

Reflection on the Gospel-Ordinary Time 31C

(Luke 19:1-10) -Veronica Lawson RSM

Last week's gospel story featured an unnamed toll collector, someone who found devious ways to make a living, yet faced his shortcomings and came before God in openness and humility. This week's gospel features Zaccheus of Jericho who, like the toll collector of the parable, is willing to admit his failings and is unafraid to demonstrate his faith in a very public way. Zaccheus is a chief tax collector, possibly responsible for overseeing the activities of other tax collectors. Whether or not this is the case, he is a wealthy man. Zaccheus is short of stature, we are told, but fairly enterprising in facing the dilemma that this poses. His stature is not an impediment to tree-climbing in a good cause: he wants to see what Jesus is like and he lets nothing get in the way. He runs ahead and climbs the tree. Jesus looks up and tells him to come down quickly, "for I must stay at your house today." The house of a public "sinner" is Jesus' personal choice of accommodation.

There are echoes in this story of Mary's haste to visit her pregnant cousin Elizabeth, and of the joy these women share in Mary's pregnancy. Jesus invites himself to the home of Zaccheus who provides hospitality "joyfully". Hospitality, joy, haste to respond to divine visitation: these are constant themes in Luke.

In any human group there are the critics. This time everyone who sees what is happening has something to say. They complain that Jesus chooses to stay with a sinner. The critics no doubt consider themselves more worthy hosts for God's prophet than Zaccheus. They have little love in their hearts. Their criticism of Zaccheus echoes that of Simon the Pharisee when Jesus allows himself to be touched by a "sinner" woman (Luke 7:36). Like Zaccheus, the woman's sins have already been forgiven. That is why she knows how to love, according to Jesus. There are clues in the narrative that Zaccheus, though labelled as a sinner, has changed his ways. The future tense of our translation ("I will pay") obscures this important element in the story. He gives half his property to the destitute and if he has cheated anyone, he pays them back four times the amount. In other words, he already goes way beyond what is required of a faithful Jew.

Jesus looks at Zaccheus and assures him that salvation has come to his house. He then turns to the crowd and acts to restore honour to Zaccheus in the eyes of those who hold him and his kind in contempt. Like the bent-over woman and Lazarus the beggar at the rich man's gate, Zaccheus is a true descendant of Abraham, his ancestor in faith.

BULLETIN FOR THE 31st 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

Telephone: 5332 6611

Fax: 5332 3303

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 31st OCTOBER 2016

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	No Mass
THURSDAY:	No Mass
FRIDAY:	No Mass
SATURDAY:	No Sacrament of Reconciliation.

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

32nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR C

READINGS -	First:	2 Maccabees 7:1-2.9-14
	Second:	2 Thessalonians 2:16—3:5
	Gospel:	Luke 20:27-38

RECENT DEATHS: Mary Laffey, Nora Herrera.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Barbara Keirl, Mick Kent, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter McDonald (Ocean Grove), Peter Clohesy, Kaye Tuddenham, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Andrew Cartledge.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 2:** B. Perkins ©, F. Nolan, J. Lewis.

Next Week: **Team 3:** M. O'Donnell ©, L O'Donnell, F. Colasante.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,310.00
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Credit Cards:	\$ 7,112.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>385.00</u>
		\$ 9,107.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 708.00

ST ALIPIUS PARISH BOOKLET

A booklet about St Alipius Parish and its various communities and activities was published recently. In the coming weeks the booklet will be published on the St Alipius home page on the Diocesan website. If you do not want your image used in the booklet please contact Jim at the Parish Office.

CARING GROUP MEETING

Friday, 4th November in St Alipius Hall at 10.00 am. All welcome.

BEYOND THE YEAR OF MERCY

A retreat afternoon, which is open to all adults, is to be held at St Patrick's Cathedral Hall, Ballarat on Sunday, 30th October from 1.30 pm concluding with 5.00 pm Mass. The afternoon will be led by Sr Veronica Lawson, biblical scholar and author of "Blessings of Mercy". Registrations through the Cathedral Parish Office ballarat@ballarat.catholic.org.au or phone 5331 2933.

REFUGEE CONCERT—BOUNDLESS PLAINS

Thursday, 3rd November, 7.00 pm at OLHC Church. Fr Andrew Hayes presents a concert of the spoken word. All monies to the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. Entry \$10.00 and above. Primary children free. Andrew does ask that you let him know you're coming. Email: frandrewboundlessplains@gmail.com

BRING THE REFUGEES HERE

Close the Camps rally 1.00 pm Saturday, 5th November at the State Library, Cnr Swanston & La Trobe Streets, Melbourne. See Notice Board.

STEWARDSHIP REVIEW

Our Stewardship program provides the core funding for our parish. We are currently conducting a mid-program review, and over the next two weekends you will hear about the current financial state of the parish and the Stewardship Program. For some parishioners this may be an opportunity to enter the program for the first time. For some it may be an opportunity to increase their contributions, while others may need to reduce their contributions. Whatever the situation, to each and every contributor, "thank you" and congratulations on all you have contributed to our great parish. Adrian.

DAMASCUS COLLEGE - ENROLMENT INFORMATION EVENING.

Information Evening: Wednesday, 2nd November at 6.30 pm Please arrive at 6.15

GRANDMOTHERS AGAINST THE DETENTION OF REFUGEE CHILDREN

GADRC Ballarat are honored to have author and refugee advocate Mark Isaacs as their guest speaker. Mark is a former Salvation Army worker on Nauru. In his book "Nauru Burning" he tells the story of the fight of the men in detention to prove their innocence, and of the workers who tried to help them.

Mark will launch "Nauru Burning" at the Ballarat Library at 5.30 pm on Friday, 4th November 2016. We would be honored if you could join us that evening. Enquiries to Cath on 0437 185 238.

POP UP SHOP

The next Pop up Shop will be early in December so planning is well under way. We are looking for donations of linen and bedding which can be popped under the table. Toiletries..men and women, non-perishable food. The only clothing required is socks and undies.

Thank you to all who continue to pop something in the box...there has been something in the box every week. More information with the box or on the notice board. Contact Colleen if you would like to become involved — 0419 504 029.

ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY—WENDOUREE CONFERENCE

Thursday, 3rd November at 10.00 am at OLHC, Gillies St, Wendouree. Thanksgiving Mass to remember, honour and celebrate the lives of members and volunteers in the Ballarat Region who have passed away in the last five years.

VISITATION TO THE HOMES

Anyone who would be prepared to visit the homebound with Holy Communion is asked to contact Jim at the Parish Office on 5332 6611.