

Sunday 10th September 2023

Parish Priest: Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priest:** Fr. Martin Tanti & Fr Ananda Maddineni MSFS

Parish Pastoral Associates: Sandy Starbuck & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

The Partnered Parishes of:

St. Mary's

204 Grimshaw St.,
Greensborough, 3088

Parish: 9435 1543 **Presbytery:** 7036 9329

Email: Greensborough@cam.org.au

Website: www.cam1.org.au/greensborough

Secretaries: Tanya O'Meara & Lisa Leahy

Mass Times

Tuesday to Friday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.30pm

Sunday: Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 5.45pm-6.15pm before evening
Mass

Parish School Principal

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**
principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au

Sacred Heart & St Peter's

25 Gipson Street,
Diamond Creek 3089

Parish: 9401 6361

Email: DiamondCreek@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek

Secretary: Pat Guatta

Mass Times

Wednesday & Friday: Mass 9.15am

St Peter's: 1st & 3rd Saturday 7.15pm

Sunday: Mass 9.00am

Reconciliation Times

Friday: 9.45am to 10.15am

Parish School Principal

Mr. Jim O'Sullivan **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**
principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au

St. Thomas the Apostle

251 Diamond Creek Road,
Greensborough Nth 3088

Parish: 9434 7373

Email: greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au

Website: www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth

Secretary: Lisa Leahy

Mass Times

Tuesday & Thursday: Mass 9.15am

Saturday: Vigil Mass 6.00pm

Sunday: Mass 10.30am

Reconciliation Times

Saturday: 9.30am to 10.00am

Parish School Principal

Mr David Delaney **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**
principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au

Please send any bulletin contributions to greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au by 12noon Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend bulletin. Thank you

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION



O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously on your beloved sons and daughters, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance.

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A,
10th September 2023.

<https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/reflection-23-ot-year-a>

Sacred Heart, St Mary's & St Thomas the Apostle are all members of the Diamond Valley Deanery.

Diamond Valley Deanery

www.diamondvalleydeanery.org.au

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

www.cam.org.au



Our Partnered Parishes respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to the Elders past and present.

PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

CELEBRATION OF FATHER STEVE'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF ORDINATION – THANK YOU

On behalf of the three Parish Pastoral Councils, the organising committee would like to thank all those who helped to make this celebration of Father Steve's ministry so special. It was a beautiful day, beginning with Mass and followed by a delicious morning tea, speeches of congratulations and much conversation and enjoyment of the occasion. We were particularly delighted to share this day with members of Steve's family and his friends.

We thank the Liturgy Teams from the three parishes for preparing a very special liturgy, with music provided by the choir and organist, scripture readings and prayers by parishioners from each parish, Fathers Peter, Martin, Brian and Zaher who concelebrated the Mass, the children from our primary schools for decorating the walls of the church with their messages to Steve and the staff members at the schools for helping with and coordinating this art work.

In recognition of the special place that Steve holds in our parishes as our spiritual and pastoral leader, we thank those who spoke so eloquently, respectfully and affectionately about Steve on behalf of all of us: Jim O'Sullivan (Principal Sacred Heart Primary School), Tim Holland (Chair of St Thomas Parish Pastoral Council) and Jacinta Bright (former Pastoral Associate at St Mary's).

We thank the parish secretaries for their invaluable help and support with the organisation of the day, St Mary's Ladies Auxiliary and parishioners from Sacred Heart and St Thomas for providing a most enjoyable morning tea and those who assisted with traffic management.

We thank all the parishioners who sent best wishes and who contributed so generously towards a gift for Steven.

Elizabeth Whiting, Margaret Farrell and Cathy O'Brien – Organising Team



LITURGY OF LAMENT

Everybody is welcome and encouraged to attend this service to express our sorrow for the various forms of abuse perpetrated throughout our church within our own lifetimes.

This is a wonderful opportunity for all those affected, either directly or indirectly, to participate in this liturgy that aims to acknowledge the pain that has been felt, and assist with a healing in our communities.



WHERE: Sacred Heart Church, Diamond Creek

DATE: Thursday, 5 October 2023, at 7:30 pm

PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Some parishioners have questioned why we commence our Sunday Masses with an acknowledgement of the Land and First Nations people. I would like to hereby explain why we do this. The members of our Partnered Parishes Pastoral Council endorse our introduction to the Eucharist with the acknowledgement of Country.

For many years, since a formation day led by Vicki Walker from Catholic Aboriginal Ministry at St. Thomas' for our Diamond Valley Deanery in about 2010, I have made a commitment to begin each Sunday Mass with the words: "We gather acknowledging the Wurundjeri People as the traditional custodians of this land to praise and worship God, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." At St. Mary's, where we do not have commentators, I introduce our Eucharistic celebration with these words; at Sacred Heart and St. Thomas', where we do have commentators, they use these or similar words as they welcome those who gather for our Eucharist.

When celebrating Mass, I believe it is important that we acknowledge the sacredness of the land on which we gather, which is particularly venerated by the first custodians who first occupied it and from whom it was taken as though they didn't exist, and now we appreciate the preciousness of the property which has been bought and developed by our parishioners and is now being used for our sacred worship.

I purposely use the word "custodians" because only our Western mentality has the notion of 'ownership'. Aboriginal people did not 'own' land but the relationship they have with the land is deeply spiritual, cultural, and interconnected. They view themselves as custodians or caretakers of the land, with a profound connection that goes beyond ownership in the Western sense. Land is a source of identity, tradition, and sustenance for Aboriginal communities. The concept of ownership is different from the Western legal perspective; it's about responsibility, respect, and maintaining the harmony of the land. This connection extends to their ancestors and future generations, reinforcing their cultural practices and beliefs. This is also consistent with an authentic Judaeo-Christian understanding of our stewardship of the earth.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have experienced a long history of exclusion from Australian history books, the Australian flag, the Australian anthem and for many years, Australian democracy. This history of dispossession and colonisation lies at the heart of the disparity between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other Australians today. Including recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples at the beginning of Mass contributes to ending the exclusion that has been so damaging and divisive.

Acknowledging the land and First Nations people in Australia is a way to recognize and honour the history, culture, and connection of Indigenous peoples to the land, which predates European settlement. It is a step towards reconciliation and acknowledging the impact of colonization.

While acknowledging other communities that have made Australia home is important, the focus on Indigenous acknowledgement is rooted in addressing historical injustices and promoting understanding. It is also consistent with the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference's first section of Article 1 of the Decree on Reconciliation: Healing Wounds, Receiving Gifts which states the following:

"... each Catholic school, parish, diocese, eparchy or organisation will respond to the recommendations contained in the NATSICC position paper, "Embracing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in the Life of the Catholic Church" in the following ways: a) acknowledges in a prominent and appropriate manner the Traditional Custodians of the land upon which their buildings stand..."

Fr. Steven Rigo

OUR CONSTITUTION and the REFERENDUM. There have been many words spoken, often causing confusion and worry, over the Constitution and the Referendum. Available in the Gathering Space is an article by Barry Jones, that helps explain some of the concerns. Please take a copy home.

Partnered Parishes Social Justice Group.

PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

CHILD PROTECTION WEEK 4th-9th SEPTEMBER & SAFEGUARDING SUNDAY 10th SEPTEMBER

Child Protection Week is a national campaign held each year to raise awareness of child-abuse prevention in our communities. In 2023, the overarching message that 'Every child in every community needs a fair go' will be complemented with the theme 'Where we start matters':

- Where we start our lives in terms of where we live, the resources available to us and the opportunities presented to us makes a significant difference to our life outcomes.
- Where we start as a Catholic community in offering children and their families support and assistance makes a significant difference to life outcomes.
- Where we start as decision-makers in addressing large, complex problems such as child abuse and neglect also has a significant impact on personal, social and economic outcomes.

Child Protection Week is a good time for us to think about how we, as adults, can address some of these issues that affect children and to consider how we can change things to make a difference.

In the Catholic Church, Child Protection Week is highlighted through Safeguarding Sunday, which falls this year on 10 September. Safeguarding Sunday seeks to acknowledge the immense damage caused by the sexual abuse of children and adults at risk, including by priests, religious and lay people within Catholic contexts. It makes a commitment to practices and protocols that create and maintain safe environments for all people. It invites people to pray for those harmed by abuse directly and indirectly.



PARTNERED PARISHES COMMITMENT

Our Partnered Parish are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and people at risk in our community. Mindful of the theme for National Child Protection Week, may we work to build and support safe communities for all people.

You can find out more about the Church's work in this area at:

www.catholic.au/s/article/safeguardingsunday2023



INVITATION to ZOOM to the HOLY LAND

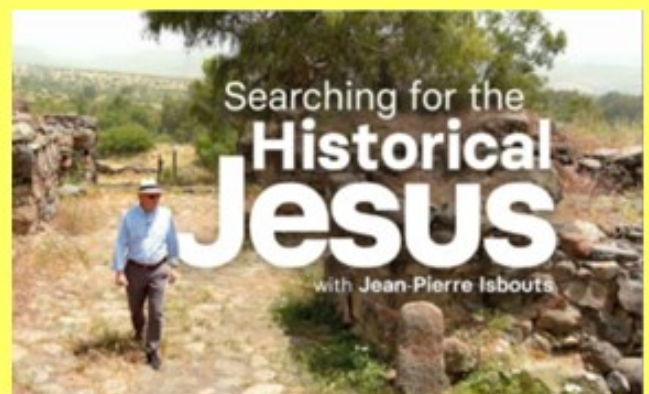
You are invited to join Monday night Zoom Bible Study Group for a video presentation, ***Searching for the Historical Jesus***. Walk in the footsteps of Jesus without needing a Passport!

Fifteen sessions presented over 5 Mondays, 7.30-9.30pm

Starts Monday 11th September

Contact Sandra Bishop to receive the Zoom link:

sandraebishop@optusnet.com.au



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SACRED HEART & ST PETER'S



BAPTISMS: We pray for Aurora, Freddy and Wylder who will be welcomed into Sacred Heart community in September.

SENIOR MOMENTS: Wednesday 20th September Lunch & Scrabble with Loyola students in the Parish Centre.
Wednesday 4th October Lunch at Platter's Café Diamond Creek

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Next Meeting 7.30pm Thursday 14th September.

Suggestion box in church or Email: ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com

SCHOOL FETE, CRAFT MARKET & CAR SHOW: : Saturday 28th October 11am-3pm. The Fete is a public event that will see us welcome the wider community to share in the fun and games and aim to raise money for our new playground.

ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE & SACRED HEART PARISHES FOOD DRIVE FOR THE ASYLUM SEEKER RESOURCE CENTRE will once again be held from the weekend of **26th/27th of August until 1st/2nd of October**. Parishioners are asked to donate non-perishable items and toiletries for men & women. Some of the urgent items are: *Tuna in oil (400gm); Olive oil (750ml-1L); Raw, unsalted nuts; Honey (small bottles); Dried fruit; Tahini; Spices (turmeric, cumin, chilli, garam masala, curry powder); Tomato paste; Toothbrushes & toothpaste; Laundry powder (1kg max.)*

At St Thomas the large basket will be available to receive the items; there will also be a basket available at Sacred Heart. There will also be list of items needed available to take home.

ASRC Foodbank currently provides free groceries to around 1000 people, including children, every week, most of whom have no income and no work rights. Every donation makes a difference.

ROSTERS:

Cleaning: Week 12th September M. Dunn, A. Ridsdale, T. Gallagher

Saturday 16th September St Peter's 7.15pm

Reader: P. Leonard **Commentator:** J. Robinson **Eucharistic Ministers:** H. Edmonds

Sunday 17th September Sacred Heart 9am

Reader: M. Walsh **Commentator:** Y. O'Brien **Eucharistic Ministers:** C. Bell, C. Ledda

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Antonietta Nesci, Grace Wein, Chris Padget, Pam Collins, Katie Pittle, Catherine Leonard, Peter Mejak, Joan Moran, Bridie Burke, Thomas Keenan, Mervyn Bourke, Jacob Draper, Kath Rickard,

We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of September that they may enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Terry Moran, Michael Holland, Ann Cusack, Andrew O'Dea, George Ind, Peter Thomas, Francis Goodge, Margaret & Bernie Fitzgerald, Alexander Libertino.

OBTAINING COMPLETION CERTIFICATE FOR ESSENTIAL SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

- ◆ Login to training link using WWCC number www.safeguarding.melbournecatholic.org
- ◆ They send a 6 digit code by email.
- ◆ Enter code and verify.
- ◆ You are asked if you are clergy – click 'Next'.
- ◆ The screen below comes up.
- ◆ Click the green 'Acquired' icon.



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS



PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday & Friday: 8.00am-4.00pm Wednesdays 12.30pm,-4.00pm
Thursdays 8.00am-12.00pm (**Wednesday 8.00am-12.00pm & Thursday 12.30-3.00pm St Mary's**)
Please send bulletin contributions by 12.00pm on Wednesday. Thank you

BAPTISMS: We pray for Hazel, Gemma and Jesse who are being Baptised later this month.

ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE & SACRED HEART PARISHES FOOD DRIVE FOR THE ASYLUM SEEKER RESOURCE CENTRE will once again be held from the weekend of **26th/27th of August until 1st/2nd of October**. Parishioners are asked to donate non-perishable items and toiletries for men & women. Some of the urgent items are: *Tuna in oil (400gm); Olive oil (750ml-1L); Raw, unsalted nuts; Honey (small bottles); Dried fruit; Tahini; Spices (turmeric, cumin, chilli, garam masala, curry powder); Tomato paste; Toothbrushes & toothpaste; Laundry powder (1kg max.)*

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ASRC Foodbank currently provides free groceries to around 1000 people, including children, every week, most of whom have no income and no work rights. Every donation makes a difference.

ST JOHN OF GOD ACCORD: St John of God Accord are hosting our 3 parishes for a tour, presentation from CEO, and meet & greet over lunch on Thursday 14th September from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. The aim is for our parishes to be more involved in a volunteer capacity in the life of St John of God and their clients. The visit should provide us with a clearer understanding of the work performed, and ways in which we are able to help. To express your interest, please contact Michael Bates on 0418 104 206, or via the Parish Office.

INVITATION TO DISCOVER: 7 Young people in the Gospel. Participants of all ages will relate to the examples of these young people, some made negative choices, some positive and one made several mistakes but didn't give up.

9.00am—5.00pm, Saturday 23rd & Sunday 24th September at St Thomas the Apostle, Greensborough North.

Adults \$40.00, Concession \$35.00. Book before the 20th September at: <https://www.trybooking.com/CKTUD>

Roster for Weekend 16th & 17th September

Saturday 6.00pm

Reader: P. Carty

Commentator: A. Fernando

Eucharistic Ministers: L. Carty, M. McKenzie, K. Salm

Set Up:

Sunday 10.30am

Reader: J. Kerr

Commentator: S. Millar

Eucharistic Ministers: B. Riordan, F. Landy, C. Riordan

Set Up: M. Bates

St Thomas prayers are asked for the following Parishioners:

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Miran Kasalo, Peter Kernjak, John Geretschlager

We pray for those who have died recently and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of September that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Jean Watson, Maria Scordo, Gennaro Mascia, Bernadette Richardson, Norah Moylan, Jane Tremayne, Tess Natoli, Barry Williamson, Mollie Kerr, Rocco Crea, Bernadette Linehan, Vincent Mascia, Jim Hardwick Snr, Kevin Power, Antonio Lunardello, Ines Lunardello, Vincenzina Varalla John Ryan, Fr Jim Feenan, John Muscat, Dawn Morgan, Varisa Zilic, Stjpan Kernjak, Bernard Healy

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S

Vision Statement "To be a vibrant Christian community engaging with the world"



PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 10am-4pm, Wednesdays 8am-12noon, Thursdays 10am-4pm.

Please send any bulletin contributions directly to greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au or greensborough@cam.org.au by 12noon Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend combined bulletin. Thank you

LADIES AUXILIARY : We are holding a cake stall in the gathering space after Masses weekend 9th./10th.September.

Enquiries Maureen 9435 5906 Judy 9435 4506.

Next meeting is on Wed,20th. Sept. at 10.15am in the gathering space.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP: Next Meeting: Wednesday 13th September. In the gathering space. 12.00 - 2.00 BO lunch. Bingo \$ 5.00 a book. Afternoon tea provide. All welcome, come have a chat, have a laugh: call Geraldine. 0438 148 896.

LITURGY NOTES – The Word of God. At Mass we listen to the Word of God, reflect on its message, and respond in prayer. God's Word is active. It is both a word to be heard and a guide to the way we live. We are called to take the Word of God with us in our hearts when we leave the church and return to our everyday lives. As a reminder of this call, at the end of Mass, the book of scripture, open at the Gospel of the day, is placed on the front of the lectern facing the congregation. The Word of God leaves the church in the hearts of the people rather than in a closed book.

CAN YOU HELP AT WEEKEND MASSES? We urgently need Projectionists and Sacristans. Projectionists display the PowerPoint slides which enable us to join as a community in prayer and song. This role does not require setting up the slides.

Sacristans prepare the church, altar and offertory gifts before Mass, and pack up after Mass. These duties take about 10 – 15 minutes. Please contact the office on 9435 1543 if you can help. Thank you.

CHURCH SECURITY : Group members and parishioners are reminded to check that ALL doors of the church and gathering space are securely locked and all lights are off when you leave after evening Masses and meetings. Thank you.

HOLY ROSARY is recited every Thursday morning after 9.15am Mass.

THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY: The prayer shawl ministry meets in the Gathering Space 10am - 12pm on Mondays.

Enquiries: Maureen Leahy—0407 687 517; Anne Fleming— 0409 234 326 .

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT: First Friday of month, after 9.15am Mass to 3pm. Spend whatever time you can.

All Welcome.



COME ALONG TO AN
EXHIBITION AND SALE OF FLOW
ART PAINTINGS

ALL DONATED BY OUR
BELOVED PARISHIONER
JUDY RACZ, A WELL KNOWN
ARTIST OF OUR DIAMOND
VALLEY DEANERY

When: September 23-24, 2023
Time: before and after mass
Venue: Gathering space at St Mary's
Catholic Church.
All proceeds will go towards pastoral
needs and maintenance of our church



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S continued

Be informed, inspired and entertained



With the coming of spring and brighter weather we have some books to lift the spirits in tune with the season:

The Happiness Habit by Daniel O'Leary

Have the Courage to be Happy by Pope Francis

C. S. Lewis on Joy by C.S. Lewis

If the Library is not open please ask a priest or sacristan to open the room and you can record your loans on the form provided. Please return loans in one month through the chute outside the Library.

Access to the catalogue is available at: cloud.collectorz.com/247780



PLEASE PRAY FOR

September Baptisms:

Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners & friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:

Peter Mejak, Barbara Fernandez, Christos Pittas, Jocelyn Tibayan, Margaret Schreenan, Olivia MacDonald, Helen Quigley, Lorraine Alexander, Harley McAleer, Pat Milczakowsky, Rosie Bray, Lois Jones

Recently Deceased:

We Pray for those whose Anniversaries occur this week, may they enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:

John Monagle, Wilfred Herrick, Gabriel de Robillard, G.H. Pitts, Eileen Knight, Eileen & Ian Cameron, Christine Ravesi, Thelma Black, Harry White, Merna Jenkinson

Brian McCormick, Patricia Doyle, Fred Batchelor, Paula Pointu, John Smith, William Godfrey, John Armstrong, Marco Parisi, Jack Kenny, Marie Rogan, Bill Pryor, Gerald Attygalle, Patricia Considine, Gustavo Cardamone, Marie Peevers

David Hyland, Philip Hedger, John Gallagher, Dason Fernando, Marie Graham, Jim Danaher

Hamilton Todd, Gerald Attygalle, Don Lippiatt, Harold White, Catherine Darcy, Rondal Gravell, Joseph Fernandez, Matt Cashin, Edgar Reid, Laurie Sarjeant, Laurie Boyle, Harold White Gloria Lockington, Avel Lucas, Christine Clancy, Francis Meehan,

Elenor Neeson, Phyllis Fitzgerald, Valerie Willis, Samuel Lentini, Charles Goral Snr, Davina Ann Bongiorno, Joan Taylor

Kevin Fitzgerald, Maree Patterson, Bess Nealy, Anne Hassett, Joseph Ribarich

Neville Davis, Mieczyslaw Puka, Joseph Borg, Laura Mallia, Annie Loubey, Joseph Borg

ARCHDIOCESE AND COMMUNITY NEWS

AID TO THE CHURCH IN NEED: Aid to the Church in Need is running an emergency campaign for Pakistan. Recently up to 24 churches, hundreds of Christian homes and a Christian cemetery were targeted in an attack in Pakistan which was sparked by reports of blasphemy allegations against two Christians accused of desecrating the Qur'an. ACN is working with project partners on the ground to aid the current needs of the Christian people. To learn more and to make an offering visit www.aidtochurch.org/pakistanappeal

NATIONAL PILGRIMAGE, IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MARY MacKILLOP: The Sisters of Saint Joseph have prepared an Australian Pilgrimage, "In the Footsteps of Mary MacKillop" commencing in Melbourne on 17 October, journeying through Victoria and South Australia, and ending at Mary MacKillop Place, North Sydney on 28 October 2023. During the pilgrimage we visit many places associated with Mary MacKillop's life and ministry.

For more information you can contact: pilgrimage@mmp.org.au or on 8912 4818.

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE is running an Online Information Session for the Graduate Certificate in Teaching Meditation on Monday 4 September at 7.30pm (AEST) that might be of interest to you, your lay ministers, or interested parishioners. Please see the attached flyer for more information.

For anyone interested in attending our information session, registration is essential. [Click](#) here to register.

HEART OF LIFE: Waiting at the Well - 4x Thu, 5, 12, 19 & 26 Oct, 10am–12.30pm (in-person event) Carole Carmody rsm, Julie Adam
This series offers an opportunity for those waiting to have their thirst quenched at the Well of Life to explore the depths of wisdom in their own heart, to recognise wisdom in the encounter with another, and to dwell in the Heart of Contemplation. Places limited.
Bookings via <https://www.heartoflife.melbourne/events/waiting-at-the-well-series/?> or email info@heartoflife.melbourne. Cost \$100 for the series or \$30 per session.



This week's gospel is about the difficulties and possibilities of a faith community. These involve our willingness to forgive and the promise of God's presence among us: 'where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.' The united prayer of such a community is powerful.

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

10 September 2023

First Reading Ez 33:7-9

If you have not warned the wicked man, then I will hold you responsible for his death.

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows, 'Son of man, I have appointed you as sentry to the House of Israel. When you hear a word from my mouth, warn them in my name. If I say to a wicked man: Wicked wretch, you are to die, and you do not speak to warn the wicked man to renounce his ways, then he shall die for his sin, but I will hold you responsible for his death. If, however, you do warn a wicked man to renounce his ways and repent, and he does not repent, then he shall die for his sin, but you yourself will have saved your life.'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 94:1-2.6-9. R. v.8

**(R.) O that today you would listen to his voice!
Harden not your hearts.**

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come before him, giving thanks,
with songs let us hail the Lord. (R.)
2. Come in; let us bow and bend low; let us kneel before the God who made us
for he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture,
the flock that is led by his hand. (R.)
3. O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your fathers put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.' (R.)

Second Reading Rom 13:8-10

Love is the fulfilment of the Law.

Avoid getting into debt, except the debt of mutual love. If you love your

fellow men you have carried out your obligations. All the commandments: You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet, and so on, are summed up in this single command: You must love your neighbour as yourself. Love is the one thing that cannot hurt your neighbour; that is why it is the answer to every one of the commandments.

Gospel Acclamation 2 Cor 5:19

Alleluia, alleluia!

God was in Christ, to reconcile the world to himself;

and the Good News of reconciliation he has entrusted to us.

Alleluia!

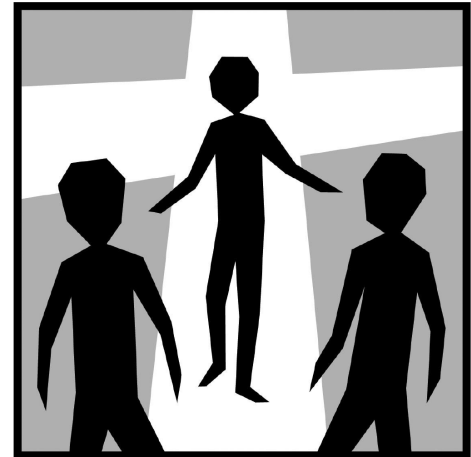
Gospel Mt 18:15-20

If your brother or sister listens to you, you will have won that person back.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If your brother does something wrong, go and have it out with him alone, between your two selves. If he listens to you, you have won back your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others with you: the evidence of two or three witnesses is required to sustain any charge. But if he refuses to listen to these, report it to the community; and if he refuses to listen to the community, treat him like a pagan or a tax collector.

'I tell you solemnly, whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.

'I tell you solemnly once again, if two of you on earth agree to ask anything at all, it will be granted to you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them.'



Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

Our Lord acknowledged that the community he was establishing had to set boundaries. Who is to decide who is within or outside those boundaries?

In today's Gospel, Our Lord teaches that a nuanced step by step process should be invoked. First, there is private conversation, then slightly extended to bring in two or three others, then a sort of church community jury before a person is put beyond the pale. Our Lord promises to be with them to help guide their decision.

We all know of marriages which are fractured and where one partner has found intimacy and security in a second (civil) marriage.

Pope Francis has not suggested that the second marriage be regarded as valid. But he has suggested a process of discernment to allow a divorced person to receive "the Eucharist . . . a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak."

Could a jury of ordinary Catholic lay people help make that discerning judgement, and then advise the Bishop as to the next step?

We could pause for a moment to ponder the promise: "Where two or three are gathered into my name, I am there with them."

mtate@bigpond.com

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