



# ST JOSEPH'S MALVERN *stepping out in faith and trust*

UNDER THE CARE OF THE VICENTIAN COMMUNITY

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## 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER YEAR A 26th April 2020



### GOSPEL:

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke  
*They recognised him at the breaking of the bread.*

Two of the disciples of Jesus were on their way to a village called Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem, and they were talking together about all that had happened. Now as they talked this over, Jesus himself came up and walked by their side; but something prevented them from recognising him. He said to them, 'What matters are you discussing as you walk along?' They stopped short, their faces downcast.

Then one of them, called Cleopas, answered him, 'You must be the only person staying in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have been happening there these last few days.' 'What things?' he asked. 'All about Jesus of Nazareth' they answered 'who proved he was a great prophet by the things he said and did in the sight of God and of the whole people; and how our chief priests and our leaders handed him over to be sentenced to death, and had him crucified. Our own hope had been that he would be the one to set Israel free. And this is not all: two whole days have gone by since it all happened; and some women from our group have astounded us: they went to the tomb in the early morning, and when they did not find the body, they came back to tell us they had seen a vision of angels who declared he was alive. Some of our friends went to the tomb and found everything exactly as the women had reported, but of him they saw nothing.'

### ST JOSEPH'S IS A CHILD SAFE PARISH

*At St Joseph's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our parish.*

Then he said to them, 'You foolish men! So slow to believe the full message of the prophets! Was it not ordained that the Christ should suffer and so enter into his glory?' Then, starting with Moses and going through all the prophets, he explained to them the passages throughout the scriptures that were about himself.

When they drew near to the village to which they were going, he made as if to go on; but they pressed him to stay with them. 'It is nearly evening' they said 'and the day is almost over.' So he went in to stay with them. Now while he was with them at table, he took the bread and said the blessing; then he broke it and handed it to them. And their eyes were opened and they recognised him; but he had vanished from their sight. Then they said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us as he talked to us on the road and explained the scriptures to us?'

They set out that instant and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven assembled together with their companions, who said to them, 'Yes, it is true. The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon.' Then they told their story of what had happened on the road and how they had recognised him at the breaking of bread.

## **FR ALAN'S REFLECTION**

### **RECOGNITION**

As a child one of the shows I enjoyed was the Cartoon Adventures of Superman. What always puzzled me at the time was why Lois Lane and Jimmy Olsen, the two people closest to him, were unable to recognize that Superman and Clark Kent were one and the same person. Even though I was young it occurred to me that wearing glasses was not a very convincing disguise. It now occurs to me that their inability to recognize his true identity was a result of their preconceived ideas of how Superman operated. Superman was someone who was always powerful and never vulnerable. He could not possibly be present in meek, mild mannered reporter Clark Kent.

In this Sunday's Gospel we hear about two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus. Jesus comes alongside of them and begins to walk with them. However, they are unable to recognize him. This was because the events of those past few days had not happened as they had expected. They had thought Jesus would be the one to set Israel free. That is what a Messiah does. They are always powerful. A Messiah does not die on a cross as a vulnerable Suffering Servant. As a result, they considered their trust in Jesus as Messiah as being misplaced and had dismissed it all. Their preconceived ideas had blocked them from taking into account how God works. This was why they could not recognize Jesus.

What we learn from this is that God's ways are not our ways. What we might be consider as failure may simply be a steppingstone to something greater. This was what the two disciples eventually came to understand as Jesus revealed himself through the scriptures and in the breaking of the bread. They discovered his true identity. Just as Jesus walked with the two disciples on that day, he walks with us every day of our lives. Do we recognize him in the

people we encounter and the events that take place in our lives? Do we have the capacity to still recognize him even when things don't happen as we expect? When we are tempted to allow things like busyness, worry, doubt, confusion and fear to block our vision let us pray that, just like the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, our eyes will be open so that we can recognize that Jesus is still present with us.

## **MESSAGE FROM FR ALAN**



I hope this finds everyone well and having a good week. Firstly, thank you to those who have telephoned to find out how I am going. I am going well. The combination of writing reflections, telephone conversations and having zoom meetings is keeping me occupied. Secondly, thank you to those who have dropped by with some 'comfort food' over these past few days. I am managing well with meals but these little gifts have been appreciated just the same. Last Tuesday night I met with the School Board of St Joseph's Primary School where I had the opportunity to find out how our Parish School is managing at this time. The teachers have done a great job with the online learning and the feedback from parents has been positive. My thoughts and prayers are currently with the parents who are supervising their children's education whilst having to continue to meet all the demands that their own employment entails. I would like to draw your attention to the *'Praise Song for the Pandemic'* on our Parish Website this week. It is a real psalm of praise for all the good that is presently happening in our communities and once again points us to hope.

Finally, please let me know if there is something either I or the Parish Staff can do for you.

**Fr. Alan**

### **POSTPONED EVENTS FOR 2020**

**Due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 the following events are postponed until further notice:**

Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> May      Hot Button Issue on Sustainability

Parish Sacramental Programmes (Confirmation, Reconciliation and Communion)

When current restrictions are lifted a review will take place to see what is possible for this year.

### **CANCELLED EVENTS FOR 2020**

**Due to the Coronavirus COVID-19 the following events are cancelled for this year:**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> June      Baptism Family Mass

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> July      St Joseph's Support Group Music Soiree

At this stage, the plan is to look at possible dates for 2021 later this year. These are great events that the parish wants to put back on the calendar as soon as it is possible to do so.

### **PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES OR ENVELOPES**

Thank you to everyone who have returned either Project Compassion Boxes or Envelopes to the Parish Office. If anyone still needs to return theirs, this can be done by placing it in the mail slot which is located beside the Presbytery front door. Parishioners bringing back Project Compassion Boxes are requested to crush them and place them in an envelope so that they will fit through the mail slot.

Receipts will be issued, where requested, as soon as possible.

**Monday 27th April 2020**

**Readings: Acts 6:8-15; John 6:22-29**

## **GREATNESS**

Pope Benedict XVI in his encyclical letter *Spe Salvi*, stated: 'Man was created for greatness—for God himself; he was created to be filled by God. But his heart is too small for the greatness to which it is destined. It must be stretched...'

The greatness that he is referring has nothing to do with success, or money or fame or even starting a great Catholic initiative – it is God himself. This means we are called to allow God to stretch our hearts beyond self-absorption so that our lives give authentic witness to him.

This is what Jesus meant in our Gospel today when he says, "Do not work for food that cannot last, but work for the food that endures to eternal life." One person who allowed his heart to be stretched was St Stephen in our First Reading today. He understood that only God could satisfy his deepest hunger. As a result, God was able to fill him with his grace and his power. It is only when we believe in the one whom he has sent and allow him to stretch our hearts does greatness become possible in our lives.



**Tuesday 28th April 2020 (Feast of St Peter Chanel)**

**Readings: Acts 7:51-8:1; John 6:30-35**

## **TRUE BREAD**

### *John 6:30-35*

*Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.*

The manna that the Israelites ate in the desert was not the authentic bread from heaven, but rather an anticipated image of it which was fulfilled when God sent his only Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ into the world.

In the gospel today Jesus meets people who demonstrate their lack of faith by asking 'What sign will you give to show us that we should believe in you? What work will you do?' They failed to recognise the gift that God was offering them.

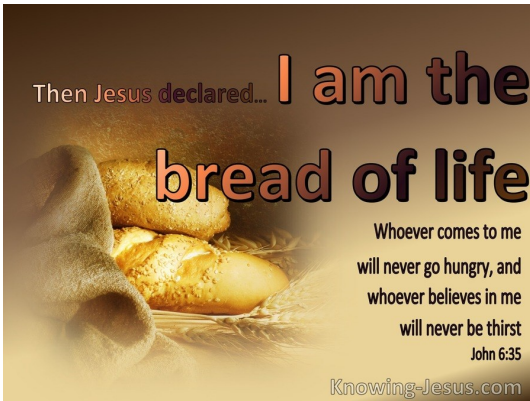
A group of people who have recognized this gift are the Martyrs in our Church. An early martyr just after the time of Jesus was St. Stephen. He died because he understood what God was offering. While giving witness to this he challenged the scribes and the elders on their lack of faith. Instead of looking to God they were looking to other means of satisfying their yearnings. Their stubbornness had blinded them to what God had wanted of them. Another who understood that only God could satisfy the deepest hunger of his heart was St Peter Chanel (1803-1841). He was a Marist Priest, born in France, who went to the island of Futuna in the Pacific to give witness to the people there. Like St Stephen he was martyred in the process.

The message that Jesus gives here is confronting to anyone who wants to settle for a comfortable religion that is tailor made just for them. The Martyrs remind us that our faith calls us to greatness. Let us ask Jesus to give us that bread always.

**Wednesday 29th April 2020 (Feast of St Catherine of Sienna)**

**Readings: Acts 8:1-8; John 6:35-40**

**GIVING**



In today's Gospel Jesus presents Himself as the bread of life. He was addressing the Jews who were seeking refuge to their situation of poverty, slavery to sin, enslavement to the Romans, and political turmoil. Jesus was trying to get them to understand it was not about what they get. Rather it was about what they were prepared to give for it is in giving that the deepest hunger of the human heart can be satisfied.

Today we celebrate the Feast Day of St Catherine of Sienna (1347 -1380). She was a Saint who burned with love for God and her neighbour. This motivated her to play her role in bringing peace and harmony between cities and do much for the renewal of religious life.

Jesus is our bread of life. Saints like St Catherine of Sienna realized and proclaimed this in and with their lives. Do we believe that God can satisfy the deepest hunger of our heart? In what way can we give to God today? St. Theresa of Calcutta proclaimed, "Give us Jesus, only Jesus, always Jesus."

**Thursday 30th April 2020**

**Readings: Acts 8:26-40; John 6:44-51**

**DESIRE TO LEARN**

Over the past 12 months in the parish I have had two candidates ask me to be received into the Catholic Church. One was received just before Christmas. The other has nearly completed their preparations and is waiting to be received into the Church as soon as the lockdown restrictions are lifted. In both cases I have been struck by their willingness to learn. It is clear that their approach to me was motivated by an invitation from God.

In today's First Reading we hear about Philip encountering an Ethiopian on the road from Jerusalem down to Gaza. This Ethiopian man was reading the prophet Isaiah. He was anxious to learn from someone who was willing to guide him. Philip obliged by explaining the Good News to him.

From our own experience we know that faith is a gift. It is something we do not initiate on our own. The invitation comes from God. When we respond positively in our desire to grow in relationship with him, we deepen and strengthen our faith.

Quite often the reason people decide to return to the Church is that someone invited them. I believe that there are people out there in our community who desire to know more about God. However, like the eunuch they do not have anyone to guide them. That is where we come in. Perhaps we are shy about doing this. I am not talking about a hard-sell because that usually only manages to turn people off. What I am talking about is looking for opportunities to gently invite others to join us in our faith journey.

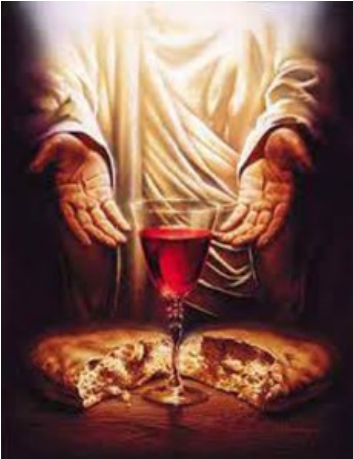


The Ethiopian man in the First Reading was both a foreigner and a eunuch. At that time this was considered a double blemish. What this demonstrates is that there is nobody that God does not invite. It is not our background that matters most to God. It is simply a desire to learn and accept the invitation by Jesus to come to the Father through him.

### **Friday 1st May 2020 (Feast of St Joseph the Worker)**

**Readings: Acts 9:1-20; John 6:52-59**

#### **UNIVERSAL INVITATION**



Like yesterday, today's First Reading shows that God invites everyone to faith. Saul was invited to come to faith even though he had been a zealous persecutor of it.

In today's Gospel Jesus invites all to the paschal mystery. The First reading tells us that once Saul allowed himself to be led the scales fell from his eyes. When we accept Jesus' invitation to come to him and embrace the paschal mystery of his death and resurrection then we too will see more clearly what it is God is asking of us. The story of Saul shows us that God invites all to share his life and mission. All we need to do is allow ourselves to be led.

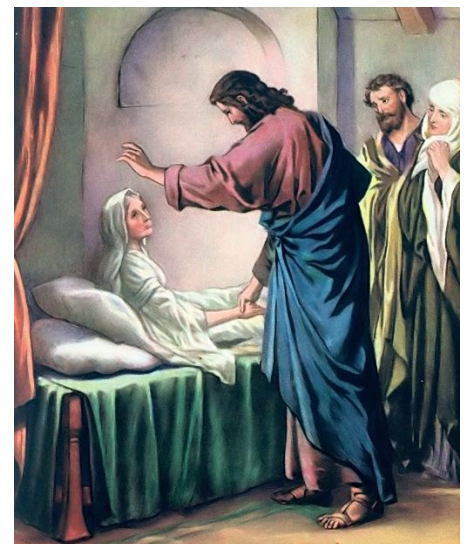
### **Saturday 2nd May 2020 (Feast of St Athanasius)**

**Readings: Acts 9:31-42; John 6:60-69**

#### **GLORIFYING GOD**

10 years ago, I heard an aspiring young actor speak about his career. He spoke of his dream of being able to win an Academy Award one day. However, he also spoke about only wanting to take on those roles that glorify God. These words struck a chord with me as we live in a world which largely promotes self-fulfillment and self-satisfaction. In pointing to God this young actor was pointing to something greater.

In today's First Reading we hear how Peter raises Tabitha to life. Peter understood that it was not by his own power that he was able to do this. He knew that the purpose of this healing was so that God may be glorified. Rather than promoting himself, Peter took the opportunity to point the crowd to something greater.



The trap we can fall into our relationship with God is starting to take an attitude what is God doing for me? What am I getting out of this relationship? Instead we should be constantly focused on what can I give to God? This is expressed well in the psalm for today when we hear the words, 'How can I repay the Lord for his goodness to me?' God's giving is evident in the Gospel where Jesus tells us that he is the Bread of Life. In these words, he is offering us eternal life. This gift cannot be matched by anything or anyone else. Why would we want to go anywhere else? Jesus allowed people to walk away from him because the choice must be a free one. Hopefully our choice will be one of gratitude so much so that we want to spend our lives glorifying God.



# Plenary Council 2020

Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

## PLENARY COUNCIL UPDATE

### Plenary Council Postponed

As you no doubt would have heard by now the first session of the Plenary Council in October 2020 has been postponed due to the ongoing Covid 19 situation. This has made it difficult to plan for and run the discernment and formation sessions for the delegates, which were an important part of the preparations. **So, the Australian bishops will consider proposals for an alternative timeline at their bi-annual meeting in May.** It may be that both will be held next year - one is already down to be held in May 2021 - or one next year and the second in 2022. We'll know next month.

### The Victorian Delegates to the Plenary Council

Among the **15 delegates from Victoria** some might be familiar to us. These include **Nimmi Candappa** who preached at the 10.00am Mass last year, **Fr Joe Caddy**, the Vicar-General, who resides at East St Kilda parish and is on the board of Cabrini Hospital, and **Fr Brendan Hayes** who is the parish priest of Toorak/Armadale and Episcopal Vicar for the Southern Region.

**Here's the full list:** Archbishop Comensoli, Fr Joe Caddy, Ms Nimmi Candappa, Mrs Vivian Alamo, Mr Jonathan Anthony, Sr Michelle Sue Yuen Goh, Bishop Mark Edwards, Bishop Terry Curtin, Mons Tony Ireland, Fr Anthony Kerin, Fr Brendan Hayes, Fr Ciril Bozic, Fr Denis Stanley, Fr Kevin Lenehan, Fr Cameron Forbes.

# ST JOSEPH'S PARISH—Mass Times



## Weekend Masses

Saturday Vigil—NO MASS  
Sunday—NO MASS

## Weekday Masses

Monday—NO MASS  
Tuesday—NO MASS  
Wednesday—NO MASS  
Thursday—NO MASS  
Friday—NO MASS

## Reconciliation

by appointment only

## PLEASE NOTE!!

*Mass Intentions are still being taken and said by Fr Alan each morning at a private Mass.*



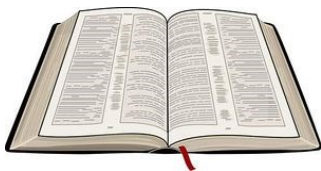
Parish Office is closed until further notice.  
Please ring, 9401 6391 before you stop by to make sure there is someone in attendance.

## CLOSURE OF CHURCH UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

Due to the increased restrictions announced by the Government, it is with much regret that the Church needs to close indefinitely. Unfortunately this means personal visits to the Church are not permitted until further notice.

## 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)

**FIRST READING:** Acts 2:14.22-33  
**SECOND READING:** 1 Peter 1:17-21  
**GOSPEL:** Luke 24:13-35



### Next Sunday's Readings

4th SUNDAY OF EASTER (A)  
Acts 2:14.36-41  
1 Peter 2:20-25  
John 10:14



## PLEASE PRAY FOR:



### BAPTISM:

**THE SICK:** John & Marie Horan, Mim Nerlich, Barbara Westcott, Janet Murphy, Mal Logan, Anne Peric, Br Paul Smith fsc

### RECENTLY DECEASED:

### ANNIVERSARIES:

Donald Earl, Guido De Chellis

## MASS INTENTIONS

26th April	Deceased Australian Diggers (dec)
28th April	
29th April	Donald Earl (an)
30th April	
1st May	
2nd May	Guido De Chellis (an)

If you are wanting to book a Mass Intention, please call the Parish Office on 8508 7200 or [info@stjosephsmalvern.org.au](mailto:info@stjosephsmalvern.org.au)

## Acknowledgement of Country

*We acknowledge that we are meeting on the traditional land of the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri people and offer our respects to the elders past, present and future. We recognise and respect the cultural heritage of this land.*