

Gospel Reflection – 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C (Luke 4:21-30)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

This week's gospel reading continues the story of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth. At first he is universally accepted: the townspeople marvel at the gracious words he utters and identify him as Joseph's son. By the end of the story, however, these same people actually try to kill him. So, what happens in between to cause such a dramatic change of heart? These are religious people, not an unruly street mob. They are friends of the family. They are familiar with their sacred texts and traditions and presumably want to understand them more fully. In fact, they are like most of us who take time out on a weekly basis to come together in worship and prayer with those who share our faith.

Unfortunately, the people of Nazareth seem to be carrying a sense of exclusive entitlement to God's favour, as well as some deeply entrenched prejudices against the neighbouring Syrians and Phoenicians. Their history is largely one of conflict with neighbours, of struggle for survival, and some are unwilling to relinquish their unhealed local and national grievances. When Jesus suggests that God's prophetic and healing power is accessible to and may even be more readily received among foreigners than within Israel, their anger knows no bounds: it spills over into violence. They have little patience with the implicit criticism and the prophetic challenge of his words.

One of the problems with the narrative is that Jesus seems to deliberately provoke a negative reaction. There are other problems as well: there is no cliff in Nazareth from which the enraged crowd could cast him to his death, and it is highly unlikely that people of this tiny town of two to four hundred Galilean Jews would resort to murdering one of their own for what they perceive as a verbal assault. So what is going on? It would seem that the gospel writer is putting elements of later stories about the violent treatment of Jesus and his followers into this episode in order to foreshadow what is to come.

The story thus becomes a microcosm of the gospel as a whole. When the message is comforting, the messenger is well received. When it is less palatable, the messenger is in danger of being attacked, more often than not at the hands of people who are basically good, people like us. Unchecked assumptions, deep-seated biases, and uncontrolled emotions will function to bring the anointed prophet of the God of Israel to a violent death. This story invites us to check our assumptions and our biases lest we turn to physical, verbal, or emotional violence in the face of prophetic challenge.

BULLETIN for the 4th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C



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, 1st FEBRUARY 2016

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am Opening Year Mass -St. Francis Xavier 12.00 pm Opening Year Mass -St. Alipius
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 5th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C

First:	Isaiah 6:1-8
Second:	1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Gospel:	Luke 5:1-11

ANNIVERSARIES: Helen Shillito, Riley Shillito, Mary Nolan.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Anthony Conroy, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Mary Barnett, Frank Forbes, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Margaret Gallagher, Pat Pearce.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: .**Team 9:** J. Patton ©, B. Brisbane, J. O'Brien, J. Gibcus.

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



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,433.80
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>395.00</u>
		\$ 2,128.80
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 758.00

MERCY CONNECT BALLARAT - Supporting refugee students in local schools

Volunteer mentors needed.

Mercy Works is currently recruiting volunteers to support refugee students in Ballarat Schools through their Mercy Connect Project. The volunteer commitment is approximately three hours per week for four school terms. Experience working in an educational setting is preferred, but you will receive ongoing training and support. Initial training for new volunteers will be held in February 2016. Contact Paulene Barton - Mercy Connect Project Coordinator on 0417 624 330 or email: mercyconnectb@gmail.com for information and application form. Applications close on February 5th, 2016.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Mass of the Oils: Monday, 21st March at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat

CARING GROUP

The first meeting of the Caring Group will be held on Friday, 5th February in the hall at 10.00 am.

LENTEN DISCUSSION GROUPS

Anyone who would like to be involved in a Lenten Discussion Group is invited to contact the Parish Office on 5332 6611 or email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

ST. ALIPIUS PARISH BOOKLET

We are presently producing an information booklet about the groups operating within our parish for newcomers and those who'd like to make contact and/or become involved. Thank you to the groups who have provided information about the booklet. Brief descriptions of groups/ministries, outlining their purpose/activities, meeting times etc. and a contact name and phone number/ email address can be emailed to Kristen Murray: kristenmurray1@optusnet.com.au or left at the presbytery. We hope also to include several images in the booklet so will be taking snaps over the next couple of weekends. If you have photos of group/church activities you're happy to share, please email them to Kristen or leave them at the presbytery.

RITE OF INITIATION (RCIA)

Our catechumen Keran Mewett and candidates Kate Gale and Helen de Weerd continue their journey with dismissals beginning this weekend. Next weekend at the 6.00 pm Saturday night Mass the Rite of Naming will be celebrated in preparation for the Rite of Election (Saturday, 13th February) where they will be presented to the Bishop at St. Patrick's Cathedral. At the conclusion of the ceremony all are invited to join the Bishop in St. Patrick's Hall for a light lunch. For further information contact the Pastoral Ministry Office, ph: 5337 7159 or email: pastoralministry@ballarat.catholic.org.au

DAMASCUS COLLEGE OPEN MORNINGS

Damascus College warmly invites all families to attend our upcoming Open Mornings. The Open Mornings will include a tour of the College by the current Damascus students and the opportunity to ask questions. It is also a great way to see the inner workings of the College on a typical school day.

OPEN MORNINGS: Thursday, 4th and 11th February, 9.00 am - 10.30 am

PLEASE NOTE: Enrolment Applications for Year 7 2017 close on Friday, 12th February 2016

**STUDENTS OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND
OPEN MORNINGS**

HOUSE FOR LEASE

Due to one of our parishioners being admitted to Nazareth House, there is a 3 bedroom house in Victoria St. for lease. For further details please contact Paul Mullane on 0438 363 269.