

Sunraysia Catholic Communities

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www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/parishes

Newsheet: Week 13



Fr. Michael McKinnon PP Fr. James Kerr Fr. Pat Flanagan

Parish Secretary: Carmel Russo

Office Hours: Tues - Fri 9:00am—4:00pm

Sacred Heart
Mildura

Our Lady of Lourdes
Werrimull

St. Francis Xavier
Irymple

St. Joseph's
Red Cliffs

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart
Merbein

*The Sunraysia Catholic Communities are committed to ensure the safety of all children and vulnerable people in our care.
Child Safety Officers:- Mildura—Christine Slattery, Merbein—Kevin Aston, Red Cliffs—Bernadette Gardner*

MILDURA

Recent Deaths: Geoffrey Minter, Joe Vallelonga

Anniversaries: Domenico Musolino

RED CLIFFS

Anniversaries: Joe Cufari (30 day anniversary), Ilario Piscioneri (30 day anniversary)

MERBEIN

Anniversaries: March 29th Domenico Manna; 31st Isobel Russell;
April 1st Harry Deed, Joy Andrews; 4th Cosimo Ierace.

(Only immediate family members of the deceased are permitted to arrange anniversary Masses.)

5th Sunday of Lent / Year A 28th & 29th March 2020

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live.

The Lord says this: I am now going to open your graves; I mean to raise you from your graves, my people, and lead you back to the soil of Israel. And you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people. And I shall put my spirit in you, and you will live, and I shall resettle you on your own soil; and you will know that I, the Lord, have said and done this – it is the Lord who speaks.

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) **With the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption.**

1. Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleading. (R.)

2. If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt, Lord, who would survive? But with you is found forgiveness: for this we revere you. (R.)

3. My soul is waiting for the Lord, I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord more than watchman for daybreak. (Let the watchman count on daybreak and Israel on the Lord.) (R.)

4. Because with the Lord there is mercy and fullness of redemption, Israel indeed he will redeem from all its iniquity. (R.)

Second Reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he will give life to your own mortal bodies.

People who are interested only in unspiritual things can never be pleasing to God. Your interests, however, are not in the unspiritual, but in the spiritual, since the Spirit of God has made his home in you. In fact, unless you possessed the Spirit of Christ you would not belong to him. Though your body may be dead it is because of sin, but if Christ is in you then your spirit is life itself because you have been justified; and if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, then he who raised Jesus from the dead will give life to your own mortal bodies through his Spirit living in you.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK

If you want a sick person prayed for, ask their permission. Names will be included for the duration of one month after which family or friends can request more time.

Mildura: Janelle Carney, Bill Antonie, Vincenzo Pileggi, Fr Denis Dennehy, Vince Alicastro, Teresita Eliquen-Dy (Manila), Melita Suppa, Celia-Dy Dela Tena, Perla Tuionisio, Lily Chumg, Lorna Kearney, Sandra McCarthy, Brian Ramsey, Hailey Crossan, Geraldine Brunner, Albis Dy

Merbein: Frank Chandler, Mary Avery, John Dorman

Red Cliffs: Bill Antonie, Martin Cameron, Maureen Lee, Edna Chua, Lily Flanagan, Barry Crosbie, Brendan Bell, Caterina

Brizzi, Marie Adams, Reynaldo Chan, Albis Dy, Roman & Joe Dy, Robert & Elizabeth Young, Maurice O'Connor

Please note: all Parish meetings for Mildura, Red Cliffs, Merbein, Robinvale & Ouyen are CANCELLED until further notice.

Our Parish Schools

Sacred Heart Mildura Principal: Des Lowry 5023 1204

St Paul's Mildura Principal: Vince Muscatello 5023 4567

OLSH Merbein Principal: Narelle Gallagher 5025 2258

St. Joseph's Red Cliffs Principal: Mark Gibson 5024 1654

St. Joseph's Secondary College Mildura

Principal: Marg Blythman 5018 8000

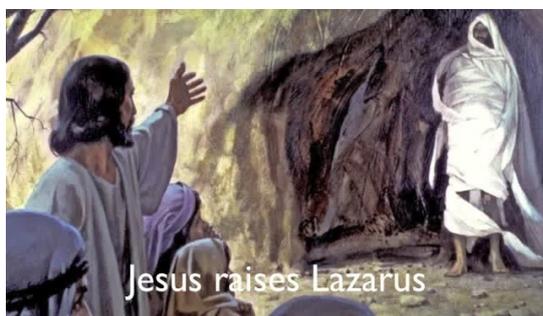
GOSPEL REFLECTION

Sunday's readings touch into the most profound of mysteries, the mysteries of life and death. To hold a new born child or to see the sick restored to health is to experience the wonder of life. On the other hand, sudden death can bring unimagined grief and pain. The news this morning (March 23) tells us that 14,641 people have died from Coronavirus over the past two months. Some have died alone. With this pandemic comes an extraordinary outpouring of grief and fear. This comes in the wake of bushfires that saw the death of some 1.25 billion animals in my country and deep sorrow at the prospect of species loss. Death brings tears, even anger. Little wonder that "life" becomes a metaphor for transformation and new beginnings or that "death" so often signifies deprivation and loss.

The gospel reading is about the death and restoration to life of Lazarus, "the one whom Jesus loved". It is the last of the seven "signs" in John's "book of signs" that reveal the "glory" of God. It is also the greatest of Jesus' signs. It functions as a catalyst for the events that lead to his death: "...from that day on they planned to put him to death" (11:53). It provides the occasion for Jesus to assert "I am the resurrection and the life" and to invite assent to that revelation of his identity. It reveals the compassion and tender heart of Jesus who weeps at the grief of Mary his friend and at the death of her brother. It also reveals the goodness in the hearts of those "Jews" who share her grief and who come to faith in Jesus who raises the dead to life.

Though the story revolves around the plight of Lazarus, Martha and Mary are the characters who, with Jesus, occupy centre stage and into whose faith journey we are invited to enter. Martha and Mary are identified as "sisters" who live in Bethany. Are they blood "sisters" or sisters in their love of Jesus and the community around him, or both? Lazarus is Mary's sick "brother". Martha will later claim him as her "brother". Might they all be part of a little faith community in Bethany rather than biological siblings? A brief notice alerts the reader to the imminent death of Jesus: "Mary is the one who anointed Jesus with perfumed oil and wiped his feet with her tears". The reader will later discover that Mary's anointing of Jesus is "for the day of [his] burial". As so often in John's gospel, misunderstanding and irony function to bring the actors in the drama, and to bring us as actors in the theatre of Christian life, to new levels of understanding and faith. Right now, in the face of a pandemic, we are called, as sisters and brothers across the globe, to play our part so that this illness may lead to greater love and even to "life".

Sr. Veronica Lawson rsm



Jesus raises Lazarus



Dear Parishioners,

We continue to pray God's blessing upon each of us during this difficult time. We are mindful of those who have died and their families as well as

those who are suffering from the virus. We keep in our prayers those who are employed in the health sector, many of whom are continually exposed to the risk of contamination.

Many people are suffering high levels of anxiety because of the uncertainty of present or future employment – let us pray for them as well as their employers who have to make tough decisions and live with the consequences.

And let us not forget political leaders and those committed to promoting social order. These are not easy times, so we pray that they may act wisely and prudently. And may we all use our common sense, excluding ourselves from as much social contact and physical interaction as possible. We are perfectly aware of what has occurred in other countries due to the fact that people chose to ignore such directives. Let us be responsible for and towards one another.

As a means for us to stay connected and united in prayer through the days ahead, we have set up a new Channel on Youtube. You can find it searching for "Sacred Heart Parish Mildura" or by following the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpujOBwu7YYU-LzJhmqE_VQ

There is only a welcome message up so far, but we will begin streaming the Sunday Eucharist from 5:30pm this Saturday. From then on we will do the same each week. You may then view it at home at a time that suits you. We will investigate further appropriate content as we move towards Holy Week.

Please pass this link on to other parishioners and to family and friends.

**PROJECT
COMPASSION**
GO FURTHER TOGETHER

FIFTH SUNDAY
OF LENT
29th March 2020

 **Caritas**
AUSTRALIA

Tawonga is a 10-year-old girl living with a disability, and struggling with food insecurity and discrimination in Malawi. Since participating in a Caritas Australia supported program, Tawonga's life has transformed.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to so this transformational program can continue to empower vulnerable women, men and children, and strengthen the communities around them.

Let's Go Further, Together. You can donate through Parish boxes and envelopes, by visiting www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion or phoning 1800 024 413.



REMINDER
DAYLIGHT SAVING ENDS
NEXT WEEKEND

so please turn your clocks **BACK**
1 hour.



IMAGINING LIFE AFTER COVID-19

To think of life after COVID-19 is daunting. The changes that it has brought to our daily lives have been vertiginous. Our awareness of its potential harm is still limited. We are only beginning to catch sight of the grim beast that slouches towards us threatening death and devastation in coming months.

Nevertheless, with so much rebuilding of society that will need to be done and so many opportunities that will present themselves for shaping a better society, we do need to think beyond the present.

Some possibilities are evident even in the disruption caused by our response to the threat. One of the most surprising features of that response has been flexibility, even in the face of visceral convictions. It is seen particularly in the abandonment of the economic ideology accepted by both major parties.

This equates the national good with economic growth. It centralises the freedom of competitive individuals in a free and minimally regulated market. Governments' role is to support the market by balancing their lean books, privatising community assets, and bullying individuals who cannot compete in society.

This view of the world is deeply held. Yet within a week or two the government has been persuaded to go heavily into debt, to prop up no-longer competitive businesses, to consider nationalising them if necessary, to give money to people who are unemployed and make it easier for people suddenly employed to access benefits, and to listen to experts other than party-line economists in framing policy.

All these measures effectively subordinate the economy to the health of the community. Though the change is explicable and commendable, I find surprising the lack of resistance to the betrayal of such a deeply rooted ideology. These and such other such changes to conventional wisdom, such as the encouragement to work from home, will create a demand for broader change.

'When reflecting on the society that we wish to build after coronavirus, we need to go beyond rebuilding the priorities and the ways of working that were there before. They were clearly inadequate.'

This will be resisted because of an abiding conflict between different priorities given to the economy and to the wider culture. This difference finds expression in the way that the individuals and community are valued, and to the relationship between the local and the global.

The regnant neoliberal construction makes economic growth the mark of a good society, and free competition by individuals and corporations central to that goal. Individuals' value lies in their contribution to economic activity.

Critics of this emphasis on the determinative priority of economic activity insisted that all human beings have a personal value that does not depend on their virtue or their participation in the economy. They are persons, not individuals. These critics emphasise, too, how important are the varied and deep relationships that enable persons to grow within communities.

This interlocking set of relationships gives all people a

responsibility to contribute to the larger community, and especially to its most vulnerable members. From this perspective the goal of government is to promote the growth of all persons in society, especially the most vulnerable. Economic growth is important but subservient to that goal. It must respect the other relationships that make a good world.

The second important relationship is between the universal and the local. Where economic growth led by individual freedom is the goal, the ideal world is seen as a single market in which competitive individuals and corporations should be able to compete freely, cooperate freely, sell freely and profit freely. From this perspective the local becomes essentially a brand name devised to sell the same goods to different regions.

Critics of this view emphasise the overriding importance of local relationships central to personal identity. These flow into broader relationships in groups based on culture, religion, political views, interests and so on. They reach out further to the relationships that make up nations and a world in which respect for persons and trust between communities dominates.

Seen from this perspective, the response to the COVID-19 crisis has shown how corrosive to good society the current ideology of governments has been. The response has accepted that economic development is a means to deeper goals of society, that people are more than competitive individuals, and that the good order, and now the survival, of societies depends on trust and cooperation between persons and their communities.

When reflecting on the society that we wish to build after coronavirus, we need to go beyond rebuilding the priorities and the ways of working that were there before. They were clearly inadequate. The challenge will be to resist the pressure to return to business as usual, and to incorporate into our thinking about the economy and our shaping of society what we have learned of the importance of cooperation, communication, trust and generosity — in a word, love.

Andrew Hamilton is consulting editor of Eureka Street.

Reflection...

*And the people stayed home.
And read books, and listened, and rested,
and exercised, and made art, and played games,
and learned new ways of being,
and were still.
And listened more deeply.
Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.
Some met their shadows.
And the people began to think differently.
And the people healed.
And, in the absence of people
living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and
heartless ways, the earth began to heal.
And when the danger passed, and the people
joined together again, they grieved their losses,
and made new choices, and dreamed new images,
and created new ways to live and heal the earth
fully, as they had been healed.*

Kitty O'Meara

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

There was a man named Lazarus who lived in the village of Bethany with the two sisters, Mary and Martha, and he was ill. – It was the same Mary, the sister of the sick man Lazarus, who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair. The sisters sent this message to Jesus, ‘Lord, the man you love is ill.’ On receiving the message, Jesus said, ‘This sickness will end not in death but in God’s glory, and through it the Son of God will be glorified.’

Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, yet when he heard that Lazarus was ill he stayed where he was for two more days before saying to the disciples, ‘Let us go to Judaea.’ The disciples said, ‘Rabbi, it is not long since the Jews wanted to stone you; are you going back again?’ Jesus replied:

‘Are there not twelve hours in the day?
A man can walk in the daytime without stumbling
because he has the light of this world to see by;
but if he walks at night he stumbles,
because there is no light to guide him.’

He said that and then added, ‘Our friend Lazarus is resting, I am going to wake him.’ The disciples said to him, ‘Lord, if he is able to rest he is sure to get better.’ The phrase Jesus used referred to the death of Lazarus, but they thought that by ‘rest’ he meant ‘sleep’, so Jesus put it plainly, ‘Lazarus is dead; and for your sake I am glad I was not there because now you will believe. But let us go to him.’ Then Thomas – known as the Twin – said to the other disciples, ‘Let us go too, and die with him.’

On arriving, Jesus found that Lazarus had been in the tomb for four days already. Bethany is only about two miles from Jerusalem, and many Jews had come to Martha and Mary to sympathise with them over their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus had come she went to meet him. Mary remained sitting in the house. Martha said to Jesus, ‘If you had been here, my brother would not have died, but I know that even now, whatever you ask of God, he will grant you.’ ‘Your brother’ said Jesus to her ‘will rise again.’ Martha said, ‘I know he will rise again at the resurrection on the last day.’ Jesus said:

‘I am the resurrection and the life.

If anyone believes in me, even though he dies he will live,
and whoever lives and believes in me

will never die. Do you believe this?’

‘Yes, Lord,’ she said ‘I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world.’

When she had said this, she went and called her sister Mary, saying in a low voice, ‘The Master is here and wants to see you.’ Hearing this, Mary got up quickly and went to him. Jesus had not yet come into the village; he was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who were in the house sympathising with Mary saw her get up so quickly and go out, they followed her, thinking that she was going to the tomb to weep there.

Mary went to Jesus, and as soon as she saw him she threw herself at his feet, saying, ‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.’ At the sight of her tears, and those of the Jews who followed her, Jesus said in great distress, with a sigh that came straight from the heart, ‘Where have you put him?’ They said, ‘Lord, come and see.’ Jesus wept; and the Jews said, ‘See how much he loved him!’ But there were some who remarked, ‘He opened the eyes of the blind man, could he not have prevented this man’s death?’ Still sighing, Jesus reached the tomb: it was a cave with a stone to close the opening. Jesus said, ‘Take the stone away.’ Martha said to him, ‘Lord, by now he will smell; this is the fourth day.’ Jesus replied, ‘Have I not told you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?’ So they took away the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes and said:

‘Father, I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand round me, so that they may believe it was you who sent me.’ When he had said this, he cried in a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, here! Come out!’

The dead man came out, his feet and hands bound with bands of stuff and a cloth round his face. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, let him go free.’

Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what he did believed in him.

