

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS – 13th September 2020

Twenty-Fourth 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 13th September 2020

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

His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart (Mt 18:32-35)."

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

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

Attached below is the latest information from Bishop Paul Bird CSsR.

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

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/> *(We recommend this link may work best Beaufort Parish)*

RECENT DEATHS:

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

ANNIVERSARIES:

Lynette Ford, Hugh Cushing, Beatrice Rogers, Gertrude Brennen, Anthony Carbone, Isabelle McArthur, John Molloy, John Fitzpatrick, Patricia(Patsy) Collins & Amy Packman.

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:

Please consider volunteering for any roles that may interest you and let Anne Beer know.

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

NEWSLETTER:

Any contributions for the newsletter will be greatly appreciated.

This is a great way to keep our little community in touch.

Just simply email: carmelmilen@hotmail.com or phone Carmel on 0407320759

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 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>

Child Protection Sunday – September 13, 2020

The Catholic Church in Australia marks Child Protection Sunday, on which we pray for those who have been abused, their families and supporters. We recognise and apologise for the harm done by priests, religious and lay people in Church settings. The Church takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse. We recommit to practices that support survivors and make the Catholic Church and its ministries the safest possible place for children and people at risk. Find out more at

www.catholic.org.au/childprotectionsunday and
www.catholicreligious.org.au/safeguarding

Annual Pontifical Good Friday Collection – this weekend

Due to the closure of churches around the world during Holy Week because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Pope Francis moved the date for this collection to this weekend (September 13) to coincide with the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. This collection promotes the missionary work of the Church in the Holy Land by providing welfare assistance to local Christians, parishes, schools, orphanages and medical centres. This year, they are facing great challenges due to COVID-19. If you are able, your generosity would again be greatly appreciated. The Holy Land Collection option has been added to your parish CDF Pay portal which can be found on the diocesan website <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/services-agencies-2/stewardship/catholic-development-fund-cdf/cdf-pay/>. (*****Please add details of how your parish will accept donations**)

Diocesan e-News Upgrade

Due to the upgrade of the diocesan website, diocesan e-News has also been updated. If you did not receive e-News in your inbox this week, please re-subscribe at <https://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au/news-events/e-news/>

Ballarat Diocese Lay Pastoral Ministry Program Online Study

Low-cost online study and formation for employed or volunteer lay workers in parish and other ministries. 5 week study cycles include Sacraments, Scripture, Youth Ministry, Liturgy, Leadership and more. Registrations open now until October 12 for the next cycle which begins October 18. More information at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or email djurdja.klaric@ballarat.catholic.org.au

CATHEDRAL CHRISM MASS CANCELLED

Bishop Paul has advised that the Chrism Mass has been cancelled for 2020 due to Coronavirus restrictions which do not allow for large gatherings. We look forward to celebrating this mass on the Monday of Holy Week 2021.

CATHOLIC EARTHCARE CONVOCATION IS NOW OPEN FOR REGISTRATIONS!

Catholic Earthcare is a place and platform where the many, diverse voices within our church community come together, in dialogue, to help and co-create our future.

Join digitally to celebrate and Care for our Common Home!

<https://catholicearthcare.org.au/2020-convocation/>

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 meet the needs of

the poorest and most marginalised members of our community. More information at 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. Here in the diocese, we will look at one paper for a month.

For the month of September we will look at **HOW IS GOD CALLING US TO BE A CHRIST-CENTRED CHURCH IN AUSTRALIA THAT IS Prayerful and Eucharistic?**

The listening and dialogue responses revealed the deep faith, integrity and sincerity of all the people who gave of themselves in their offerings. The responses included divergent opinions in various topics. At the same time, they showed a common faith in Christ and a common desire to follow his teaching in love of God and love of neighbour. They demonstrated a commitment to living the gospel of Christ and sharing the gospel with others, even in the midst of a largely secular culture. They expressed a love for the community of the Church, despite the well-documented failings of members of the community. They showed a desire to be a christ-centered church that is prayerful and Eucharistic.

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/)

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/next-step-on-plenary-council-journey/>

DID YOU KNOW?

Points of interest and Catholic lore

- The sum of ten thousand talents would have been an impossibly huge debt. A Jewish talent was made of silver, weighing 43 620 grams!
- A debt of one hundred denarii was still a hefty sum. The denarius was a commonly used Roman coin made of silver, weighing 3.64 grams. A denarius was the wage paid for one day's casual labour.
- The use of the word 'torturers' in this text is problematic. The Greek term is linked to the notion of 'tormentors'. It may be that the debtor's friends and relations would more vigorously try to raise the necessary funds if the culprit is undergoing torment but it may also be an eschatological reference given what follows in the next verse.

EXPLORING THE WORD

Jesus teaching about the need to settle conflict, the basis of last week's gospel, was a surprising summons for Christians to fly in the face of accepted standards of judgement and condemnation. Here the teaching becomes even more outrageous! There is no end to the forgiveness offered.

For the average person, represented by Peter, forgiving another person seven times would show a very substantial commitment to mercy. Seven is used in the Bible to signify perfection, so Peter is not being mean in his suggestion. This is a very reasonable degree of tolerance. Yet Jesus, in his parable of the servant who is forgiven a debt equivalent to millions but cannot forgive his fellow a lesser sum, turns our human understanding of what constitutes a fair thing on its head. God's forgiveness is prodigious, but it is dependent on our willingness to forgive each other in the same way. The inability or unwillingness of the servant to match the master's forgiveness provides a powerful contrast. The master forgives in compassion, but the servant resorts to violence. If one has truly experienced the loving forgiveness of God, it must be shared with othe

MAKING CONNECTIONS

- To whom are you indebted? Can you acknowledge what you owe to these people?
- Reflect on a time when you felt wronged. What happened? What were your feelings? How did you react to the perpetrator? What was the outcome? Were you able to forgive the action and move on? How do you experience God's forgiveness? Write down some responses and share them with the person next to you.
- What needs healing and reconciliation in your life? Work on that this week.
- In the Lord's Prayer, we ask forgiveness from God and pledge to forgive those who wrong us. Pray it often this week.

" Dare to dream with wings that take you across the pain that scares the world. Flyswift, fly sure,have courage and live the dream. Be strong in faith, in hope and love:live out the dream."



'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said, "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me," he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said, "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

A SERVICE OF THE SOCIETY OF ST PAUL



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FORGIVENESS BEYOND CALCULATION

In the parable of the Unforgiving Debtor that Jesus tells in response to Peter's question about forgiveness, the debt of 'ten thousand talents' is an utterly fantastic sum: in today's terms, 'billions of dollars'—something that the servant, despite his plea for time, could never hope to repay. He stands to lose absolutely everything—freedom, family, possessions—for his whole life long. The master's generosity in cancelling the debt in effect restores his life.

In comparison, the debt that the servant himself is owed by a fellow servant and which he is violently unwilling to remit, is paltry. The equivalent of a few hundred days' wages. Given time, it could easily be paid off. Hence the wickedness of the servant in not passing on to his fellow even a tiny portion of the immense generosity he had himself received.

The Lord would have Peter and all members of the community understand that they live as people who, through Christ's costly love, have received remission of a debt (the debt of sin) that they could never repay. How inappropriate then an unwillingness to forgive fellow members of the community the 'debts' set up by injury on a much smaller scale.

That said, we know that forgiveness is not something to speak of lightly. For people who have been deeply wronged finding the capacity to forgive may be the task of a lifetime. It cannot simply be willed—still less prescribed, urged or imposed by others who have not shared the loss. It is a grace, an entrance into the mystery of God's own generosity.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

FIRST READING

Sir 27:30–28:7

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

Forgive your neighbour's faults and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner. He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord, who keeps strict account of sin. Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven. If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord? Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins?

Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments.

Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM Ps 102: 1-4, 9-12. R. v. 8

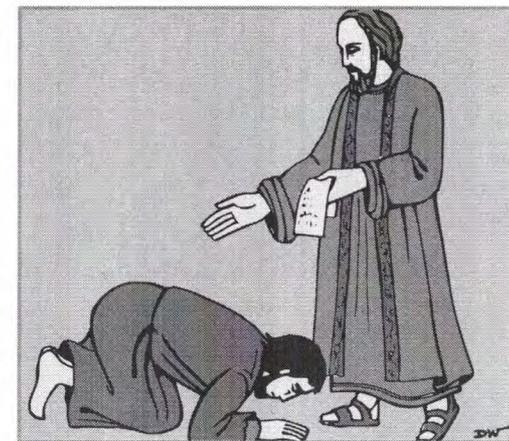
R. The Lord is kind and merciful; slow to anger and rich in compassion.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, / all my being, bless his holy name. / My soul, give thanks to the Lord / and never forget all his blessings. **R.**

2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, / who heals every one of your ills, / who redeems your life from the grave, / who crowns you with love and compassion. **R.**

3. His wrath will come to an end; / he will not be angry for ever. / He does not treat us according to our sins / nor repay us according to our faults. **R.**

4. For as the heavens are high above the earth / so strong is his love for those who fear him. / As far as the east is from the west / so far does he remove our sins. **R.**



SECOND READING

14: 7-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord.

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 13: 34

Alleluia, alleluia! / I give you a new commandment: / love one another as I have loved you. / Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 18: 21-35

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

I tell you that you forgive not seven times but seventy times seven.

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'