

Reflection on the Gospel-Feast of the Ascension Year C

(Luke 24:46-53)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Loss is part of the human condition, and the physical death of a loved one is one of the most painful experiences of loss. Today's Feast of the Ascension invites us to face the experience of loss in a transformative way. In Ordinary Time, we celebrate the life and ministry of Jesus. Over the period of Lent and Easter, we have been remembering his death and resurrection. As we approach the end of the Easter season, the liturgy draws us into another aspect of the Mystery, that of the presence and absence of Jesus who has been raised.

The Lukan Ascension stories as found in the gospel and in today's first reading (Acts 1:1-11) presuppose a pre-scientific, three-tiered understanding of the structure of the world. In this ancient view, God is in the heavens above and the prophet Jesus, like the prophet Elijah of old, is caught up into God's realm from whence the Holy Spirit will "descend" upon God's people. This vertical (up and down) movement is balanced by a horizontal movement.

In Acts, Jesus' family and friends who grieve the loss of their loved one are told not to keep looking up to the heavens. They have work to do: they must return to Jerusalem for the present and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the prophetic ministry of Jesus ("clothed with power from on high"), to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. They have to face the fact that the physical loss of Jesus means a new and different sort of presence and that they have a role to play in making him present in their world. Like us, the early Christians needed time to grasp each dimension of the one great Mystery of God's life in their midst.

In the gospel account, the disciples gathered in Jerusalem are to be witnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus. They are to proclaim a gospel of "repentance and forgiveness". In the gospel (Luke 24:47) their audience is "all peoples", while in Acts 1:8, they are commissioned to be witnesses to Jesus "in all Jerusalem, in Judaea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". In other words, the good news is not only for the earth's human inhabitants but for the earth itself. Pope Francis, in calling us to be attentive to the cry of the poor, insists that the earth itself is "among the most maltreated and abandoned of the poor" (*Laudato Si 2*).

Joy, prayer, and blessing have the final word in Luke's gospel. They have permeated Luke's story from the outset. As we prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost we might pray that the spirit of joy that animated the earliest Christians might fill our hearts so that the entire planetary community might know the blessing of God.

BULLETIN for the ASCENSION OF THE LORD, YEAR C



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

Telephone: 5332 6611

Fax: 5332 3303

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 8th MAY 2016

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	No Mass
THURSDAY:	No Mass
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

PENTECOST SUNDAY, YEAR C

READINGS -	First:	Acts 2.1-11
	Second:	Romans 8.8-17
	Gospel:	John 14:15-16.23-26

RECENT DEATH: Derek Tigchelaar.

ANNIVERSARIES: Helen Ronan, Mary Bettes.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Mary Barnett, Frank Forbes, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Margaret Gallagher, Peter McDonald (Ocean Grove), Christian Ashby.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: .Team 11: P. Saunders ©, M. Saunders.

Next Week: .Team 12: E. Kennedy ©, C. Stewart.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,057.70
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>1,320.00</u>
		\$ 2,677.70
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 964.00

VICTORIAN WELSH MALE VOICE CHOIR

A fundraising concert will be held at **Ss Peter & Paul's Church, Buninyong on Sunday, 26th June at 2.00 pm.** Advance bookings are strongly recommended as a sell out is likely. Contact John & Geraldine White on 5341 2675 or 0402 808 299. Tickets **\$30**. Afternoon tea provided.

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Wednesday, 11th May in the Mercy Centre at 2.00 pm. Please enter via Gent Street.

THANK YOU

To all who have offered prayers for Mia McGuigan. She is now enjoying good health again.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

Invest in your most precious asset....Your Marriage!

Forget life's tensions and interruptions and rekindle the closeness, intimacy, love and romance that brought you together. Recharge your relationship batteries and explore the precious nature of your marriage, allowing you both to share your feelings, hopes and dreams with each other in ways that normal, daily living tends to prohibit.

2016 Melbourne weekend dates: 17-19 June, 19-21 August, 11-13 November.

Starts 7.00 pm on Friday, ends 5.0 pm Sunday. Accommodations and all meals provided.

Information/bookings: Ph Marianne and Marcel on 9733 0997.

Email: vicbookings@wwme.org.au Website: www.wwme.org.au

MEMORIAL MASS

Bishop Paul Bird invites priests and people to join him at the cathedral on Monday, 16th May at 12.05 pm to celebrate a Memorial Mass for Bishop Ronald Mulkearns.

BALLARAT INTERFAITH NETWORK (BIN)

Is planning a bus trip to The Great Stupa's remarkable light show in Bendigo on Saturday, 28th May. Early bookings are recommended. Enquiries to 0477 477 658.

AMORIS LAETITIA

On Friday, 8th April 2016, Pope Francis published a new papal document called *Amoris Laetitia*, "The Joy of Love: On Love in the Family" at the Vatican in Rome.

The papal document is also known as "Apostolic Exhortation".

It is available to read and download on the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference website: <https://www.catholic.org.au/synod-2015/home>

MERCY CONNECT BALLARAT

Mercy Works is currently recruiting volunteer mentors to support refugee students in local schools through their Mercy Connect Project. The volunteer commitment is for 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 June 2016. Contact Pauline Barton—Mercy Project Coordinator on 0417 624 330 or email mercyconnectb@gmail.com for information. Applications close on 7th June 2016.

KNOX PUBLIC LECTURE

Monday, 16th May at the Catholic Leadership Centre, East Melbourne, with Archbishop Mark Coleridge on "From Wanderings to Journeying: Thoughts on a Synodal Church". See notice board for further information.

RIGHT TO LIFE

You are invited to an invigorating Life Hike on Thursday 26th—Saturday 28th May with Right to Life Australia to raise money to protect the unborn child. This year's Hike is in the majestic Grampians, Victoria. For more info www.righttolife.com.au or phone 9385 0111. See brochures on notice board.