



Sunday 19th November 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

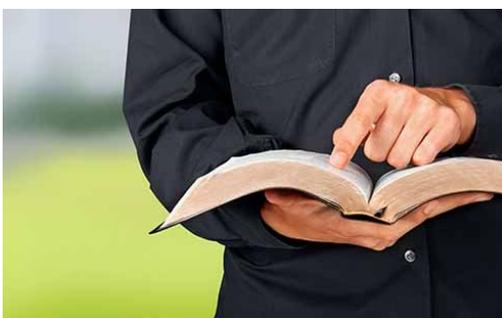
Parish School Principal

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

Saints of the Week: St Cecilia, Wednesday 22nd November, Sts Andrew Dung-Lac & companions, Friday 24th November.

SCRIPTURE REFLECTION



Grant us we pray, O Lord our God, the constant gladness of being devoted to you, for it is full of lasting happiness to serve with constancy the author of all that is good.

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
19th November 2023.

<https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/reflection-33-sun-a-2023>

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

www.cam.org.au

St Mary's Facebook page

facebook.com/stmarysgreensborough/



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

NEWSLETTER:-All parishioners are encouraged to contact your parish office to add your name to the email distribution list for our partnered parishes newsletter. This will allow you to always have access to the newsletter on your phone or computer and will help reduce our carbon footprint by saving paper. Copies will continue to be available at our churches and on our parish websites. Thank you.

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY: Zoom group are currently exploring the Gospel of John. All are welcome, 7.30-9.30pm.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/79611838040>

CHOIR PRACTICE: Will take place on Fridays 10, 17, 24 November and 1 December from 1:30 - 3:00 pm at St Mary's Church leading up to the 96th Festival of Family Carols which will be held in St Mary's Church on Sunday, 3 December at 7:30 pm. All are welcome!!

For copyright purposes if you wish to attend the choir practice please contact Megan Mitchem mamitchem@gmail.com

THE SIGN ADVENT PROGRAM 2023: Discover the profound spiritual journey of Advent and Christmas with The Sign: Daily Advent and Christmas Reflections 2023, a captivating 80-page book containing spiritually rich, yet accessible, daily reflections from the beginning of Advent (3 December 2023) through to the Baptism of the Lord (8 January 2024).

COPIES ARE NOW AVAILABLE IN OUR PARISHES. A DONATION OF \$5.00 WOULD BE GREATLY APPRECIATED.

"HOPE – SERENITY - INTIMACY – LOVE": You are warmly invited to join us for five weekly Sunday evening prayer sessions on ZOOM.

They are taken from Michael Hansen's collection of 'God's Field Hospital' (GFH) prayer exercises and are a series of individual standalone prayer exercises. Michael suggests that: "Each will draw on your lived experience, your present feelings and desires.

While great for personal prayer, each exercise may also be fruitfully prayed and reflected up on, in a group". *Michael Hansen SJ*

Where: It is a weekly Zoom experience. When: 3rd Dec 2023 Time: Sunday evenings 7pm – 8.30pm

Facilitators: Marie and Peter Davine RSVP: Marie Davine by the 1st of December. Email: mariemcm1991@gmail.com



All 6 sessions over 3 Thursday afternoons

2.00 to 3.15pm

23 & 30 Nov, 7 Dec.

St Thomas the Apostle Church

Enquiries: Emilia 0418 120 902

MARCELLIN COLLEGE ANNUAL MEMORIAL MASS: The Marcellin College Annual Memorial Mass is taking place in the Champagnat Chapel (on Marcellin Grounds) on the 7th of December, followed by a light supper. We would like to extend an invitation to all parishioners for this Mass. Thank you for your ongoing support.

*Greensborough Interchurch Council G.I.C.C Invites you to join in the
annual Festival of Carols*

St Mary's Church

Sunday 3rd of December at 7.30pm



*A wonderful opportunity to bring along the whole family and lift up our
voices to the Lord with in the lead up to Christmas, featuring special
Musical entertainment for the children of our faith communities!*



PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

ARCHDIOCESE TRAINING MODULE

If any parishioner from our partnered parishes does not have a Working with Children Check, renewed their WWCC or have not completed the Safeguarding training module you will no longer be able to continue in the ministry that you volunteer in after the 11th of November. There will be no exception.

To apply for a WWCC go to:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/working-with-children-check>

Alternatively you can complete the Safeguarding training now using your WWCC or VIT card to begin.

To access the training follow the link: <https://melbournecatholic.org/safeguarding/safeguarding-training-and-upcoming-events/safeguarding-training-modules/>

CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S GLOBAL GIFTS CARDS Caritas Australia's Global Gifts Christmas cards are a great way to spread joy and hope this Christmas season and to make a life-changing impact. Each gift represents a donation that will support vulnerable communities to create a brighter future.

Order now to receive in time for Christmas at: www.globalgifts.org.au



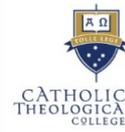
CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE: 2023 Knox Public Lecture on Tuesday 28th November at 7.30pm.

Live videostream via Zoom. "Truth and Peace: Timeless Twins". Presented by Dr Susan Connelly RSJ. To book go to trybooking.com/CMYVM. Enquiries 9412 3333. vi.panganiban@ctc.edu.au ü: ctc.edu.au

CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE: *Pastoral Leadership for a safe Church.*

CTC offers an innovative unit in this critical area to create a culture of safety within a variety of church and church-related settings. Suitable for religious and lay leaders, the unit will develop the capacity to:

- Evaluate risk factors and promote prevention and inclusion
- Understand the theological foundations of safeguarding
- Be responsive to the causes and life-long impact of abuse
- Apply the learning to the student's own area or work and ministry
- This is a face to face or online Synchronous.
- Dates for 2024: Intensive unit over 4 Saturdays: 2nd, 16th, 20th April, 4th May.
- Time: 10.00am-4.30pm
- For more information about this unit please visit our 2024 timetable
- registrar@ctc.edu.au or ctc.edu.au



Advent begins Year B & the Gospel of Mark, to prepare come and

Meet Mark, his Gospel & his Jesus

3 Tuesday evenings: 21 & 28 Nov, 5 Dec.

7.30 - 9.30pm via ZOOM

Book before 1pm 20th Nov., at:

<https://www.trybooking.com/CLYVL>

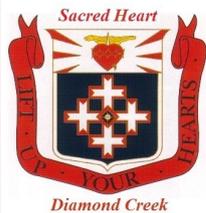
Overseas participant code: OVASEA

Further information: Emilia 0418 120 902.

This course is offered by the Catholic School of Evangelisation.



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



PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday & Thursday 10.00am-1.00pm, Wednesday & Friday 8.30am-2.30pm.

Please send bulletin contributions by 12.00pm on Wednesday. Thank you

BAPTISMS: we pray for Isabell & Jaden who will be welcomed into Sacred Heart community in December.

ANNUAL REMEMBRANCE MASS: 9am Sunday 26th November: Parishioners are encouraged to remember their deceased loved ones and participate by lighting a candle and placing it in the sand bowl.

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Some agenda discussed at recent November meeting

-Thank you to retiring members Ted Jenkins and Tonina Sirianni and welcome to new 2024 PPC members Breeda O'Regan and Sugath Fernando.

-Baptism Celebration Mass 9am 19th November and Remembrance Mass 9am 26th November.

-Preparations underway for Women's Dinner 3rd May 2023.

-PPC members recently visited the school and gave out cards to Confirmation candidates. Cards also to be presented to candidates following Reconciliation next week.

-Sacred Heart School Fete was financially very successful. Parent volunteers and school staff were outstanding, and the sense of community spirit was very evident.

-Anointing Mass 9.15am Friday 1st December.

-Christmas Masses 5pm Christmas Eve and 9am Christmas Day.

-Brian presented Maintenance Report including a thank you for the enormous amount of volunteer work being done on Sacred Heart church.

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

FAMILY GROUPS: November 2023 is the 38th Anniversary of the Passionate Family Groups at Sacred Heart Diamond Creek. This is what one family in our group has written:

What Family Groups Means To Us

We've been in Sacred Heart Family Groups for over 36 years and people ask us why we've stayed as part of the group even though we've moved out of the area. It's simple really – family groups is living the faith we all share. We've made many friends we wouldn't otherwise have met, we feel supported and part of a loving community. The group really came to the fore when it supported us through ill-health. Our children grew up being in a family group and learnt so much about mixing with all age groups, they learnt respect for others and formed friendships with adults that remain today. Family groups is open to everyone and is welcoming, supportive, totally non-judgemental, caring and sharing. It may look purely social on the outside but is so much more when you become involved in a group, it's like a second family.

From Kerry & Frank Micallef

ANNUAL ANOINTING MASS: You are welcome to the Anointing Mass on Friday 1st December at 9.15. Anyone who would like to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is welcome to receive it. It is available to anyone who feels that they are struggling in any way in mind, body or spirit. It is a beautiful sacrament through which we pray that God may heal those who are open to experience God's healing power working in their lives, and as a community we pray for each person who is anointed. We are also asking senior students from the school to accompany us in praying for all those who are anointed. You might like to support others by transporting to the Mass those who are unable to drive.

SENIOR MOMENTS: Wednesday 6th December Christmas Lunch 12pm in the Parish Centre.

HALL HIRE: Sacred Heart Hall is for hire. For all enquiries regarding cost and terms and conditions contact Alison Pieper on 0417571535 or alisonpieper52@gmail.com

ROSTERS:

Cleaning: Week 21st November B. & P. O'Regan

Sunday 26th November Sacred Heart 9am

Reader: Baptism family **Commentator:** A. Pieper

Eucharistic Ministers: P. Keenan, R. Padget

Saturday 2nd December St Peter's 7.15pm

Reader: J. Robinson

Commentator: Amindha

Eucharistic Ministers: Dharshanie

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 November that they may enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Geraldine Nihill, Bev Camilleri, Kevin Doherty, Vincent Atkinson, James Burke, Grace Jones, Lena Anderson, Haydn Chapman, John Prendergast, Bridgette Tancredi-Roberts.

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



BLESSING OF OUR CHRISTMAS STABLE



At all Masses on the weekend of 9 and 10 December our Christmas stable will be blessed. Parishioners are invited to bring along an item from their stable at home, or a special decoration from their Christmas tree, and they will also be blessed. Children are invited to draw or colour in a picture of a Christmas stable and leave it in the box on the table in the gathering space during December. They will be displayed around the walls of the church during Advent and the Christmas season.

COLUMBAN CALENDARS: Are now available in the Church, \$10.00 each. Limited stock.

ST. MARY'S TENNIS CLUB - is seeking anyone interested in playing junior and/or senior competition (daytime and nighttime) tennis commencing February 2024. For more information email stmarystennis56@gmail.com or call 0432 251 712.

CHOIR PRACTICE: Will take place on Fridays 17, 24 November and 1 December from 1:30 - 3:00 pm at St Mary's Church leading up to the 96th Festival of Family Carols which will be held in St Mary's Church on Sunday, 3 December at 7:30 pm. All are welcome!! For copyright purposes if you wish to attend the choir practice please contact Megan Mitchem mamitchem@gmail.com

LADIES AUXILIARY: The community fair will be on 25th November, as we have a number of stalls we would appreciate a few volunteers to assist us on that day. Plants for sale, at the Community Fair on Sat. 25th November, may be left behind the Parish House. Healthy plants only please. Enquiries Maureen 9435 5906 Lucy 9435 6990.

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 .

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - GREENSBOROUGH CONFERENCE 2023 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year's Christmas Appeal will be officially launched at St. Mary's Parish on the weekend of 2nd/3rd December. The local 'Companions' we visit in Greensborough and Watsonia are often hungry, anxious and desperate. Christmas will look different this year for struggling families.

If possible we ask Parishioners to please consider donating whatever is affordable to enable us to continue our Conference's work of providing help to those who seek it. To donate please see below-

1. Appeal envelopes will be provided at the end of the pews and in the Gathering Spaces of both Churches - they can then be placed in the 2nd Collection or in the 'after Mass' Collection bag. Donations can also be placed in the Collection bags on the following weekends.
2. Credit card donations can be arranged by calling 13 18 12 and stating you are donating to the Greensborough Conference Christmas Appeal
3. Donations can be made online via vinnies.org.au – please make sure you include Greensborough in the 'Comments/Conference Name' section.

With our continued gratitude for your ongoing support and incredible generosity!

Maureen Lonsdale, Greensborough Conference President

St. Vincent De Paul Society

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S continued

Be informed, inspired and entertained



Books of the Week

This week the Library display features a selection of books from our **Christian fiction** collection.

From the earliest biblical narratives to the present, stories have been vehicles for matters of faith. Not only are stories a method for conveying truth, but they are also central to the Christian faith as an imaginative art form, a means of sharing testimony, and for their ability to make abstract and often complex issues accessible.

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

PLEASE PRAY FOR

November 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, Peter Miles, Leon Gray, Amparp Sarmiento, Mick O'Meara.

Recently Deceased: John Nowicki

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

Dulcie Chennells, Nance Barnett, Win Bourke, John Wallace, Kathleen Goodwin, David Philp, Delina Said, Doris Catania, Evelyn Conway, Patrick Francis Smith, Max Stimpson, William Black, Antonietta Giusti, Marc Bourdet, Ross Pendry, Mgr John Murphy, Betty Taylor, Herbert Thomson, Lucy Nolan, Dusan Ribar, Jessie Busch, Peter Fox, Alex Fereday, Harry Darroch, Maureen Goral, Sylvia Leach, Patrick Leach, Florence Laidler, Harold Laidler, Steve Murphy, Shirley Coleman, Rita Chivers, John W. Smith, Sidney Stimpson, Mary Ellen Exton, Aniela Guzowski, Joan Lawler, Fr. P. Smark, Jane Doherty, Aleykutty Kurian, Poppy Stanton, Catherine Margaret Joyce, Max Rosewall, Ron Prendergast, Reginald Jowett, Noreen O'Callaghan, Leo Early, Genesis Pacione, Francis James LaBrooy, Robert Hallam, Greg Mackenna, Adrienne Martin, Mary Cummins, Molly Reid, Molly Creeley, Phillip Testagrossa, William Jarvis

NIGHT OF THE WITNESSES 2023

We are excited to inform you that Night of the Witnesses – a night to remember and pray for the persecuted Church, and to hear testimonies from three international speakers about their personal experiences of persecution will be held in Melbourne in November.

With its origins at Notre Dame and Sacre Coeur Cathedrals in Paris over 15 years ago, Night of the Witnesses is now a regular feature in cities around the world including Madrid, London, Washington D.C. and Krakow. Here in Australia, our first Night of the Witnesses was held in 2022 in the nation's capital, Canberra.

St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Wednesday 22 November 2023. 7.00 pm – 8.30 pm

International Guest Speakers: His Beatitude, Patriarch Joseph Absi of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church - Patriarch of Antioch, Alexandria, Jerusalem, and all the East. Mr Xavier Stephen Bisits, ACN Head of Projects, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt.

Sr Majella Dogonyaro OP, Dominican Sister, Northern Nigeria.

Night of the Witnesses is an evening to remember, to pray and to be inspired by the witness of twelve recent Christian martyrs and to stand in solidarity with Christians all over the world who are suffering persecution for their faith in Jesus Christ.

A procession of images of these twelve men and women from countries such as Nigeria, Iraq and the Philippines will coincide with a brief reading of their stories. Visiting guest speakers will then share their personal experiences of Christian persecution and stories of faithful witness amidst persecution.

Remembering the persecuted Church through these martyrs gives us pause to reflect on the love of Jesus Christ and the power of the Gospel to change the world that we are called to be witnesses in. It is an opportunity to reflect on the strength of our own Christian witness and perhaps to ask the Lord for the grace and courage to be His bright light in a world so desperate for hope.

For more information: www.aidtochurch.org/notw



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS



PARISH OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday & Friday: 8.00am-4.00pm Wednesdays 12.30pm,-4.00pm
Thursdays 8.00am-11.30am (**Wednesday 8.00am-12.00pm & Thursday 12.00-3.00pm St Mary's**)
Please send bulletin contributions by 12.00pm on Wednesday. Thank you

BAPTISMS: We pray for Frankie, Lucy and Leo who are being baptised later this month.

BUILDING BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP: This is the last get together for this year on Thursday 23 No-

vember at 1.30 pm at Phoenix Diamond Creek Rd Plenty. If you plan on coming text me 0408370685 Everyone welcome. Thanks Marg



BLESSING OF CHRISTMAS CRIBS: In 1223, St Francis of Assisi wanted to do something special to celebrate the birth of the Holy Child Jesus. So, St Francis asked the villagers to prepare a re-enactment of the Nativity at Bethlehem.

A cave with live animals and a hay-filled manger was prepared and the villagers came dressed ready to participate in the story. During the Christmas Midnight Mass, many believed they saw the infant radiant as St Francis embraced the child in his arms.

This beautiful tradition of the Christmas crib has continued in churches all around the world for the past 800 years.

To commemorate this amazing event, we are asking families to bring their Christmas crib from home and /or for the children to colour a Nativity scene (samples available at the churches and in the schools in the weeks prior to the 3rd December) to any of the Masses on the 2nd and 3rd December for the first Sunday of Advent. The family cribs and art work will be blessed along with the large Parish Crib. The children's art work will then remain on display for the Christmas season.



ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY - GREENSBOROUGH CONFERENCE 2023 CHRISTMAS APPEAL

This year's Christmas Appeal will be officially launched at St. Thomas' Parishes on the weekend of 2nd/3rd December. The local 'Companions' we visit in Greensborough and Watsonia are often hungry, anxious and desperate. Christmas will look different this year for struggling families.

If possible we ask Parishioners to please consider donating whatever is affordable to enable us to continue our Conference's work of providing help to those who seek it. To donate please see below-

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With our continued gratitude for your ongoing support and incredible generosity!

Maureen Lonsdale, Greensborough Conference President

St. Vincent De Paul Society

Roster for Weekend 25th & 26th November

Saturday 6.00pm

Reader: A. Fernando

Commentator: K. Salm

Eucharistic Ministers: S. Bishop, T. Holland, L. Carty

Set Up: M. Mc Kenzie

Sunday 10.30am

Reader: J. Kerr

Commentator: T. Williamson

Eucharistic Ministers: C. Riordan, A. Letzia, A. Kerr

Set Up: C. O'Brien

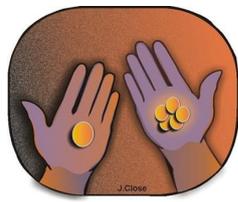
St Thomas prayers are asked for the following Parishioners:

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 November that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:

Nick Piccolo, Maura Coyle, Lena Brullo, Ray Tipping, Lawrence Meilak, Theresa Meilak, Marcel Bishara, Frank Mercieca, Thomas Iacobucci, Fr Kelvin Kenny, Christopher Kenny, Joan Campbell, Serge Teychency, Joan Chadzynska, Rocco Di Pierro, Haydn Chapman, Francis Mc Mennemin, Carmel McCrorie, Michael Munforte, George Fantauzzo, Robert Kasic, Mona Willcocks, Livio Di Nino



Lectionary Art and Reflection by Jenny Close The parable of the talents brings to mind the importance of personal growth and the enhancement of life. In this context 'trustworthiness' refers to our ability to use what we are given in life to best advantage. No doubt this will mean something different for each of us. 'Live long and prosper' is an appropriate sentiment in this context.

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

19 November 2023

First Reading Prv 31:10-13.19-20.30-31

Give her a share in what she has worked for.

A perfect wife – who can find her?
She is far beyond the price of pearls.
Her husband's heart has confidence in her,
from her he will derive no little profit.
Advantage and not hurt she brings him
all the days of her life.
She is always busy with wool and with flax,
she does her work with eager hands.
She sets her hands to the distaff,
her fingers grasp the spindle.
She holds out her hand to the poor,
she opens her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty;
the woman who is wise is the one to praise.
Give her a share in what her hands have
worked for,
and let her works tell her praises at the city
gates.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 127:1-5. R. v.1

(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord.

- O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. **(R.)**
- Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table. **(R.)**
- Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
in a happy Jerusalem
all the days of your life. **(R.)**

Second Reading 1 Thes 5:1-6

The day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night.

You will not be expecting us to write anything to you, brothers, about 'times and seasons', since you know very well that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. It is when people are saying, 'How quiet and peaceful it is' that the worst suddenly happens, as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman; and there will be no way for anybody to evade it. But it is not as if you live in the dark, my brothers, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all sons of light and sons of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 15:4. 5

Alleluia, alleluia!
Live in me and let me live in you,
says the Lord;
my branches bear much fruit.
Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 25:14-30

Because you have been faithful over a few things, enter into the joy of the Lord.

Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man on his way abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third one; each in proportion to his ability. Then he set out. The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now a long time after, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. "Sir", he said "you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Next the man with the two talents came forward. "Sir," he said "you entrusted me with two talents; here are two more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Last came forward the man who had the one talent. "Sir," said he "I had heard you were a hard man, reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered; so I was afraid, and I went off and hid your money in the ground. Here it is; it is yours, you have it back." But his master answered him, "You wicked and lazy servant! So you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered? Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have recovered my capital with interest. So now, take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the five talents. For to everyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from the man who has not, even what he has will be taken away. As for this good-for-nothing servant, throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth."



Reflection by Greg Sunter

This week's gospel is a very familiar parable and one that is often used with students and young people. It is generally used as an encouragement to make the most of the gifts and skills that the listeners possess. It is rarely, however, placed in its context as part of the full Chapter 25 lesson about the time of waiting and preparation for the coming of the Lord and the Christian life.

Again, the story is presented as a parable of the Kingdom – a glimpse into the right order of things in the realised Kingdom. A very wealthy master entrusts his considerable assets to his servants to manage in his absence. The three servants were allocated money, 'each in proportion to his ability'. The emphasis of the parable is on what each servant did with the funds they were allotted. They were charged with managing the money in the place of their master; acting in their master's place to further develop his wealth.

Like all of Jesus' parables, this one has a sting in the tail. Although the third servant has done nothing illegal or corrupt, he is very harshly dealt with. His crime is laziness! He was given a great opportunity to demonstrate his abilities and yet he shied away and returned to his master exactly what had been entrusted to him, unimproved. The author of Matthew's gospel uses this parable to shock the audience out of complacency. They cannot rely solely on the promised return of the Lord, they must continue to act on Jesus' message and work to bring about the Kingdom in their own lives. Those who fail to act, leaving everything to the work of God, are as bad as the lazy servant who failed to grasp an extraordinary opportunity.

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