

**Reflection on the Gospel- 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
(Matthew 25:14-30)**

-Veronica Lawson RSM

In answer to my usual greeting, "G'day Muff, what are you up to?" my polymath brother-in-law, David (nicknamed Muff), would invariably reply, "Just contemplating the eternal verities!" The conversation that followed, usually over a glass of wine, would confirm the truth of his response. Contemplating the eternal verities was a way of life for my brother-in-law over the six decades of his life, until his all too early death 12 years ago.

As the end of the church year approaches, the liturgy presents us with texts that invite us all to consider the big questions of life and death, including the day of reckoning that will inevitably confront each one of us. Matthew's parable of the talents is part of a discourse about the final realities. It is sandwiched between the parable of the ten lamp-bearers, five of whom are unprepared for the bridegroom, and the end time judgement of the nations (next week's gospel).

The previous story has concluded with the warning: "Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." This is usually interpreted as a reference to the second coming of Christ. Today's story continues this motif. It opens: "For it is as if a man going abroad summons his slaves and entrusts his property to them...." The slaves are entrusted with phenomenal wealth: ten talents, five talents, and one talent respectively. A talent was a measure of weight rather than a coin and one silver talent was the equivalent of 1000 days wages for an ordinary labourer.

The slaves receive no instructions, but later events indicate that the man expects a good return on his wealth. The first two slaves deliver and are invited into the joy of the master, another possible reference to the end time when God will embrace those who are faithful to their mission. The third slave buries his talent and provides a reasonable rationale: the master is a hard man who inspires a fear-ridden response in the slave. The master does not resile from this description. The seemingly unproductive slave loses even what he has and is banished to a place "where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Is the master an image of God? There are some elements in the story that may point in this direction. There are other features, however, such as the concentration of wealth in one person and the treatment of the fearful slave, that suggest this may be too simplistic an answer. In face of the present global unrest, we may find ourselves in sympathy with the third slave insofar as he challenges the violence and exploitative ways of the master. Parables are open to multiple interpretations and the eternal verities cannot be encapsulated in one story or one image. They bear ongoing reflection and call us to responsible action.

BULLETIN FOR THE 33rd 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, 20th 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	10.30 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	9.00 AM

OUR LORD, JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE, YEAR A

READINGS First: Ezekiel 34:11-12.15-17
Second: 1 Corinthians 15:20-26.28
Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

RECENT DEATHS: Lyn O'Brien.

ANNIVERSARIES: Phillip McGarry, Andrew O'Brien.

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 1:** L. Noonan ©, G. Clarkson, L. Mullane

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



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,213.50
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>875.00</u>
		\$ 2,388.50
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 940.00

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.

WANTED—HANDY PERSON

A handy person is wanted to install some simple watering systems to assist Margaret to keep the gardens along the front fence looking great without her having to drag hoses or carry buckets of water. Please contact Jim on 5332 6611 if you can help. He will put together a work team. Thank you to Margaret for her great gardening work—the grounds look beautiful!

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Wednesday, 22nd November at 2.00 pm in the Mercy Centre. Please enter via Gent Street.

A.G.M.

The Annual General Meeting of the Ballarat Branch of the World Day of Prayer will be held at 2.00 pm on Friday, 24th November at the Seventh Day Adventist Church, 317-319 Drummond Street South, Ballarat.

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.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS APPEAL

We invite you to be part of our annual Christmas Appeal. We are most grateful for the support we receive from our parish as it enables us to continue our assistance to those in need in the local area.

We share with you the following facts to give an insight into the need that exists within the Ballarat Area. In the twelve-month period from 01/11/16 the Society distributed support to the value of \$620,000. This is an increase of 13% on the previous year. Of this amount \$110,000 went to Ballarat East residents. In addition this our bread run provided goods to the value of \$24,000 annually. Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall.

Donations over \$2.00 are tax deductible are all used in the Ballarat area.

MASAC

As we prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate the birth of Christ we have invited MASAC (Making a Scene at Christmas) to visit St Alipius Parish School. Nativity Scenes from at least 40 different nations from 40 continents except Antarctica will be displayed for your enjoyment.

We invite all parishioners to share in the joy of Christmas and view nativity scenes that:

- illustrate the key parts of the stories—from Annunciation to the flight into Egypt
- explore a social justice element of Christ's birth
- ask the question - if Jesus was born here now, what would it be like?

This display will be open from 3.30 - 4.00 pm on Tuesday, 28th November in the McNerney Centre at St Alipius School. We hope you can join us.

COMMUNIAL RECONCILIATION

Tuesday, 5th December in St Alipius Church at 7.00 pm.

FAREWELL FOR BRENDAN & JILLIAN MAHER

As you are all well aware our dear friends Brendan and Jillian Maher are taking up a new opportunity next year in South Gippsland. Brendan has accepted the position of Principal at St Mary's in Yarram.

Brendan has served as Principal at two of our Parish schools, St Alipius Parish School and Emmaus Catholic Primary School. He has been an amazing leader of students, staff, families and our wonderful parish. We will have the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Brendan and Jillian for their commitment to our community at a Parish Mass at St Alipius on Sunday, 10th December at 10.30 am. We invite everyone to join Brendan & Jillian for a cuppa in St Alipius Hall after Mass and ask that families bring a plate to share. Thank you!

Any queries please phone Tanya on 0427 418 155.