

Reflection on the Gospel-Feast of Christ the King Year C (Luke 23:35-43)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Sadly, there have always been those who scoff at others or make fun of them, generally because they themselves feel threatened in some way. Those who suffer such bullying behaviour often feel powerless and demeaned. There may be some comfort for such people in today's gospel. We find here a serious case of bullying and two dignified responses that undermine the destructive power of those who taunt or deride.

The first response is that of Jesus who refuses to retaliate when the soldiers mock him or when another convicted criminal ("one of the criminals hanging there") derides him. Another dignified response comes from "the other" criminal. This man has the insight to recognise that Jesus is innocent. He also has the courage to challenge the injustice of what is going on around him. Having offered his challenge, he then turns to Jesus and addresses him by name: "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kin-dom." His request reveals his faith in Jesus as the human face of God. It also reveals his knowledge of Jesus' mission, first announced in Galilee: "I must proclaim the good news of the kin-dom of God"

Jesus points to God and God's reign or empire. Jesus' criminal companion points to the reign or empire of Jesus. The reign of God and the reign of Jesus are one and the same. In turning to Jesus and putting his request, this criminal becomes a disciple and receives the assurance of a share in Jesus' life with God: "Today you will be with me..." "Jesus, remember me" is a fitting prayer in the face of all life's struggles. It is a prayer for mercy. Next time we sing these words or pray them in our hearts, we might spare a thought for the one who first uttered them, a convicted Jewish criminal who had the courage to rise above his own suffering and to challenge the unjust oppression of an innocent neighbour. Like Jesus, this criminal was and continues to be an instrument of God's reign. His capacity to challenge the injustice of Jesus' execution might be a source of inspiration for us as we struggle to find mercy and justice for the Earth as well as for the innocent ones who seek asylum in our midst only to find themselves subjected to the torture of exile and hopelessness.

The title of today's feast reminds us of the boundless nature of God's rule or reign: we celebrate Christ Jesus as ruler of the universe, of all that is and of all that will be. As our understanding of the universe expands, we find ourselves caught up in the ever creative and saving presence of a compassionate, merciful God. This feast might serve as a reminder to us to allow the peace of Christ to reign in our hearts even in the face of derision.

Luke 23:35-43 And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, "He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, God's chosen one!" The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, "If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!" There was also an inscription over him, "This is the King of the Jews." One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

ST ALIPIUS PARISH—BALLARAT EAST & BUNINYONG
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE — YEAR C, SUN. 24TH NOV, 2019

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

St Alipius' Parish Church
82 Victoria Street, BALLARAT EAST 3350

SS Peter & Paul's Church
701 Fiskens St, BUNINYONG

Contact Details

Parish Office: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East 3350

Hours: 9.30am - 1.30pm Tues, Thurs, Fri **SAP Liturgy email:** sapliturgy@gmail.com

Telephone: 5332 6611 **SAP Liturgy website:** www.sapliturgy.net.au

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au **Parish Website:** www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Clergy and Staff

Priests: Frs Justin Driscoll, Jorge De Chavez OSJ, Vincent Pham Van Long CSSr

Visiting Priests: Frs Dan Arundell and Barry Ryan

Parish Coordinator: Lucy O'Beirne

Child Safety Officer: Roxanne Leed

Finance Officer: Kerrie McTigue

Funeral Ministry: Kathy Curran & Carmel Flynn

Masses This Week

Tuesday, 26th November	11.00 am	St Alipius' Church (Funeral Mass)
Wednesday, 27th November	9.30 am	Mercy Sisters (Victoria St)
Thursday, 28th November	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Church
	11.00 am	Mercy Place (Corbett St)
Friday, 29th November	9.30 am	St. Alipius' Church

Next Weekend's Masses

St Alipius' Church , Ballarat East	Saturday	30th November	6.00 pm
	Sunday	1st December	9.00 am
SS Peter & Paul's Church , Buninyong	Sunday	1st December	10.30 am

First Sunday of Advent — Year A

Readings	First:	Isaiah	2:1-5
	Second:	Romans	13:11-14
	Gospel:	Matthew	24:37-44

Baptisms: Lenny Bourke, Lola Bourke, Isabella Carrick, Penelope Carrick and Parker Davis

Recent Deaths: Salvatori (Sam) Amendola, Pauline Corcoran, Lina Muller

Anniversaries: Tracy Howard

We pray for Kateri Byrne (Albury) and Peter Martin and all who are unwell

What's on for Advent that can help us prepare for Christmas?

Lead Kindly Light, Buninyong and Ballarat East Advent Reflection Opportunities
Thursdays November 28 and December 5, 12 & 19. 10.30 am at Ss Peter Paul Buninyong and in the evenings, 7.00 pm at St Alipius. Fr Justin will lead the first of the four meetings.

An **Advent Retreat** will be held on Sunday December 15th, St Alipius' Hall, 2pm - 5pm
Loreto Sisters Natalie Houlihan and Rachel McLoughlin will lead the retreat which will be an advent time of reflections, readings, music, images, silence and ending with Spiritual Conversation circles. All are welcome.

Advent / Christmas Masses planning meeting

Tuesday November 26th between 4 - 5pm at the Parish Office. All welcome to attend, please contact David Santamaria on 0427310564 to confirm your attendance. If you can't attend the meeting you can offer your ideas via the form on the sapliturgy.net.au website.

St Alipius' Church Working Bee

After 6.00pm Mass, Saturday 30th November. Sausage sizzle and drinks available. Looking forward to having a good number to clean our Church for Christmas — the more the merrier! Besides brooms, dusters, cloths, if anyone can bring their vacuum cleaner it would be a big help. Thank you. Dianne and Kevin McKeegan (coordinators).

Parish Pastoral Council

Many thanks to the parishioners who have nominated others who will now be invited to consider membership of the Parish Pastoral Council. Rachel McLoughlin IBVM will facilitate a discernment evening for those who accept the invitation to participate on Monday December 16th 7pm - 9pm in the St Alipius' Parish Hall.

St Alipius' Advent Anointing Mass & afternoon tea

Wednesday 11th December at 2.00pm. Afternoon tea will follow in the St Alipius' Hall. A plate to help with the afternoon tea would be appreciated. Those needing transport please contact a member of the Caring Group or Lucy in the parish office.

Our **Christmas Masses** will be Christmas Eve 6pm & 8pm St Alipius with Fr Jorge, 7pm at Buninyong with Fr Justin and on Christmas Day 9am at St Alipius' with Fr Barry Ryan.

SVDP Christmas Cards & Calendars — St Alipius' Piety Stall

Christmas cards (\$5 for 8 cards) and 2020 Columban calendars (\$9 each) now available.

Counting Teams

This Week: **Team 5:** M. Stewart ©, M. Anderson, R. Reynolds
Next Week: **Team 6:** K. Cummins ©, J.
O'Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck

Parish:
Envelopes: \$ 689.70
Loose: \$ 300.00
Credit Cards (mthly) \$ 2667.00
Direct Debits: \$ 780.00
\$ 4436.70

*Thank you to those who
contributed to the
collections last weekend*

St Vincent de Paul Society Christmas Appeal

St Alipius' Conference is most grateful for the support they received from the parish as it enables them to continue assistance to those in need in the local area. This year, the theme of our appeal is, "**Help A Family Celebrate Christmas**" and they invite you to join them in their challenge to "*help families put food on the table this Christmas*".

- ◆ Families experience food insecurity for a range of reasons. For many, food is the only item in the household budget they have some control over. They often prioritise paying the rent and utility bills over purchasing food. This frequently results in insufficient funds remaining to buy the weekly groceries.
- ◆ For most of us it is impossible to imagine the anxiety felt in such situations. During the Christmas season this problem is heightened as a result of the media focus on the commercial side of Christmas. In 2018–19, Vinnies Victoria distributed \$8,249,505 worth of food and food assistance to people in need. During the same period Ballarat Conferences spent 82% of their total budget of \$590,000 on food.

Envelopes are available at the Piety Stall. All donations are used in the Ballarat area and donations of over \$2.00 are tax deductible.

OLHC Parish Wendouree Christmas Day Lunch

OLHC Parish Wendouree are hosting lunch on Christmas Day in the Parish Hall, 482 Gillies Street, Wendouree from 12.00noon – 2.00pm. Transport is available. For bookings or further information ph. 0419 975914 or email christmaslunchwendouree@gmail.com.

Giving Tree

We extend our great thanks to Margaret McCarty who has generously coordinated the 'Jesse Tree' project for many years past and is now taking a break. Year 12 student, Ruby Dean, has kindly offered to coordinate this year's 'Giving Tree' outreach efforts. Interested parishioners who would like to assist are invited to contact Lucy in the parish office. It is anticipated that gift tags to attach to donated gifts will be available for parishioners to take home on the 2nd Sunday of Advent.

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program

Next study cycle begins January 12. Registrations open now until December 23. More info at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or email kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au ph. 0407523424. Welcome to Kim Butler who will speak about the program at Masses this weekend.

Plenary Council 2020

*How is God calling us to be a Christ-centred Church that is **Inclusive, Participatory and Synodal?*** Our next parish discernment gatherings will be held on Monday 2nd December 7.00pm - 9.00pm, and Tuesday 3rd December 1.00pm - 3.00pm. Please come along and help shape our future. The Snapshot report is available [online](#) or through the Parish Office.

House of Welcome, Asylum Seeker Fundraiser - Annual Garden Party

Sunday, November 24th 30 Waller Avenue, Newington 2.00pm. Adult Entry \$20.00,

YCW Cricket Club Reunion Former players, supporters, and families of the YCW Cricket Club, Sunday 1st December. Further details: Terry 0401730670 & John 0409864080.