

Reflection on the Gospel-18th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B (John 6:24-35)

-Veronica M. Lawson RSM

We have become so familiar with the sayings of Jesus that we can easily fail to notice the earth elements in the text or the constructed environment and treat them simply as backdrop for human activity rather than as having value in themselves. Jesus' claim "I am the bread of life" invites us to consider bread as matter essential to life as well as a metaphor for the God's Word become flesh. It invites us to consider what both material and symbolic dimensions of the statement might mean for living a gospel way of life.

We might note the close attention in this passage to the material and social context of Jesus' words. Boats, a town (Capernaum), the sea (of Galilee), the land on the "other side" all feature in this text. For those who have visited Galilee and seen the first century boat preserved in Kibbutz Ginnosar, reference to boats might evoke the diversity of wooden materials used in boat construction, in this case mostly oak and cedar. It might also alert us to the human communities that interacted with the material world to build the boats so integral to the life of the lake communities.

Those who have seen images of Capernaum will be aware of the basalt building materials used in the construction of the houses and might be led to wonder at the extraordinary processes of rock formation. The Sea of Galilee has agency in so many gospel stories. Here it is mentioned in passing, but must not be ignored, especially as we become aware of how perilously endangered it is since its waters have been exploited for irrigation over several decades. The "other side" evokes the rich agricultural land generally referred to as the "bread-basket" of the region. Mention of the crowd introduces children as well as women and men searching for Jesus. In other words, the text invites us into the whole Galilean world encoded in the text.

The question, "Rabbi, *when* did you come *here*?", is about time and place. Jesus is addressed as teacher, as one who can lead his questioners from one physical and metaphorical place to another. It is his response to this question that introduces the discussion about bread. This in turn opens up a whole world of earth activity, of sun and soil and seed and plant, a world of planting and harvesting, of processing and cooking. Ironically, the words of the Johannine Jesus with their focus on the symbolic meaning of the bread turn his questioners away from the physical, material Earth elements that constitute both bread and flesh. Pope Francis invites us in his recent encyclical, *Laudato Si*, to value and respect the material world. The more we do so, the more attuned we will be to the challenge of Jesus' claim for our living of the gospel.

BULLETIN FOR 18th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

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MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 3rd AUGUST 2015

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| 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 |
| SATURDAY: | Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10.00 am |

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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| ST. ALIPIUS | SAT | 6.00 PM |
| | SUN | 9.00 AM |
| BUNINYONG | SUN | 10.30 AM |

READINGS - THE 19th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

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| First: | 1 King 19:4-8 |
| Second: | Ephesians 4:30-5:2 |
| Gospel: | John 6:41-51 |

RECENT DEATHS:

June Bolton, Moira Lewis

ANNIVERSARIES:

Ivan Boddle, Frank Pearce, Norman & Jane Perkins, Hilda Duggan

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Nell McGettigan, Barb Gleeson, Pamela Hayes, Anthony Conroy, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Mary-Rose McLaren, Doreen Forbes, Mona Shillito, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 7**: K. Cummins ©, J. O'Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck.
Next Week: **Team 8**: B. Ridsdale ©, M. Ridsdale, B. McKeegan.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

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| PARISH: | Envelopes: \$ 1,037.00 |
| | Loose money: \$ 300.00 |
| | Direct debits: \$ 872.00 |
| | \$ 2,209.00 |
| PRESBYTERY: | \$ 864.00 |

EVENTS

- Friday, 7th August **Caring Group Meeting** in the hall at 10.00 am.
- Wednesdays **Rosary** in the Chapel of Visitation at St. John of God Hospital at 12.45 pm. All welcome.
- Wednesday afternoons **Legion of Mary** meets at Nazareth House, Mill St. Ballarat, at 1.30 pm. Enquiries: 5332 8624 or 5332 7227.
- **Legion of Mary Prayers:** Prayers of Petition to Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, will be held at St. Patrick's Cathedral from 11.15 am - 11.45 am on 1st & 3rd Thursdays.

SUGGESTION

A small group of families and people directly affected by sexual abuse in this parish met recently to discuss how we might mark an admission of the abuse and its effect, and seek to move forward. They suggested that we should consult the parish and ask for ideas. You are invited to make your suggestions via the **suggestion box** at the entrance to St. Alipius church, or by email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

THE JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAM

Go to www.jcr.org.au or www.itunes.jcr.org.au where you can listen anytime and subscribe to weekly shows by email.

BISHOP'S SECRETARY

The Secretary in the Bishop's office, Bernadette O'Loughlin, will soon be retiring from this position. Bishop Paul is seeking expressions of interest in the secretarial role. An application package can be accessed on the website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au - Our Diocese - Employment. Enquiries can be directed to Cathy Dunbar: 5337 7131 or cdunbar@ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au Applications will close at 10 am on Monday, 10th August.

R.C.I.A. - RITE OF INITIATION OF ADULTS

An invitation is extended by the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation) Team to those who wish to enquire about the Catholic faith or those wishing to know more about the process of becoming a Catholic in today's church. An enquiry gathering will be held in St. Alipius Parish Church Meeting Room on Saturday, 15th August at 10.00 am. For further information please contact Fr. Adrian at the Parish Office: 5332 6611.

KEEP THIS DATE FREE

Fr. Robert McCulloch will explore extremism, acts of hatred and Christian compassion.

On Friday, 21st August at Nazareth House Hall, Mill St. Ballarat.

6 pm - Mass; 7.30 pm - Responding to Extremism

Presentation followed by Q & A and Supper

Entry by donation. All welcome.

Enquiries: 041 175 045; 5332 2103 or annekav123@yahoo.co.uk

COLLOQUIUM ON THE ENCYCLICAL

To be presented by Fr. Denis Edwards at OLHC Wendouree Mercy Centre on Tuesday, 25th August from 9.00 - 4.00 pm. All are welcome to attend. Enquiries and bookings to Sue Seouls: sue.seouls@ballarat.catholic.org.au; 0409 401 329 OR scrowe@ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au; 0419 887 274. Booking is required for catering purposes. Cost: \$15.00 for morning tea and lunch.