



Parish Newsletter - April 16, 2017

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Parish Priest – Fr Gary Jones gary.jones@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Daylesford Presbytery: 5348 3911

St Augustine's Parish Primary School - **Principal:** Mr Terry Brennan
Receptionist: Mrs Mandy Simpson Ph 5345 2106

St Thomas Aquinas, Clunes
(no longer a Sunday Mass Centre)

St. Joseph's Church, Blampied

Lay Led Assembly: 9.00am (2nd Sunday of the Month)

Vigil Mass: Sat 6.00pm (4th Sunday of the Month)

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

Monthly Blampied Vigil Mass - Next Saturday 22nd April @ 6pm

Anniversaries of Death (Thurs - Weds): Gerald McDermott, John Bennett, Lorna Nihill

Unwell at this time: Brad Simpson (son of Mandy, St A's school admin officer) James Stacey,
Pat Prendergast, Mary Bell

PLEASE NOTE: Due to Privacy Laws, names of those unwell needing our prayers can only be placed
on this list when requested by the person in question, or immediate family on behalf of their unwell family member.



Easter Message

*Thank you to all who have help with
the Holy Week liturgies.*

*And I hope you all have a wonderful
Easter.*

*Blessings & Hopes of the Risen
Christ be with you All.*

Fr Gary



TWO COLLECTIONS are taken up and presented after the PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

*The 1st COLLECTION is cash toward the Presbytery for the sustenance of our Priest;
with a contribution of 13% to provide support for our retired priests and the Diocese.*

*The 2nd COLLECTION is the Planned Giving (envelopes) or cash
for the administration of the Parish & general running costs.*

Last Week's Collections (with thanks)

1st Collection: \$205.70

2nd Collection: \$112.00

Project Compassion: \$20.00

Rosters for NEXT weekend on Sunday, 23rd April

Cleaners: Bernie & Pat T; **Welcomers/Offertory:** Loretta and Roland K; **Remote:** Lois K;
Commentator: Bernie T; **Reader:** Barb H;
Special Eucharistic Ministers: Margie - Judy - Aileen; **Counters:** Mick G & Pete G

REFLECTION *by Greg Sunter*

On this, the most important celebration in the Christian calendar, it is a shame that the reading chosen for the Lectionary is something of a let down. Certainly, within the gospel reading we have the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary of Magdala; the disbelieving disciples running to find things exactly as Mary had described; and the dawning realisation of what Jesus had meant when he so frequently spoke about rising from the dead. However, if the editors of the Lectionary had chosen to also include the next nine verses of the gospel we would have also heard the magnificent encounter between Mary and the risen Lord, confirming that it was a woman, Mary Magdala, who was the first witness to Christ's resurrection. As it is, we never hear this account as part of the cycle of Sunday readings.

The discovery of the empty tomb – although so simply told – is an astounding event that completes the Paschal Mystery: the passion, death AND resurrection of Jesus. Whilst Christ's willingness to go to his death on the cross was an extraordinary statement of God's love for humankind, it is his rising again from death that offers all Christian people hope. It is the second disciple – the one whom Jesus loved – who is the first to grasp the meaning of what has happened inside the tomb. The gospel tells us that upon entering the tomb and seeing Jesus' burial cloths lying there, 'he saw and he believed'. Unlike the later encounters with the risen Lord, this disciple recognised the truth and significance of what he saw in the empty tomb. He didn't need to see the risen Lord to believe. Perhaps it is he that we today can best identify with. Not in a position to physically encounter the risen Christ, we are capable of seeing the signs of his resurrection and continuing presence in the world and choose to believe.

Historical Context – Mary Magdalene

Mary Magdalene, or Mary of Magdala, plays an important role in the gospel accounts of the resurrection. She was obviously a significant follower of Jesus, being named as a witness to the crucifixion, discovering the empty tomb and the first to encounter the risen Christ. One would think that she would hold a prestigious place in the Church, but for many years she was confused with another character identified in the gospels and was portrayed as a prostitute and sinner. Mary is named in each of the four gospels and not once is it indicated that she was a sinner or prostitute. She has been a victim of mistaken identity for 2000 years.

Gospel Focus – The disciple Jesus loved

In this week's gospel we see reference to a disciple as 'the one Jesus loved'. It is generally agreed that this disciple is John. There is some suggestion that the disciple, John, is in fact the John ascribed as the author of this gospel. If this is so, to describe himself as the disciple Jesus loved is merely a means of avoiding using a personal pronoun – I or me. Just as Jesus described himself as 'the Son of God' or 'the Son of Man' rather than say 'I', John uses the same convention to avoid naming himself. It is not to suggest that Jesus didn't love his other disciples.

Different View – An empty tomb?

There are some writers who have questioned the historical accuracy of the empty tomb account of the resurrection. Some theologians and biblical scholars (e.g. members of the 'Jesus Seminar') argue that historically, it is far more likely that the victim of Roman crucifixion would be left to rot on the cross or buried in a shallow criminal's grave – not laid to rest in an expensive private tomb. However, they do not argue against resurrection. They maintain that Jesus' body was not 'resuscitated' or 'reanimated'. What happened to his corpse, they argue, is irrelevant to Christ's resurrection.