

**Reflection on the Gospel–23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
(Matthew 18:15-20)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

What does a just society or community do with its persistent offenders, with those whose behaviour continually disrupts or even destroys the unity of a group? This is an age old question that has no easy answer. The people of South Africa in the wake of apartheid and Timor Leste after twenty-five years of oppression recognised that a too easy amnesty is no solution for violent and destructive behaviour. Offences need to be named and acknowledged by their perpetrators for the sake of community reconciliation and for building the trust essential to the creation of a new future.

The processes followed in South Africa and in Timor Leste were similar to those proposed in today's gospel for members of the church community. The power to deal with transgression is firmly in the hands of the community members. All care must be taken to allow an offender to acknowledge the offence in private. If that fails, the matter is referred to a group of two or three witnesses, in line with Israel's ancient legal practice (Deut 19:15). The next step is referral to the assembled community. A person who refuses to listen "to the church" is to be treated as a Gentile or a tax-collector. The meaning here is not at all clear. Some scholars suggest that the Matthean Jesus is proposing exclusion from the community of those who refuse to listen. Others consider that he is advocating the sort of compassionate approach that Jesus has personally shown to outsiders, to those in need of conversion.

If our personal efforts to resolve conflict are unsuccessful, we do well to seek the wisdom of others. Jesus, God-with-us, is present in the assembly. We have that assurance. We also have the assurance that our failure to deal with transgression can leave a person unreconciled. We need to "loose" the sins of those who acknowledge their offences. In other words, we are called to forgive them and thus set them free from the burden of their sins against us. This does not mean that we overlook or in any way condone offences. In response to a request from Pope Francis, this Sunday has been named Child Protection Sunday, a Day of Prayer and Penance for Victims and Survivors of Sexual Abuse. While the gospel passage focusses on offenders, our first concern must be with those who suffer at their hands.

Forgiveness is needed at every level if we are to be in right relationship in the Earth community. Most global tensions have their origin in the unresolved conflicts of the distant past. Our future on this planet depends on our capacity to "surrender to the sky [our] heart of anger" (James K. Baxter) even as we do all we can to ensure that the mistakes of the past are never repeated.

BULLETIN FOR THE 23rd 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, 11th SEPTEMBER 2017**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	10.00 am Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am Parish Church

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

24th SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

READINGS	First: Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7
	Second: Romans 14:7-9
	Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

RECENT DEATHS: Fr. Peter Taffe, Paul Smith.

ANNIVERSARIES: Janette Pearse.

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 3:** M. O'Donnell ©, L. O'Donnell.

Next Week: **Team 4:** C. Tarquino ©, M. Tarquino.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 827.20
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Credit Card:	\$ 1,300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>1,425.00</u>
		\$ 3,852.20
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 722.00

MNW EMMAUS BOARD

Special *Going Forth Day* on Saturday, 16th September at the Werribee Baptist Church. If you wish to know more please contact Rhonda on 0424 557 380. More details on the Notice Board.

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.

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Wednesday, 13th September in the Mercy Centre at 2.00 pm. Please enter via Gent Street.

2018 PILGRIMAGE

EASTERN EUROPE TO MEDJUGORJA

See notice board for full details, including itinerary of this pilgrimage in May 2018. Enquiries to Jeremy at jbride@internode or phone 0438 347 226

**30TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION OF
FR. GARY JAMES**

The Parish of St Peter's Daylesford will be celebrating the 30th Anniversary of Fr. Gary's ordination at 10.30 am Mass on Sunday, 15th October followed by morning tea in the Parish Centre. All welcome.

Please *RSVP* to daylesford@ballarat.catholic.org.au to assist with catering.

ST VINCENT de PAUL

Each Monday evening between 7.30 and 8.30 a team of volunteers deliver bread to homes across the parish. We are currently looking for at least 2 people to join this team. If you are interested or would like further information please phone Geoff Clarkson on 5340 0782.

**SENDING PEOPLE CAN BE MORE IMPORTANT
THAN SENDING MONEY**

Communities in Asia, the Pacific and Africa are looking to provide mentoring opportunities for local personnel and improve processes and procedures for organisations vital to reducing poverty. If you are an experienced professional, business or trades person, in any area, but especially education, please consider volunteering with Palms Australia.

Palms Info Session: Thursday 14 September, 5.30 pm - 7 pm
Australian Catholic University, Building 100
Torney Room, 1200 Mair Street, Ballarat

RSVP: joey@palms.org.au or call 02 9560 5333

Can't make it? Call now about applying for positions currently available, OR
Look first via Palms' [two-week Encounter \(palms.org.au/encounters/\)](http://palms.org.au/encounters/)

**DAMASCUS COLLEGE ENROLMENT
INFORMATION EVENING & OPEN MORNINGS**

Damascus College warmly invites all families to attend our upcoming Information Evening and Open Mornings. The Information Evening will include a tour of the College, activities for students and an information session for parents.

Open Mornings are guided tours by Damascus students during school hours.

INFORMATION EVENING: Thursday, 26th October at 6.30 pm
Please arrive at 6.15 pm for registration.

OPEN MORNINGS: Thursday, 2nd and 9th November, 9 am -10.30 am

**STUDENTS OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND
PLEASE REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE THROUGH
THE DAMASCUS WEBSITE www.damascus.vic.edu.au**