

St. Peter's Parish

Communities of Linton, Skipton, Smythesdale and Snake Valley



The Ascension of the Lord 24th May, 2020

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Next Week's Readings: Pentecost: Acts 2:1-11 1 Corinthians 12:3-7, 12-13 John 20:19-23

The Parish acknowledges that the Aboriginal people of Australia are our first nation peoples and the traditional owners and custodians of this land.

Recent deaths: Gerard Britt, Ellen Brown, Ena Fischer, Fr Joseph Kearney SAC

Please remember in your prayers:

Margaret Cooper, Fr. Dennis Dennehy, Winifredo Ferrer, Lucas Mactingrao, Leonie Street, Sr. Patricia Vagg

PUBLIC LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Mass Options and Resources for Prayer

Although public Masses and liturgies will not be celebrated, the following opportunities are available:

Ballarat Diocese Mass options: <http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/>

Daily Mass: 11.30am St John of God Hospital Chapel can be viewed via

<https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9> or

<http://stpatscathedral.weebly.com/>

Masses with Bishop Shane Mackinlay: <https://www.sandhurst.catholic.org.au/>

Please refer to Parish website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/ for any updates

Week of Prayer and Christian Unity 2020

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Australia will be observed from 24-31 May, 2020 in the week between Ascension and Pentecost. This year's theme, "They showed us unusual kindness" (Acts 28:2), calls us to move from shared prayer to shared action and remembers the historic shipwreck of Paul on the island of Malta. It calls us to a greater generosity to those in need. Resources are now available at the website [The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity](#).

Message from Pope Francis to Pray the Rosary in May

Pope Francis has asked Catholics to make a special effort to pray the Rosary during May and has composed two new prayers asking for Our Lady's intercession to help end the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information visit www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, May 24th – 31st

“They showed us unusual kindness”

(Acts 28:2)

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity in Australia will be observed in the week between Ascension and Pentecost.

This year's theme calls us to move from shared prayer to shared action. The international resources for the 2020 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity have been prepared by colleagues in Malta. The 2020 theme, “They showed us unusual kindness” (Acts 28:2), remembers the historic shipwreck of Paul on the island of Malta and calls us to a greater generosity to those in need.

Reflections for each day in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity can be found here

Plenary Council ~ Assemblies set for 2021 and 2022

The two assemblies for the Fifth Plenary Council of Australia will now take place in October 2021 and April 2022, following the disruption of the original schedule due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference last week decided to postpone the opening assembly by 12 months, with it now to be held in October 2021. Adelaide remains the venue for the first assembly. The second assembly will be in Sydney in April 2022. [The Media Release can be read here.](#)

*We are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children,
young people and vulnerable adults.*

Gospel Reflection - Feast of the Ascension

(Acts 1:1-11; Matthew 28:16-20)

by Veronica Lawson RSM

Loss is part of the human experience and death is generally the most painful experience of loss. As the death toll from Covid-19 approaches 300,000, we become more and more conscious of loss as a global reality. This loss of human life takes place against the backdrop of a catastrophic loss of species and of eco-systems, exacerbated in our part of the planet by the recent bushfires. 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 re-membering his death and resurrection. As we come towards the end of the Easter season, the liturgy draws us into another aspect of the Mystery, that of the presence of the Risen One even in his absence. While today's gospel recounts Matthew's story of Jesus' final encounter with his disciples, it does not provide an account of Jesus' "ascension" or return to God. For that, we must turn to the first reading, from the Acts of the Apostles. The story presupposes a pre-scientific, threetiered 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 presence. The Holy Spirit will "descend" upon God's people and "clothe" them with power to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth. The vertical (up and down) movement is balanced by a horizontal movement: Jesus' family and followers who grieve the loss of their loved one are told not to keep looking up to the heavens. They have work to do: strengthened by his blessing, they are to stay in the city for the present and be empowered by the Holy Spirit to continue the prophetic ministry of Jesus, to be witnesses to his death and resurrection. 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. The gospel reading has Jesus on a mountain top where he commissions his male disciples to make disciples of all nations, literally "to disciple all peoples". He has already commissioned the women on the open road to announce the good news of the resurrection (Matt 28:10). They are to be fearless in their mission. In Matthew's final chapter, then, both men and women are commissioned to proclaim the gospel. There are other dimensions to their mission, namely to baptize in the name of the Triune God and to teach what Jesus has taught or "commanded" them. The confidence that they need and that we need to engage in this mission is the assurance that the risen Christ is with us to the end of time. The gospel has come full circle. In the first chapter of Matthew, an angel announces that the child to be born will be called Emmanuel, God-with-us. The last verse of the gospel invites us once more to ponder that mystery and to commit ourselves to a life-giving gospel mission. Pope Francis' 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* shows us the way in the face of planetary distress.