



Parish Newsletter - February 28th 2016

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Parish Priest – Fr Gary Jones gary.jones@ballarat.catholic.org.au

St Michael's Parish Primary School- Principal: Mr Chris Pollard.

St. Joseph's Blampied

Mass Celebrated first & third Saturday (Sat vigil 6.30pm)

Diocesan Website: www.ballarat.catholic.org.au



Anniversaries of Death: Pauline Carmody, John Hare, Frank Wright, Eva Lynch, Jo Harrison, Kathleen Bainbridge, Maria Phelan

4th Sunday Lent - March 6th

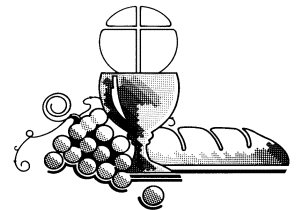
Welcome: B Daghish, J Egan **Reader:** S Whiffen **Commentator:** U Kroeger

Ministers: M Coffey, M Bruce, L Dwyer **Offertory:** C Collins, B Capes

Counters: Feb 28 (team 8) J Barker

Mar 6 (team 1) L & M Righetti

Sacristy: C Collins



Prayer of Pope Francis for the Jubilee

Lord Jesus Christ,

you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.
Show us your face and we will be saved.

You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:
let the Church be your visible face in the world.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing,
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor,

We ask this of you, Lord Jesus, through the intercession of Mary, Mother of
Mercy; you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and
ever.
Amen.

Last Week's Collections: *Two collections are taken up after the Prayers of the Faithful. The 1st Collection is the Presbytery Collection – this collection is for the support of the local priest, with 13% going towards the support of the retired priests and the Bishop. The 2nd Collection is the Planned Giving (envelopes) for the support of Parish endeavours and structures.* 1st Collection (Presbytery – supporting our Priest) \$288.30

2nd Collection (Planned Giving): \$105.00

REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

Gospel Reflection

When Jesus is asked about the deaths of some Galileans and some residents of Jerusalem, he seizes the opportunity to remind his audience that their obsession with the 'sin' of the victims is misplaced. He challenges all who are listening that unless they repent, they will all perish in a similar fashion. This would have been very confronting to those in the audience who were ingrained in the thinking that 'bad things only happen to bad people'. The purity codes of the day stated that if one maintained purity of action – obeying the Law and respecting the prohibitions on certain actions – then one was fulfilling one's duty and maintaining right relationship with God. Jesus chastises the people for this attitude and tells them that they all must 'repent'. For 1st Century Jews, the word 'repent' had a greater depth of meaning than our current understanding. Rather than simply 'being sorry', to repent meant to completely turn life around – both individually and as a society. His injunction to repent would be seen as a challenge to question motives and actions and set a new direction.

To follow this up, Jesus tells his audience a parable about a fig tree that has not borne fruit after three years. There are many interpretations of this parable and it is often interpreted in isolation from the gospel passage that immediately precedes it. Given the challenge to 'repent' that is given so strongly, we can see the parable as an example to the listeners that their time for repenting is running out. The one year reprieve for the fig tree is an indication to the listeners that their change of heart and change of spirit had better take shape in the very near future.

Scriptural context – Parables

The parable of the unproductive fig tree at the end of today's passage is not a straightforward story with a clear message. Indeed, this is a hallmark of the style of storytelling that we call 'parable'. A parable is deliberately open to interpretation at different levels. In the first instance, today's parable is a simple farming story. However, the original audience knew (as we know) that there had to be more to the story. Parables use metaphoric and symbolic language that invites the listener or reader to explore deeper and find a meaning that lies beyond the literal.

Living the Gospel – Bad Things / Good People

Today's gospel taps in to the vexing question: 'Why do bad things happen to good people?' The question implies that God is punishing good people. Surprisingly, this attitude continues and one only has to watch news coverage of a tragedy to hear someone ask, 'How could God let this happen?' The very question suggests a belief in a God who interferes in our lives and manipulates events. Jesus suggests that tragic events are not punishment from God, but the accidental, deliberate or natural event does provide a reminder to turn our lives around and live lives that matter

Sacrament of Forgiveness - Communal Rite of Reconciliation

St Peter's Daylesford, 7pm on Wednesday March 16th.

St Augustine's Creswick, 7pm on Tuesday March 15th.

Anointing Masses

St Augustine's Creswick, 11am, Wednesday March 9th, Followed by lunch—all welcome.

St Peter's Daylesford, 11am, Thursday March 10th, Followed by lunch—all welcome.

Diocesan News: Mass of the Oils: Monday, March 21, 2016 The Mass of the Oils will be celebrated in St Patrick's Cathedral, Ballarat at 6.30pm on Monday, March 21, 2016. This Mass is a celebration of the whole Church of the Diocese of Ballarat. We celebrate the unity and ministry of the ordained priests in the midst of the entire priestly people of God of the Diocese. This Mass also has special significance for those who will use the blessed oils in 2016 – the sick, those to be baptised and confirmed.

Walk for Justice for Refugees 2016 Palm Sunday, March 20, 2016 at 2.00pm at the State Library, cnr Swanston and La Trobe Streets, Melbourne.