

Reflection on the Gospel-Pentecost Sunday Year B

(John 20:19-23)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Pentecost Sunday is often called the birthday of the Church. For the ancient Israelites, Pentecost (meaning 'fiftieth') was a harvest festival celebrated 50 days after the beginning of the harvest. When the Jerusalem Temple was built, this harvest festival was transformed into a pilgrimage feast to celebrate the covenant that God had made with Israel on Mt Sinai. Several decades after the death of Jesus, the early Christians reflected on their origins and chose this feast to mark the birth of God's new covenant with God's people.

In today's first reading, Luke tells the new Pentecost story in symbolic language that evokes the story of Moses and the people of Israel receiving God's Law on Mt Sinai. Just as God's presence to Israel was marked by earthquake and thunder and fire, so God's Spirit enveloping the people of the new covenant appears in a mighty rush of wind and tongues of fire. Luke's account also evokes early rabbinic teaching that the voice of God on Sinai divided into seventy tongues and all the nations received the Law in their own tongue.

For the teaching at the heart of the new covenant, we turn to the gospel reading from John. The risen Christ appears to the disciples who are huddled behind locked doors. He offers the simple greeting: "Peace be with you," the greeting we offer each other at every Eucharistic celebration. He sends them on a mission of peace in continuity with his own God-inspired mission. He breathes on them the gift of the Holy Spirit and tells them that God will forgive those whom they forgive, and will "retain" or "seize hold of" the transgressions of those whose sins or transgressions they "retain".

To seize hold of wrong-doing is to expose it and deal with it. Sometimes it is best to forgive and simply allow everyone to move on. In other situations, an easy amnesty only exacerbates the problem. Much of the enduring conflict in our world derives from the inability of ordinary people and of leaders to know how to deal with transgression. The Holy Spirit is the unique source of our power to forgive, of our capacity to deal with the perpetrators of violence, and of the strength we need to refrain from vengeance. Sadly, the desire for vengeance often inhibits healing in those who have suffered violence or abuse, and even in those who endeavour to support them, so that the cycle of transgression continues. We must work ceaselessly as a global community to address the causes of violence and abuse and search together for lasting solutions. As we celebrate Pentecost Sunday, let us gather into our hearts all the distressed members of our Earth community and pray with greater urgency than ever: "Come Holy Spirit, renew the face of the Earth."

PENTECOST SUNDAY — 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, 21 MAY 2018

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	5.00 pm at Mercy Centre
WEDNESDAY:	No Mass
THURSDAY:	No Mass
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

SUNDAY OF THE MOST HOLY TRINITY—YEAR B

READINGS	First: Deuteronomy 4:32-34,39-40
	Second: Romans 8:14-17
	Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

RECENT DEATHS: Patricia Quarrell.

ANNIVERSARIES: Bernard Blood, Owen Callaghan, Robert Casey, Michael Curran, Mary Hogan, Francis Roach.

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 3:** M. O'Donnell ©, L. O'Donnell.
Next Week: **Team 4:** C. Tarquino ©, M. Tarquino.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 813.70
	Loose:	\$ 150.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ 115.00
		\$ 1,078.70
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 834.00

ANNUAL MASS COUNT

The Annual Diocesan Mass Count commenced last 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.

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Wednesday, May 23rd at 2.00 pm in the Mercy Centre. Please enter via Gent Street.

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.

BALLARAT NILS

A service provided by the St Vincent de Paul Society to assist low income earners in the Ballarat region to purchase essential goods and services up to the value of \$1500. We currently require volunteers to assist in running this service. The role would include being an independent witness in the interview process. No previous experience is required, simply to be available four hours a fortnight on a Thursday between 9.00 am—1.00 pm. If you can assist, please call Richard Francis on 5331 3907 for more information.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL SERVICES VICTORIA WORKSHOP—MAY 21

Fr Anthony Gittens, a leading author and speaker on ministry and service, will present his workshop *Ministry at the Margins* on Monday, May 21, from 10.30 am — 3.00 pm at the Cardinal Knox Centre, East Melbourne. This is an opportunity to reflect on the spiritual roots of our service to those on the margins of our society. For more information go to the Catholic Social Services website <https://www.css.org.au/Whats-Happening/Our-Events>

JOURNEY CATHOLIC RADIO PROGRAM—AIRS 27 MAY

Fr Graham Schmitzer reflects on the Gospel of Matthew; Bruce Downes, The Catholic Guy encourages us to Get Spiritually Fit; and Marilyn Rodrigues, The Peaceful Parent, reminds us of the importance of One-on-One Time. Our music is selected from various talented music artists who help us to create a show about faith, hope, love and life. Go to www.jcr.org.au or www.itunes.jcr.org.au where you can listen anytime and subscribe to weekly shows by email. Please note that Journey Catholic Radio information is always a week in advance.

CENTENARY OF ST COLUMBANS MISSION SOCIETY

Invitations to:

- Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, East Melbourne, June 24 at 11.00 am
- ACU Lectures *Mission today and tomorrow* on June 20.
Presenters, Columbans Fr Noel Connolly and Rev Dr Patrick McInerney.

For more information on both these events see flyers on Notice Board.

SAVE THESE DATES—DIOCESAN YOUTH FESTIVALS!

Ballarat Diocese is holding 3 x day-long Festivals called *Joy+* 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.