

Recent Deaths: Bernard Bradbury, John Moodie, Tess O'Callaghan

Anniversaries: Sr Margaret Gray (Loreto), Barbara Melican, Des Nolan,
Peter Warden

Welcome!

With the return to school this week, many of the groups and organisations that take a break over January are recommencing. The Parish liturgy group met this week to plan for the 2019 year and welcomed Therese O'Loughlin to the group. John Davis and Maria Peck have both concluded their service on the Liturgy group and we thank them both. On Tuesday of this week (February 5th) the Parish Pastoral Council will meet at 7.30pm.

This weekend we welcome Fr Vincent Pham to our Parishes of Ballarat, Beaufort and Linton. Fr Vincent is a Redemptorist priest who will be with us for all of 2019. He will be introduced at each of the four Masses at the Cathedral over this weekend.

In the Parish Office, we have welcomed Selina Gaden who has commenced as part time Administration Officer, working on Thursday and Friday each week. Selina will share this position with Anita Houlihan who works Monday – Thursday in both Parish Administration and Family Ministry, as well as being the Parish Safeguarding Officer. Thank you to Juanita Bongiorno for her work in the Parish Office over the past 6 months

Thank you for contributing to the Cathedral collections last weekend

Envelopes	\$1,738.00	Parish Loose	\$264.05	Presbytery	\$1,936.35
Counters	Team 4	Next Week	Team 5		

Life in the Spirit Charismatic Prayer Group meetings take place on Tuesdays at 7.30pm in the MacKillop/Glowrey meeting rooms.

Morning Cuppa in the Glowrey / MacKillop rooms after 10.30am Mass this Sunday (there will be Zooper Dooper icy poles for the kids!).

Baptism Preparation for parents of children who are to be baptised

Thursday February 7th at 10am and 7pm in the smaller hall at the Cathedral. This preparation is a collaborative project of the six Parishes of Ballarat.

Catholic Women's League

Members of the Ballarat Cathedral Branch will meet at the Cathedral Presbytery meeting room on Wednesday February 6th at 1.30pm. They extend a warm invitation to any women who are interested to come and see what they are all about.

Enquiries to Carmel 5332 2103 or Anna 0400 260 660.

Catholic Man Breakfast Series

Men of all ages are invited to a Catholic Man Breakfast to be held on Thursday, February 21, 2019 at Craig's Royal Hotel in Ballarat. The Breakfast will be hosted by Bishop Paul Bird CSsR and will feature former leading Radio Executive, Shane Healy, as guest speaker. Shane has walked a fascinating path to the top of the highly competitive radio industry in Australia and has connected with high profile performers such as Brian Taylor, Neil Mitchell and Rex Hunt. Further information from Chris Liston, ph. 0437 318 251 or email chris.listo2@gmail.com or Vincent Sully, ph. 0407 310 115 or email vcjdh.sully@gmail.com. Bookings are open on Trybooking <https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?eid=451553>

Theology Course – *Thirsting for God: Faith Seeking Understanding*

Fr. Barry Ryan and Sr. Veronica Lawson invite parishioners to sign up for five 2-hour sessions on faith commitment in the contemporary world. Venue: Mercy Gathering Room, Gent Street, Ballarat East. February 14, March 14, April 11, May 9 and June 6. Afternoons (1-3pm) or evenings (7-9pm). Donation of \$25 to cover costs. Contact Sr. Veronica by email veronica.lawson@mercy.org.au or phone 0408392297 before February 4th. *This is a new course, not a repeat of sessions held over the past 4 years.*

Parish 'Our Future' Forum

All parishioners are warmly invited to special forums as part of the Program – the Our Future Forum on Wednesday February 27th at 10.30am and 7.00pm in the small hall. This is a great opportunity to make your contribution to the discussion. Please mark this date in your calendar. Full Program details will be available on the dedicated Program page on our parish website – which will be updated regularly throughout the Program.

Reflection on the Gospel – Veronica Lawson rsm

This week's gospel reading continues the story of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth. At first he is universally accepted: the people of Nazareth marvel at the gracious words he utters. They identify him as Joseph's son. By the end of the story, however, these same people actually try to kill him. So, what happens in between to cause such a dramatic change of heart? These are religious people, not an unruly street mob. They are friends of the family. They are familiar with their sacred texts and traditions and presumably want to understand them more fully. In fact, they are like many of us who take time out on a weekly basis to come together for worship and prayer.

The people of Nazareth seem to be carrying a sense of exclusive entitlement to God's favour, as well as some deeply entrenched prejudices against the neighbouring Syrians and Phoenicians. Their history is largely one of conflict with neighbours, of struggle for survival, and some are unwilling to relinquish their unhealed local and ethnic grievances. This story is about power and control. When Jesus suggests that God's prophetic and healing power is accessible to and may even be more readily received among foreigners than within Israel, the anger of those who consider themselves "the chosen" knows no bounds: it spills over into violence. They have little patience with the implicit criticism of their attitudes to outsiders and the challenge of his prophetic words.

One of the problems with the narrative is that Jesus seems to be deliberately provoking a negative reaction. There are other problems as well: there is no cliff in Nazareth from which the enraged crowd could cast him to his death, and it is highly unlikely that people of this tiny town of two to four hundred Galilean Jews would resort to murdering one of their own for what they see as a verbal assault. So what is going on? It would seem that the gospel writer is putting elements of later stories about the violent treatment of Jesus and his followers into this episode in order to foreshadow what is to come.

The story thus becomes a microcosm of the gospel as a whole.

When the message is comforting, the messenger is well received. When it is less palatable, the messenger is in danger of being attacked or manipulated, more often than not at the hands of people who are basically good people like us. Unchecked assumptions, deep-seated biases, and uncontrolled emotions will function to bring the anointed prophet of the God of Israel to a violent death. This story invites us to check our assumptions and our biases lest we turn to physical, verbal, or emotional violence in the face of a prophetic challenge.