

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS – 20th September 2020

Twenty-Fifth 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, please get in touch with one of our members below:

Gail Hall 0412 311 586 Bernadette Franc 0427 678 830 Anne Beer 0417 369 322

Welcome to 'Our Community News' for 20th September 2020

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

The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in love. How good is the Lord to all, compassionate to all his creatures.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Attached below is the latest information from Bishop Paul Bird CSsR.

All updates are also on the diocesan website "news" section www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

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

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

The Cathedral Facebook page is Patrick's Cathedral

<https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9> but the Masses can also be reached via the Cathedral website where the Masses are posted each day after the

Mass has concluded so for those who don't have a Facebook account they can go to <https://stpatrcathedral.weebly.com/> *(We recommend this link may work best Beaufort Parish)*

RECENT DEATHS:

We continue to pray for all victims of Coronavirus in Australia and the world.

ANNIVERSARIES:

Margaret Dickman, Elizabeth O'Connor, Mary Watkins, Steve Molloy, Debbie Hayes
Jack Fitzpatrick & John Wall.

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, Maria Large (Judy O'Connor's sister), Joan Cushing and all those in need of prayer.

ROSTERS:

Please consider volunteering for any roles that may interest you and let Anne Beer know.

Anne's mobile number is 0417 369 322 or email: bigmac09@bigpond.com

NEWSLETTER:

Any contributions for the newsletter will be greatly appreciated.

This is a great way to keep our little community in touch.

Just simply email: carmelmilen@hotmail.com or phone Carmel on 0407320759

ELECTRONIC THANKSGIVING OFFERINGS

Our CDF (Catholic Development Fund – Ballarat) together with CDF Pay have developed an online thanksgiving portal known as CDF Pay for Parishes.

During this period of time where Masses in the diocese are suspended or reduced, parishes need the financial support of parishioners more than ever. As the vast majority of our parishioners give physically electronic parish thanksgiving program.

You can now use this portal to support our parish in both/either the first and second collections.

Electronic thanksgiving offerings can be made as one off payments or you can set up a regular payment.

You will receive an electronic receipt for any payments made.

The payment link is: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayBeaufort>

Diocesan e-News Upgrade

Due to the upgrade of the diocesan website, diocesan e-News has also been updated. If you did not receive e-News in your inbox this week, please re-subscribe at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/>

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program Online Study

Low-cost online study and formation for employed or volunteer lay workers in parish and other ministries. 5 week study cycles include Sacraments, Scripture, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, Leadership and more. Registrations open now until October 12 for the next cycle which begins October 18. More information at

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or email djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Engaging Your Catholic Faith

Engaging Your Catholic Faith is a series of short sessions offered online by Catholic Theological College lecturers on a range of topics including theology, scripture, pastoral studies and spirituality. Sessions will be held from September 14 - October 31 and will cost \$20 per session. The sessions will be held via Zoom and will run for approximately 90 minutes. More information and enrolment details are available from www.ctc.edu.au.

Prayers and Images in the Time of Virus

Following the success of Michael McGirr's *Trees in Solitude, Prayers and Images for Pentecost*, Garratt Publishing are pleased to present a complimentary second 'Trees' series from Michael – *Trees Without Masks*. Over the coming weeks these beautiful prayers and images will be shared. Download the prayers from the news section of the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au.

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2020-2021

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the mental health of many members of our parishes, schools and communities. Understanding mental health will help us to be aware of those who need our support. In the Social Justice Statement 2020-2021, *To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today*, the Bishops invite us all to reject stigmatisation, to work for the transformation of social determinants of mental ill-health, and to call for policies and service provision that meet the needs of the poorest and most marginalised members of our community. More information at the diocesan website

www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or http://bit.ly/SocialJustice_2020

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.

Discernment Papers: The six discernment papers have been released and are available to be read. Here in the diocese, we will look at one paper for a month.

For the month of September we will look at **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Prayerful and Eucharistic?**

The listening and dialogue responses revealed the deep faith, integrity and sincerity of all the people who gave of themselves in their offerings. The responses included divergent opinions in various topics. At the same time, they showed a common faith in Christ and a common desire to follow his teaching in love of God and love of neighbour. They demonstrated a commitment to living the gospel of Christ and sharing the gospel with others, even in the midst of a largely secular culture. They expressed a love for the community of the Church, despite the well-documented failings of members of the community. They showed a desire to be a christ-centered church that is prayerful and Eucharistic.

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 at <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-2.pdf>. [Visit the Inclusive, Participatory & Synodal theme's page at https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/inclusive/.](https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/inclusive/)

Next step on Plenary Council journey: As part of the ongoing journey for the Plenary Council, work has commenced on the preparation of the *instrumentum laboris*, or working document, for the Council. Fr Kevin Lenehan is part of the *instrumentum laboris* writing team <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/next-step-on-plenary-council-journey/>

New timeline: With all the date changes that have taken place with the rescheduling of the assemblies, a new timeline has been developed to help people understand the next couple of years of the Council journey

DID YOU KNOW?

Points of interest and Catholic lore

- In the Greco-Roman world, casual labourers used to gather in the agora or town-square waiting for employers to hire them.
- In the early church, those who had believed in the risen Christ from the earliest days—and had thus suffered persecution for their faith—were sometimes jealous of those, especially Gentiles, who came to belief later on.

EXPLORING THE WORD

This gospel offers yet another challenge to human ideas about what is just and reveals the generosity of God. The Master makes a point of having those who came last paid first. One must imagine the queue, with the newly arrived workers at the head and those tired from a full day's labour watching as the late-comers are paid in full. In many ways, the audience is drawn into sharing their disappointment and indignation. If those employed early had been at the head of the queue, they would have gone off happy with their contracted wage. The problem arises only when they see the latecomers reaping the same reward. This alludes to a problem that has arisen in Matthew's community. Those Jewish Christians who have risked all and believed from the beginning are now seeing the newcomers to faith being offered the same reward. Jesus' answer is simple: the kingdom is God's. God can do as he likes, and what God chooses is to welcome all and offer reward to all who come to belief, no matter at what stage.

- Are there examples in our world of people being generously rewarded when some may feel that they do not deserve such generosity?
- You could discuss this concept in terms of the candidates coming to belief later than those baptised as babies

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Do you sometimes experience jealousy or resentment? What causes this response? How does it make you feel?

- Imagine the feelings of the workers who arrived last when they were paid for a full day's work. What might they say of the generosity of God?
- Share together a time when you have experienced overwhelming generosity.
- Is there a difference in how we react if we are the recipients of generosity compared with our reaction when we see others being treated with generosity that we believe they do not deserve? Do we live in a generous society?

- Look for occasions this week to be generous, not only with money, but with time, attention and attitude. Challenge those who lack generosity of spirit. Pray this psalm often this week.

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

There are many people revered by the Church who came late to their faith in Christ. Tell the story of people like Paul, St Augustine and St Francis of Assisi, who came late to belief yet made enormous contributions to the life of the Church.

Invite some people who have made the catechumenal journey in the past. Ask them to reflect on their journey and speak about how they are now contributing to the life of the parish and the Church.

Ask them to discuss their ongoing growth in faith.

SYMBOLS AND IMAGES

The 'vineyard' in the Hebrew Scriptures always referred to Israel, the people of God, while the 'master' was God. This parable would have been clearly understood as being about the experience of being gathered into God's people and about who was welcomed into the kingdom. The unbounded generosity of God is highlighted.



day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last" they said "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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REFLECTING THE GENEROSITY OF GOD

Today's Gospel is introduced as a parable 'about the kingdom of heaven'. That is, it illustrates the way in which God's rule is reclaiming the world for values that allow people to live lives that are human in the fullest sense of the word.

In the Palestine of Jesus' time, employment was for many a day to day business. Whether labourers got work—and the wage they needed to support themselves and their families—depended on whether they were hired for that day in the marketplace.

The story presupposes a long working day with successive hirings during the day. The 'just wage' agreed upon at the start of the day would have been a denarius, the standard wage for a day's labour. This is in fact what everyone receives, but when those who have laboured since early morning see even the latecomers paid this wage, they expect that in *their* case 'a just wage' will mean considerably more. Hence their grievance.

Jesus' message is that we cannot simply take the conventional idea of justice and apply it without qualification to God. God *is* just, but, beyond justice, reserves the right to be overwhelmingly generous as well. If the landowner, out of wider social concern, chooses to be generous and to pay everyone, deserving or not, what social justice today would call a 'living wage', this truly reflects the will and action of God. Aligning ourselves with this view of God has much to do with allowing the values of the kingdom to transform our lives and our world.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

Isa 55:6-9

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

My thoughts are not your thoughts.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord who will take
pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;

for my thoughts are not your thoughts,
my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who
speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM

Ps 144:2-3, 8-9, 17-18. R. v. 18

R. The Lord is near to all who call him.

1. I will bless you day after day / and praise
your name for ever. / The Lord is great,
highly to be praised, / his greatness cannot be
measured. **R.**

2. The Lord is kind and full of compassion, /
slow to anger, abounding in love. / How good
is the Lord to all, / compassionate to all his
creatures. **R.**

3. The Lord is just in all his ways / and loving
in all his deeds. / He is close to all who call
him, / who call on him from their hearts. **R.**

SECOND READING

Phil 1:20-24, 27

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the
Philippians

For me to live is Christ.

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by
my life or by my death. Life to me, of course,
is Christ, but then death would bring me



something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results – I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake.

Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Acts 16:14

**Alleluia, alleluia! / Open our hearts,
O Lord, / to listen to the words of your
Son. / Alleluia!**

GOSPEL

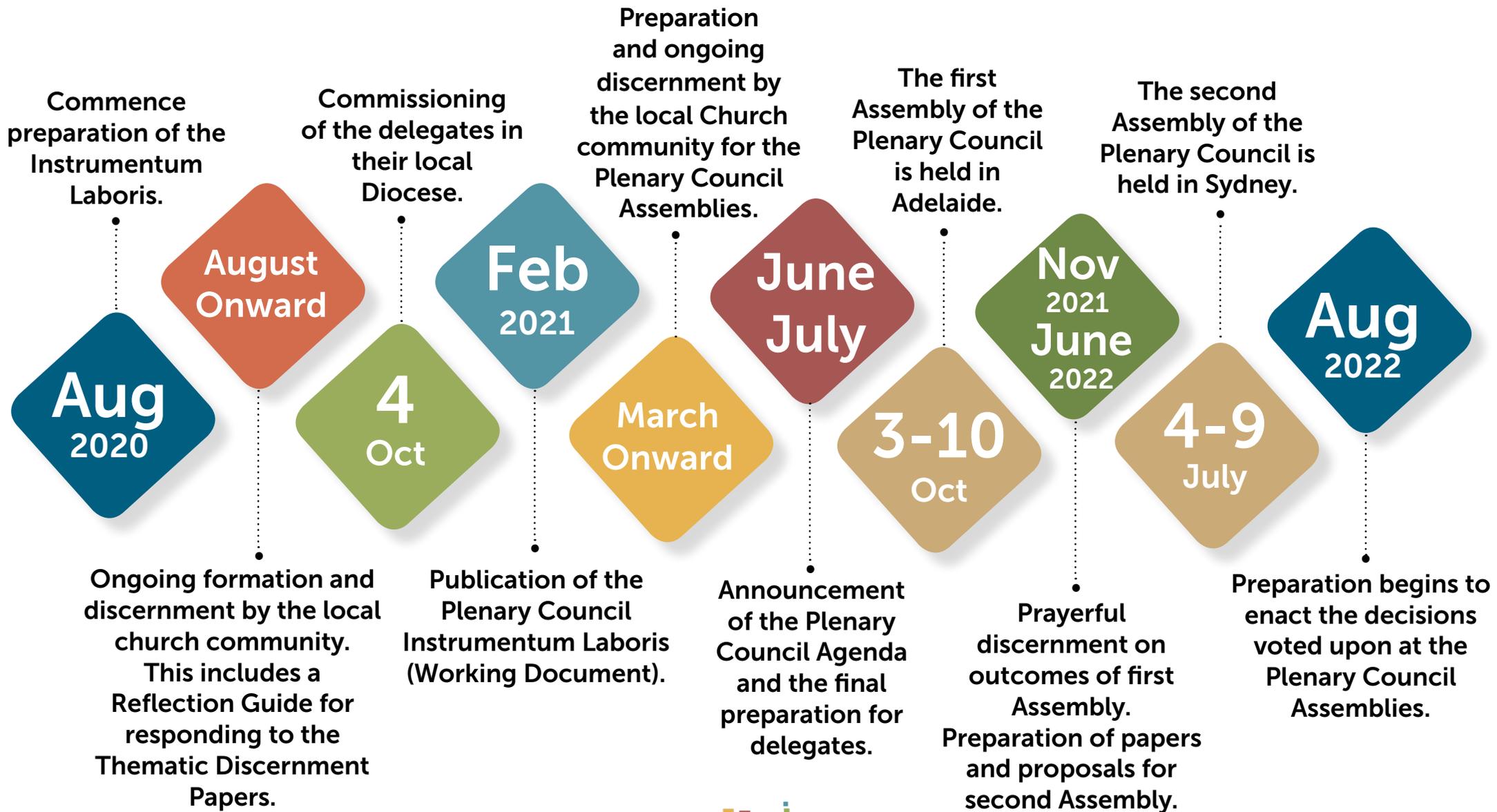
Mt 20:1-16

A reading from the holy Gospel according to
Matthew.

Why are you jealous because I am generous?

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a

THE PLENARY COUNCIL JOURNEY 2020 - 2022



Plenary Council 2020
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

Whilst every effort has been made to project accurate dates, changes may arise. Please check the Plenary Council website for the most recent version.