

Reflection on the Gospel-21st Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

(Matthew 16:13-19) -Veronica Lawson RSM

“Be yourself. Everybody else is taken”, sings Melinda Schneider. The lyrics of this lovely song, composed for Melinda’s dying father, affirm some fairly obvious truths. Even though we know that “everybody else is taken”, most of us spend much of our lives trying to measure up to other peoples’ expectations and fail to be truly ourselves. In our self-absorption, we can also misread others and fail to know them as they are. Being accepted as we are is among the most precious of gifts. Jesus knew this. He was utterly true to himself and he allowed others time to discover for themselves his real identity and the nature of his mission. If the mission was to succeed, then “people” needed to look beyond their preconceptions about him and accept him as God’s anointed one, as the revelation of the living God.

Jesus’ true identity is a key issue for Matthew’s community as it is for us. In the first verse of the gospel, he is presented as the anointed one of God, the Messiah or Christ. Before his birth, the reader knows him as “Emmanuel”, God with us. What the narrator asserts at the outset, certain characters in the story come to understand as the narrative unfolds. Jesus’ fearless teaching and his healing ministry bring the crowd to recognise him as a prophet in the tradition of Elijah or Jeremiah or John the Baptist, and as the incarnate Wisdom of God. The power of God at work in Peter leads him to a deeper understanding of Jesus’ identity. No matter that Peter has faltered in the past and will falter again, even to the point of denying any knowledge of or association with Jesus. He finally arrives at deep insight and proclaims his faith in Jesus as both Christ or Messiah and son of the living God. Insight is a gift, and God can work wherever there is openness and goodwill. Peter has both in abundance. He is declared “blessed” on account of this gift of insight, and entrusted with the “keys” of God’s kin-dom.

The specific power of binding and loosing that is given to Peter is subsequently given to the community of disciples (18:18) where the saying is framed on the one hand by instructions about dealing with transgressors and on the other by the assertion that where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus, he is there in their midst. “Binding and loosing” belongs to Peter and to all who gather in the name of Jesus whom Matthew presents as God-with-us, as prophet and Wisdom, as the Christ or Messiah, and as the revelation of the living God. The exercise of the power “to bind and to loose” demands the same wisdom and insight as does the capacity to recognise and affirm the true identity of Jesus.

BULLETIN FOR THE 21st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



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, 28th AUGUST 2017

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|-------------------|---------|
| MONDAY: | No Mass |
| TUESDAY: | No Mass |
| WEDNESDAY: | No Mass |
| THURSDAY: | No Mass |
| FRIDAY: | No Mass |

NEXT WEEKEND’S MASSES

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

22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

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|-----------------|--------------------------|
| READINGS | First: Jeremiah 20:7-9 |
| | Second: Romans 12:1-2 |
| | Gospel: Matthew 16:21-27 |

RECENT DEATHS: Lesley Bigarelli, Rita Madden, Maree Clifton, David Griffiths.

ANNIVERSARIES: Sioning Lopez.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Terry McGarry, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Mary Barnett, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Pauline Murphy, Luke Taylor, Mary Martin, Patricia Harman, Mary Goossens.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 1:** L. Noonan ©, G. Clarkson, L. Mullane.

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



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

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|--------------------|----------------|-------------|
| PARISH: | Envelopes: | \$ 1,422.00 |
| | Loose: | \$ 300.00 |
| | Credit Cards: | \$ 3,632.00 |
| | Direct Debits: | \$ 515.00 |
| | | \$ 5,869.00 |
| PRESBYTERY: | | \$ 683.00 |

SPECIAL MINISTERS

Thank You to existing Special Ministers and a big welcome to those who are joining this ministry for the first time. New, updated rosters will be sent out shortly.

ABSENCE

Father Peter will be away for a few days this week recovering from wisdom teeth extraction.

EUTHANASIA AND ASSISTED SUICIDE PROPOSALS

In April this year, the bishops of Victoria published a pastoral letter in response to proposals to introduce legislation allowing euthanasia and assisted suicide. As a follow-up to that letter, a group of lay people has prepared a flyer encouraging people to write to parliamentarians and express their opposition to such legislation. See flyers on the Notice Board and in the Church foyer.

CATHOLIC WOMENS LEAGUE - CATHEDRAL BRANCH - SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Will be held on **Wednesday September 6th** in the Mary Glowery Room in the O'Collins Hall. Speaker, Diane Colbert, will present "*The Media and our Children*". Stalls and competition. Afternoon tea. Free entry. Enquiries - Carmel 0401 175 045

CARING GROUP MEETING

Friday, 1st September at 10.00 am in St Alipius Hall. All welcome.

DAMASCUS COLLEGE ENROLMENT INFORMATION EVENING

Wednesday, 6th September at 5.00 pm. Please arrive by 4.45 pm for registration.

CAN CHRISTIANS SURVIVE IN PAKISTAN

Fr Robert McCulloch will speak on the above on Monday 28th August.

Time: 6.00 pm Mass at Nazareth Chapel

7.00 pm Presentation in Hall followed by supper.

Ladies—please bring a plate. Entry by donation. All welcome.

See Notice Board. Enquiries 0401 175 045

CHILD PROTECTION SUNDAY RESOURCES

In response to a request from Pope Francis, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has set aside Sunday, 10 September 2017 **Child Protection Sunday** as a Day of Prayer and Penance for Victims and Survivors of Sexual Abuse. See the diocesan website under "Liturgy Resources" www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

SPIRITUAL CARE PRORAM

A second program for parishioners engaged in pastoral ministry in its many expressions in our parishes is being offered soon. Bethany Pennington will facilitate this program comprising five sessions on the following dates—September 20th, October 4th and 25th, November 8th and 22nd. Each of these sessions will be held in the MacKillop and Glowry rooms in the smaller hall at the Cathedral. Parishioners engaged in Funeral ministry, Visiting, Communion to those at home or in care are welcome to participate.

Please register with Jacinta in the Cathedral Parish Office 5331-2933, by Friday September 15th.

BALLARAT CLERGY SUPPORT FUND

Collection for Sick and Retired Priests — next weekend

Creating a secure retirement future for the priests of the diocese is a duty and care in which we can all participate. Eighteen retired priests are currently supported by this Fund. Some live privately, some are retired in units in Ballarat or elsewhere, others live in supported accommodation.

The funding required for these commitments is ongoing. Thanks to your generosity, this collection has raised nearly 1.8 million dollars since it began in 1991 including nearly \$60,000 last year. Along with the priests' own contribution of approximately \$37,000 per year, this annual collection has allowed the Fund to continue to support our sick and retired clergy. Last year St Alipius Parish collection was \$5,146.80.

A credit card facility is available for your convenience, and contributions over \$2.00 are tax-deductible.

CARING FOR THOSE WHO CARED FOR US—THE CHURCH COMMUNITY'S RESPONSIBILITY