

**Reflection on the Gospel-21st Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
(John 6:60-69)**

-Veronica M. Lawson RSM

'To whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.'

If we have trouble understanding and coming to terms with some of the teachings of Jesus in the gospel, then we can take some comfort from the reaction of the disciples in today's gospel. It seems that it was not only the members of the Jewish synagogue who were offended by his teaching, but also those who had accepted Jesus as Messiah or Christ and had joined the community of believers.

"This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?" they complain. Once more, Jesus' response introduces new teaching, teaching that can only raise more questions in their minds. He links "spirit" with "life". Having used the term "flesh" of his body and of the life that he offers to those who eat of his flesh, he now introduces an element of doubt: flesh is now "useless"! It is typical of John to use the same word in a variety of ways. Here "flesh" is used negatively and metaphorically to refer to human weakness and sinfulness in contrast with "spirit" which evokes the creative spirit of God that moved over the waters at creation and the spirit that informed the word of the prophets.

The Johannine Jesus lays the ground for offering progressively deeper insights into his identity and destiny and into the meaning of the Christian life as the gospel narrative unfolds. The reference to his ascending recalls the earlier part to the gospel where Jesus is presented as the pre-existent one, the one who comes from God and has already ascended to God (John 3:13). Once again, we are confronted with an ancient cosmology that places God in the heavens above. After his death, Jesus will tell Mary Magdalene that he has not yet ascended and instructs her to tell the disciples that he is ascending to God (20:17). It seems that John wants to keep emphasising the origins of Jesus as the eternal Word and Wisdom of God.

There are many disciples who refuse to grapple with the complexities and implications of this teaching and they turn away. Jesus asks his closest followers if they too will desert. Peter speaks for himself and his companions when he declares their undying allegiance: *"To whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life."* Eternal life is the Johannine equivalent of the "kingdom of God" or "of the heavens" of the other gospels. Most of us have wanted to abandon our commitment at some time or another. Peter's declaration is a sobering one for us in times of doubt and an encouragement for those of us who seek to understand more deeply and keep believing despite the challenges.

BULLETIN FOR 21st SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 24th AUGUST 2015**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Marcy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
SATURDAY:	No Sacrament of Reconciliation

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

READINGS - THE 22nd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

First:	Deuteronomy 4:1-2.6-8
Second:	James 1:17-18.21-22.27
Gospel:	Mark 7:1-8.14-15.21-23

RECENT DEATHS: Mary Giles.

ANNIVERSARIES: Leo Dodd, Jim Caddy, Mervyn Roach, Lee Roach, Mary Roach, Dennis O'Driscoll, Ether O'Driscoll, Margie Goldsmith, Marbeth Torpy.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Anthony Conroy, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Mary-Rose McLaren, Mona Shillito, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic, Barbara Keirl.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: .**Team 10:** J. Kennedy ©, P. Kennedy, L. Mullane.

Next Week: .**Team 11:** P. Saunders ©, M. Saunders.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,748.50
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Credit cards:	\$ 3,874.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>395.00</u>
		\$ 6,317.50
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 752.00

EVENTS

- Wednesday, 26th August **Social afternoon** in the Mercy Centre at 2.00 pm.
- 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

GUEST SPEAKER

Humanitarian and refugee advocate Julian Burnside will be speaking on Sunday, 23rd August at 2.00 pm at the Ballarat Library on the topic Asylum Seekers - the way forward? All welcome. No cost.

COLLOQUIUM ON THE ENCYCLICAL

To be presented by Fr. Denis Edwards at OLHC Wendouree on Tuesday, 25th August from 9.00 - 4.00 pm. All are welcome to attend. Enquiries and bookings to Sue Searls: sue.searls@ballarat.catholic.org.au 0409 401 329 or scrowe@ceoballarat.catholic.edu.au 0419 887 274. Cost: \$15.00.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

In response to our "Time and Talent" registrations which accompanied the recent Stewardship Program, those people who expressed an interest in becoming Ministers of the Eucharist have been asked to attend a formation night with Sr. Veronica Lawson. Veronica will discuss various scripture passages which refer to the Eucharist. **Because this will be such a good opportunity for deepening our own appreciation of Eucharist we have decided to open the evening to anyone who would like to join in.**

St. Alipius Hall, Wednesday, 2nd September 7.00 - 8.30 pm.

So that we might be prepared, please let us know on 5332 6611 or ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au if you will be present.

AUXILIARY COFFEE PARTY

Where: Nazareth House Hall

When: Friday, 4th September 2015

Time: 1.30 pm

Admission: \$5.00

Details: Entrance Prize, Devonshire Tea, Raffle, Spinning Wheel, Produce and Fancy Goods Stall

SACRED HEART COLLEGE REUNION—CLASS OF 1965

A gathering is being planned for anyone who attended the College from Yr 7 1960 to matriculation 1965 on **7th November** at the Barkly, Main Rd at 12.00 noon. For further information contact Jan Mullaly (Favaloro) on 0418 522 180 email janmull65@gmail.com, or Carmel Frost (Frith) email carmel@frost.net.au or Anne Mibus (Watt) email annemibus@me.com

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Forget life's tensions and interruptions and rekindle the closeness, intimacy, love and romance that brought you together. There is no group discussion, and couples and a priest present the weekend. In Melbourne on **23-25 October** starting at 7.00 pm on Friday and finishing at 5.00 pm on Sunday. Accommodation and all meals provided. Information and bookings to Marianne and Marcel on 9733 0997 email vicbookings@wwme.org.au