*St. Theresa’s Parish Community Newsletter*



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 Principal: Rob Macklin

Mother of God Primary School – 9363 1734

 Blanche St., Ardeer 3022

 Principal: Assunta Iacovino

*“Do Small Things Well”*

SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER Year A 15 & 16 April 2023

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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 Thursday 6.00pm Friday (Polish) 5.30pm Saturday10.15am Sunday (Polish)QUEEN OF HEAVENHolt St, Ardeer  8.00am Wednesday 9.00am SundayRECONCILIATION (Individual Confession)Saturday 22nd April, 11am at Mother of God |  | THANK YOU…..To all who have returned their Project Compassion Boxes and envelopes. We have received $2,153.20 so far and would those who have not done so, please return their boxes asapPARISH FINANCE COMMITTEE Meeting Wednesday 19th April 7pm at PresbyteryCHRIST’S CATHOLIC COMMUNITYPrayer Group meets every Thursday, 7.00 - 8.30pm, at Queen of Heaven Church. All are welcomeCOLLECTIONS RECEIVEDThanksgiving $731 Loose Money $842 Presbytery $1465 Easter Offering $513COUNTERS 23rd April  Team 1: D Catania, E Catania, E XuerebREADINGS *Today Next Week**Acts 2.42-47 Acts 2.14,22b-28**Ps 118.2-4,13-15,22-24(R.1) Ps 16.1-2+5,7-8,9-10,11 (R.11)**1 Peter 1.3-9 1 Peter 1.17-21* *John 20.19-31 Luke 24.13-35* |

PARISH MOVIE MORNING Mon 24th April 10.00am, Sunshine Village Cinema, Tickets $9. Film is “Air” (Michael Jordan – Nike Shoes) Please RSVP Ann-Maree 0401192079 by 23rd April

CAROLINE CHISOLM CATHOLIC COLLEGE OPEN DAY Sunday 21st May 11am-2pm

Caroline Chisolm Catholic College, Churchill Avenue, Braybrook. Tour the three campuses meet and greet our students and staff, plus ask all your questions. See poster to book through QR code or phone (03) 9296 5311. We look forward to seeing you at our College Open Day!

PARISH CARAVAN, Safety Beach / Dromana SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

If you would like to use our Parish 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 the school holidays please contact us.

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

SCRIPTURE COMMENTARY by Brendan Byrne SJ

It is understandable that the Church should celebrate the octave of Easter by reading each year the episode in the Fourth Gospel where the risen Lord appears to Thomas ‘eight days later’ (20:19-31).

This is preceded, appropriately enough, by a First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles (2:42-47) describing the life of the disciples in the very early days of the Church. The summary gives a rather idealised view of early Church life, one not destined to continue in all its details. What it chiefly communicates is the sense that the power of the Spirit, so evident in the ministry of Jesus and later at Pentecost, continues in the subsequent life of the church.

One sign of the Spirit’s presence is the continuing increase in numbers of converts, drawn by the sheer attractiveness of the communal life of believers and the spirit of joy and thanksgiving palpable among them. At one level they continue to be devout Jews, frequenting the Temple daily. But other practices reflect a new direction: daily instruction from the Apostles and meals shared in common, the climax of each being the eucharistic commemoration of Jesus (‘the breaking of the bread’).

The sharing of material goods denoted by ‘having all things in common’ was destined to last in Christianity only in the monastic tradition. But beyond the material sense, we should be aware of an axiom pervasive in Greco-Roman society that ‘friends have all things in common’. What is being indicated, then, is that the early disciples were a community of friends. They shared friendship with the Lord Jesus and because of that they were friends with each other. This is the essential meaning of the Greek word *koinōnia* – a difficult word to translate, though ‘communion’ is preferable to ‘fellowship’. *Koinōnia* denotes the bond created between individuals on the basis of a common participation in some other thing (here the friendship of Jesus). This rich idea remains, of course, central to the Church’s sense of its own identity.

The attractive Second Reading from the beginning of the First Letter of Peter (1:3-9) complements much of this, especially in its sense of a hope held in common. The beautiful expression with reference to Jesus towards the end – ‘You did not see him, yet you loved him’ – aptly prepares the way for the ‘blessing’ Jesus will pronounce at the close of today’s Gospel on those who ‘have not seen, yet believe’ (see below).

Gospel (John 20:19-31): Thomas is one of the most clearly defined characters in the Fourth Gospel. Born loser, realist, pessimist, he has missed out on the Easter night appearance of Jesus. He won’t believe in the resurrection simply on the other disciples’ claim ‘we have seen the Lord’. He lays down his explicit, highly ‘physical’ conditions.

With the divine ‘courtesy’ that seems to be a feature of the risen Lord in all the appearance stories of the gospels, Jesus is prepared, eight days later, to meet Thomas’ conditions exactly. Before the risen Lord in person, however, Thomas abandons them and makes the most exalted act of faith contained in the gospel: ‘My Lord and my God!’. The confession takes us back to the Prologue: ‘... the Word was with God and the Word was God’ (1:1); ‘No one has ever seen God; it is God the only Son, who is close to the Father’s heart, who has made him known’ (1:18). At this climactic moment of the gospel it is Thomas, the late-comer, the obtuse one, the doubter, who proclaims the full identity of Jesus.

But that is not the end. Jesus adds a comment that brings us into the picture too. Thomas has believed because, like Mary Magdalene (20:16) and the other disciples present in the room, he has seen the risen Jesus. Others – succeeding generations of believers – will not see Jesus. Unlike Thomas, they have to believe simply on the report handed down in the Church’s preaching: ‘We have seen the Lord’. On them – on us, that is – Jesus pronounces a blessing: ‘Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe’. Why ‘blessed’? Because from them/from us a faith greater than that of Thomas and the others will be required: the greater the faith the more scope for the power of God.

So the first ‘edition’ of John’s Gospel (chapters 1-20) ends with this solemn assurance that believers of all subsequent generations are in no way at a disadvantage compared to the original disciples who saw and heard and touched the Lord. The written gospel imparts to us all the knowledge necessary for a life-giving encounter with the risen Lord.