

**Reflection on the Gospel-32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
(Matthew 25:1-13)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

How many times were you told as a child to be ready for an outing or for the expected arrival of visitors or for dinner or for something else when you simply wanted to stay as you were? Sometimes it matters little whether we are ready or not. Sometimes it really matters and today's gospel parable depicts one of those situations when it is of crucial importance to be prepared.

The imminent event is a wedding celebration. The betrothal period is over and the bridegroom has left to bring the bride from the home of her parents to his family home. Ten young women of his household will watch for the arrival of the couple and will light their way into the wedding feast. The young women in their turn can expect to be welcome at the feast. Five are well prepared for the arrival and five are not. The five who bring (olive) oil for their lamps are designated "wise" while the other five who bring no oil are said to be "foolish". Negotiating the terms of the marriage contract takes longer than expected so that the bridegroom is delayed. The young women wait and wait, then fall asleep. At midnight, the bridegroom's arrival is signalled and the young women rise to trim their lamps in readiness for their role of lighting his way.

The bride is invisible in the telling of the story, presumably because the focus must be on the bridegroom alone. Earlier in Matthew's gospel (9:15), Jesus is depicted as "the bridegroom". The attentive reader of the gospel is aware that today's parable is about Jesus and that it forms part of Matthew's end-time discourse (24:1-25:46). The delay of the bridegroom evokes the community's expectation that Jesus who has died and been raised will return at an undisclosed time. In the interim, the members are to be actively watchful and ready, living in the spirit of Matthew's first discourse (5:1-7:29) with its emphasis on right relationship. Matthew 7 concludes with reference to wise and foolish decisions: the foolish one builds on sand while the wise one builds on rock.

The behaviour of the "wise" in today's parable is as puzzling as that of the "foolish". The "foolish" fail to prepare: they have no oil and cannot expect to light the way without it. The "wise" have prepared and they receive their reward. Is there wisdom, however, in sending their "foolish" friends to buy olive oil at midnight? There are more unanswered questions than we can address in this little reflection. We can identify with both the wise and the foolish. We need the wisdom to ensure that the produce of God's Earth, represented by the olive oil, is received as gift and used in right measure or in right relationship.

BULLETIN FOR THE 32nd 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, 13th NOVEMBER 2017**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm in Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

33rd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR A

READINGS	First: Proverbs 31:10-13.19-20.30-31
	Second: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-6
	Gospel: Matthew 25:14-30

ANNIVERSARIES: James Simpson, Kevin Howlett, Honoria Callahal, Margaret Maddinghan, Laurence Galvin, Eris Blood, Pahay Dhay, James Roach, Tom Torpy, Pat Towns.

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, Mary Martin, Maria Wilson.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 12: K. Bevelander ©, M. Liston, G. Maguire.

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



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,107.00
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ 1,245.00
		\$ 2,652.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 716.00

ADVENT REFLECTION GROUP

During Advent each year, the Parish offers opportunity for parishioners to join a small group to reflect and prepare for the feast of Christmas.

Listening to and reflecting on the readings, and the reflections of others, enriches those present and helps take the Gospel into our hearts and daily living, and prepares us for participation in the Sunday Liturgy.

A Reflection Group will meet on Thursday, 30th November, to prepare the Readings and Gospel for the 1st Sunday of Advent, which is the 3rd of December this year.

If you wish to join the Reflection Group, please contact the Parish Office and leave your name and phone number for a return contact.

ADVENT RESOURCES

Advent resources are available from the diocesan website. Click on the "Liturgy Resource" tab on the front page at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au.

NAZARETH HOUSE AUXILIARY ANNUAL FETE

Saturday, November 18, 2017 at Nazareth House Ballarat starting at 10.00 am. Stalls galore, handball competition, morning tea, spinning wheel, BBB lunch and much more. Fun for all the family.

ASYLUM SEEKER FUNDRAISER—SUNDAY 19TH NOV, 2 PM

"Sweet Monas" Gospel Choir will rock around the garden at 30 Waller Avenue, Newington to assist local asylum seekers and their families. Fun for all with singers, musicians, stalls, cakes, prize roses, face painting, games and competitions and afternoon tea. Entry \$20, children free. Inquiries 0401175045. All Welcome.!

GORDON CEMETERY MASS

Sunday, November 19, 2017 at 2.00 pm. Some seating supplied. Cup of tea available afterwards at Donegan's Farm. Please pass information on to interested people.

ANOINTING MASS

Will be held on Thursday, 7th December at 2.00 pm followed by afternoon tea in St Alipius Hall. If you need transport please contact a member of the Caring Group. We would appreciate the contribution of a plate for afternoon tea.

LEADERSHIP FOR MISSION 2018-2019

A Graduate Program for Young Catholic Women aged 25-35. Combines theological education, faith formation and preparation for mission in a multi-faith world.

For more info and an application form go to <http://www.opw.catholic.org.au/young-women-s-interfaith-fellowship/leadership-for-mission-2018-2019>.

Applications close Sunday, November 26.

ACRATH

Taking action against slavery and human trafficking in Australia

Did you know that slavery and human trafficking exists today, here in Australia? Australia is a destination for trafficked people who are used for a variety of purposes in various industries. We can take action to give them a voice. ACRATH stands for the *Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans* and is endorsed by Catholic Religious Australia. ACRATH works towards the elimination of human trafficking in Australia, the Asia Pacific region and globally. The ACRATH website seeks to tell the stories of victims of slavery so that we can make a stand against the abuse of human rights. The ACRATH website allows users to discuss and respond to human trafficking and slavery in our country and region. Together, we are called to respond to this injustice. The ACRATH website provides a wealth of resources and information parishes and communities can use to work toward solving this problem. Visit website: www.acrath.org.au.

16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence

ACRATH has developed resources to mark the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence from November 25th—December 10th 2017.

The campaign calls us to work together to stop the trafficking of girls and women, which is an extreme form of violence. Many face forced marriage or forced labour in hazardous conditions with no chance of an education and no chance to escape from a cycle of poverty. Please remember all women and girls around the world who are trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labour, domestic servitude and the production pornography. Find out more about the campaign at www.acrath.org.au/16days.