, not a repeat of either the 2015 or the 2016 sessions.

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Thursday, 23rd February at 2.00 pm in the Mercy Centre. Please enter via Gent Street

CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S PROJECT COMPASSION LENTEN SPEAKER

An invitation is extended to parishioners and friends to attend a shared meal with Fr Robert Tomoner (known as Fr Tonette) to hear about his work for Caritas Australia in the Phillipines. Fr Tonette is Director of the Socio-Pastoral Action Centre Foundation, Inc, a Filipino organisation that supports the development and empowerment of Indigenous communities. Please bring a plate of food to share for a buffet. Tea/coffee provided. Friday, 3rd March, 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm start at Our Lady help of Christians Parish meeting room. RSVP 28th February to Connie.c.bonzon812@gmail.com or Sue at sue.searls@ballarat.catholic.org.au Mobile 0409 401 329.

RITE OF ELECTION

The Rite of Election is an important part of the process of a person's journey to full membership in the Catholic Church community and one which is greatly appreciated by all who participate. This applies to both adults and children of catechetical age. The Rite of election for catechumens, candidates and children of catechetical age will take place on SATURDAY, 4th MARCH at 12.30 pm in St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat. The presider will be Bishop Paul Bird CSsR. At the conclusion of the ceremony all are invited to join the Bishop in St Patrick's Hall for a light lunch. Enquiries to Julie Boyd on 5337 7159 or julie.boyd@ballarat.catholic.org.au

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

Am I being unfair to you?

Friday, 3rd March 2017

10.00 am St Paul's Anglican Church, 3 Humffray St Sth, Bakery Hill

2.00 pm St John's Anglican Church, 606 Armstrong St Nth, Soldiers Hill

5.30 pm St Andrew's Uniting Church, 130 Ballarat Rd, Creswick

7.00 pm Buninyong Baptist Church, Town Hall, Learmonth St, Buninyong

See Notice Board