

**Reflection on the Gospel-Feast of Christ the King Year A
(Matthew 25:31-46)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

“It has long been a common custom to give to Christ the metaphorical title of King.” These are the words of Pope Pius XI who established this feast between two world wars in the hope of counteracting the growing secularism “in public affairs and politics” and finding a way towards global peace. Peace would never be achieved, wrote Pope Pius XI, until and unless individuals and nations accept the “rule of our Saviour”.

In some ways, hope for the global reign of the Prince of Peace seems more remote than ever. For many peace-loving people, the rise of the so-called Islamic State and of Boko Haram marked new low points in more than a century of violent and ongoing conflict which has claimed the lives of some 160 to 180 million people across the globe. From a Christian perspective, the world needs the sort of leadership that Jesus of Nazareth advocated in first century Palestine, the kind of leadership that Pope Francis is offering our world.

The gospel for today provides a blueprint for Christian living in general and for leadership in particular. Matthew presents Jesus as both shepherd and sheep: as judge and king on the one hand and as suffering humanity (“the least”) on the other. Works of mercy are the measure of justice or righteousness. Those who feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, and set the prisoners free are “the righteous/the sheep” who will inherit God’s empire or kin-dom and have life. Those who fail in these respects are the unrighteous/the goats who fail to recognise the presence of the shepherd/king in the suffering of “the least”. Why sheep and goats? While goats grazed with the sheep, they were never imaged as God’s people, somewhat unfairly, I suggest. “Sheep”, on the other hand, is a frequent biblical designation for the people of God’s fold.

This gospel story is replete with mixed metaphors. It is the gospel source of the seven spiritual and corporal works of mercy that have informed the Christian way of life for centuries. It focusses on suffering humanity. In proclaiming an eighth work of mercy, care for our common home, Pope Francis has asked us to expand our horizons and to extend our concern to the suffering of the whole Earth community, human and other-than-human.

The Feast of Christ the King brings the church year to a close. It invites us to consider ways to achieve the things that make for peace. If we wish God’s reign of peace to be realised on planet Earth, then we might heed the invitation of Pope Francis to care for our common home: to engage in “grateful contemplation of God’s world” on the one hand and in daily gestures that “break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness” on the other.

BULLETIN FOR FEAST OF CHRIST, UNIVERSAL KING, YR A



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul’s, Buninyong

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 27th NOVEMBER 2017**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm 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	9.00 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	10.30 AM

1st SUNDAY IN ADVENT, YEAR B

READINGS	First: Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1.3-8
	Second: 1 Corinthians 1:3-9
	Gospel: Mark 13:33-37

ANNIVERSARIES: Tracey Howard, Frank O’Loughlan.

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, Mary Martin, Maria Wilson.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 2:** B. Perkins ©, F. Nolan, J. Lewis.

Next Week: **Team 3:** M. O'Donnell ©, L. O'Donnell.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 714.70
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Credit Cards:	\$ 3,477.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>260.00</u>
		\$ 4,751.70

PRESBYTERY: \$ 670.00

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

Meetings commence this Thursday, 30th November at 10.00 am in the Church meeting room.

ADVENT REFLECTION BOOKLETS

A great opportunity to focus on the events that we celebrate at Christmas. *Advent Reflection Booklets for 2017* with new prayers and reflections appropriate for the upcoming season of Advent. They are an excellent resource to help prepare your mind and heart for Christmas. A limited number of books are available near the Piety Stall (Gold coin donation if you like).

WANTED—HANDY PERSON

A handy person is wanted to install some simple watering systems to assist Margaret to keep the gardens along the front fence looking great without her having to drag hoses or carry buckets of water. Please contact Jim on 5332 6611 if you can help. He will put together a work team. Thank you to Margaret for her great gardening work—the grounds look beautiful!

ANOINTING MASS

Will be held on Thursday, 7th December at 2.00 pm followed by afternoon tea in St Alipius Hall. If you need transport please contact a member of the Caring Group. We would appreciate the contribution of a plate for afternoon tea.

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

See invitation on the Notice Board of OLHC Parish, Wendouree, *Christmas Day Lunch*.

CHURCH WORKING BEE

At St Alipius Church next Sunday following the 9.00 am Mass to clean and prepare for Christmas. Please bring dusters, vacuum cleaners, window cleaning equipment, ladder, etc.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We invite you to be part of our annual Christmas Appeal. We are most grateful for the support we receive from our parish as it enables us to continue our assistance to those in need in the local area.

We share with you the following facts to give an insight into the need that exists within the Ballarat Area. In the twelve-month period from 01/11/16 the Society distributed support to the value of \$620,000. This is an increase of 13% on the previous year. Of this amount \$110,000 went to Ballarat East residents. In addition this our bread run provided goods to the value of \$24,000 annually.

Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall.

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible and are all used in the Ballarat area.

MASAC

As we prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate the birth of Christ we have invited MASAC (Making a Scene at Christmas) to visit St Alipius Parish School. Nativity Scenes from at least 40 different nations from 40 continents except Antarctica will be displayed for your enjoyment.

We invite all parishioners to share in the joy of Christmas and view nativity scenes that:

- illustrate the key parts of the stories—from Annunciation to the flight into Egypt
- explore a social justice element of Christ's birth
- ask the question - if Jesus was born here now, what would it be like?

This display will be open from 3.30 - 4.00 pm on Tuesday, 28th November in the St Alipius Parish Hall. We hope you can join us.

COMMUNIAL RECONCILIATION

Tuesday, 5th December in St Alipius Church at 7.00 pm.

FAREWELL FOR BRENDAN & JILLIAN MAHER

As you are all well aware our dear friends Brendan and Jillian Maher are taking up a new opportunity next year in South Gippsland. Brendan has accepted the position of Principal at St Mary's in Yarram.

Brendan has served as Principal at two of our Parish schools, St Alipius Parish School and Emmaus Catholic Primary School. He has been an amazing leader of students, staff, families and our wonderful parish. We will have the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Brendan and Jillian for their commitment to our community at a Parish Mass at St Alipius on Sunday, 10th December at 10.30 am. We invite everyone to join Brendan & Jillian for a cuppa in St Alipius Hall after Mass and ask that families bring a plate to share. Thank you!