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We seek to cherish the dignity of the human person and support all in need: especially families, our indigenous brothers and sisters, migrants, refugees and all who need the compassion and mercy of Christ. We pledge ourselves to continue to do everything we can to contribute to the common good of all Australians. As Catholics, we want to build up and strengthen our great diverse multicultural community here in Australia.

Our point in relation to the current debate about same-sex marriage is simple. We make it in good faith according to the demands of our consciences. The Catholic Church, along with other faith traditions, teaches that marriage is a natural institution established by God to be a permanent union between one man and one woman, intended towards the formation of a family in which children are born and nurtured. Any legislation that changes this definition of marriage recognised by all the major cultures of the world demands careful consideration by all Australians. It is vital that we Catholics vote, so that our viewpoint can be heard on this vital public issue. Its outcome will affect our society and families profoundly in the future. We understand that ours is not the only viewpoint in our diverse society. Many do not agree with it. Many people see this as an issue about ensuring equality for every and all relationships.

Yes, human rights are important. But so are human responsibilities. We are responsible for the impact of our decisions on future generations. Therefore, we ask all to consider the profound implications of possible legislation that will embed this desire for equality of relationships in our laws.

This debate on same-sex marriage raises profound questions about who we are. Fundamental issues are at stake.

Why do humans exist as male and female? Is that distinction simply marginal? Is it simply a social construct? Do our children also have rights? We are all children of a male and a female. Should not this be a central consideration in our decisions about the way children should be ideally nurtured and educated in our society.

(We understand that these are complex issues. But certainly, no legislation should be enacted without a deep public conversation in which we all engage about such issues that goes beyond slogans and soundbites. In a pluralist community, we maintain that respect for *difference* should be as important as a demand for *equality*. Things can be equal in all respects without having to be uniformly the same.

We sincerely believe that there is a core and fundamental wisdom and truth in the traditional definition and understanding of marriage that should not be ignored and is worth keeping for the health and future of our society. As Pope Francis has pointed out: 'The family is threatened by growing efforts on the part of some to redefine the very institution of marriage, by relativism, by the culture of the ephemeral, by a lack of openness to life.' Some will naturally be disappointed in our stance. Some even question our right to speak and follow our consciences.

It is entirely possible future legislation about same-sex marriage could infringe fundamental human rights of freedom of religion and conscience. It could result in restrictions on the right of ministers of religion and religious bodies and organisations having the freedom to teach, preach and speak about marriage between persons of the same sex being contrary to their religious or conscientious beliefs.

We as a church affirm the dignity of all those who identify as having a same sex orientation. Like all human beings they are created in the image and likeness of God. They have a right to expect to be loved and welcomed and not subject to unjust discrimination. So where do we go from here?

In all our conversations and encounters, let us imitate Pope Francis, who asks us to be humble and never judgemental. In that spirit, the Catholic Church will continue to teach and preach the truth that marriage is a union of one man and one woman and encourage all people of good will to embrace the fullness of that truth. We will also work to promote and strengthen marriage and families.

We will strive to uphold the dignity of every human person, including persons who experience same-sex attraction, welcoming them as our brothers and sisters.

As Catholics concerned for the common good may we join all our fellow citizens of Australia in an active and respectful engagement in this critical public conversation.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ *Denis Hart*

Archbishop Denis J Hart
Archbishop of Melbourne and President of Conference

ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE



St Francis Xavier Parish, Frankston

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Honorary Associate: Fr. Neil Fryer (Ordinariate OLSC)
Secretaries: Vicki Abbatangelo & Christina Williams
Parish Schools: St Augustine Principal Jan de Koning 9781 3007
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John Paul College Principal John Visentin 9784 0200

27th August
2017

*21st Sunday
in Ordinary
Time Yr A*

Sunday Masses

Vigil Mass - Saturday Evening 6.00pm
Sunday 8.30am, 10.30am, 5.30pm

Weekday Masses

Tuesday - Saturday 9.15 am
Monday - 1st + 3rd Mondays of month

Liturgy of Word and Communion Service

Monday - 9.15am
2nd + 4th + 5th Mondays of month

Anointing Mass

9.15am First Thursday of month

Exposition of Blessed Sacrament & Adoration

Wednesday 8.40am-9.10am
Friday after 9.15am Mass

Rosary

Wednesday after 9.15am Mass

Children's Liturgy

Sunday during 10.30am Mass

Charismatic Prayer Group

Wednesday: 7.30pm in Chapel

Legion of Mary

Friday: 2pm in Quilter Room

Divine Mercy

Friday: 3pm in Chapel (private prayer)

Charismatic Prayer for Healing

3rd Sunday of month: 5.15pm music,
then Prayer for Healing after 5.30pm
Mass: **In Recess until Sept 2017**

Teach, Preach, Reach (TPR), Adoration & Healing after 5.30pm Mass

4th Sunday of month

Cell Groups

Tuesday: 10.00am in Quilter Room
Thursday: 7.30pm in Quilter Room

Confessions

Saturday: 10am - 10.30am,
Saturday: 5.30pm - 5.50pm

The Sacrament of Baptism

1st Sunday of month during the Masses.
(Saturday Evening Mass inclusive)
AND
4th Sunday of month at 11.30am

This Sunday 's Readings: **1st Reading** ISAIAH 22:19-23 & **2nd Reading** Romans 11:33-36

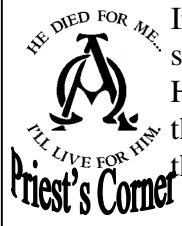
Gospel Matthew 16:13-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said, 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said, 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

The Gospel of the Lord Praise be to you Lord Jesus Christ





HOMILY FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A

In the first reading (Is 22:19-23), we read about the deposing of Shebna the palace minister (chief of staff) to king David. He was deposed because he was extravagant. In his place, Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah was elevated. The symbol of his elevation and authority was the handing over of the keys to the palace (house of David) to him. He has the authority to open the doors to let people in or to close the doors to shut them out.

The second reading (Rom 11:33-36), presented us with the immensity of God. He is omnipotent, omniscience, and immutable. He is our creator and the one who sustains everything that exist.

Socrates had warned that unexamined life is not worth living. So, when Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi (Matt 16:13-20), he enquired from his disciples who people thought he was. He discovered that many people in their evaluation of him thought that he was a holy person; a prophet of God like Jeremiah or Moses, or John the Baptist. While the people's opinions of Jesus were impressive, they were grossly inadequate, hence, Jesus turned to his disciples to supply the missing part of the puzzle. Peter did supply the missing link by declaring that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus rewarded Peter for his intuition by assuring him that he (Jesus) was going to build his church on the faith he had professed. He promised to give him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, what he (Peter) binds on earth would be considered bound in heaven, and what he shall loose on earth will be considered loosed in heaven. The giving of the keys to Peter symbolised authority. This made Peter the leader of the Church and the first among the apostles. This authority to bind and loose that Jesus gave to Peter, he also extended to the rest of his disciples after his resurrection when he breathed on them and said, "receive the Holy Spirit, what sins you forgive on earth would be considered forgiven in heaven and what sins you retain on earth will be retained in heaven" (Jon 20:22_23).

Authority in the church should be discharged through service. Jesus warned his disciples that it was only through service that a disciple becomes great in the community. He cautioned that no disciple should be made to feel the blunt of authoritarianism. For Jesus, authoritarianism belongs to unbelievers. He advocated that all church leaders should imitate His example, for he came not to be served but to serve and to offer up his life as ransom for many (Mk 10:44 45; Matt 23:11).

To be in authority does not mean that one is flawless. Hence, Jesus promised to pray for Peter and he asked him to encourage his brothers and sisters after he had recovered from denying that he knew him (Jesus) (Jon 18:15-27). While it is true that leadership has sometimes failed us both in the church and in the civil society; however, we have become too critical of leadership that we almost expect every leader to be beyond reproach. I am not condoning mediocrity or ineptness in leadership, but we should realise that leaders are mere mortals. Those in leadership should emulate the good example of Peter when they make mistakes. They should unambiguously apologise for their mistakes and not try to cover them up or explain them away. Peter acknowledged his fault after denying Jesus, he wept for his betrayal of Jesus. Jesus re-instated him after his resurrection by asking him trice if he loved him. He then asked peter to feed his flock and his sheep.

Authority in the church is to guide and protect the deposit of faith. Those in authority should always listen to the voices of the people of God. But we should also realise that being in majority does not necessarily mean being right. In our individualistic world of today where relativism is the order of the day, authority in the church ensures that our core Catholic beliefs are safe guided. But those in authority must be on their guard that authority does not degenerate into authoritarianism.

Fr Chinua Okeke CSSp

We pray with loving and trustful hearts for Len Crowe, Henri Tiu, Emily Middleton, Max Janiszewski, Jack Torcaso, Kevin Churchill, Wendi Courtney, Harry & Donna Arnold, Billy Coburn, Ross Monterosso, Paul Czubryj, Vima & Salih Basic, Greg Davine, Gloria Resubal and for all our Parishioners, friends and family who are not doing so well at this time, that they will recognize the hand of our Merciful and Loving God in difficult times.

We pray for Colin Leerson who died recently and for Mathew Daniel, John Houlihan, Andree Hattersley, Norm Bromley and Valarie Crowe and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time. May the souls of all departed rest in the peace and love of God.

Mary Wise and family would like to thank Parishioners/friends.

‘ Their support and prayers are a comfort for us at this time of the sad passing of Bill.’



presents - a new Catholic television channel

taking a new bold step in faith - SHALOM WORLD is a new satellite 24/7 Catholic channel that will reach out to English-speaking viewers worldwide. This new channel will supplement the pastoral efforts of the Church to spread the Good News of Christ Jesus. SHALOM WORLD will offer programming that will truly be a spiritual banquet to people of all ages. Production houses in major cities across the globe will work in conjunction to create programme content for this commercial-free channel.

Second Collection next Sunday - 3 September : Priests Retirement Foundation -Fathers' Day is the traditional day for the annual collection which supports our retired and sick priests. Your generous donations will ensure a normal life for our priests who have served our Archdiocese and who are now elderly and frail. \$2 or more are tax deductible and receipts for \$5 and over will be sent to contributors.

Next Sunday's Readings for Reflection - 22ND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
1st Reading JEREMIAH 20:7-9, 2nd Reading ROMANS 12:1-2
Gospel MATTHEW 16:21-27

SUNDAY COLLECTION 20.08.2017

Thanksgiving Offering-Pledged - Church \$ 1591
Thanksgiving Offering-Pledged - Presbytery \$ 606

Please ensure you write your dollar amounts on each side of the envelopes. **Thank You**
Collection will be taken up after the Prayer of the Faithful

We are looking for people to operate the projector (overhead) for Sunday Masses : Sunday Vigil 6pm, Sundays 8.30 am, 5.30 pm. Even once a month would be very helpful. Please leave message at office : Phone 97833484. Weekdays.

Blessings and thanks .M.Sharpe



AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

We Catholics in Australia love our nation. Indeed, so much of what is cherished as good in our society is, in fact, the fruit of Christian culture. So, we want our 'story' to continue to be heard in all the great debates about the foundations of our society. Our voice is not the only voice but it is an important one.

One such debate currently concerning us all is the issue of same-sex marriage.

We have always sought to contribute to our society as good citizens. We strive to act and speak out for the common good especially for the poorest and suffering among us.

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Child Safe Standards
All our Policies can be viewed on our Website: www.cam.org.au/Frankston
St Francis Xavier's Parish Frankston
Child Safety Policy

Excerpt from Policy dated 9 February 2017: Policy Commitments

All children at St Francis Xavier's Parish have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not and will not tolerate child abuse. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

Our commitment to our children

We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children in our parish.

We commit to providing children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences.

We commit to listening to children and young people and empowering them by taking their views seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.

We commit to taking action to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse or harm.

We commit to teaching children and young people the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

We commit to seeking input and feedback from children regarding the creation of a safe parish environment.

More information next week...