

Reflection on the Gospel-Feast of the Ascension Year B

(Mark 16:15-20)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

The feast of the Ascension invites us to face the universal experience of the loss of a loved one, and to face it in a transformative way. In Ordinary Time, we celebrate the life and ministry of Jesus. Over the period of Lent and Easter, we have been remembering his death and resurrection. The liturgy now draws us into another aspect of the Mystery, that of the presence and absence of the One who has been raised. The physical loss of Jesus means a new and different sort of presence. Like the early Christians, we need time to grasp each dimension of the one great Mystery of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Today's gospel passage receives little attention in commentaries and classes because, along with the immediately preceding passage (Mark 16:9-14), it is a late addition to the original text of Mark's gospel. The author of these verses is familiar with the similar commission to proclaim the good news to all nations and to baptise in the name of the Trinity, found at the end of Matthew's gospel. In Mark 16:15, the command is to go "into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation (*ktisis*).” It is a more inclusive vision than Matthew's and opens a space for an ecological reading of the text, an extension from the human to the other-than and more-than-human elements of the Earth community. The command to proclaim the good news, the gospel, recalls the first words of the Markan Jesus, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent [=expand your horizons], and believe in the good news" (1:15).

If we were to accept that our mission in the "in-between times" is to bring the gospel to all creation, then we might take more seriously God's command in Genesis 2 to reverence and protect the earth (usually translated as "to till and to keep"). We might stop polluting the air that all creatures need for life. We might also read the affirmations of Genesis 1 through the lens of Mark 16 and respect once more the intrinsic goodness of all creation as a gospel imperative.

The "Ascension" event recounted towards the end of the passage presupposes a pre-scientific, three-tiered understanding of the structure of the cosmos. In this ancient view, God is in the heavens above and Jesus is caught up into God's realm. The vertical movement is balanced by a horizontal movement: Jesus' return to "the right hand of God" ensures a different kind of presence in the church despite his seeming absence, one that enables the believer to continue the healing and re-creative ministry of Jesus "to all creation".

THE ASCENSION OF THE LORD—YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

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MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 14 MAY 2018

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|-------------------|---|
| MONDAY: | No Mass |
| TUESDAY: | 5.00 pm at Mercy Centre |
| WEDNESDAY: | 11.00 am Memorial Mass in Parish Church (for Margaret Maher) |
| THURSDAY: | 9.30 am in Parish Church |
| FRIDAY: | 9.30 am in Parish Church |

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

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

PENTECOST SUNDAY—YEAR B

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|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| READINGS | First: Acts 2:1-11 |
| | Second: Galatians 5:16-25 |
| | Gospel: John 15:26-27; 16:12-15 |

RECENT DEATHS: Cathy Auchettl, Tess Hayes, Margaret Maher.

ANNIVERSARIES: Mae Armstrong, Mary Bettes.

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, Leonie Sinnott, John Darroch.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: **Team 2:** B. Perkins ©, F. Nolan, J. Lewis.
Next Week: **Team 3:** M. O'Donnell ©, L. O'Donnell.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

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| PARISH: | Envelopes: | \$ 694.70 |
| | Loose: | \$ 150.00 |
| | Direct Debits: | \$ <u>1,265.00</u> |
| | | \$ 2,109.70 |
| PRESBYTERY: | | \$ 799.00 |



Vacancy

St Alipius Parish Coordinator

St Alipius Parish Ballarat East invites applications for the part-time position (16 hours per week) of *Parish Coordinator*. A Position Description and Application Form can be accessed via the Parish website <http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au> - Look under *Our Parish* then click on links. **Applications close Monday, 14th May.**

MOTHERS DAY

A **HAPPY MOTHERS DAY** to all who mother us with a mothers love.

Thank you and Appreciations to:

- The team who have prepared the Liturgy for Mother's Day.
- The musicians and student choir
- Reus family for the flowers
- The decorators
- The 'cuppa' people
- And of course, the Mothers

ANNUAL MASS COUNT

The Annual Diocesan Mass Count commences this weekend. It is counted over four weekends at all Masses and Lay-led Assemblies. The last weekend is 2/3rd June. Collectors please take note.

NEW FENCE

Our new fence is in progress along the back of the Church—hope you like it! Thanks to the Finance Group for getting this project done.

ST ALIPIUS PARISH SCHOOL TRIVIA NIGHT

Saturday, 26th May in the McInerney Centre at school, 7pm for a 7.30 pm start. Tickets now on sale from the school office—\$10 per ticket, tables of 8,6, & 4 are available. BYO nibbles and drinks, fantastic prizes to be won.

NAZARETH HOUSE FUNDRAISING CONCERT

The Nazareth House Auxiliary are hosting a fundraising concert on Sunday, May 20th at Nazareth House Hall, Wendouree, at 1.45 pm. The Regina Caeli Choir and Kerin and Kyle from St Columba's Parish will be performing. Tickets available at the door —Adults \$20, Family \$25. Afternoon tea provided. For more information contact Margaret on 5332-4454.

DATE SAVER—YOUTH FESTIVALS!

Ballarat Diocese is holding 3 x day-long Festivals for Youth and Young Adults 15-30 years old. Sundays—August 5, September 2 and November 25. The events are free and is an initiative for the Year of Youth—*Opening New Horizons for Spreading Joy!* More details soon and checkout www.ballarat.catholic.org.au youth web pages.

NEW ADVISORY BODY TO MONITOR CATHOLIC REFORMS IN RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE TRAGEDY

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Religious Australia have recently established a new advisory body to assist Catholic leaders in their ongoing work responding to child sexual abuse. The *Implementation Advisory Group*, led by Chair Jack de Groot, will monitor progress within the Catholic Church and propose additional initiatives to support the safety of children and vulnerable adults. The Implementation Advisory Group will be one of three important groups working collaboratively as the Church continues an ongoing process of change that shapes Catholic ministry in Australia.

LAY PASTORAL MINISTRY PROGRAM

Now open for new participants, the Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program offers low-cost opportunities for online study and formation for lay workers in the diocese, both employees and volunteers. A wide range of subject areas is offered along with a flexible program. Registration for the May/June 2018 study cycle is open until 18 May. For more info go to www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or contact Amanda on 5337-7125 or email amanda.smith@ballarat.catholic.org.au.