

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS – 9th August 2020
Nineteenth 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, 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 9th August 2020

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

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

Stage 3 restrictions have been re-introduced in regional Victoria effective from August 5, 2020.

Attached is the latest information from Bishop Paul Bird CSsR.

All updates are also on the diocesan website "news" section www.ballarat.catholic.org.au



Bishop's Office
5 Lyons Street South
Ballarat VIC 3350
P.O. Box 121
Ballarat VIC 3353
Phone: (03) 5337 7121
Fax: (03) 5332 1122

E-mail: bishopsoffice@ballarat.catholic.org.au

August 4, 2020

Hello Everyone,

As you would be aware, the Victorian government has introduced further restrictions to counter the renewed spread of COVID-19.

In regional Victoria, including our Diocese of Ballarat, Stage 3 restrictions will apply from midnight on August 5. The restrictions will apply until September 13.

The regulations require that "religious ceremonies and private worship" be "broadcast only". This means that our churches and chapels will be closed to the general public. It will still be possible to live stream Masses or other services from churches or chapels, although this would only involve those necessary to conduct the services and enable the live streaming. For information about Masses online, you could go to our diocesan website at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au

In regional Victoria, there are exceptions for weddings and funerals, though with limited numbers. For weddings, there may only be 5 people (the couple, two witnesses and the celebrant). For funerals, there may be up to 10 people, plus those conducting the funeral. It is very sad that we will not be able to gather for Mass in the coming weeks. However, medical advice indicates that the restrictions are necessary for the health of the community. I hope and pray that these steps will be effective in reducing the impact of the pandemic and that we will be able to come together again soon to give thanks to God. In the meantime, we can pray anywhere and anytime in our own heart. Families can pray together at home. We might also pray with others online or simply with a phone call. Christ promised to be with us always. May we know his presence in the weeks ahead.

Peace be with you.

God bless you all.

Bishop Paul

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/>

Note: Recommend the second link above may work best for Beaufort Parish

RECENT DEATHS:

We pray for Neville Wright and continue to pray for all victims of Coronavirus in Australia and the world.

ANNIVERSARIES:

Marcus Davidson, Bernie Barker, Agnes Cuthbertson, Barry Walker, John Fitzpatrick, Lynette Francis, Harold Miller, Margaret Ahearn, Mavis Vinnecombe, Bob Crocker, Charlie Lock

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.

Please consider volunteering for any roles that may interest you?

Anne's mobile number is 0417 369 322 or email: bigmac09@bigpond.com

NEWSLETTER:

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.

August: **Angela Gerrard** Phone: 0439 565 468 Email: colangegerrard@gmail.com

INFORMATION FOR PARISHES FROM THE DIOCESE:



Aid to the
Church in Need

ACN AUSTRALIA

National Emergency Appeal for Lebanon

In response to the horrific explosion in Beirut on the 4th of August, the Australian office of the international Catholic Charity, *Aid to the Church in Need*, has launched a national emergency appeal to raise funds to support the people of Lebanon.

To read more about the appeal, and to make a donation, please visit: www.aidtochurch.org/lebanon or call **1800 101 201** during business hours: 8am-5pm, AEST.

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

ELECTRONIC THANKSGIVING OFFERINGS

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.

The payment link is: <https://bit.ly/CDFpayBeaufort>

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 phone: 0407 523 424.

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2020-2021

The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the mental health of many members of our parishes, schools and communities. Understanding mental health will help us to be aware of those who need our support. In the Social Justice Statement 2020-2021, *To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today*, the Bishops invite us all to reject stigmatisation, to work for the transformation of social determinants of mental ill-health, and to call for policies and service provision that meets the needs of the poorest and most marginalised members of our community. More information is available from the diocesan website www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or http://bit.ly/SocialJustice_2020

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 August we will look at **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Inclusive, Participatory & Synodal?** *The Church, founded by Jesus Christ, is a forum of welcome to “the great multitude from every tribe, tongue and nation”. This biblical image invites us to imagine anew the ways in which the diversity of unique gifts can contribute to an organic and authentic common building of the Church. This is especially crucial in Australia, where the Church is manifest in the great multitude of ecclesial expressions from East and West. The words that St John Paul II spoke particularly to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples may be applied to all Catholics in Australia: “the Church herself in Australia will not be fully the Church that Jesus wants her to be until you have made your contribution to her life and until that contribution has been joyfully received by others.”* 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 at <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/PC2020-thematic-papers-2.pdf>. [Visit the Inclusive, Participatory & Synodal theme's page at https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/inclusive/.](https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/themes/inclusive/)

Plenary Council Discernment papers now available in audio format:

The Diocese of Bathurst has taken the discernment papers to another format, recording audio versions to help with the reception of the documents. All six discernment papers have now been recorded and can be accessed on the Plenary Council website:

<https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/continuing-the-journey-of-discernment/>

Next step on Plenary Council journey:

As part of the ongoing journey for the Plenary Council, work has commenced on the preparation of the *instrumentum laboris*, or working document, for the Council. Fr Kevin Lenehan is part of the *instrumentum laboris* writing team <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news/fx-articles.cfm?loadref=102&id=2881&categoryId=101>

GOSPEL REFLECTION:

Right now, our planet is battered by the waves of pandemic. Our church also knows what it means to be “battered by the waves”. Over its two millennia history, there have been periods of discrimination and persecution against its members. Countless church members have died for their faith, while others have been and are being denied the freedom to practice their religion. There have also been times when the church has fallen far short of its own ideals and has quite seriously betrayed the gospel values it seeks to embody and proclaim. It is presently “battered” by huge even terrifying waves, largely of its own creating. Only God can bring order out of the chaos, and God works through the courageous witness and action of faith-filled disciples.

In today’s gospel, Matthew tells of Jesus astride the waves like the God of Israel in Job 9:8. In Israel’s mythology, the sea represents chaos. To walk on water is to have power and authority to bring order out of the chaos. Matthew presents Jesus as exercising the power of God over the potentially destructive chaos. Jesus makes his claim to divine power explicit in words that echo God’s words from the burning bush: “It is I” (literally “I am”). He tells the frightened disciples to take heart and not to be afraid. Peter, leader of the group, continues to doubt. He asks for a sign and is then prepared to take a risk in order to come to Jesus on the water. He begins to falter when he takes his eyes off Jesus and focuses instead on the threatening wind. Jesus reaches out his hand to rescue Peter. In a lovely gesture, Jesus takes him by the hand and holds him firmly in his grip. Jesus names Peter’s hesitation as a response of limited faith.

Matthew weaves the story of Peter into an earlier story from Mark’s gospel. We can only speculate on the reasons for this. Were Matthew’s communities going through hard times? Were they battered by the waves of conflicting loyalties as they found themselves excluded from Pharisaic Judaism? Was the pressure of separation from the synagogue too great for some, even for those in leadership? This is a telling story for anyone who exercises leadership at any level in the church. It is a reminder to us as disciples to keep our eyes firmly fixed on the source of hope in times of struggle and uncertainty and on the crucial issues that face our planetary home.

Finally, this story invites us to consider the threatening waves created by the undeniable reality of a pandemic in a time of climate crisis. The human community is largely responsible for the climate crisis. The human community must join hands to save what can be saved. The growing commitment to renewable energy provides, for me, a contemporary image of a saving hand reaching out to Earth communities that are in danger of being submerged.

Sr Veronica Lawson rsm

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Command me to come to you over the water.

Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead to the other side while he would send the crowds away. After sending the crowds away he went up into the hills by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, while the boat, by now far out on the lake, was battling with a heavy sea, for there was a headwind. In the fourth watch of the night he went towards them, walking on the lake, and when the disciples saw him walking on the lake they were terrified. 'It is a ghost' they said, and cried out in fear. But at once Jesus called out to them, saying, 'Courage! It is I! Do not be afraid.' It was Peter who answered. 'Lord', he said 'if it is you, tell me to come to you across the water.' 'Come' said Jesus. Then Peter got out of the boat and started walking towards Jesus across the water, but as soon as he felt the force of the wind, he took fright and began to sink. 'Lord! Save me!' he cried. Jesus put out his hand at once and held him. 'Man of little faith,' he said 'why did you doubt?' And as they got into the boat the wind dropped. The men in the boat bowed down before him and said, 'Truly, you are the Son of God.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflections on the Gospel



THE SAVING WORD

NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

09 AUGUST 2020

WALKING ON THE SEA WITH JESUS

Jesus sends his disciples off to cross the lake by boat, while he disperses the crowd. When eventually he rejoins the disciples, now battling with a headwind and heavy seas, he does so by walking on the sea.

In biblical imagery to tread down raging water is something only God can do (Psalm 77:19; Job 9:8; Isaiah 43:16). Jesus' reassurance to the terrified disciples, 'It is I; fear not', echoes the revelation of God to Moses at the Burning Bush (Exodus 3:14).

What prompts Peter's desire to come to Jesus across the sea? Love or bravado? Perhaps a mixture of both—but also, surely, faith. Faith enables him to trample for a time the forces of destruction. But when he looks away from his Lord, to focus instead upon the wind and sea, doubt creeps in, and with doubt the gravest danger.

Peter 'models' the mixture of faith and doubt to which all believers are prone. Jesus' gentle rebuke, 'O you of little faith, why did you doubt?', applies to us all. Sometimes the Lord calls us to leave the security of the boat and come to him across the waves. We begin to falter when we take our eyes off Jesus and focus only on the difficulties that come our way.

Then we can make our own Peter's cry for rescue and feel, as he felt, the Lord's strong hand reaching out to raise us up. The Lord is not absent: he is 'with us' ('Emmanuel': Matthew 1:17; 28:19) to the end of time.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

I Kings 19:9, 11-13

A reading from the first book of the Kings

Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord God.

When Elijah reached Horeb, the mountain of God, he went into the cave and spent the night in it. Then he was told, 'Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord.' Then the Lord himself went by. There came a mighty wind, so strong it tore the mountains and shattered the rocks before the Lord. But the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there came the sound of a gentle breeze. And when Elijah heard this, he covered his face with his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Ps 84:9-14. R. v. 8

R. Lord, show us your mercy and love, and grant us your salvation.

1. I will hear what the Lord God has to say, / a voice that speaks of peace. / His help is near for those who fear him / and his glory will dwell in our land. **R.**

2. Mercy and faithfulness have met; / justice and peace have embraced. / Faithfulness shall spring from the earth / and justice look down from heaven. **R.**

3. The Lord will make us prosper / and our earth shall yield its fruit. / Justice shall march before him / and peace shall follow his steps. **R.**



SECOND READING

Rom 9:1-5

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

I would willingly be condemned if it could help my people.

What I want to say is no pretence; I say it in union with Christ – it is the truth – my conscience in union with the Holy Spirit assures me of it too. What I want to say is this: my sorrow is so great, my mental anguish so endless, I would willingly be condemned and be cut off from Christ if it could help my brothers of Israel, my own flesh and blood. They were adopted as sons, they were given the glory and the covenants; the Law and the ritual were drawn up for them, and the promises were made to them. They are descended from the patriarchs and from their flesh and blood came Christ who is above all, God for ever blessed! Amen.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Ps 129:5

Alleluia, alleluia! / I hope in the Lord, / I trust in his word. / Alleluia!

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



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