

Reflection on the Gospel — Easter 3A (Luke 24:13-35)

-Veronica Lawson, RSM

Extraordinary things can happen if we open ourselves to the presence of a stranger on life's journey. That seems to be a key element in today's gospel passage from the well-known and well-loved Emmaus story. Imagine two dejected disciples (Cleopas and possibly his wife) on Easter Day, on the road back from Jerusalem to their home in Emmaus, a few kilometres away. On their journey, they encounter Jesus who has been raised. At first, they fail to recognise him. Their sadness at his violent death has blinded them to the significance of the women's account of the empty tomb. It has blinded them to what is happening before their very eyes.

Jesus engages them in conversation and holds up a metaphorical mirror to their experience of loss and grief. Their hearts "burn" within them as he reveals to them the meaning of his death and resurrection in the light of their sacred scriptures. Yet still they fail to recognise the one whom they have described as "a prophet mighty in deed and word." They invite him to share a meal with them and their eyes are opened: they recognise him in the blessing and breaking of the bread they share with him. He disappears from their midst. They cannot contain the joy they have experienced in realising that Jesus is alive and once more present to them, though in a new and transforming way.

Cleopas and partner go straight back to Jerusalem to share this good news with the other disciples. Now all the assembled disciples experience powerfully the presence of the risen Jesus in their midst. They too pass over the women's story. It is the appearance to Peter of the resurrected Jesus that is the ground of their new faith. As the story continues beyond today's reading, we learn that the male disciples will also share a meal with him and he will open their minds to understand the scriptures. Everything will fall into place. The fear that has paralysed them will fall away. They will not only understand Jesus' death and resurrection in the light of the scriptures. They will be "clothed with power from on high" to exercise their role as witnesses to this great mystery.

Extraordinary things can happen to those hospitable enough to "break bread" with "strangers" in whom they do not immediately recognise God's presence. If we open our hearts to those who have sought a welcome on our shores and are now awaiting permanency, we might come to participate more deeply in the joy of the resurrection. Opening our hearts is always a possibility while opening our homes is not in these days of restricted physical contact. My experience at this time is of reverse ministry: a young refugee couple is presently doing my essential shopping and leaving it on the front doorstep. Though "strangers" in our land, they are demonstrating what it means to be "of God".

ST ALIPIUS' PARISH — BALLARAT EAST & BUNINYONG THIRD SUNDAY OF EASTER — YEAR A, 26TH APRIL, 2020

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

SS Peter & Paul's Church
701 Fiskens St, BUNINYONG 3357

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

*St Alipius' Parish acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of this
land and we pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging.*

Parish Office & Presbytery: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East 3350

Hours: 9.30am - 1.30pm Tues, Thurs, Fri

Telephone: 5332 6611

Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Parish Website: www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

SAP Liturgy website: www.sapliturgy.net.au

SAP Liturgy email: sapliturgy@gmail.com

Parish Priest: Fr. Jorge De Chavez OSJ

In Residence: Fr. Eladio Lizada OSJ

Parish Coordinator: Lucy O'Beirne

Finance Officer: Kerrie McTigue

Funeral Ministry: Carmel Flynn & Kathy Curran

Child Safety Officer: Roxanne Leed

Liturgy Coordinator: David Santamaria

Finance Committee Chair: Paul Jans

Some Online Mass Options & Resources for Prayer

- ◆ Ballarat Diocese Mass options: www.ballarat.catholic.org.au
- ◆ St Alipius' Parish Liturgy Website: www.sapliturgy.net.au
- ◆ Masses with Bishop Shane Mackinlay: www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au
- ◆ St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne: <https://www.melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

Prayer for Spiritual Communion:

*"My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament of the altar.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I
cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into
my heart ... I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly
to You. Never permit me to be separated from You."* Pope Francis

Next Week's Readings: Fourth Sunday of Easter — Year A

First: Acts 2:14, 36-41

Second: 1 Peter 2:20-25

Gospel: John 10:1-10

Unwell:

We pray for Kateri Byrnes, Carmel Doherty, Pat Hogan, Cathy Jones,
Peter Martin, Letitia Simmons, Margie Wilmott and all who are unwell

Keeping in Touch — Fr Jorge

My dear people of God,

We are on the third Sunday of Easter. In the gospel two disciples met Jesus on the road to Emmaus but they are not aware it's Him. They only begin to recognise Jesus when He breaks bread with them. In the same way, Jesus is recognised in each one of us when we show our concern and care for each other. When we break ourselves and become person for others, Jesus is truly alive in us. During this time of isolation, be on our own or with family, and by staying at home, we show how much we care for each other. Looking forward to break bread with you all, we pray together, it be sooner.

Special Thanks to David and Maureen for organizing our Spiritual Communion every weekend and I am inviting you to follow our SAP liturgy website www.sapliturgy.net.au and join us in prayer at the comfort of your home. Here is my email and you may reply directly to me in this address: jorge.dechavez@ballarat.catholic.org.au.

God bless you all and keep safe!

Best Regards, Fr. Jorge, OSJ

ANZAC Day 2020

As our nation pauses this Saturday, our parish likewise offers its thoughts and prayers as we reflect upon all that ANZAC Day represents in a year that will be like no other. With no ANZAC Day community dawn services or marches being held due to the coronavirus, people are encouraged to join in with the privately conducted **National Commemorative Service** which will be held from **5.30am AEST**. It is being broadcast from inside the Australian War Memorial (AWM) in Canberra, and you can watch it [live on ABC TV](#), listen on [ABC radio](#), or stream on [ABC's YouTube](#) or [Facebook feeds](#). The Last Post and a minute's silence will be conducted at 6.00am — Australians are invited to stand at the end of their driveways, on balconies or in their loungerooms at this time.

The Catholic Military Ordinariate of Australia is charged with the pastoral care of uniformed members of Australia's Navy, Army and Air Force, their families and civilians employed by the Department of Defence. Unfortunately ANZAC Day Mass for 2020 has been cancelled. Read more at their website <http://military.catholic.org.au>

St. Vincent de Paul Society Bread Run at St. Alipius

Free fresh bread available to people on Centrelink benefits and to all experiencing job loss, shorter hours, etc. This may be picked up each Monday night between 7.50 pm and 8.20 pm in the parish hall adjacent to the St. Alipius Church. Parking is via Hopetoun Street entrance. Bring own bags as no bags are supplied. Please pass on this information to any families experiencing difficulties at this time. For further information please ring Gavin 5334 7221 or Geoff 0413 840 835. Please also note: **SVDP Call Centre — 5334 2844 lines open 24/7**

Parish Coordinator News

I wish to advise parishioners that I will be finishing as Parish Coordinator on Friday 8th May. During my time in this role I have had the immense pleasure of meeting many parishioners and feel privileged to have served the wonderful people who make up this extraordinary parish. I will always be grateful for the friendship and support that you have shared with me and I offer my prayers and best wishes to the parish for the future. Sincerely, Lucy O'Beirne.

Plenary Council 2020 Assembly 1 Postponed

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Plenary Council 2020 Assembly 1 scheduled for October in Adelaide, has been postponed. Read the full media release at <https://mediablog.catholic.org.au/first-assembly-of-plenary-council-postponed/>. See a message from Bishop Paul on the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au.

Mother Earth Day – April 22

Mother Earth is clearly urging a call to action. Nature is suffering. For more information go to [https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/uploads/ppage/files/Catholic%20Earthcare%20Ballarat/Mother%20Earth%20Day\(2\).pdf](https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/uploads/ppage/files/Catholic%20Earthcare%20Ballarat/Mother%20Earth%20Day(2).pdf)

Matthew's Beatitudes and Catherine McAuley in Dialogue with Earth's Distress

Veronica Lawson RSM recently held a webinar exploring the Beatitudes and Catherine McAuley at this time of the Earth's distress. Watch the video here <https://vimeo.com/404735366>

With Jesus in the Desert: A Retreat for a Time of Isolation

The staff of Jesuit Communications have prepared a 14-day retreat for use during the Coronavirus crisis, particularly for those in isolation. The retreat has suggestions for each of the 14 days, though participants are free to follow it through or to pick out particular days. A shorter retreat that keeps the basic pattern could involve days 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14. More info: <https://www.pray.com.au/with-jesus-in-the-desert-a-retreat-for-a-time-of-isolation/>

Mercy Connect Ballarat/Bendigo Co-ordinator

Mercy Connect is a program within Mercy Works which recruits, trains and supports volunteers to mentor refugee students and their families as they settle in Australia. We are seeking a Co-ordinator of our Ballarat/Bendigo Mercy Connect Education project.. The role involves connecting all volunteers with students from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds in existing and potentially new primary and secondary schools across Ballarat/Bendigo. It also includes recruiting and training new volunteers. While providing assistance in the educational setting, the primary focus is one of mentoring and providing ongoing support and training. The Co-ordinator is required to liaise with schools in providing volunteers appropriate to the situation. A key focus will be expanding the project within the Bendigo region. It is a two day a week position and based in Bendigo. For further information <https://www.mercyworks.org.au/job-opportunities/>

Planned Giving Envelopes and Other Offerings

Please post envelopes through the mail-slot of the presbytery. If you have any queries regarding Planned Giving, please contact:

Kerrie McTigue

Parish Finance Officer

Phone: (03) 5331 2933 — Email:

ballaratoffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Thank You to Those who Contributed to Last Week's Collections

Parish: Envelopes:	\$ 980.00
Loose:	\$ nil
Credit Cards (mthly)	\$ 2417.00
Direct Debits:	<u>\$ 585.00</u>
	\$ 6982.00
Presbytery:	\$ 240.00