

Reflection on the Gospel-Feast of the Ascension Year C

(Luke 24:46-53)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Loss is part of the human condition, and the physical death of a loved one is among the most painful experiences of loss. Today's Feast of the Ascension invites us to face the experience of loss 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. As we approach the end of the Easter season, the liturgy draws us into another aspect of the Mystery, that of the presence and absence of Jesus who has been raised.

The Lukan Ascension stories as found in the gospel and in today's first reading (Acts 1:1-11) presuppose a pre-scientific, three-tiered understanding of the structure of the world. In this ancient view, God is in the heavens above and the prophet Jesus, like the prophet Elijah of old, is caught up into God's realm from whence the Holy Spirit will "descend" upon God's people. This vertical (up and down) movement is balanced by a horizontal movement.

In Acts, Jesus' family and friends who grieve the loss of their loved one are told not to keep looking up to the heavens. They have work to do: they must return to Jerusalem for the present and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the prophetic ministry of Jesus ("clothed with power from on high"), to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. They have to face the fact that the physical loss of Jesus means a new and different sort of presence and that they have a role to play in making him present in their world. Like us, the early Christians needed time to grasp each dimension of the one great mystery of God's presence among them.

In the gospel account, the disciples gathered in Jerusalem are to be witnesses to the death and resurrection of Jesus. They are to proclaim a gospel of "repentance and forgiveness". In the gospel (Luke 24:47) their audience is "all peoples", while in Acts 1:8, they are commissioned to be witnesses to Jesus "in all Jerusalem, in Judaea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth". In other words, the good news is not only for the earth's human inhabitants but for the earth itself. Pope Francis, in calling us to be attentive to the cry of the poor, insists that the earth itself is "among the most maltreated and abandoned of our poor" (*Laudato Si'* 2).

Joy, peace, prayer and blessing have the final word in Luke's gospel. They have permeated Luke's story from the outset. As we prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, we might pray that the spirit of joy that animated the earliest Christians might fill our hearts so that the entire planetary community might know the blessing of God.

FEAST OF THE ASCENSION — YEAR C

Our parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.

ST ALIPIUS PARISH — BALLARAT EAST

St Alipius' Parish Church

84 Victoria Street, BALLARAT EAST 3350

Ss Peter & Paul's Church

701 Fiskens St, BUNINYONG 3357

Office Hours: 9.30am—1.30am Tue, Thu & Fri

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SAP Liturgy website: www.sapliturgy.net.au

CLERGY & STAFF

Parish Priest: Fr Peter Sherman

Administrator: Fr Kevin Maloney VG

Parish Coordinator: Lucy O'Beirne

Child Safety Officer: Roxanne Leed

Finance Officer: Kerrie McTigue

Bereavement: Carmel Flynn & Kathy Curran

WEEKDAY MASSES COMMENCING MONDAY, 3rd JUNE 2019

MONDAY:	No Mass	
TUESDAY:	10.30 am	Funeral Mass St Alipius
WEDNESDAY:	9.30 am	Mercy Convent (Victoria St)
THURSDAY:	9.30 am	St Alipius' Church
	11.00 am	Mercy Place (Corbett St)
FRIDAY:	9.30 am	St Alipius' Church

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT 8th June	6.00 PM
	SUN 9th June	10.30 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN 10th June	9.00 AM

PENTECOST SUNDAY — YEAR C

READINGS	First:	Acts 2:1-11
	Second:	1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13
	Gospel:	John 20:19-23

BAPTISMS:

RECENT DEATHS: Leo (Lang) Dean

ANNIVERSARIES: Br John Walsh, Sheila McCartin, Denise Mildren

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Aurora Ferrer, Leonie Sinnot, John Darroch, Eleanor Keating, Terry Foran, Cathy Jones, Alison Rice, Pauline Stapleton, Fred Marouff.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 11: E. Kennedy ©, C. Stewart (Team 10 unavailable)
Next Week: Team 12: K. Bevelander ©, M. Liston, G. Maguire

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH: Envelopes: \$ 1162.20
 Loose: \$ 300.00
 Direct Debits: \$ 355.00
 \$ 1817.20

PRESBYTERY \$ 966.00



COUNTING TEAMS

The next cycle of counting teams has been devised. Due to some retirements, we will have eleven teams. A copy of the new list commencing mid-June is available in the St Alipius' Church foyer.

CARING GROUP MEETING

The next meeting of the Caring Group will be held on **Friday 7th June at 10 am** in the St. Alipius Hall. All welcome.

COMMUNITY IDEAS SOUGHT FOR USE OF NEW HALL

At morning tea after the **10:30 Mass this weekend at Buninyong**, community members of Ss Peter & Paul's are invited to discuss what sort of community/parish activities of a social nature could be held in the hall that parishioners would like to see on a regular basis.

CELEBRATIONS OF CONFIRMATION & FIRST EUCHARIST

Celebration of the sacraments will conclude this weekend. We congratulate the children from Emmaus Catholic Primary School and offer our prayers, support and welcome to all the children and their families. Thank you to Fr. Kevin Maloney for celebrating our Sacraments to date and to Bishop Peter Connors who will assist at Buninyong this weekend.

JUBILARIANS' MASS

Mass to celebrate the Jubilees of Ordination to the Priesthood of Frs Sajan Mathew (25 years), Rupert Bowd, John Pothiyittel, Alex Lim, Brian McDermott (40 years) and Adrian McNerney (50 years), will be celebrated on Tuesday, June 4, 2019 at Patrick's Cathedral Ballarat at 5.30pm. All are welcome to attend.

ASYLUM SEEKER FUNDRAISER

A Refugee Week Soup and Sandwich Luncheon will be held on **Wednesday June 19th** at Nazareth House Hall, Mill Street, Ballarat. Entry \$20. Speakers and Entertainment. Stall and Competition. Inquiries 0401175045 annekav1234@gmail.com Facebook: House of Welcome-Ballarat.

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLICS MAGAZINE

The winter edition of Australian Catholics is now available in the church foyers.

PARISH ANNUAL MASS COUNT

The Annual Mass Count took place in parishes across the diocese over the past four weekends of May. The average attendance at parish masses during that period is noted below. Due to the celebration of the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion over three of these weekends at St Alipius, our parish will conduct another count in November for comparison purposes. Many thanks to our diligent counters!

St Alipius' Church Mass Times	Average Attendance		Ss Peter & Paul's Church Mass Times	Average Attendance	
	2019	2018		2019	2018
Sat. 6.00pm	261	204			
Sun. 9.00am	117	119	Sun. 9.00am	68	68
Sun. 10.30am	194	134	Sun. 10.30am	123	128

CATHOLIC EDUCATION WEEK

The parish extends its best wishes to all the wonderful children, staff and families in our school communities who celebrated Catholic Education Week this past week. The theme this year was *"to listen with the ear of your heart"*. Catholic Education Week publicly celebrates our Catholic Identity in education and reminds us of the important role that faith plays in the lives of our children and families.

2019 AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL

The next Australian Catholic Youth Festival will be in Perth from December 8-10, 2019! The Ballarat Diocese is partnering with the Melbourne Office for Youth to offer all-inclusive packages to the festival which will cover transport, accommodation, registration to the festival and meals. The event is for those in Year 9 up to 30 years old and is a great way to partake in celebrating the vitality of the Catholic Church in Australia. Interested parishioners can find more information on the Youth & Young Adult Ministry page of the diocesan website or contact Patrick, ph. 5337 7160.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

In this week leading up to Pentecost, we celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. This year the theme is *"Justice and only justice, you shall pursue"* (cf. Deut 16:18-20). All are welcome to join in any, or all, of the 5.30pm Prayer Evenings:
 Monday, June 3rd St. Matthew's Anglican Church, Wendouree
 Tuesday, June 4th Ballarat Central Uniting Church, Lydiard St Sth
 Wednesday, June 5th St. Patrick's Cathedral, Lyons St Sth
 Thursday, June 6th Anglican Cathedral Church of Christ the King, Lydiard St Sth.

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY WINTER APPEAL

We invite you to be part of our annual Winter Appeal. This year, to date, the Society has distributed support to the value of \$26,911 across the Ballarat area. This is a weekly average of \$1260. To date we have received 3,185 calls which gives us a weekly figure of approximately 177 calls. We are most grateful for the support we receive from our parish as it enables us to continue our support for those in need. **If anyone is interested in joining our group please contact Helen on ph. 0419 875 349 for information. Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall.** All donations are used in the Ballarat area. Donations of over \$2.00 are tax deductible, receipts will be issued.