

**Reflection on the Gospel - Easter 6A
(John 14:15-21)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Those who defend themselves in court run the risk of being out-smarted by clever and sometimes unscrupulous adversaries. It is never a good idea to be too self-reliant even in a country with a basically sound legal system such as ours. Today's gospel implies that the disciples need a defense attorney or lawyer. Jesus has acted in that capacity for them in their struggles with the anti-gospel forces arrayed against them.

Now he is close to death and he gives them instructions that begin and end with reference to loving him and keeping his commandments. Jesus has given them "a new commandment" (13:34-35): "... that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." Later in this discourse (15:12-14) the reader of the gospel learns what the actors in the drama already know about Jesus' commandments. "This is my commandment," says Jesus, "that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you." This is no small demand, to be prepared to die for one another.

Given the opposition they are likely to face, the disciples cannot live out such a commitment on their own. Neither is Jesus leaving them "orphans" who have to fend for themselves. He will ask his Father to provide "another" defender or advocate who will act on their behalf, an advocate who will always be there. This new advocate is the "Spirit of truth". As we approach the end of the Easter season, the liturgy thus points us in the direction of Pentecost and the gift of God's Spirit.

It is good to know we are never on our own. It is also good to reflect on the capacity we have for love. Most of us will never find ourselves in a situation where our love is tested to the point that we have to die for another. On the other hand, we are constantly being called on to put the well-being of others, even their survival, before our own comfort. With global warming and the life-style changes that will inevitably come sooner rather than later, we may well find ourselves "laying down our lives" in various ways for the sake of our friends, humankind and other-kind, across the planet. Even now, we have countless opportunities to "lay down our lives" to mitigate the effects of climate change or to protect the rights of those displaced by war or persecution. With the help of the Spirit, our Advocate, we can surely rise to the challenge.

BULLETIN FOR SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER, YEAR A



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 22nd MAY 2017**

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|-------------------|--------------------------|
| MONDAY: | No Mass |
| TUESDAY: | 10.00 am - Funeral Mass |
| WEDNESDAY: | 11.00 am in Mercy Centre |
| THURSDAY: | 2.00 pm- Funeral Mass |
| FRIDAY: | No Mass |

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD, YEAR A

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|-----------------|---------|-------------------|
| READINGS | First: | Acts 1:1-11 |
| | Second: | Ephesians 1:17-23 |
| | Gospel: | Matthew 28: 16-20 |

RECENT DEATH: Barbara Keirl, Peter Lavery, Bernie Hogan.

ANNIVERSARIES: Mary Hogan, Bernard Blood, Michael Curran, Robert Casey, Francis Roach, Owen Callahan.


PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Mick Kent, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Tania Giles, Pauline Murphy.

COUNTING TEAMS:

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

Next Week: **Team 10:** P. Saunders © M.Saunders.

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:



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|--------------------|----------------|------------------|
| PARISH: | Envelopes: | \$ 1,044.40 |
| | Loose: | \$ 300.00 |
| | Direct debits: | \$ <u>665.00</u> |
| | | \$ 2,009.40 |
| PRESBYTERY: | | \$ 767.00 |

CENTRALISED BAPTISM PREPARATION

Clergy, staff & Baptism coordinators from the Parishes of St Alipius Ballarat East, St Patrick's Cathedral, St Aloysius Redan, St James' Sebastopol, St Columba's Ballarat North and Our Lady Help of Christians Wendouree have been meeting to discuss the possibility of centralising the Baptism preparation process. It has been decided that there will be combined Baptism preparation sessions held on the 1st Thursday of the month at 10.00 am & 7.00 pm for all families wishing to have their children, under the age of 7, baptised in the Ballarat area. This will begin in August. For the months of June and July preparation evenings will continue as normal in the St Alipius Parish. More information to come.

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Wednesday, 24th May in the Mercy Centre at 2.00 pm. Please enter via Gent Street.

LITURGY ROSTERS

Are available for collection this weekend

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLICS

Are available for collection this weekend

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Can be found on the following link:

<http://www.ncca.org.au/faith-and-unity-resources/wopcu/item\1006-week-of-prayer-for-christian-unity-2017>

"LESSONS FROM THE LONG PADDOCK" ECONFERENCE

The Diocese of Wilcannia-Forbes is offering an econference online event called "Lessons From the Long Paddock" on Tuesday, 6th June, 2017. This econference opens the conversation for many people who are curious about what the experience of faith actually feels like in ordinary life. Participants engage with conversations which signpost essential spiritual markers relevant to knowledge about what leads into fuller humanity, Christian, Catholic and Australian life. This econference draws participants to seek Christ at the heart of human experience and nurtures a capacity to trust that individuals have all they need to begin the journey into constant conversion.

The econference has two keynote speakers, Bishop Columba Macbeth Green OSPPE and Fr Frank Brennan SJ, who will discuss Australian and Outback Spirituality. The workshops will be facilitated by Kate Englebrect, Diocesan Director of Mission. For more information please contact Kate on 0420 309 689 or <http://www.wf.catholic.org.au>

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL

7th-9th December in Sydney.

Information about the youth festival is available from the Parish Office. 15,000 young people, year 9-30 year old are expected. Events include talks, music, social justice art, faith expression and faith information, meeting others and fun.

FR "WALKABOUT"

Fr Peter is leaving Monday 29th May to undertake a walking pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostello in Spain and will return 15th July.

The Pilgrimage will begin in Irun on the Spanish French border and along the northern coast of Spain to Oviedo. The walk then will follow the 9th century "Primitivo Way" through the Cantabrian mountains to Santiago de Compostello, the burial place of Apostle James.

It should take about 35 days if the feet hold up and all goes well. Bishop Peter Connors and Fr. Kevin Arundell will be celebrants for the weekend Masses while I'm away. I am grateful for their assistance.

MEDITATION

"Sit down in a quiet place. Close your eyes. Concentrate on your breathing. Quieten your thoughts. On the 'in' breath count slowly to five. As you breathe out, count slowly to ten. Do this a number of times. It's an introduction to meditation.