

**Reflection on the Gospel - Feast of the Ascension Year A  
(Acts 1:1-11; Matthew 28:16-20)**

Veronica Lawson RSM

Loss is an integral part of the human experience, and death is generally the most painful experience 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 re-remembering his death and resurrection. As we come towards the end of Easter season, the liturgy draws us into another aspect of the Mystery, that of the presence of the Risen One even in his absence.

While today's gospel recounts Matthew's story of Jesus' final encounter with his disciples, it does not provide an account of Jesus' "ascension" or return to God. For that we must turn to the first reading, from the Acts of the Apostles. The story presupposes 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 presence. The Holy Spirit will "descend" upon God's people and "clothe" them with power to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth. The vertical (up and down) movement is balanced by a horizontal movement: Jesus' family and followers who grieve the loss of their loved one are told to keep looking up to the heavens. They have work to do: strengthened by his blessing, they are to stay in the city for the present and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the prophetic ministry of Jesus, to be witnesses to his death and resurrection. They have to face that they have a role to play in making him present in their world.

The gospel reading for today has Jesus on a mountain top where he commissions his male disciples to make disciples of all nations. He has already commissioned the women on the open road to announce the good news of the resurrection (Matthew 28:10). They are to be fearless in their mission. In Matthew's final chapter, then, both men and women are commissioned to proclaim the gospel. There are other dimensions to their mission, namely to baptise in the name of the Triune God and to teach what Jesus has taught or "commanded" them. The confidence that they need and that we all need to engage in this mission is the assurance that the risen Jesus is with us to the end of time. The gospel has come full circle. In the first chapter of Matthew, an angel announces that the child to be born will be called Emmanuel, God-with-us. The last verse of the gospel invites us once more to ponder the wonder of that truth.

**BULLETIN FOR THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD, YEAR A**



**ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST**

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

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**MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING  
MONDAY, 29th MAY 2017**

<b>MONDAY:</b>	No Mass
<b>TUESDAY:</b>	1.00 pm - Funeral Mass
<b>WEDNESDAY:</b>	No Mass
<b>THURSDAY:</b>	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
<b>FRIDAY:</b>	9.30 am in Parish Church

**NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES**

<b>ST. ALIPIUS</b>	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	9.00 AM
<b>BUNINYONG</b>	SUN	10.30 AM

**PENTECOST SUNDAY, YEAR A**

<b>READINGS</b>	First:	Acts 2.1-11
	Second:	1 Corinthians 12.3b-7,12-13
	Gospel:	John 20.19-23

**RECENT DEATHS:** Ann (Nance) Madigan, Nancy Colasante, Catherine Smith.

**ANNIVERSARIES:** Ivan Auchettl, Peter Auchettl, George Pearse.

**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 10:** P. Saunders © M.Saunders.

Next Week: **Team 11:** E. Kennedy ©, C. Stewart.

**COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:**

<b>PARISH:</b>	Envelopes:	\$ 1,049.00
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Credit cards:	\$ 3882.00
	Direct Debits	\$ <u>475.00</u>
		\$ 5,706.00
<b>PRESBYTERY:</b>		\$ 687.00



**PRIESTS INSERVICE**

The priests of the diocese are gathering this week for their annual in-service. Key note speaker Fr. Timothy Radcliff O.P. Dominican Friar of the English province and former master of the Order of Preachers. Please remember the priests, leaders & CEO in your prayers.

**CENTRALISED BAPTISM PREPARTION**

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.

**WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY**

28th of May- 4th of June. ‘Reconciliation - the Love of Christ compels us’  
5.30 pm Thursday 1st of June in St Patrick’s Cathedral.

**WORLD WIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND**

Invest in your most precious asset .....Your Marriage!  
2017 Melbourne weekend dates: 28-30 July, 17-19 November, 2017  
Information/Bookings: PH: Marianne & Marcel (03) 97330997  
Email: [vicbookings@wwme.org.au](mailto:vicbookings@wwme.org.au) Website: [www.wwme.org.au](http://www.wwme.org.au)

**CARING GROUP MEETING**

Friday, 2nd June in St Alipius Hall at 10.00 am. All welcome.

**THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)**

The RCIA is a process where people who are interested in becoming Catholic come together with members of the RCIA team to discuss their personal experiences which have drawn them to question and discover more about the Catholic faith. Those who choose to explore and seek full initiation into the Catholic Church continue through the process of *Enquiry* to the *Catechumenate* and then onto full membership into the Catholic Church. An invitation is extended to anyone interested in exploring the Catholic faith. Please contact the parish office or Fr. Peter on 53326611.

**ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY WINTER APPEAL**

We invite you to be part of our “TOGETHER WE CAN DO HEROIC THINGS” appeal. To give you some indication of the work of SVDP locally we share with you the following statistics. In the first quarter of this year the Society has distributed support to the value of \$154,563 within the Ballarat area. This is a 16% increase on last year’s figures. During this period we have experienced a 14% increase in the numbers of people seeking assistance. We are most grateful for the support we receive from our parish as it enables us to continue our support for those in need. Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall. All donations are used in the Ballarat area. Donations of over \$2.00 are tax deductible, and receipts will be issued.

**DAMASCUS COLLEGE TIMOR-LESTE IMMERSION**

Through the City of Ballarat Friends of Ainaro Community Committee Friendship School Program, Damascus College was linked with a school in East Timor in 2005. As a result, Damascus College formed a sister school relationship with Santa Maria College in Ainaro. Since 2011, Damascus has had an annual Immersion Program to Timor-Leste in June. This is for year 11 students and supporting staff.

**SOUP LUNCHEON - ASYLUM SEEKER FUNDRAISER- WED 21ST JUNE**

The Annual Refugee week soup and sandwich luncheon will be held again at Nazareth House hall on Wednesday, 21st of June at 12.30. Didgeridoo and Acknowledgement of Country at 1.00 pm followed by asylum seeker presentations to Ballarat Elders and musical items from local asylum seeker. Entry \$20. Conc. \$15 Contact - 0401 175045.