

SEASONS

Newsletter of the Catholic Parish of St. Thomas More, Mount Eliza

Twenty - Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time — Year A

20th September 2020

Stage 4 of Covid 19 Restrictions!!!

Parish Office Staff

Parish offices must be closed. Parish employees must work from home.

In the event of an urgent matter or certain extenuating circumstances and a parish employee needs to attend the parish office (or Church), the following steps must be followed:

- 1)the staff member must obtain an approved *work permit* before attending the parish office (the template for this *work permit* should be available on the Victorian Government website shortly; as soon as it is posted we will send a link)
- 2)the work permit must be carried with the staff member as proof if questioned by Police;
- 3)the staff member must stay at the parish office (or Church) the shortest possible period before returning home;
- 4)when attending the parish office (or Church), a written record of the staff member's time of arrival and departure must be kept;
- 5)while in the parish office (or Church), the staff member must wear a face mask at all times, practice social distancing and appropriate hand hygiene; and
- 6)directly after leaving the parish office (or Church), the staff member must wash/sanitise their hands.

Parish Volunteers

The health and safety of parish volunteers is also very important at this time. This means volunteers should not be attending Parish facilities and working from home if at all possible. If volunteers are engaged in essential services (e.g. preparation of food packs for the needy) then the necessary conditions apply:

- 1)the work permit must be carried with the volunteer as proof if questioned by Police;
- 2) the volunteer must complete the voluntary activity in the shortest possible period before returning home;
- 3) when volunteering, a written record of the volunteer's time of arrival and departure must be kept as well as a description of the activity;
- 4) whilst volunteering, the volunteer must wear a face mask at all times, practice social distancing and appropriate hand hygiene; and
- 5) immediately after completing the activity, the volunteer must wash/ sanitise their hands.

Baptisms in a restricted zone are to be postponed, unless there is an urgent and grave pastoral need. (Can. 857; 860).

Funerals held in a restricted zone will be limited to 10 people plus those required to conduct the funeral.

Weddings are banned during Stage 4 of Covid 19 Restrictions

Except for the exemptions noted regarding Weddings and Funerals, all public Masses, Liturgies and communal devotions (whether indoors or outdoors) **are temporarily suspended until further notice.**

We pray for...

**Those who have passed away recently...
Those whose anniversaries fall at this time....**

.. Patrick Willsteed, Bernice Chute, Sheila Walker, Norman Hellard, Joan Enright, Leo Ryan, Mary Irene Pearson, Thomas Kelly.

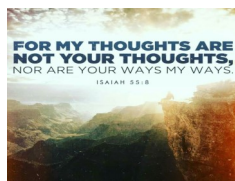
The sick... Denis Mirrabella, Michael Leonard, Peter Rodriguez, Liz Spurdle, John Spurdle, Evonne Paddison, Joanne O'Brien, Maree Bracken, Maria Truong, Bill



Luscombe, Brigitte Rohner, Eileen O'Beirne, Helen Steinbach, Ava Macias, Michael MacKenzie, Luke Carroll, Betty Corke, Chloe, David Dole, Maria Kelly, Elizabeth Ware, Althea Greeff, Michael Blick, Maureen Anstey, Jake Steyn, Adrian Gobel, and all of the sick at the George Vowell Centre & Ranelagh Gardens Nursing home **and the parishioners of St Thomas More Parish, Tequimata, East Timor, St Therese Parish, Bathurst Island and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish, Alice Springs.**

Twenty - Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time — Year A

First Reading: Isaiah 55:6-9
My thoughts are not your thoughts



Responsorial Psalm:

The Lord is near to all who call him

Second Reading: Philippians 1:20-24,27

For me to live is Christ.

Gospel Acclamation:

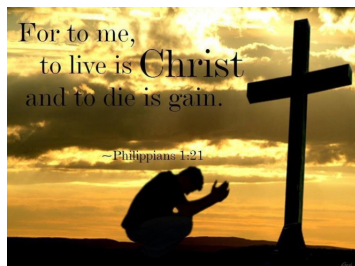
Alleluia, Alleluia!

Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the word of your Son.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Why are you jealous because I am generous?



Next Week's Readings - 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Ezekiel 18:25-28

2nd Reading: Philippians 2:1-11

Gospel: Matthew 21:28-32



The Bishops of Victoria have suspended the Sunday Mass Obligation for all Catholics in Victoria until further notice. Mass is broadcast via the **Ten Network (6am, Sunday)** for any one who would like to participate.

Parish Office Hours: Closed during Stage 4 of Covid 19 Restrictions
After Hours: Please leave a message on 9787 7777

Catholic Parish of St Thomas More

**313 Canadian Bay Rd
Mount Eliza Vic. 3930
Phone: 9787 7777**

Email: MountEliza@cam.org.au

Web: www.stm-mteliza.org

Pastoral Leadership Team

Fr Joe Truong (Parish Administrator)

Jacinta Griffin (Chairperson)

Sue Carr Paul Stinear

Leonie Bourke Carmel Huggard

Margaret Jamieson

PPLT Email: MountEliza.PPLT@cam.org.au

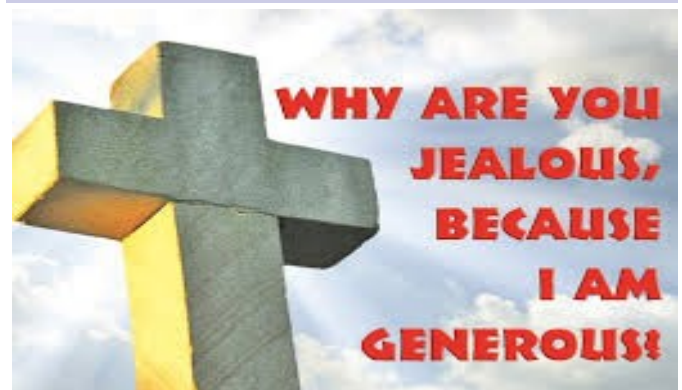
Mass online

www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass

OR <http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand>

OR <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>

OR St Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne. Daily and Sunday Mass is available, with the I Am Mass live streamed; it is also available as a recording on-demand. <https://melbournecatholic.org.au/Mass>



Pastoral Care for STM Parish during the time of the Coronavirus Pandemic

This plan will be revised upon further easing of restrictions

1. **STM Church and Office Closed during Stage 4 restrictions**
2. **Seasons** publish online, send out by email, or by post.
3. **Pastoral visitation:** Not available during Stage 4 restrictions
4. **Anointing of the Sick, and Communion for the housebound:** Anointing of the Sick is available only for the seriously ill. The Eucharist is given as Viaticum to the dying only.
5. **Reconciliation:** Please call Fr Joe on 9787 7777 to make an appropriate arrangement.
6. **Spiritual Guidance:** Fr Joe is available from Tuesday to Sunday afternoon — by phone or **zoom video conference** only.
7. **Seasons:** Please contact the parish office if you would like to receive a copy of *Seasons* by post.
8. Mass in private (without the congregation): **Tuesday—Sunday**

CDF-Online Portal for Parishes

Dear Parishioners,

We wish to thank you for your support of our parish even during this time of health crisis and financial challenge. We wish to advise you that the Archdiocese of Melbourne and Catholic Development Fund have partnered to build an online payment portal—CDF pay for parishes. This site enables you to make quick and easy online thanksgiving payments—you can set-up a recurring payment, or you can choose a one-off offering. The St Thomas More Mount Eliza site is live and can be found via the link below:

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your family every blessing from the risen Christ.

Fr Joe Truong

Financial Matters 6th September

	Actual	Pledge
Stewardship	\$ 963	\$ 1560
Presbytery	\$ 60	

Thanks to all of you who give so generously to support our parish.

What's Happening Here ...

EAST TIMOR UPDATE SEPTEMBER 2020

The 39th shipping container, since starting our East Timor project in the year 2000, has been filled and sent to East Timor.

It was filled with 100's of desks, chairs, 4 drums of donated rice from parishioners, 100's of boxes of clothing, many Baby Boxes, a refrigerator, cupboards, gardening tools and many 100's of tubes of skin creams. Skin diseases prevail among the people.

Thanks for the generous donations from parishioners and local businesses. Also many thanks to the hard working volunteers who helped collect the goods and pack the container.

We hope to be filling the 40th container when Corona Virus restrictions are lifted.

Another project making a difference is the sponsorship of the education of dozens of school and university students. Generous parishioners sponsor the education of children, who because of poverty and not being able to afford school fees, would most likely leave school to work in the family vegetable garden.

If you would like to become a sponsor, or discover more detail on the things we are doing in East Timor look up the web site "HELPING EAST TIMOR" "lesharper.org" and speak to Les Harper.

Email: lesharper@optusnet.com.au

Or telephone 0408123562

Catholic Care Support for your parish community during COVID-19

We know that many people are suffering emotionally, socially and financially during the COVID-19 pandemic. CatholicCare has the following services to help:

Counselling - Free counselling via telephone or video conference.

Emergency Relief - For food vouchers and other financial assistance.

T: (03) 9287 5555 | W: www.ccam.org.au/covid19response | E: CatholicCare@ccam.org.au

Baptisms

All Baptism Information/Preparation - Please contact Fr Joe at the Parish Office. Not available during Stage 4 of Covid 19 Restrictions



STM Children and Young People Safeguarding Committee

At STM Catholic Parish, Mount Eliza, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our parish. For more information please call: John Natoli (Coordinator) on 0418 208 778; or Julie Carter (Banda) on 0420 923 859

STM Social Club Fun & Friendship For All

New members are always most welcome!

Membership fee is \$30.

Due to the Corona Virus pandemic, the Social Club has decided to suspend all activities until further notice.

Dear fellow members of STM Social Club,

This is just to say hello and to let you know that you are in my thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. I hope that you all are going well. I am missing our Social Club gatherings and hoping that we will be able to come together for our annual Christmas get together. Love you, **Carolyn Gascoigne**.

Community Corner

Dear fellow parishioners,

On Wednesday 16 September, 12 parishioners gathered to celebrate mass with Fr. Joe via 'Zoom' at 9.15am. I don't think any of us were sure how it would be, but, there was joy and excitement at seeing people who we haven't seen for ages. We had a commentator and a reader, we sang hymns and we prayed together. It was an uplifting experience.

Fr. Joe admitted us to the 'meeting' from 9.00, so there was chatter and smiling faces before mass, and then again afterwards people stayed chatting for several minutes.

Thank you Fr. Joe for organising this. The most difficult thing during lockdown and level 3 and 4 restrictions is not being able to gather as community, this enabled people to come together albeit via our iPads and computers. Fr. Joe will be expanding this to a Sunday mass shortly. Come and join in, if you're unsure how to, contact Fr.

STM Poetry Group: STM Social Club

STM Poetry Group is planning to meet on zoom on **Monday, 21 September from 1:30PM—3:00 PM**. If you would like to join, please call

Brian MacAnallen on 0428 776 202.



Parish Zoom Account

Monday 21 September 2020

1:30PM—3:00PM—Poetry Group (STM Social Club)

7:00PM—9:00PM—St Vincent de Paul Society Meeting

STM PARISH MASS ON ZOOM—Wednesday 23 Sept

Please find below the link for STM Parish Zoom **Mass Wednesday 23 September 2020**. Mass commences at 9:15 AM. However, you may start logging on to zoom from 9:00AM.

Topic: STM WED MASS

Time: Sep 23, 2020 09:00 AM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 434 691 8189

Passcode: 439075

Saint Pius of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio) ●
on Wednesday of week 25 in Ordinary Time

First reading

A reading from the book of Proverbs.

Every word of God is unalloyed,
he is the shield of those who take refuge in him.
To his words make no addition,
lest he reprove you and know you for a fraud.
Two things I beg of you,
do not grudge me them before I die:
keep falsehood and lies far from me,
give me neither poverty nor riches,
grant me only my share of bread to eat,
for fear that surrounded by plenty, I should fall away
and say, 'the Lord – who is the Lord?'
or else, in destitution, take to stealing
and profane the name of my God.

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet.

My soul pines away with grief;
by your word raise me up.
The law from your mouth means more to me
than silver and gold.

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet.

Your word, O Lord, for ever
stands firm in the heavens:
I turn my feet from evil paths
to obey your word.

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet.

I gain understanding from your precepts
and so I hate false ways.
Lies I hate and detest
but your law is my love.

Your word, O Lord, is a lamp for my feet.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!

The kingdom of God is near:
repent and believe the Good News!

Alleluia!

STM PARISH MASS ON ZOOM—Sunday 27 Sept

Please find below the link for STM Parish **Zoom Mass Sunday 27 September 2020**. Mass commences at 8:00AM. However, you may start logging on to zoom from 7:45AM.

Time: Sep 20, 2020 08:00 AM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

Topic: STM SUNDAY MASS

Time: Sep 27, 2020 08:00 AM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney

Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 434 691 8189

Passcode: 439075

First reading

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel.

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: ‘You object, “What the Lord does is unjust.” Listen, you House of Israel: is what I do unjust? Is it not what you do that is unjust? When the upright man renounces his integrity to commit sin and dies because of this, he dies because of the evil that he himself has committed. When the sinner renounces sin to become law-abiding and honest, he deserves to live. He has chosen to renounce all his previous sins; he shall certainly live; he shall not die.’

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Lord, make me know your ways.

Lord, teach me your paths.

Make me walk in your truth, and teach me:

for you are God my saviour.

Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Remember your mercy, Lord,

and the love you have shown from of old.

Do not remember the sins of my youth.

In your love remember me,

because of your goodness, O Lord.

Remember your mercies, O Lord.

The Lord is good and upright.

He shows the path to those who stray,

He guides the humble in the right path,

He teaches his way to the poor.

Remember your mercies, O Lord.

Second reading

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians.

If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus:

His state was divine,

yet he did not cling

to his equality with God

but emptied himself

to assume the condition of a slave,

and became as men are;

and being as all men are,

he was humbler yet,

even to accepting death,

death on a cross.

But God raised him high

and gave him the name

which is above all other names

so that all beings in the heavens,

on earth and in the underworld,

should bend the knee at the name of Jesus

and that every tongue should acclaim

Jesus Christ as Lord,

to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.



Protecting God's Children Parent Resource

Professional Standards Unit

A Catholic Parent's Guide to Keeping Their Kids Safe

The Archdiocese of Melbourne is pleased to announce the release of the *Protecting God's Children Parent Resource: A Catholic Parent's Guide to Keeping Their Kids Safe*. This protective behaviours resource is aimed at supporting Catholic parents of children aged 5-12 years. The resource helps parents teach children a range of important personal safety skills, supports the development of emotional intelligence skills and promotes a child's understanding of the right to feel safe through engaging activities and storybooks.

Using the concept of "basket fillers", the resource begins by exploring the theme, "God gave all children the right to feel safe at all times" and sequentially builds on:

- children's understanding of safety
- awareness of their feelings and early warning signs
- body awareness
- helping seeking strategies
- empowering children to say no in unsafe situations
- reinforcing the concept of personal space, and
- importantly the theme of "Nothing is so awful that we can't talk with someone about it".

Whilst we maintain that adults are ultimately responsible for maintaining safe environments for children, it is just as important to empower children to recognise when they are feeling unsafe and to tell a trusted adult (or adults) so that action is taken to help them be safe and feel safe. As children's first and most enduring educators, parents are best placed to begin conversations with their children in an age and developmentally appropriate way. Building on the parental bond established through trust and love, these conversations model for them that it is okay to "talk about anything" and that we are approachable and "we will listen".

Developed by Andrea Musulin (Director of Safeguarding, Catholic Archdiocese of Perth), this resource has been adapted by our Professional Standards Unit (PSU) for use by families within the Melbourne Archdiocese. We also thank Archbishop Timothy Costelloe SDB (Archbishop of Perth) for making the resource available to us

Building a culture of safety in our parishes

Professional Standards Unit

Across the Archdiocese, parish leadership and safeguarding teams have been working hard to implement safeguarding practices and policies that reinforce the Church's commitment to protecting children and those most vulnerable in the community.

Fr Tony Doran, Parish Priest of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ringwood, says it has required his parishioners to look at every aspect of parish life. 'What we do, how we do it, the spaces in which we do what we do. Now we know where the gaps are in our policies and procedures, so we can begin to address them. We also know where we're doing well.'

Implementing change can often be a slow process, requiring the participation of all in the community.

'We engage with our community, our leaders, and our parishioners about reinforcing our joint commitment to child safety,' says Ewa, a parishioner at St Benedict's in Burwood. 'We also provide the broader community with information about our policies and our procedures, and give them some online helpful resources, and also ask for feedback on our practices.'





Archbishop Commensoli letter to the People and Clergy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne

Dear friends in Christ, As we now welcome the beginnings of easing in COVID-19 Restrictions in Victoria, I would like to take this opportunity to write to you, the Clergy and people of our Archdiocese. It is great news that regional Victoria will, from tonight, move into the Third Step of the Roadmap to reopening, which includes our parishes located outside the metropolitan zone. However, we have a long way to go. The deprivation in sacramental life has been a profound loss for our people. As well as all the other sufferings of the Pandemic, the sense of estrangement from the Eucharist has been a particular struggle for Catholics. The Mass is our primary means of gathering together in faith; it is the source and summit of our Christian life, and its life-giving nourishment and healing is dearly missed. In the midst of this loss, I am grateful to our Priests and Deacons for continuing to serve the faithful, for sharing a sacramental ministry even under strict conditions, and for being alongside our people and their loved ones in times of death and grief. Thank you for your faithfulness. All of us are anxious to open church doors, but I want to emphasise our need to be creative in the ways we do so, especially with the thousands of children who have been waiting for Sacraments of Initiation. Countless Catholic families are awaiting Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation for their children. Adults, too, have longed to be received into the life of the Church. We shall be exploring possibilities such as outdoor liturgies in parish and school settings to facilitate these crucial events of grace and welcome. Throughout the pandemic, I have been advocating directly with the Government, reminding authorities continually of our respectful compliance with each stage of restrictions, and seeking a fair consideration in what is permitted. The Catholic community throughout the pandemic has been constructive and positive. We have, and continue to act in a mature way, caring for the safety and vulnerability of Victorians facing great risk. Thankfully the signs of driving down COVID numbers are looking good at this moment and Catholics join other people of faith in giving thanks for this outcome and working to ensure the steps ahead do not take us backward. Now, it is essential that the Government does not treat faith communities as an afterthought to the opening up of other sectors. Our churches are locations for communities of care and essential service, and must be treated fairly and reasonably. Practically speaking, I have been in discussion with the Premier to thank him for overturning the restriction on spiritual ministry to the sick and the dying, and have assured him that the Catholic Church is able to manage restrictions (including good hygiene, face coverings, social distancing and density requirements). If pubs and restaurants can open, then places of worship should be open under similar conditions and numbers. If case numbers track well, I expect we will see larger outdoor gatherings in regional Victoria become possible over the next few weeks, and proportionate opportunities for gathering in metropolitan Melbourne. I am hopeful that this may occur sometime in October, which would be a deeply welcomed improvement on the current Roadmap indications. If we can open our churches, even for outdoor gatherings, then we should open them. The Deputy Premier and the Multicultural Affairs Minister are conducting discussions this month through the Multifaith Leaders Forum. The Archdiocese will be contributing to these meetings. In addition I will continue to engage with the Premier and Ministers directly on the Church's need for opening doors, carefully and safely. Be assured of my ongoing closeness in prayer and concern. I have heard your cry, and I am working to bring your voice to the authorities. The Lord has promised he will be with us always; let us place our hope in Him. With every grace and blessing, I remain, Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus

Social Services Sunday, 20th September – a time to reflect and give thanks

On 20th September 2020, we mark Social Services Sunday within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. On this day we are invited to give thanks and pray for all who stand with and provide support to those who are marginalised and vulnerable within our communities. We recognise with deep gratitude, those working within Catholic Social Services Victoria's 45 member organisations, the 7,000 staff and 17,000 volunteers, who together, serve more than 200,000 people in need each year. We also give thanks for all in our parishes, who are so often at the forefront of providing practical support and care to those in need within their local communities, and beyond. We call to mind the 2020/21 Social Justice Statement brought out recently by the Australian Catholic bishops, *To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today*, and so draw your attention to a recent event hosted by CSSV, *Counselling and Therapeutic Support in a Time of COVID*, which provided an opportunity to become more familiar with mental health services, and how to practically reach out for or point to assistance.

Prayer for Courage and Compassion

Compassionate God,

Your unconditional love for all

inspires our hearts and empowers our actions

for those who are most vulnerable.

May we boldly and humbly serve one another

and be steadfast in our work for justice for all people.

Keep our hearts open to the joys and the hopes of our world,

and our ears ready to hear your call

to truth, justice and reconciliation.

Let us continue to draw inspiration and strength

from those, like St Mary MacKillop,

on whose shoulders we stand.

We gather in Jesus' name

to be nourished and to move forward together

in hope and joy.

Amen

This prayer was the 2020 National Catholic Social Services Conference prayer held in February 2020 in Melbourne. The Conference was convened by Catholic Social Services Victoria and Catholic Social Services Australia.

Homily

The scriptural texts for this Sunday tell us that God's ways are not our ways. ...God's generosity serves as a model for our dealings with the people we meet and interact with during the course of our life.

Some people believe that today's Gospel account addresses the issue of injustice in the society. However, this is not the primary message that Jesus wants to convey through the parable about the generous owner of the vineyard. We need to understand that there is no violation of justice in the parable that Jesus tells us about in today's Gospel. The owner of the vine yard entered into a mutual agreement with the first group of labourers for one denarius a day (this is a standard wage). At the end of the day, Jesus does honour the contract and pays the first group of labourers the amount as agreed too. There is no injustice done (it is purely the first group of labourers' wishful thought that they would be paid more than the agreed wage when they heard about the generous wage the owner of the vineyard pays the last group of labourers). The matter of justice or injustice is certainly not the main point of the Gospel that the Church presents to us on this Sunday.

If Jesus does not make use of the parable to address the issue of injustice- what is it that Jesus wants to say to us through this thought provoking parable? The parable is about God's mercy and generosity for all people especially the poor and the under privileged. The eleventh-hour labourers were not idles. They have no employment because no employer wants to give them a job. Those of us who run a business would know that often employers would select the best of the applicants or the applicant that would be most beneficial to their company, and turn away the others... The eleventh-hour labourers are the unsuccessful applicants looking for jobs – they are the second or third preference. Therefore, these people have no other choice than to wait patiently and hoping that some employers would give them a fairer consideration. Fortunately, the generous and compassionate owner of the vineyard sympathises with their situation and offered them work in his vineyard. The owner of the vineyard chooses to pay the eleventh –hour labourers a day wage (one denarius) even though they only worked for few hours. The vineyard owner knows that these men do rely greatly on this money to provide for their family.

It is out of his generosity, mercy and compassion that the owner of the vineyard taking in the eleventh - hour workers when many other employers wouldn't. This is the example of the kindness, generosity and mercy God has in dealing with his people. Cardinal Francis Thuan says that one of the defects of Jesus is that he does not know maths or [economy]. I can only add to the Cardinal's comment by saying that - oh happy defect of Jesus!! Jesus is not calculative in his love, mercy and compassion for us. Could we say the same thing about our love and commitment to God and to one another??? Dear friends, God's generosity and mercy serve as a model for our dealings with others. Our world, society, and home could be much happier places if each one of us imitates the generosity and mercy of God – our loving Father!

On this weekend let us pray that we too are generous and merciful in our dealing with the people around us.