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*St. Theresa’s Parish Community Newsletter*

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 16 Drummartin St., Albion 3020

 Principal: Rob Macklin



Mother of God Primary School - 93631734

 Blanche St., Ardeer 3022

 Principal: Assunta Iacovino

*“Do Small Things Well”*

 FOURTH Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A 28 & 29 January 2023

PARISH DAY OUT……The Lume Monet and Friends Exhibition at Convention Centre South Wharf….Monday 6th February Cost: $36-45 (Group of 10 people of more), easy access via Public transport leaving from Sunshine Train Station. Payment required on booking please contact Ann Maree 0401 192 079 RSVP 30th January

 H.O.S.T. S Help One Student to Succeed

Reading Program - 1 hour a week, 2 students for half an hour each, held at Mother of God School, Blanche St, Ardeer. Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday from 9.30am to 10.30am.

Please Contact Michelle Doyle on 9363 1734

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| MASSES THIS WEEK ST THERESA’SDrummartin St, Albion 9.00am Friday10.30am SundayMOTHER OF GODBlanche St, Ardeer10.00am Wednesday (Pol) 9.00am Thursday11.00am Thursday (Pol) 6.00pm Friday (Polish)  5.30pm Saturday10.15am Sunday (Polish)QUEEN OF HEAVENHolt St, Ardeer  8.00am Wednesday 9.00am SundayCHRIST’S CATHOLIC COMMUNITYPrayer Group meets every Thursday, 7.00 - 8.30pm, at Queen of Heaven Church. All are welcome |  | CUPPA AFTER MASS Join us next weekend after each Mass for a cuppa and a chat. Why not take this opportunity to enjoy the company of your fellow parishioners, and get to know one another better? Please bring a plate to share.CHURCH CLEANERS REQUIRED If anyone would like to help care for our Parish Churches please contact the Parish Office ph. 9311 3091, cleaning once a month on a rotating roster. COLLECTIONS RECEIVEDThanksgiving $750 Loose Money $330 Presbytery $565 Christmas Offerings $563COUNTERS 5THFebruary  Team 2: M Azzopardi, M CamenzuliFEAST DAYS THIS WEEKSt John Bosco, 31 JanuaryThe Presentation of the Lord, 2 FebruaryREADINGS *Today Next Week**Zephaniah 2.3;3.12-13 Isaiah 58.6-10++**Ps 146.6c-7,8-9a,9b-10 (R5.3) Ps 112.4-5,6-7,8a-9 (R.4)**1 Corinthians 1.26-31 1 Corinthians 2.1-5**Matthew 5.1-12 Matthew 5.13-16* |

PARISH CARAVAN, Safety Beach / Dromana. If you would like to use our Caravan please call the Parish Office on 9311 3091 to book. It sleeps up to six (very cosy) and costs $60 per night. Great opportunity to get away over during the week or for a weekend, please contact us.

*St Theresa’s Parish is* committed *to the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults*

 GOSPEL REFLECTION Matthew 5:1-12

The Beatitudes

 Brendan Byrne, S.J.

The Gospel for today (Matt 5:1-12) introduces the great Sermon (Sermon on the Mount, 5:1-7:29) which is the real beginning of Jesus’ public ministry in the Gospel according to Matthew. As we have noted from the start, of all four evangelists, Matthew is the one most concerned to relate the Christian community to its Jewish heritage. Central to that heritage is Israel’s possession of the Law or Torah of Moses. For Matthew, Jesus does not sweep away the Torah but ‘brings it to fulfilment’ (5:17). With an authority far in excess of that of Moses, he does this by giving it an authoritative interpretation valid for the time of the Kingdom of Heaven that he proclaims. As the Jewish community has in the Law of Moses, the Torah, that shapes its life, so the Christian community should find in the Sermon the Torah that is to shape and characterise its life.

For this reason it is important to note the context in which Jesus gives the Sermon. If we look back to the concluding verses of the previous chapter, we shall see that Jesus addresses his disciples in the presence of ‘all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics and paralytics, ... great crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan’ (4:24-25). ‘Seeing the crowds’ (5:1a), Jesus ascends the mountain, sits down and his disciples come to him – as to a Teacher – for instruction. He is going to tell them who they must be and how they should live, not just for themselves, but for the sake of that burdened mass of humanity that is down there on the plain waiting for his – and ultimately their – ministry.

This is the essential context for the Beatitudes with which the Sermon begins (vv 2-12). The Beatitudes are not commandments bluntly instructing the disciples about how they should live. They are rather invitations to adopt certain attitudes and live out certain values in the light of a particular vision of God. Those who choose to live in this way may seem to place themselves at a disadvantage here and now in terms of values prized by the world. But, in the light of God’s faithfulness, they are really placing themselves in the most advantageous and fruitful position of all. The biblical sense of ‘blessed those who ...’ lying behind the Beatitudes is basically that of ‘Congratulations!’ – the sort of thing we say to someone who has won the lottery. We are not commending them for being virtuous. We are acknowledging their good fortune and sharing their joy; we’re saying, ‘You’re in a good place!’

Other things being equal, the attitudes and situations that Jesus here commends are not in themselves a recipe for getting on in the world. All cohere around the core idea of living in a non-competitive, non-grasping way. To be poor in spirit (as well as being actually poor); to be gentle and unselfish, rather than on the make; to be prepared to weep alongside the unfortunate rather than avoid them; to work for justice and peace; to exercise mercy and be single-minded in pursuit of the good (‘pure in heart’); to be ready to endure persecution and calumny for the sake of the gospel: all these things make one vulnerable here and now, entailing much loss. But then we have to note the second clause in each beatitude, stating the reason for the ‘blessedness’ in each case. All those passives: ‘shall be comforted’, ‘shall be satisfied’, ‘shall have mercy shown to them’, and so forth, indicate, in biblical parlance, the action of God. To live in this way, according to these values, makes supreme sense if God truly is as Jesus reveals God to be. It is only in the context of faith in such a God that living according to the Beatitudes makes sense and is, in fact, the supreme wisdom. Now it may involve vulnerability and loss; in the perspective of faith and the hope for the Kingdom of Heaven that faith holds out, it is simply hard-headed common sense. That is why those who, following Jesus, adopt this way of life, as to be ‘congratulated’, why they are ‘Blessed’.

The First Reading, a rare appearance of the prophet Zephaniah (2:3; 3:12-13) provides an appropriate background for the Beatitudes in that it commends similar attitudes and, again, does so in the light of a similar vision of God.

The Second Reading, 1 Cor 1:26-31, also fits the theme. Paul reminds a community inclined to adopt worldly standards of how it was precisely their lowliness and ordinariness in the sight of the world that led to their choice and spiritual enrichment by God.