

Monty & Eltham

The Catholic Parishes of
St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians



We acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respect to the elders past, present and emerging of the Kulin Nation.

Homily - Fr Terry

In these COVID-19 days many of us are making time to walk, to exercise and find some time to step out from our isolation and catch a glimpse of life on the streets or in the parks.

In one of my recent walks I passed a young Mum wheeling a pram with her baby inside, tucked up in blankets. I paused to look at the baby and then to look at the Mum. She had a wonderful smile on her face, acknowledging that I had stopped to look at her beautiful baby and she was so proud. Not a word we said to one another but in another way a profound moment of recognition.

So today, Mother's Day, let's think of that young Mum, and for that matter all Mums, acknowledging and recognising the beautiful gift of love they are in our lives.

Many of us will be able to celebrate Mother's Day with our Mums. Families, even though there can be no gatherings, can still find ways of celebrating today.

For many others of us, Mother's Day will be a hard day. How many Mothers will not see their children or their grandchildren? Zoom Meetings, Face-Time, Houseparty can help some meeting from afar, but not the same as being there with a hug.

For some of us Mother's Day is always a difficult day, especially for mothers who feel they have failed in some ways as a mother, or for that matter those sons and daughters who have a troubled relationship with their mothers. There will be some mothers who will not hear from their children today and it's not because of coronavirus. We hold all of you in our prayers this day.

For many of us, our Mothers have died and we honour them in memory with much appreciation. We can find ourselves today thinking back on precious times shared with our Mothers and today is such a good opportunity to dwell on these times and ponder their significance in our lives.

I think back to that young Mum wheeling her pram with her beautiful child snuggled up in blankets. She is young, and hopefully she will be a great Mum. How life will work its way, who knows. In a way for her, as for any Mum, the way of mothering is a learning, frustrating, worrying, understanding, loving pathway and it is sure challenging. Ask any mother.

For that matter for all of us, life is a journey, a discovering, a finding a way through all sorts of experiences. Sometimes these experiences are wonderful but sometimes they can throw us into confusion, doubt, anger, grief and we lose heart and even faith in ourselves.



Today's Gospel has something to say about all this. It would seem that the disciples of Jesus were confused. They didn't know the way ahead of them. They had put their faith in Jesus and it wasn't working out the way they had anticipated.

Does Jesus give them a blueprint of what will happen? Not at all. He says 'I am the way, the truth and the life'. Jesus is asking the disciples to continue to put their faith in him, to trust him and take the risk of following him.

This same Jesus is with us today saying to us, 'I am the way, the truth and the life.' It's like whatever happens in our lives, and some of this is within our control and much of it isn't, we are in faith to believe in the Risen Jesus leading us, calling on us to trust him and to follow him.

That's the journey. We make our way in faith and love without always knowing where life will take us, and ultimately when it comes our time to let go of this life, we are to surrender into the loving arms of God of life.

That's the Easter story.

This parish has a commitment to ensuring the safety of children and vulnerable people in our community.

For more information visit www.sfxmonty.org

We support the recommendations of the Royal Commission into institutional abuse and pray for all the survivors.



PARISH TEAM & INFORMATION

OUR PEOPLE & OUR CONTACT DETAILS



Parish Priests

Terry Kean - Pastor in Solidum

terry.kean@cam.org.au

Michael Sierakowski - Moderator

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montmorency@cam.org.au

Gina Ang: Pastoral Worker & Caring Group Co-Ord

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Website:

www.sfxmonty.org

www.cam.org.au/montmorency

www.olhc.info

www.cam.org.au/eltham

Facebook:

St Francis Xavier Parish Montmorency

Monty & Eltham Newsletter & Facebook items:

eltham@cam.org.au

Schools

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Principal: Mr Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Mr Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Principal: Mr Chris Ray: 9439 7824

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Rosters - 16 & 17 May	
<i>Montmorency</i>	
Davidson, John	PRYR
<i>Eltham</i>	
Reardon, Kathy	Altar Society
Rigg Family	Pilgrim Rosary Statue
Scully, Helen	Altar Society



Let us pray for all those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith ...

Montmorency

For the recently deceased;

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

Warren Beaton, Betty Frape, Rita Fraser, Cath Molin

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Baby Kylie, Sriyani Algama, Nikki Attwood, Justine Best, Kristina Brazaitis, Desmond Deehan, Renee Eastwood, Debbie Edgley, Julian Forrester, Gennie Hannon, Samuel Hauser (Kyabram), Colleen Hussin, Jim Hussin, Tina Inserra, Adrian Jones, Pat Longton, Erin McLindon, Hasti Momeni, Therese Moore, Patricia Mulholland, Montagna Mustica, Graham Neal, Geoffrey Nyssen, Mercy Ocon, Ron Pfeil, Susan Phelan, Andrew Pighin, Terry Said, Anthony Salvatore, Mary Salvatore, Maria Schroeders, Jeanette Steward, John Tobin, Aldo Viapiana, Sheryn Zurzolo.

Eltham

For the recently deceased;

For those whose anniversaries are at this time;

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Robyn Atherton, Baby Harriet Banks, Albina Croce, Jon D'Cruz, Claire Dakwar, Ruth Decker, Fay Dobson, Jeanette Jenkins, Maureen Jenkins, Baby Finley McPartlin, Simone Owen, Jo Porter, Sally Price, Paul Rushbrook.

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House 9435 2178 or eltham@cam.org.au.



<https://bit.ly/2WbsWtm>

RECONCILIATION

Saturday, 10:30am Monty ~ Terry
1/2 hr prior to any mass said by Michael

Collections last weekend: 3 May 2020		
Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
Eltham	\$280.00	\$210.00
Montmorency	\$420.00	\$235.00
Please note the above figures are monies banked & do not include visa/mastercard or direct debits. Thank you so much for your contributions.		

As The Tablet's foreign correspondents report from Latin America and Africa, some of the poorest communities in the world are caught between the risk of catching a potentially deadly virus on the streets or staying at home and dying of hunger.

Urban poor endure hunger and oppression during lockdown

"The big issue of the coronavirus in Latin America is hunger," Clare Dixon, the head of Cafod's Latin America department, explains. "Of course it's a health crisis but it is also a social catastrophe - one of hunger, and also human rights, inequality and violence against women."

In the last week of April there was "a worrying increase" in cases of Covid-19 in Latin America, according to Dr Carissa F. Etienne, director of the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO). PAHO's deputy director, Dr Jarbas Barbosa, said Latin America was like Europe six weeks ago.

Brazil, with 212 million people the most populous country on the continent, not surprisingly has the largest number of cases. Baltimore's Johns Hopkins University on 2 May estimated it has 97,000 cases with 7,100 deaths. In relative terms, Brazil's pandemic is less severe than those in Peru, Ecuador or indeed the United Kingdom, but the sight of trenches being dug in cemeteries to accommodate rows of coffins has horrified Brazilians.

The greatest death tolls have been in the two largest metropolitan centres of Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, both of which have densely populated shanty towns or *favelas*. The Brazilian situation has been complicated by the attitude of the President, Jair Bolsonaro, who initially dismissed the virus as "a touch of flu" and when asked about the mounting death toll, said: "So what?"

In Buenos Aires, the capital of **Argentina**, officials last weekend confirmed 124 cases of Covid-19 in the shanty towns of the city, which are known of *villas*. Gustavo Carrara, the episcopal vicar of the *villas* and an auxiliary bishop in Buenos Aires, said in an interview: "The need for food is what has been most strongly felt. And the solidarity of neighbours, especially women, who have taken on a big role in soup kitchens to distribute as much food as possible."

Draconian clampdowns in **El Salvador** and **Guatemala** mean that people are allowed out only once a week to buy food but, they have told Dixon, "they would rather risk catching the virus on the streets and earn an income than die of hunger". Social distancing is difficult where several generations of the same family live in one or two rooms. "The urban poor are suffering the worst impacts of the virus through hunger and in many countries, such as **Colombia** and **Bolivia**, the crisis has brought human rights abuses", says Dixon.

The archbishop emeritus of Caracas, **Venezuela**, Cardinal Jorge Urosa Savino, pointed out that "informal" workers are "barely surviving," and only with "the help of family members, social organisations and the Church". In **Nicaragua**, rather than encouraging social isolation, the government of Daniel Ortega called for mass celebrations during Holy Week. It keeps tight control of testing, and banned the Bishop of Matagalpa from setting up medical advice centres in his diocese. No one believes the official figures of 14 cases and three deaths.

Peru, with an estimated 43,000 cases, has been praised for the government's financial support to businesses and individuals. Nevertheless, "people are heading away from Lima for their home towns in the interior of Peru out of sheer desperation", reports Columban missionary Fr Ed O'Connell.

"No jobs, no money for food and accommodation, their only option is to walk home, up or down the desert coast roads going north or south of the capital, or up the central highway to the Andes mountains and some from there on down to the jungle to places like Tarapoto. The first group started off for Junin and Huancavelica up the central highway, the next along the coast road, going north to Piura and some inland to Cajamarca. Now there are numerous groups on the move."

Mexico's President, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, has tended to emphasis keeping the economy going. The country has an estimated 22,000 cases. The situation in **Ecuador** with a population of more than 17 million but with 27,000

cases and 1,400 deaths, worries many observers, especially as the government ended the official lockdown as from 4 May. In Ecuador, as in Peru, there is fear for the indigenous populations of the Amazon, where deaths are beginning to occur.

In **Africa**, too, people wanted to follow social distancing guidelines but meeting basic needs was their priority. Fr Andrew Wanjohi, the priest in charge of Korogocho, a parish in a Nairobi slum in **Kenya**, told *The Tablet*: "They wake up in the morning and move out in search of daily bread. Earning the daily bread is bigger for them than the guidelines." Fr Wanjohi added: "If the disease strikes, I fear a big tragedy. It would move like wildfire."

The number of recorded cases and deaths remains low in the slums in Kenya's capital, but cases are rising in the low-income areas of Kawangware and Eastleigh. "If distancing becomes the only solution for Covid-19, people may be under a death sentence," said Fr Javier Gonzalez, the priest in charge of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Kibera. At least 2 million people live in slums like Kibera. According to Fr Gonzalez, it is not a Covid-19 hotspot yet, but there have been credible rumours that it is "highly contaminated".

In **Zimbabwe**, the government has sent in the army to enforce a lockdown but, according to Jesuit Fr Brian MacGarry, "forcing people working in the informal sector to stay at home means condemning them to death and I fear there will be riots to which law enforcement agencies will respond with violence".

Archbishop Robert Ndllovu of Harare said that 55 Catholic health institutions have been offered to the government "in the fight against the pandemic". In Bulawayo, drought has depleted reservoirs and some neighbourhoods face months of being cut off from the municipal water supply. Regular washing of hands is impossible in a city of 2 million people.

Reporting by Francis McDonagh, Fredrick Nzwili, Martha Pskowski and Ellen Teague.

Well alone

While loneliness is harmful, solitude brings many benefits
Sarah Anderson

A History of Solitude David Vincent (Polity Press, 304 pp.)

Seldom can a book have been published at such an opportune time. During this period of lockdown, many of us have been thrust into a solitude that perhaps we hadn't really considered before - although astonishingly over eight million of us in the UK live alone. We hear a lot about loneliness, we even have the world's first "Minister for Loneliness", appointed in 2017, with London dubbed "the loneliness capital of the world". But we hear far less about the consequences of solitude - very different from loneliness, and mostly good. David Vincent borrows a description of loneliness as "failed solitude", indicating that solitude is something positive.

Vincent's exploration into the differences between solitude and loneliness, and his examination of the many solitary occupations, both outdoor and indoor, make for a fascinating and very readable book. Added to that, he weaves together historical and literary research. Wordsworth probably walked around 180,000 mostly solitary miles during his lifetime.

Vincent traces the history of solitude from the eighteenth century, with only a passing reference to anything that came before. And of course there were many solitary figures who predated this - among them the Desert Fathers of the third century AD, Meister Eckhart in the fourteenth century, the sixteenth-century Spanish mystics and all the solitaries from Eastern spiritual traditions.

In the late eighteenth century the Swiss doctor Johann Georg Zimmermann, physician to George III and Frederick the Great, published a very successful book, *Solitude Considered*, in which he attempted to balance the "comforts and blessings of Society" with the "advantages of Seclusion". Zimmermann had no time for Christians who aimed for a silent, personal communion with God in solitude, but Vincent does discuss monastic life and the renewed interest nowadays in meditation and mindfulness. Yet, while he writes about Thomas Merton and the success of his autobiography *Elected Silence* (*The Seven Storey Mountain* in the



US), there is very little about other forms of meditation and retreats.

Walking, now often a leisure pastime, was an essential, mostly solitary, pursuit well into the nineteenth century. Many people had no option other than to walk to work, or to school, and great distances were covered. But walking was also a means of escaping from people and frequently overcrowded living conditions. Both Robert Louis Stevenson and G.M. Trevelyan insisted that, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be undertaken alone, since by being alone you could be free; and for someone like John Clare, solitary walking enabled a better appreciation of the beauty of natural surroundings.

In the 1870s and 1880s fishing became, and has remained, the great solitary sport, and indoor activities such as playing patience, doing jigsaws, reading, crossword puzzles, collecting stamps or doing needlework were all enjoyed alone, although maybe in the presence of others, often with the desire to escape from social interaction. Vincent considers the Sony Walkman, launched in 1979, a truly innovative appliance - for the first time it was possible to personalise music and to listen to it both indoors and out. It was a forerunner of the iPhone - another personal way of listening to music and something we now all take for granted.

Sailing, and especially solo round-the-world sailing, is a definite bid for solitude. However, most long-

distance sailors have not been given to much introspection - Bernard Moitessier being an exception. Most survived their months alone at sea relatively sane, with Donald Crowhurst, who committed suicide, another exception.

Although there is much to be gained from solitude, the history of solitary confinement shows that there is much that is negative. There are currently around 80,000 inmates in solitary confinement in the US. Those who fare best in solitary are, not surprisingly, those who are educated - these are often political prisoners who have a sense of purpose. Some prisoners go as far as to say that being in solitary was the only time that they had felt truly free, and that during their incarceration they gained a sense of inner empowerment.

Loneliness as a health risk is said to be on a par with obesity and smoking, and to put sufferers at a greater risk of coronary heart disease and stroke, depression, cognitive decline and Alzheimer's. And some of the descriptions that Vincent gives sound truly desperate: "I get so lonely, I could fill up the teapot with tears". Some elderly have no significant human contact at all, and the poor suffer most, often not having access to the Internet. During lockdown, with libraries closed, some no longer have access to books, probably more important now than ever before.

One wonders what the outcome of our current crisis will be. How many people will be able to convert the loneliness they might be feeling into a more positive solitude? This is partly a matter of free will, but also of circumstance and education. It's a very different matter being confined in a big house with a garden from being in a one-bedroomed high-rise. And it could also be harder for young people, who think the present will never end, while older people know that it will.

Reading Vincent's book, I kept unconsciously substituting the word "silence" where he had written solitude. Silence is the subject of the book that I am writing (what better time?) - and often the words are interchangeable. But of course you can be in physical solitude yet surrounded by noise. Silence is harder to find. Does it even really exist? The Tablet

May - The month of Mary, Mother of God

Every year during the month of May, the statue of Mary is brought up to the Altar at Our Lady's in Eltham, and Barbara Bibby leads the rosary on Monday nights throughout the month. This year, sadly the church building is closed, but Barbara would like to invite all of us to join her in reciting the Rosary together at home on Monday nights at 7 pm. She will be reciting the Glorious Mystery, praying for the community. Together we can be united in prayer through the Rosary.

If you would like further clarification, please contact
Gina: 0423 947, or Barbara: 9439 8594.



Letter of His Holiness Pope Francis to the Faithful for the Month of May 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The month of May is approaching, a time when the People of God express with particular intensity their love and devotion for the Blessed Virgin Mary. It is traditional in this month to pray the Rosary at home within the family. The restrictions of the pandemic have made us come to appreciate all the more this “family” aspect, also from a spiritual point of view.

For this reason, I want to encourage everyone to rediscover the beauty of praying the Rosary at home in the month of May. This can be done either as a group or individually; you can decide according to your own situations, making the most of both opportunities. The key to doing this is always simplicity, and it is easy also on the internet to find good models of prayers to follow.

I am also providing two prayers to Our Lady that you can recite at the end of the Rosary, and that I myself will pray in the month of May, in spiritual union with all of you. I include them with this letter so that they are available to everyone.

Dear brothers and sisters, contemplating the face of Christ with the heart of Mary our Mother will make us even more united as a spiritual family and will help us overcome this time of trial. I keep all of you in my prayers, especially those suffering most greatly, and I ask you, please, to pray for me. I thank you, and with great affection I send you my blessing.

FIRST PRAYER

O Mary, You shine continuously on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who, at the foot of the cross, were united with Jesus' suffering, and persevered in your faith. “Protectress of the Roman people”, you know our needs, and we know that you will provide, so that, as at Cana in Galilee, joy and celebration may return after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform ourselves to the will of the Father and to do what Jesus tells us. For he took upon himself our suffering, and burdened himself with our sorrows to bring us, through the cross, to the joy of the Resurrection. Amen.

We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God; Do not despise our petitions in our necessities, but deliver us always from every danger, O Glorious and Blessed Virgin.

SECOND PRAYER

“We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God”.

In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection.

Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment.

Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust.

Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health.

Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone.

Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus.

Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity.

Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future.

Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer.

Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course.

To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

May and Mothers Day

As I put pen to paper - I cannot remember ever linking the Marion Month of May to Mother's Day. Yes, I know that two months in our annual Catholic calendar are always directed to the devotion of Mary (May & October) and I also know that the second Sunday in May is our society's celebration of Mother's Day. I just don't think that I have linked these two important occasions together in a faith context.



Thus, at this time of the year, I would have invited people from the local catholic community at Sunday Masses to share their thoughts and express their love of their mother's (alive or dead) and simply to give thanks for the gift of 'Motherhood'. In my experience these occasions are always uplifting and special for the Catholic community to hear and celebrate! This is often an opportunity for special recognition of mothers doing ordinary things in life - extraordinarily well. And might I say an equal opportunity for those people who are courageous enough to share such intimate stories a public validation of their mothers life. This action and openness builds community and it has been my experience that it is simply a wonderful time to share! (Obviously the same is true for 'Father's Day'.)

My mother was an extraordinary person too, whom I naturally remember fondly at this time and on this occasion, even though her passing was some 15 years ago. As children Maureen, my mum was our family rock! She was very competent in many areas and a no nonsense type of human being with a wicked sense of humour and a tongue that could do a lot of damage from a distance! You always wanted to be on her right side. And always choose her version over dad's! (Poor dad.) Otherwise, the nightly food might not taste as good! Mind you, with 12 children to manage and their friends hanging around too, don't expect Mum to ever get my name right - when calling out to me for help! Mum was hopeless on names! Hospitality was her forte, and the family home was famous for parties and always being open! I can remember, before dinner time - having to take dinner to some local families to enjoy what we were having for dinner too. It never occurred to me that some of these families were in need and finding daily life a little difficult! Helping others in our street or neighbourhood was a given, and no questions were ever asked. Maureen had a practical answer for everyone who asked for her advise, and with so many children, one fostered and one with Downs-syndrome in the mix - mum's wealth of experience and trauma was extensive and often called upon! As a stupid aside, and I don't exactly know why I'm telling you this - but since dad was working at the hotel till late most nights.... mum would get ready for bed on week nights, by putting 'makeup on' and watching Graham Kennedy IMT (in Melbourne tonight) in bed - laughing all the time! That was her sacred time!

My mum was no saint, but of course had many saintly qualities! She died aged 84 at home in the garden after suffering a brain haemorrhage while planting some more flowers - no heart attack for her! She was often quoted: "us Sierakowski's, we don't have heart attacks - we give them!" Mum and Dad were strong faith people and often spoke about every sacred issue under the sun, so funeral information was always included. Thus, when asked by some family members about what type of funeral she might like, mum's response was simple and clear: "I want one with the lot!... I deserve it after having you children." And so we did honour her wishes and gave her back the lot! (That's the least we could do for our Mother.)

As I conclude these simple musings on this weekend Mothers Day, I am reminded that we are in this Marion Month of May, and the strong image that I hold of Mary is similar to that which I hold of my mother! Thanks Mum for being Mary - a practical woman of faith, to me.

Michael

The Catholic Weekly reported on an address by Pope Francis on April 22 for Earth Day 2020.

Here's an excerpt:

"Pope supports children's protests against environmental vandalism.

The Pope expressed his deep appreciation for the many international and local movements and initiatives that have been created in an effort to raise awareness and stir people's consciences and he said it will still be necessary "for our children to take to the streets to teach us the obvious: we have no future if we destroy the very environment that sustains us." "We have failed to care for the earth, our garden-home; we have failed to care for our brothers and sisters. We have sinned against the earth, against our neighbours and ultimately against the Creator, the benevolent father who provides for everyone and desires us to live in communion and flourish together," he said. **"We have no future if we destroy the environment that sustains us"**.

People of many faiths, including Catholics, support School Strike for Climate (SS4C) events. The SS4C movement is run by committed school-age students who are the vulnerable future generation who will inherit the degraded earth that is left to them.

Tip of the week: Search SS4C and ARRCC on the web about their activities on **Friday May 15** for the SS4C rally. Scout around their website or register interest to get updated details about the 4pm national broadcast. Scout around the ARRCC website to get details on the 10am online service which will include speakers and religious leaders from many faiths. And remember, check out laudatosiweek.org if you're interested in Laudato Si week, 16-24 May.



Prayers of the Faithful for 10 May 2020 Fifth Sunday of Easter - Marisa Capuana

Celebrant: Christ calls us his friends and commands us to love one another. Let us show that love by the sincerity of our prayers today.

We pray Lord, for our mothers who put others before their own welfare. May their example of selflessness serve to remind us that as followers of Jesus we should put the welfare of others ahead of our own. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the Church, that we may bring the light of Christ into the dark corners of our society and a message of hope to all who are struggling. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for Pope Francis in his endeavor to be a witness to the Mercy of God, to be a leader in the works of charity and a builder of bridges to the alienated. May his example inspire us to lead Saintly lives, so that we too may lead others to Christ. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray in particular for those suffering from the corona virus and for those caring for them. May their pain be eased through the encouragement and support of their friends and relatives. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Lord, we pray in particular for the health care providers, doctors, specialists, nurses and all medical practitioners who risk their own health for the well-being of the people in their care. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for Christians persecuted around the world: Father strengthen their faith in Jesus, grant them courage in the face of fear, but most of all may they be blessed in Christ who overcomes all evil. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For vocations to the priesthood and religious life. May those called by you to the religious life respond with resolve, generosity and joy. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all those suffering mentally, physically: may they be strengthened through their close friends and relatives. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all parishioners and loved ones who have died, that God will meet them face to face on their journey to eternal life. We pray especially for Warren Beaton, Betty Frape, Rita Fraser & Cath Molin whose anniversaries are at this time. Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Celebrant: Almighty Father, your beloved son has risen from the dead, as he promised us. In peace and joy we present our prayers to you, through the same risen Lord, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

All: Amen.

A MESSAGE FROM (FR.) TERRY

A number of people have been asking if I have retired and will live permanently in Nth Caulfield and not return to the Parish.

The answer is that I'm not retired and I'm very much looking forward to returning to live and work in our two wonderful Parish Communities of Eltham and Montmorency, once it is safe to leave this time of home isolation

In the meantime I am doing what I can to stay in contact through writing a homily each week, through telephone calls and emails, through Zoom and Houseparty Meetings. I hope to be back in person soon.

Much love and peace

Terry



Gospel: John 14:1-12

Jesus said to his disciples:

‘Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father’s house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am now going to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.’

Thomas said, ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?’ Jesus said:

‘I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.’

Philip said, ‘Lord, let us see the Father and then we shall be satisfied.’ ‘Have I been with you all this time, Philip,’ said Jesus to him, ‘and you still do not know me?’

‘To have seen me is to have seen the Father, so how can you say, “Let us see the Father”? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak as from myself: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing this work. You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; believe it on the evidence of this work, if for no other reason.’

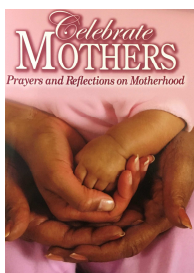
‘I tell you most solemnly, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.’

Reflection

We can thank “doubting Thomas” for the cornerstone of today’s gospel, Jesus’ declaration that he is “the Way, the Truth and the Life”. This and what leads up to it may have a familiar ring for many in the congregation. It’s a text that is often read at funeral services.

It begins with words of assurance for the disciples whom Jesus had just disturbed by speaking about betrayal and denial. From this point on, for four full chapters of the gospel, Jesus opens his heart to them and to the Father. This discourse, unique to the gospel of John, is in the form of a “last testament” from a leader to his followers. After the dialogue between Jesus and Thomas and Philip that we hear today, almost all that follows is a monologue from Jesus.

Part of the appeal of John’s gospel lies in the conversations it records between Jesus and others. These give the gospel a human face. However they can also be disconcerting. Often Jesus’ response to a question is either quite indirect or in the form of a theological pronouncement that only raises more questions. Such is the case when Thomas asks to be shown the way Jesus is going and when Philip asks him to show them the Father. Jesus takes advantage of these pragmatic questions to offer sublime teaching. We must expect the same treatment. **Break Open the Word 2020**



Celebrating Mother’s Day

Watch over us and bless us, Lord, as we share our memories and celebrate this day. Let our mother-child relationship continue to develop and grow into a deep and comforting friendship.

No matter how near or far from each other we may be, let us always treasure and hold on to this magical connection we’ve woven over the years.

Don’t let us ever do anything to sever this bond of love. Keep it strong and caring. Encircle us with your love, Lord, and give each of us the wisdom and guidance we need to pass this love from generation to generation. Amen.



Here’s a reflection from Sandy (Sandringham) parish bulletin:

A parishioner received the words below in a letter from a friend facing great family trauma...

“Naturally everyone is so worried but there is a God and he has blessed our family with strength. Strength isn’t about how much you can handle before you break. It’s about how much you can endure after you have been broken. We never trust our fears - they do not know our strength! Not all dark storms come to disrupt your life, some come to clear the path. With God’s grandest blessings, [name] will enjoy his precious life... Belief in God gives us imperishable hope. Hope is the only thing stronger than fear!”



St Vincent De Paul Scones & gifts for Mother’s Day - YouTube

As parishioners of SFX are aware, the Montmorency conference of SVDP has, for the last two years, been in a community partnership with Lalor Secondary College (LSC) and Catholic Ladies College (CLC) in providing meals to people in need in our local community.

Thanks again to our community partnership with the two schools, we have been able to provide for kids of the families we visit, the ingredients to make some treats for their mums or guardian grandparents. We have given them the pictures and instructions to make Chocolate Coconut Balls and Honey Joys. They also received a potted cyclamen. The Mum’s/Guardian Grandparents were absolutely delighted with this expression of love.

Also this week as part of our tribute to our Mothers, our community partners have again made a video making lemonade and cream scones. Whilst most of us can make scones with varying degrees of success, the video made by Simon and Jade is a loving tribute for Mother’s day. Enjoy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QA5ZjMPVsDE&t=77s>