

ST JOSEPH'S PARISH

OUYEN, PATCHEWOLLOCK, TEMPY, WALPEUP, UNDERBOOL



The Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

26th January 2025

Entrance Antiphon

O sing a new song to the Lord;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
In his presence are majesty and splendour,
strength and honour in his holy place.

First Reading

A reading from the book of Nehemiah

They read from the book of Law and they understood what was read.

Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, consisting of men, women, and children old enough to understand. This was the first day of the seventh month. On the square before the Water Gate, in the presence of the men and women, and children old enough to understand, he read from the book from early morning till noon; all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden dais erected for the purpose. In full view of all the people – since he stood higher than all the people – Ezra opened the book; and when he opened it all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God, and all the people raised their hands and answered Amen! Amen!; then they bowed down and, face to the ground, prostrated themselves before the Lord.

And Ezra read from the Law of God, translating and giving the sense, so that the people understood what was read.

Then Nehemiah – His Excellency – and Ezra, priest and scribe (and the Levites who were

instructing the people) said to all the people, 'This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not be mournful, do not weep'. For the people were all in tears as they listened to the words of the Law. He then said, 'Go, eat the fat, drink the sweet wine, and send a portion to the man who has nothing prepared ready. For this day is sacred to our Lord. Do not be sad: the joy of the Lord is your stronghold.'

Responsorial Psalm

(R.) Your words, Lord, are spirit and life.

1. The law of the Lord is perfect,
it revives the soul.
The rule of the Lord is to be trusted,
it gives wisdom to the simple. (R.)
2. The precepts of the Lord are right,
they gladden the heart.
The command of the Lord is clear,
it gives light to the eyes. (R.)
3. The fear of the Lord is holy,
abiding for ever.
The decrees of the Lord are truth
and all of them just. (R.)
4. May the spoken words of my mouth,
the thoughts of my heart,
win favour in your sight, O Lord,
my rescuer, my rock! (R.)

Second Reading

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Together you are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it.

Just as a human body, though it is made up of many parts, is a single unit because all these parts, though many, make one body, so it is with Christ. In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink.

Nor is the body to be identified with any one of its many parts. If the foot were to say, 'I am not a hand and so I do not belong to the body', would that mean that it stopped being part of the body? If the ear were to say, 'I am not an eye, and so I do not belong to the body,' would that mean that it is not a part of the body? If your whole body was just one eye, how would you hear anything? If it was just one ear, how would you smell anything?

Instead of that, God put all the separate parts into the body on purpose. If all the parts were the same, how could it be a body? As it is, the parts are many but the body is one. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' nor can the head say to the feet, 'I do not need you.'

What is more, it is precisely the parts of the body that seem to be the weakest which are the indispensable ones; and it is the least honourable parts of the body that we clothe with the greatest care. So our more improper parts get decorated in a way that our more proper parts do not need. God has arranged the body so that more dignity is given to the parts which are without it, and so that there may not be disagreements inside the body, but that each part may be equally concerned for all the others. If one part is hurt, all parts are hurt with it. If one part is given special honour, all parts enjoy it.

Now you together are Christ's body; but each of you is a different part of it. In the Church, God has given the first place to apostles, the second to prophets, the third to teachers; after them, miracles, and after them the gift of healing; helpers, good leaders, those with many languages. Are all of them apostles, or all of them prophets, or all of them teachers? Do they all have the gift of miracles, or all have the gift of healing? Do all speak strange languages, and all interpret them?

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Lord sent me to bring Good News to the poor and freedom to prisoners.

Alleluia!

Gospel

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

The scriptures were fulfilled on this day.

Seeing that many others have undertaken to draw up accounts of the events that have taken place among us, exactly as these were handed down to us by those who from the outset were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, I in my turn, after carefully going over the whole story from the beginning, have decided to write an ordered account for you, Theophilus, so that your Excellency may learn how well founded the teaching is that you have received.

Jesus, with the power of the Spirit in him, returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside. He taught in their synagogues and everyone praised him. He came to Nazara, where he had been brought up, and went into the synagogue on the sabbath day as he usually did. He stood up to read, and they handed him the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling the scroll he found the place where it is written:

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me, for he has anointed me.

He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor,

to proclaim liberty to captives

and to the blind new sight,

to set the downtrodden free,

to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.

He then rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the assistant and sat down. And all eyes in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to speak to them, 'This text is being fulfilled today even as you listen.'

Communion Antiphon

Look toward the Lord and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.

Reflection by Dr Scott Hahn

The meaning of today's liturgy is subtle and many layered. **Continued on the inside** →

ST JOSEPH'S PARISH
OUYEN, PATCHEWOLLOCK, TEMPY, WALPEUP, UNDERBOOL
Parish Administrator: Fr Shaiju Mathew (03) 5026 3068
Parish Contact Person: Faye Nihill 0429 921 326
Parish Email: ouyen@ballarat.catholic.org.au

Recent Deaths:
Anniversaries:

Sick: Cora Jardine, John Moulder, Maisie Walsh, Mark Weir, Mary Moloney, Lyn McIntyre and Sylvester Rudolph.

Sunday 2nd February

Welcomer: Peter Shaddock

Reader: Marie Shaddock

Prayers of the Faithful:

Merril Boland

Offertory Procession:

Louise and Gerald Leach

Eucharistic Minister:

Marlene O'Callaghan

Projectionist: Carmel

Vallance

Collections: 19th January

Ouyen \$230.00

Planned Giving \$90.00

February Church &

Presbytery Cleaning:

Peter & Marie Shaddock

Mass Times:

Ouyen each Sunday at 11am

Underbool: February – Friday 21st @ 9:00am

Weekday Masses this week:

Friday at 10:30am

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Father will be available after the 11am Mass or any time by appointment.

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Thursdays 2:30 – 5:30pm

Pope's Prayer Intention for January: For the right to an education. Let us pray for migrants, refugees and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

Wisdom from on high "I saw the snares that the enemy spreads out...and I said... 'What can get through from such snares?' Then I heard a voice saying to me, 'Humility.'" *St. Anthony, Abbot*

Our roster of priests will usually look like this for our parish: 1st Sunday Fr Shaiju, 2nd Sunday Fr John, 3rd Sunday Fr Shaiju, 4th Sunday Fr Matt. (except in January)

Update on baby Jacinta: From Ruth and family - Thank you so very much for your messages and continued prayer and support. We deeply appreciate all your love and prayers. Please know just how grateful and humbled we are, and how much strength and comfort it gives us. We are all, are eternally grateful and return the prayers for you all and your loved ones 🙏 There is more news about Jacinta on the tables at the back. As the updates on Jacinta come they will be dated and placed on the tables at the back of the church, so that you can follow along if you are interested.

Something to smile about . . .

Why Women Need a Husband?

A woman goes to a psychiatrist and complains: "I don't want to marry. I am educated, independent, and self-sufficient. I don't need a husband. But my parents are asking me to marry. What do I do?" The psychiatrist replied: "You undoubtedly will achieve great things in life. But somethings inevitably will not go the way you want. Somethings will go wrong. Sometimes you will fail. Sometimes your plans won't work. Sometimes your wishes will not be fulfilled ... Then who will you blame? Will you blame Yourself?"

Woman: "NO!!!"

Psychiatrist: "That's why you need a husband."

Prayer For Australia: Eternal Father, I offer you the Precious Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ offered at all the Masses throughout the world, in atonement, and to protect Australia from the sin of abortion, euthanasia, and from every evil. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Prayer for Freedom of Religious Belief: Heavenly Father, we pray for our politicians to work openly with our faith communities, and for faith leaders, teachers, parents and guardians of children, to protect religious freedom from within our churches. We pray for the appropriate formation of children in accordance with the traditional teachings of their families. We ask this through the intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians. Amen.



Continued from the back → We need some background information to understand what's happening in today's First Reading.

Babylon had defeated the Jews years previously (after they turned away from God) and virtually emptied Israel of people. Anyone of any value was taken to Babylon. But now Babylon has been defeated by the Persians and King Cyrus of Persia has decreed that the exiled Jews could return home to Jerusalem. They rebuilt their ruined temple (see Ezra 6:15–17) and under Nehemiah finished rebuilding the city walls (see Nehemiah 6:15).

The stage was set for the renewal of the covenant and the re-establishment of the Law of Moses as the people's rule of life. That's what's going on in today's First Reading, as Ezra reads and interprets (see Nehemiah 8:8) the Law, and the people respond with a great "Amen!"

Israel, as we sing in today's Psalm, is rededicating itself to God and His Law. The scene seems like the Isaiah prophecy that Jesus reads from in today's Gospel.

If you Read all of Isaiah 61. The "glad tidings" Isaiah brings include these promises: the liberation of prisoners (61:1); the rebuilding of Jerusalem, or Zion (61:3-4; see also Isaiah 60:10); the restoration of Israel as a kingdom of priests (61:6; Exodus 19:6); and the forging of an everlasting covenant (61:8; Isaiah 55:3). It sounds a lot like the First Reading.

Jesus, in turn, declares that Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in Him. The Gospel scene, too, recalls the First Reading. Like Ezra, Jesus stands before the people, is handed a scroll, unrolls it, then reads and interprets it (compare Luke 4:16–17, 21 and Nehemiah 8:2–6, 8–10).

We witness in today's liturgy the creation of a new people of God. Ezra started reading at dawn of the first day of the Jewish new year (see Leviticus 23:24). Jesus also proclaims a "sabbath," a great year of Jubilee, a deliverance from slavery to sin, a release from the debts we owe to God (see Leviticus 25:10).

The people greeted Ezra "as one man." And, as today's Epistle teaches, in the Spirit the new people of God, the Church, is made "one body" with Him.

Our Lady Help of Christians, Patroness of Australia – Pray for us

The celebration of the feast day of Our Lady Help of Christians in Australia traces its roots back to 1821, yet its historical significance stretches as far back as the 1500s. During Napoleon Bonaparte's tumultuous reign, Pius VI was unjustly imprisoned and died in captivity in France. Several years later his successor, Pope Pius VII, was captured and facing the same fate.

In a pledge to God, Pope Pius VII vowed to establish a special feast in honour of Mary, should he be restored to the papal seat. He asked all Christendom to pray the rosary to Our Lady Help of Christians for this intention, a task the Irish willingly obliged.

Eventually, military pressure compelled Bonaparte to release the pope. He returned triumphantly to Rome on 24 May 1814 and officially decreed the feast of Our Lady Help of Christians to be observed on this date a year later. From this moment, the title of Our Blessed Mother became dear to the Irish as a sign of her presence and fidelity.

In the early stages of the Australian Catholic community the faithful relied heavily on the rosary to sustain their faith as Mass was forbidden, and the devotion to Our Lady Help of Christians became a cornerstone of their religious practice. Their steadfast devotion to Mary culminated in Australia being the first nation to adopt her as principal patroness under the title "Help of Christians."

St Mary's Cathedral in Sydney became a focal point of this devotion, thanks to Fr John Joseph Therry. As the only priest in Sydney until 1825, he encouraged devotion to Our Lady through the recitation of the rosary and intercession of Our Lady Help of Christians.

His perseverance drove the dedication of Australia's Mother Church to her, marking a significant milestone in Australian Catholicism. *Adapted from the Sunday Weekly, 24th May 2024*

St Joseph's Parish is a Child Safe Parish - Parish Safety Officer: Mrs Melanie Grace 0477 846 777