

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS – July 26, 2020 **Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary time Year A**

Parish Safeguarding Officer: Sandra Watkins: 0409 492 508
Fr Marcello Colasante 0416 194 825 Contact: St Columba's, Ballarat North 53 311 012
email: ballaratnorth@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Information for special parish events (Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals)

Please contact Anne Beer on 5349 2168 or 0417 369 322

Parish Support:

A reminder that if anyone needs help with anything,
to please get in touch with one of our members below.

Gail Hall 0412 311 586 Bernadette Franc 0427 678 830 Anne Beer 0417 369 322

Welcome to 'Our Community News' for July 26th 2020

Note: Today's Community News email has one other attachment: copy of 'The Saving Word'



What is the message of the parable of the pearl?

The **Parable of the Pearl** means that eternal life in heaven is worth more than anything anyone could possibly have on earth.

It appears in Matthew 13:45-46 and illustrates the great value of the Kingdom of Heaven. ... Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly **pearls**: Who, when he had found one **pearl** of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Have you heard the Good News?

Our CDF (Catholic Development Fund – Ballarat) together with CDF Pay have developed an online thanksgiving portal known as CDF Pay for Parishes.

During this period of time where Masses in the diocese are suspended or reduced, parishes need the financial support of parishioners more than ever. As the vast majority of our parishioners give physically to our parish in the first and second collection plates, we are encouraging all parishioners to use our new electronic parish thanksgiving program.

You can now use this portal to support our parish in both/either the first and second collections. Electronic thanksgiving offerings can be made as one off payments or you can set up a regular payment.

You will receive an electronic receipt for any payments made.

Payment link can be found by scrolling down on our webpage or using the below link.

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayBeaufort>

RETURN TO MASSES DELAYED - A MESSAGE FROM FR MARCELLO:

As the restrictions for people assembling remain fluid and uncertain due to COVID 19, it will be necessary to defer recommencement until at least 26th July 2020. The government has extended the limit of 20 persons until Sunday 19th July 2020, at which time a further update will be provided. Once the limit is increased to 50, we can resume the Sunday celebration on the 2nd & 4th Sundays @ 8.30 am. STILL NO UPDATE

FATHER JUSTIN'S ONLINE MASSES FROM ST JOHN OF GOD HOSPITAL:

Reminder: Daily Mass at 11.30 am from St John of God Hospital Chapel.

The Cathedral facebook page is Patrick's Cathedral <https://www.facebook.com/patricks.cathedral.9> but the Masses can also be reached via the Cathedral website where the Masses are posted each day after the Mass has concluded so for those who don't have a facebook account they can go to <https://stpatscathedral.weebly.com/>

CAN I SUGGEST THAT THE SECOND LINK HERE WILL PROBABLY WORK BEST FOR OUR COMMUNITY?
.... AND IT SEEMS WE MIGHT BE IN FOR A LONGER HAUL THAN WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT.

RECENT DEATHS:

We pray for Eddie Dunn (Middle Creek) and Marie Corbetts (Ena Frichot's sister-in-law) and we continue to pray for all the victims to Coronavirus throughout Australia and the world.

ANNIVERSARIES:

Lawson Lyttle, Eileen Stewart, Frank & Peggy Wise, Beryl Thompson, Joseph Ross Ford, Mary Collins, Mick McCarthy, Marjory Oddie, Margaret Quinn, Bill McDonald, Veronica Baker, Karen Pongho, Terry Dickson & Ian Smith.

PRAY FOR ALL THESE FRIENDS OF OURS WHO ARE ILL:

Pat Byrne, Margaret MacDonald, Roger Molomby, Graeme Dawson, Blake Dridan, Fr. Adrian McInerney, Shelagh Mulcahy, Valda Murphy, Maria Large (Judy O'Connor's sister), Joan Cushing and all those in need of prayer.

ROSTERS:

As Anne Beer will soon be preparing our new roster, can people give consideration to volunteering for any roles that may interest them? Anne's mobile number is 0417 369 322 or email:- bigmac09@bigpond.com

If any parishioners wish to contribute anything at all for inclusion in the newsletter, it will be greatly appreciated. This is a great way to keep our little community in touch. Just simply put your contribution in an email.

July: **Bernadette Franc** Phone: 0427678830 Email: bernadette.franc.m@gmail.com

INFORMATION FOR PARISHES FROM THE DIOCESE:

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

We continue to distribute information regarding the coronavirus as it received. All updates are also on the diocesan website "news" section" www.ballarat.catholic.org.au The last update I have was on June 21st, which was circulated at the time. *Still no further updates as of July 23.*

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program – Registrations now open

Low-cost online study and formation for lay workers in parish and other ministries; employed or volunteers. Sacraments, Scripture, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, Leadership and more. The next cycle begins August 30. Study is 5 weeks. Registrations open now until August 19. More information at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or email kim.butler@ballarat.catholic.org.au or ph. 0407 523 424.

St Vincent de Paul Society Winter Appeal

As a result of the coronavirus many people have found themselves in the position of having a job one day, and being unemployed the next. This will lead to an increasing number of people reaching out to Vinnies for help for the very first time. Therefore, this year's appeal will focus on addressing the needs of Victorians who have been impacted by COVID-19. Now more than ever, the funds raised during this appeal are critical in ensuring that Vinnies can continue to be there for people when they need us most. You can donate to our appeal via: online at vinnies.org.au or by phone 13 18 12. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible

Plenary Council Update

The journey to the Plenary Council 2020 continues. While it's in a context more different than we could have ever expected, the need to pray, discern and listen to the Holy Spirit and each other is more important than ever.

Discernment Papers: The six discernment papers have been released and are available to be read. The National Plenary Facilitation Team will soon release resources to assist parishes and communities to explore each of the papers. Here in the diocese, we will endeavour to look at one paper for a month. For the month of July (you can start in June, of course), we will look at **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Missionary & Evangelising?** *'Mission' is God's initiative and proceeds from the Trinity, whose love overflows in creation and redemption. The Word and Spirit are present and active in the unfolding of the universe and in all human history, as evidenced in the goodness and truth found in all cultures and societies. The incarnate Son of God through his life, ministry, death and resurrection revealed God to us and redeemed us in a unique and unsurpassable way through his paschal sacrifice. His evangelising activity gave birth to the Church which is the visible manifestation of the Gospel command to "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations" (Mt 28:19).* Have a read of the discernment paper, think about your parish and the diocese in general. We welcome any comments. Please send through to jane.collins@ballarat.catholic.org.au. Read the discernment paper Visit the Missionary and Evangelising theme's page.

ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans) - World Day Against Trafficking in Persons is on July 30

COVID-19 is impacting those most vulnerable to trafficking because they often live in poverty and lack suitable housing and healthcare. Hundreds of thousands of these people will be drawn to the promise of work simply to put food on their tables - work that often turns out to be a job in slave-like conditions. Each year ACRATH asks for your support as we mark the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons on July 30. Each year, generously, you respond. And each year because of your response, ACRATH has been able to develop projects, services and resources. If you're able, your donation will be much appreciated. You can donate online at <https://www.trybooking.com/au/donate/acrath> or go to Youth Social Justice page of the diocesan website at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-and-agencies/dsp-default.cfm?loadref=238> for other donation options and more information.

ST VINCENT PALLOTTI SCHOLARSHIP TRUST

Scholarships are offered to enable lay people to further their understanding and skills in leadership/ministry or a specialised activity, such as promoting faith enhancement, social justice and pastoral care. More information and applications forms are available at <https://pallottine.org.au/scholarships/st-vincent-pallotti-scholarship-for-lay-ministry.html>. Closing Date : **July 31, 2020.**

EXPLORING THE WORD

Jesus continues to convey his teaching about the kingdom using the imagery of everyday life. Pearls were highly valued in the Near East and were regarded as a symbol of wisdom—hence the saying ‘pearls of wisdom’. In the first two of these parables, the protagonists commit everything they own to acquiring what is beyond price. According to Jesus, gaining a place in the kingdom is worth the sacrifice of everything we value most. The parable of the dragnet tells us something more of the kingdom. There will be those who have not recognised its value and are unworthy of the kingdom. However, it is not for people to judge who is worthy and who is not. That task belongs to God. Jesus is very concerned that his followers clearly understand his message, and he questions them directly: ‘Do you understand all this?’ There must be no confusion over the meaning of the gospel! Matthew stresses that believing in Christ does not mean a total rejection of Judaism. Indeed, both the old and the new have value. Jesus did not come to overturn the Law but to fulfil it, and those who recognise this truth will honour both the old and the new.

SHARING THE TRADITION

The church has a long tradition and history. Many of the things we value as a church are ancient indeed. The practice of the Eucharist, gathering together as a community, some of the prayer forms we use, like the Lord’s Prayer, were the actions of the earliest followers of Jesus. We honour these ‘old’ things of the faith. The church is like the householder in that it has a long tradition that has been handed down through the generations—beliefs, customs and practices that are of enduring value—yet it is still alert to the hand of God in what is happening now in our own time, still reading ‘the signs of the times’.

MAKING CONNECTIONS:

- Jesus asks the disciples, ‘Have you understood all these things?’ Ponder your own understanding of the mystery of faith and how you are coming closer to it. Pray for the strength and understanding you need to continue the journey towards the treasure.

SYMBOLS AND IMAGE:

The image of treasure dominates this text. Jesus sees the search for God as part of the journey of people in all walks of life, because everyone is searching for ‘treasure’ in their lives. We need to have discerning hearts so that we can recognise what is real treasure and then give our whole lives to it.

A couple of Feast Days coming up this week are:-

July 29th – St Martha https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=79

July 31st – St. Ignatius of Loyola <https://www.catholic.org/saints/sofd.php?date=2019-07-31>

August 1st – St Alphonsus Mary Liguori https://www.catholic.org/saints/saint.php?saint_id=1284

The above links might be worth checking out.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE FOLK WHO HAVE GIVEN POSITIVE FEEDBACK ABOUT OUR NEWSLETTER
DURING THIS PERIOD OF RESTRICTIONS.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

He sells everything he owns and buys the field.

Jesus said to the crowds, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

‘Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

‘Have you understood all this?’ They said, ‘Yes.’ And he said to them, ‘Well, then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.’

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Shorter form 13:44-46.

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Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

26 JULY 2020

GLIMPSING THE KINGDOM

The two little parables, that of the Treasure Discovered in the Field and the Pearl of Great Price, both depict a situation where a person finds something that they dearly want to possess. In one, a poor day-laborer comes across treasure buried in a field – an unimaginable windfall! In the other, a merchant recognises something he has been searching for all his business life: the perfect pearl!

Neither, however, is able to get hold of what they have discovered immediately. There is a gap between finding and possessing. But already the mere sight of what each have found frees them to ‘sell all’ so that they can finally possess it.

Jesus told the twin parables to illustrate a key feature of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is not something we possess right now; only in the future will it be fully realised in the world and in human lives. But those who have caught a glimpse of it from Jesus know that they have come upon a treasure that will fulfil their deepest desires. The joy of the discovery puts all other attractions in second place. They gain the freedom to ‘sell all’ in order, one day, to obtain what they have seen.

Taken together, the parables contain a whole Christian spirituality – perhaps best illustrated in the life of St Francis of Assisi. His commitment to radical poverty was not something imposed on him. It flowed in complete freedom from the ‘treasure’ of God’s love that he, in supreme degree, had glimpsed.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

A reading from the first book of the Kings

You have asked for wisdom.

The Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, ‘Ask what you would like me to give you.’ Solomon replied, ‘Lord, my God, you have made your servant king in succession to David my father. But I am a very young man, unskilled in leadership. Your servant finds himself in the midst of this people of yours that you have chosen, a people so many its numbers cannot be counted or reckoned. Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil, for who could govern this people of yours that is so great?’ It pleased the Lord that Solomon should have asked for this. ‘Since you have asked for this’, the Lord said, ‘and not asked for long life for yourself or riches or the lives of your enemies, but have asked for a discerning judgement for yourself, here and now I do what you ask. I give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you has had and none will have after you.’

■ The word of the Lord.

RESP PSALM Ps 118:57, 72, 76-77, 127-130. R. v. 97

R. Lord, I love your commands.

1. My part, I have resolved, O Lord, / is to obey your word. / The law from your mouth means more to me / than silver and gold. **R.**
2. Let your love be ready to console me / by your promise to your servant. / Let your love come to me and I shall live / for your law is my delight. **R.**
3. That is why I love your commands / more than finest gold. / That is why I rule my life by your precepts: / I hate false ways. **R.**
4. Your will is wonderful indeed; / therefore I obey it. / The unfolding of your word gives light / and teaches the simple. **R.**



SECOND READING

Rom 8:28-30

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

He predestined us to become true images of his Son.

We know that by turning everything to their good God co-operates with all those who love him, with all those that he has called according to his purpose. They are the ones he chose specially long ago and intended to become true images of his Son, so that his Son might be the eldest of many brothers. He called those he intended for this; those he called he justified, and with those he justified he shared his glory.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. Mt 11:25

Alleluia, alleluia! / Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, / you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. / Alleluia!