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*St. Theresa’s Parish Community Newsletter*

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 Principal: Rob Macklin



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 Blanche St., Ardeer 3022

 Principal: Assunta Iacovino

*“Do Small Things Well”*

 FIFTH Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A 4 & 5 February 2023

ANNUAL CHAPLAINCY APPEAL 11th & 12th February

Next weekend is the Pastoral Care Appeal in the Archdiocese of Melbourne. Each year a special collection is conducted in all parishes, so that the vital work of the Catholic Chaplains can continue. The Chaplains support thousands of Victorians every year in hospitals, prisons and youth justice centres. Your gift can help people find comfort and hope as they go through some of their darkest times of their life. Please give generously. You can donate using the envelopes available or online at www.catholiccarevic.org.au or call (03) 9287 5513, or by contributing to the special collection which will be taken up at all Masses next weekend.

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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 11th February, 10am at Queen of Heaven |  | CUPPA AFTER MASS Join us this weekend after each Mass for a cuppa and a chat. We have worshipped together, now let us enjoy one another’s company for a short while.ABBEY SOLO FOUNDATION. Raising money and awareness for families facing childhood cancer. T20 Family Cricket Night. Tuesday 14th February, from 5.00pm. Ainsworth Reserve, Sunshine West. COLLECTIONS RECEIVEDThanksgiving $715 Loose Money $362 Presbytery $556 COUNTERS 12THFebruary Team 3: M Poulter, A CorreyaFEAST DAYS THIS WEEKSt Paul Miki and Companions, 6 FebruarySt Scholastica, 10 FebruaryREADINGS *Today Next Week**Isaiah 58.6-10 Sirach 15.15-20**Ps 112.4-5,6-7,8a-9 (R.4) Ps 119.1-2,4-5,17-18,33-34(R1)**1 Corinthians 2.1-5 1 Corinthians 2.6-10**Matthew 5.13-16 Matthew 5.17-37* |

DATE CHANGED……PARISH DAY OUT……The Lume Monet and Friends Exhibition at Convention Centre South Wharf….Friday Afternoon 10th February Cost: $36-45, easy access via Public transport leaving from Sunshine Train Station. Please contact Ann Maree

PH: 0401 192 079 RSVP by Thursday 9th February.

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

Reflection on the Gospel-5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A (Matthew 5:13-16) –

Veronica Lawson RSM

In today’s gospel, Jesus addresses two short parables to his disciples in the presence of the crowds. The crowds as well as the disciples hear what he has to say. Parables were intended to tease their hearers, inviting them to see things differently or from a new perspective, to see themselves in a new light. One of the difficulties for us is that Jesus told these parables in early first century Palestine with its particular symbol system, while we hear them through the multiple layers of our own twenty-first century contexts and symbol systems. “Salt” and “light” have slightly different resonances in different contexts, as do “earth” and “world”. Exploring those resonances or nuances can bring us to a deeper appreciation of the text.

This short reflection allows for a focus only on “the salt of the earth” parable or metaphor. For Jesus’ Palestinian audience, salt was used to preserve and to season food. It also functioned as a cleansing or purifying agent. It could only lose its savour if contaminated by additives. We can resonate with all of that. For some of the Jewish rabbis, salt signified wisdom: a “salted” disciple was a “wise” disciple. In some parts of the ancient world, as in Pakistan today, salt was used in dyeing processes as a way of intensifying as well as preserving the colour of fabrics. Many Westerners are not aware of this practice.

These days we are rightly concerned about high levels of salinity in overworked soil. That was certainly not so for firstcentury Palestinians.

When we declare someone to be “the salt of the earth”, we are generally referring to the sheer goodness of the person in question, her/his down to earth reliability, lack of pretentiousness and practical wisdom. To be salt of the earth is to season the earth community, to intensify its beauty, to be wise in one’s judgments, to be just and compassionate in all of one’s dealings. This parable, with its multi-layered symbolism, certainly teases the mind.

In the original Greek, the emphasis is on the first word in the sentence. Jesus is telling his hearers, disciples and crowds, that they are the salt of the earth. They do not have to become the salt of the earth; they are the salt of the earth. In short, he is affirming their worth. In its literary context, that assertion contrasts Jesus’ followers with those who might persecute them. It affirms their capacity to stand strong in the face of opposition, “for the sake of justice”. If they allow themselves to be overwhelmed or allow their commitment to be shaken, then the “salt” will be contaminated and the “earth” cannot be seasoned. As we reflect on the diverse metaphorical applications of salt and earth, we might take a moment to give thanks to God for the gift of the material realities that underlie these powerful metaphors.

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Another reflection

Sister Mary Coloe

What a challenging Gospel! *You* are the salt of the earth. *You* are the light of the world. Not somebody else! *You!* You are the one who can give our world its flavour, its ambience, its character. You are the one to offer a vision of life and hope in a world troubled by fear and dark powers. If only we Christians would really hear and heed these words. Jesus places an enormous responsibility on us, to be salt and be light. I fear too often we come across as insipid and the Gospel loses its power to transform our world into God’s reign of compassion and peace and justice. When we have a wound and bathe it in salt water, it stings. The society we live in should ‘sting’ from time to time by the strength of Christian values that challenge society’s values – that is if we Christians are salt.

Light has many functions. It can offer comfort and solace. Light can drive out the shadows of fear. And light can also reveal what is hidden. The prophets of Israel were those who shone a light on Israel’s failures to live up to their values as God’s people. At other times they offered words of hope and guidance when Israel was plunged into despair.

During this week, each time you reach for the salt, or turn on a light let this action remind you of your Christian vocation. Let it be a moment of prayer for strength and courage to be salt and light in the world.