

Reflection on the Gospel — Passion Sunday Year A (Matthew 26:14-27:66)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

This year, we are invited to hear Matthew's passion narrative through the lens of a global community threatened by a virus. The prospect of untimely death for many is an ever present reality. Even more abhorrent to most of us is the ongoing practice of capital punishment, particularly when a just person is put to death for specious reasons or to political ends. That's what confronts us in today's gospel, although the gospel writers pay little attention to the details of the suffering and death of Jesus: they are more interested in the meaning of these events.

The Romans execute Jesus outside Jerusalem when the city is filled with Jewish pilgrims, there for the Passover festival. For Jesus' friends and followers, every subsequent Passover is celebrated in the light of his death by crucifixion. They share their memories and reflect on the meaning of his death in the light of their sacred traditions. Every element of the Passover story, the ancient story of God's deliverance of their ancestors, resonates with echoes of the experience of Jesus who is now present to them in a new way. Little wonder, then, that the final events of Jesus' life were probably the first part of his story to be committed to writing.

Though Matthew draws much of his material from Mark, he fashions the tradition into a new narrative and adds several distinctive features. "To fulfil all righteousness" is Jesus' stated mission (3:15). He has declared "blessed" those who suffer for the sake of righteousness (justice or right relationship)" (5:10). He now embodies his own teaching as the just or righteous one, the one in right relationship with God. The prayer on his lips as he faces death (Psalm 22) is that of the suffering just Israelite who is utterly faithful to his mission and whose trust in God never fails.

There are hints that Jesus' death is not the end, but is rather the inauguration of the new age of God's empire, a compassionate alternative to the brutality of Rome. In response to the high priest Caiaphas, Jesus points beyond death to his resurrected life "at the right hand of power...." Extraordinary signs follow his death: the tearing of the temple curtain; the trembling of the earth; the recognition by the Roman centurion and his companions that this man is of God; and finally, the opening of the graves and appearance of the dead in anticipation of the final resurrection. These signs offer the hope of reversal to all who have witnessed the events surrounding Jesus' death. They offer hope to the women who have followed him all the way from Galilee and "ministered to him". They offer hope to the male disciples who have deserted or denied him, to faithful disciples like Joseph of Arimathea, and even to his Roman executioners. They have the potential to bring hope to us all at this time, especially to those who are putting their lives on the line for others.

ST ALIPIUS PARISH — BALLARAT EAST & BUNINYONG PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD — YEAR A, SUNDAY 5TH APRIL, 2020

*Our parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity
of all children and vulnerable adults.*

St Alipius' Parish Church
82 Victoria Street, BALLARAT EAST 3350

SS Peter & Paul's Church
701 Fisker St, BUNINYONG 3357

Contact Details

Parish Office & Presbytery: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East 3350

Hours: 9.30am - 1.30pm Tues, Thurs, Fri
Telephone: 5332 6611
Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Parish Website: www.ballarat.catholic.org.au
SAP Liturgy website: www.sapliturgy.net.au
SAP Liturgy email: sapliturgy@gmail.com

Parish Priest: Fr. Jorge De Chavez OSJ
Parish Coordinator: Lucy O'Beirne
Finance Officer: Kerrie McTigue

Funeral Ministry: Carmel Flynn & Kathy Curran
Child Safety Officer: Roxanne Leed
Liturgy Coordinator: David Santamaria

Some Online Mass Options

St Patrick's Cathedral Parish, Ballarat: Mass livestreamed daily at 11.30am via St. Patrick's Cathedral facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9>

Pope Francis' Daily Mass: www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta.pagelist.html

Prayer for Spiritual Communion:

"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart ... I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You."
Pope Francis

Readings for the Sacred Paschal Triduum and Easter Sunday — Year A

	<u>First Reading</u>	<u>Second Reading</u>	<u>Gospel Reading</u>
Holy Thursday	Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14	1 Corinthians 11:23-26	John 13:1-15
Good Friday	Isaiah 52:13 - 53:12	Hebrews 4:14-16, 5:7-9	John 18:1 - 19:42
Holy Saturday Suite	[Gen 1:1 - 2:2; Gen 22:1-18; Exodus 14:15 - 15:1; Is 54:5-14; Is 55:1-11; Baruch 3:9-15, 32 - 4:4; Ezek 36:16-28; Rom 6:3-11] Matthew 28:1-10		
Easter Sunday	Acts 10:34, 37-43	Colossians 3;1-4	John 20:1-9

Deaths: Lydia Montilla (Phillippines)

Anniversaries: Minnie Cafe, Dorothy Cafe

Unwell: We pray for Kateri Byrnes, Carmel Doherty, Pat Hogan, Cathy Jones, Peter Martin, Letitia Simmons, Margie Wilmott and all who are unwell

Spiritual Communion

The Liturgy group has created a Spiritual Communion Liturgy video presentation for this week's celebration of Passion Sunday. If you would like to access the presentation, please visit the [SAP Liturgy website](#) or [THIS LINK](#) for direct access. If you would like the presentations for Holy Week and the following Sundays during the period of restrictions, please send an email to the SAP liturgy group at sapliturgy@gmail.com re. *Presentation Email List* and include *Your Name, Email address & Location*.

Watch Easter Services Live on National TV — St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney

Watch Channel 7 / Prime 7 / 7plus to see the following liturgies broadcast commercial free:

- ◇ **The Lord's Passion, Good Friday:** Friday 10th April 2020 at 3pm;
- ◇ **Easter Sunday Mass:** Sunday 12th April 2020 10.30am.

Resources

- ◆ **Ballarat Diocese Website:** www.ballarat.catholic.org.au.
- ◆ **St Alipius' Parish Liturgy Website:** www.sapliturgy.net.au
- ◆ **Blessed Palms:** available from the presbytery verandah from Palm Sunday.
- ◆ **Holy Week Prayer sheets:** There are five separate pamphlets from *Liturgy Brisbane* covering Palm Sunday, The End of Lent, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. Paper sets of these are available from the presbytery verandah.

Receiving the Weekly Notice-Sheet — How to Get Your Copy

Via the [St Alipius' Parish website](#), via **email** (please contact the parish office) or **paper copies** are now available on the presbytery verandah; holy water also available.

Planned Giving, Special and Loose Collection Offerings

Whilst organised direct debit offerings can continue, contributions made via envelopes or cash (in a sealed and marked envelope) can be posted through the mail-slot of the presbytery whenever convenient. Envelopes for Easter are available on the table on the presbytery porch. More options regarding 'loose plate' collections will be available soon.

Good Friday Collection

The needs of the Holy Land continue to be great and the contribution of the Catholic faithful each Good Friday, through the traditional collection at the 3.00pm Liturgy, is absolutely crucial for the functioning of the Church in this area as it provides a significant source of income.

— Fr Mario Debattista OFM, Holy Land Commissary of Australia

Please place your contribution in an envelope marked "Good Friday — Holy Land Collection" and post through the presbytery mail-slot. Many thanks.

Thank You to Those who Contributed to Last Week's Collections

Parish:	Envelopes: \$ 765.00	Presbytery: \$ 447.00
	Loose: \$ nil	
	Direct Debits: \$ 971.00	
	\$ 1736.00	



Sixth Sunday of Lent
5th April 2020



Dominic, 47, is a father of six from Papua New Guinea. In 2016, he became involved with Caritas Australia's partner, Centre of Hope who runs a safe house and family anonymous programs and turned a difficult life and an unhappy relationship around.

Please donate to Project Compassion 2020 to help support the Safe House project and help bring greater harmony to families in Papua New Guinea.

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

Thankyou to all the people who sent messages, cards & gifts or who kept me in their thoughts and offered prayers for me on the occasion of my 50th birthday. God bless. *Fr Jorge*

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Review (RCIA)

St Alipius and Ss Peter & Paul's Communities

We are inviting nominations for two representative from each community to be part of a rewarding and fulfilling ministry within the RCIA Team. Please forward nominations to John Clonan (0478770598) and for further information outlining the role and time commitment.

St Alipius' Parish Finance Committee — Vacancies Open

We have received one nomination to date and would welcome more, particularly from the St Alipius' faith community. Please email the parish office with the name of the nominee and reason for suitability by Easter. The committee meets 5 to 6 times a year and offers the opportunity for in depth appreciation of how the parish operates and to be part of vital planning for our future in a friendly and respectful environment.

Speak Up for Justice for Refugees

As our community grapples with the health, safety and economic crisis of the coronavirus pandemic we must not forget that refugees and people seeking asylum here in Australia, and those held offshore, are still struggling with the injustices, insecurity and cruelty of the current policies. This is a time for us to speak up for justice, and for a safer future for all – especially those who are most vulnerable in our communities. Please visit the *Speak Up for Justice for Refugees Virtual event* in lieu of the traditional *Palm Sunday Walk for Refugees*, available online from Good Friday at 3pm. Visit www.refugeeadvocacynetwork.org.au.

Mercy Connect Ballarat/Bendigo Co-ordinator

Mercy Connect is a program within Mercy Works which recruits, trains and supports volunteers to mentor refugee students and their families as they settle in Australia. We are seeking a Co-ordinator of our Ballarat/Bendigo Mercy Connect Education project. A key focus will be expanding the project within the Bendigo region. It is a two day a week position and based in Bendigo. Further information <https://www.mercyworks.org.au/job-opportunities/>

St Vincent De Paul Call Centre — 5334 2844 lines open 24/7