

Reflection on the Gospel—6th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
(Mark 1:40-45)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

We all seek to be part of family and community because we are social beings who need to engage with others and with our environment. Some are deprived of choice in this respect, in our times as in ancient times. Repeated name-calling and labelling is an age-old strategy of exclusion. “Illegals” is a label that excludes some of the most vulnerable people in today’s world. “Leper” is a label that is used metaphorically of those who are not welcome, of those deemed to be “infectious”. Today’s gospel about a man with leprosy invites us to reflect on the pain of exclusion. To be a leper in the world of early Judaism was to have some sort of skin disease that excluded a person from community and in particular from public worship. There were very strict regulations regarding such lepers (see the first reading from Leviticus, dating from several centuries before the time of Jesus). Their condition required ritual cleansing by a priest and an offering that cost money. That seems horrifying from our perspective, and it was. In Mark’s story, the man with leprosy approaches Jesus of Nazareth who is not one of the priests. This afflicted person thus cuts across the established procedures. Jesus is “moved with compassion”, literally “moved in his gut, or in the depths of his being”. In other words, Jesus empathises deeply with the suffering person. He has a physical reaction in the face of suffering. Some manuscripts have “moved with anger”. A later scribe probably considered that expression too harsh as an emotion for Jesus and softened the text. Jesus speaks and acts. He declares that he wills the cure of the man. He actually reaches out and touches him: a bodily encounter brings healing. He then sends the man back to tell the priests “as a proof to them”. The verb used for “send back” suggests that the priests had already been approached without success. Jesus, the Galilean healer, succeeds in mediating the power of the God of Israel and so restores this outcast to life in the community and the community itself to greater wholeness through this healing. The widespread report of Jesus’ healing activity will incur the anger of some of the authorities. For our part, as followers of Jesus, we might reflect on the fact that sickness and disability are not only physical phenomena. They also have social and emotional impacts on individuals and the communities to which they belong. Healing enables people to live again, to be with others, to do the things they want to do. It brings new life and integrity to community. Jesus demonstrates that the combination of a compassionate word and a healing touch can work wonders. That was true in the ancient world. It is equally true for us today.

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR B



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, 12TH FEBRUARY 2018**

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm in Mercy Centre
ASH WEDNESDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church 12.00 pm in Parish Church 6.00 pm in Parish Church
THURSDAY:	9.30 am Opening Year Mass for Emmaus School <i>All parishioners are welcome to attend.</i>
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

The FIRST SUNDAY of LENT, YEAR B

READINGS	First: Genesis 9:8-15
	Second: 1 Peter 3:18-22
	Gospel: Mark 1:12-15

RECENT DEATHS: John Keating, Noreen Mullane.

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, Maria Wilson, Aurora Ferrer, Patricia Harman.

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:	\$ 1,720.50
	Loose:	\$ 300.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>1,055.00</u>
		\$ 3,075.50
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 836.00



LENT

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days. All churches that have a continuous history extending before AD 1500 observe Lent. The ancient church that wrote, collected, canonized, and propagated the New Testament also observed Lent, believing it to be a commandment from the apostles. (See *The Apostolic Constitutions, Book V, Section III*).

PRAYER FOR ASH WEDNESDAY

“As we live through this Ash Wednesday, may the crosses of ashes that mark our foreheads be a reminder to us and to those we meet that we belong to your Son. May our worship and prayer and penitence this day be sustained throughout these 40 days of Lent. Bring us refreshed and renewed to the celebration of Christ's resurrection at Easter.”

PROJECT COMPASSION

Envelopes/boxes are available for collection this weekend near the Piety Stall.

RITE OF ELECTION

The *Rite of Election* is an important part of the process of a person's journey to full membership in the Catholic Church community and one which is greatly appreciated by all who participate. This applies to both adults and children of catechetical age. The Rite of Election for catechumens, candidates and children of catechetical age will take place on **Saturday, 17th February at 12.30 pm** in St Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat. The presider will be Bishop Paul Bird CSsR. At the conclusion of the ceremony all are invited to join the Bishop in St Patrick's Hall for a light lunch. For further information contact the Pastoral Ministry Office on 5337-7159 or email pastoralministry@ballarat.catholic.org.au.

ADULT SURVIVORS OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

See Notice Board for details of this presentation on **Monday, 12th February** at St Patrick's Hall. Enquiries to Dianne on 0415-057-815.

40 DAYS FOR LIFE FEB 14—MAR 25

Join the international Pray to End Abortion campaign this Lent with other pray-ers on Wellington Parade, outside Jolimont station, anytime between 7 am and 7 pm daily. Register at www.40daysforlife.com/melbourne to add your hours to the calendar or phone 0407 350 948 for more information.

BALLARAT RURAL AUSTRALIANS FOR REFUGEES

Gather at the rotunda, opposite the Golden City Hotel, on **Saturday, 17th February from 7.00—8.00 pm** to remember those who have died at the Manus Island Detention Centre.

BISHOP PAUL'S PARISH VISITATION

Bishop Paul will be visiting our parish as part of his Diocesan Visitation Programme from **March 2nd to 5th** which will include visits to the schools of St Alipius, St Francis Xavier, Emmaus and Damascus. He will celebrate the weekend Masses and meet and greet parishioners. More details later.

NEW FAITH FORMATION AND SPIRITUALITY RESOURCES

The Ballarat Diocese Faith Formation page has been updated with new resources for Lent (for groups and individuals) and many other formation and personal spirituality resources. Many are free to download at [www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/Services and Agencies/Faith Formation and Spirituality](http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/ServicesandAgencies/FaithFormationandSpirituality).

WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND

Invest in your most precious asset.... Your Marriage!

Forget life's tensions and interruptions and rekindle the closeness, intimacy, love and romance that brought you together. Recharge your relationship batteries and explore the precious nature of your marriage, allowing you both to share your feelings, hopes and dreams with each other in ways that normal, daily living tends to inhibit.

2018 Melbourne weekend dates:

16-18 March; 1-3 June; 17-19 August; and 9-11 November.

The weekend starts at 7.00 pm on Friday and ends at 5.00 pm on Sunday. Accommodation and all meals are provided.

For Information/Bookings: Phone Andre and Maria on 0411-225-992.

Email: vicbookings@wwme.org.au

Website: www.wwme.org.au