

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.

How can we help YOU?

Lockdown "Two" of our Coronavirus quarantine is now well underway and I have to say that I find this time more difficult than Lockdown "One" - back in late March till May.

The daily positive COVID-19 numbers seem very disturbingly high in our state of Victoria and the now obligatory wearing of face masks for all is yet another sign that things are getting worse and not better. Surprisingly, some businesses and community activities are thriving during these strange times, while the churches are closed and cold in these winter months.

It is not exactly true to say that we are doing nothing during these difficult days, with the Parish Bulletin available each week (8 pages) and the live-streams of Sunday Mass, plus the 'team' is attempting to keep our office hours available to all.

Terry and I are weekly at the service for small funerals, occasional weddings and only the rare baptism! Mind you, we now have some 45 families waiting for regular baptisms to begin. School sacraments are now lined up into the hundreds, but might have to wait till 2021.

Nothing is normal, and it is truly all very odd - as we live through this World pandemic.

But I would love to ask this question, 'How can we help YOU?'

Is there another way of doing things - being creative, connecting with those in need or who feel emotionally fragile at this time? Do you have some suggestions that might help us all stay connected and be a simple project during the next few weeks? Sometimes just doing things differently can bring out the best in others!

- Did you know - that the parish of St. Francis Xavier is celebrating 55 years since it was opened? And to mark this special occasion I have commissioned an upgrade to the Audio Visual technology in the church to help our many liturgical celebrations! Appropriate Heating and Air Conditioning is next on my list, in line with the upgrades that have now been completed at our parish church in Eltham.
- Did you know - that the catholic community of Montmorency is also celebrating 25 years of the Passionist Family Group Movement? Initially they had planned some special celebrations to mark this milestone, but unfortunately we are unable to gather for this occasion.

Catholic parishes around the world are struggling to support their parishioners at this time, and we know that when this terrible period of time is behind us, that local parishes will be different places into the future! Your contribution is always valued as we move forward.

So, from Terry, Kate, Peter, Gina and myself - we just wanted to reassure you of our continued prayers and support at this time, and thank you for your support of our wonderful Catholic Communities at Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham and St Francis Xavier, Montmorency.

Michael

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

For more information visit pol.org.au/eltham or pol.org.au/montmorency.

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

michael.sierakowski@cam.org.au

Barry Caldwell

Parish Office

86 Mayona Road

9435 2178

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

montmorency@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

eltham@cam.org.au

Gina Ang:

Pastoral Worker & Caring Group Co-Ord—**Eltham**

gina.ang@cam.org.au

Peter Williams:

Child Safety Officer

SFX&OLHC.ChildSafety@cam.org.au

Website:

www.pol.org.au/montmorency

www.pol.org.au/eltham

(pol stands for Parish OnLine)

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

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au



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:

Sr. Sabine de Croos, Stan Gioules, Catherine Nelson, Michael Perera, Millicent Perera, Yanthi Perera, Patrick Pinghe

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Baby Kylie, Sriyani Algama, Nikki Attwood, Justine Best, Ray Bowman, Kristina Brazaitis, Desmond Deehan, Renee Eastwood, Debbie Edgley, Julian Forrester, Gennie Hannon, Samuel Hauser (Kyabram), Val Hayes, Colleen Hussin, Jim Hussin, Tina Inserra, Adrian Jones, 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;

Nancy Hunt

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Robyn Atherton, Hugh & Iris Azzopardi, Baby Harriet Banks, Ray Bowman, Andrew & Lucinda Collier, Albina Croce, Jon D'Cruz, Claire Dakwar, Ruth Decker, Rob Doolan, Marlis Dopheide, Maria George, Dennis Goddard, Luke Hawthorne-Smith, Mary Irani, Diana Jackson, Jeanette Jenkins, Maureen Jenkins, Baby Finley McPartlin, Simone Owen, Jo Porter, Barry Scully.

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

MASS LIVE – STREAMING

Live-streaming Masses are scheduled for:

This Sunday, 26 July @ 10:00am
Our Lady Help of Christians, Eltham

and throughout August,
please keep an eye on the
'Calendar of Events' for dates and times

Link: <https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE>

RECONCILIATION

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

Collections last weekend: 19 July 2020

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
Eltham	\$1,475.00	\$0.00
Montmorency	\$500.00	\$690.00

Please note the above figures are monies banked & do not include visa/mastercard or direct debits. Thank you so much for your contributions.

CDFFPay: (alternate thanksgiving options)
Montmorency - <https://bit.ly/MontyCDFFPay>
Eltham - <https://bit.ly/ElthamCDFFPay>

Volunteers Needed:

We are in need of volunteers to take donated goods, which can be left at the Parish House, from our parish to Alphington for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. One Thursday morning per month between 10am and 12 midday. Contact Tony Cotter (0408 028 501).

Your generous parish donations are enabling the ASRC to supply groceries to those people in lock-down in the housing commission towers in the inner city.

Thank you!



Prayers of the Faithful for 26 July 2020 Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Celebrant: Today we reflect on the gift of wisdom - the ability to pause, discern and use perspective.

May we feel the warmth of God's presence in our lives. We give thanks for the security of our homes and families. We pray for those who lack security, who are isolated, lonely, or lacking basic support systems. We pray also for those agencies working to support their needs.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have lost employment or educational opportunities and now face an uncertain future. Through the continuation of government support strategies and the love of friends and family, may they find the courage to reassess, reinvent and discover renewed hope for the future.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

The Lord's words are more precious than gold. Help us to reflect upon the perspective and wisdom in God's words. We pray for the leaders of our governments, may they be granted the wisdom and strength to lead wisely and in a spirit of compassion and justice for all.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For families, teachers & children: may they be granted the patience, strength and creativity to work, learn and play together under current challenging conditions.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

We give thanks for the professionalism, dedication & care of health care-workers. We pray for their safety and health.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For all struggling with the effects of isolation, especially those with mental or physical illness. May the presence of the Lord in our lives bring us all a sense of calm and with it the warmth and strength of community.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

For those who have died recently, and those whose anniversaries occur around this time, including Sr Sabine de Croos, Stan Gioules, Nancy Hunt, Catherine Nelson, Michael Perera, Millicent Perera, Yanthi Perera & Patrick Pinghe. May they feel the peace of Christ and may their families feel the Lord's presence with them in this difficult time.

Lord, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

Celebrant: God of infinite wisdom, we cannot know our future, we place our trust in your constant love and presence.

All: Amen.

Live-Stream Masses

As time passes and we are kept apart longer, we are unable to nourish each other with the human touch necessary for our wholeness and well-being. We so often have taken for granted the smiling faces, shining eyes, kisses and hugs that keep us alive and connected. We are also kept from celebrating together the Eucharist, our greatest gift. In an effort to ease this ache within, we are offering live-streaming Masses each week in August and hope it may help. We thank the good Fathers Michael and Terry for their blessing in this, as always.

We leave the simple steps below to help those who may still require them:

1. Go to [google.com](https://www.google.com), type: olhc sfx youtube (click search);
2. OLHC SFX YouTube will appear (click on it);
3. You will see the thumbnail of Masses already streamed;
4. You will see somewhere on the screen *subscribe* (red box) - click on it;
5. Then click on any of the Masses or watch the live-streaming Mass of the day.

Good luck, let us know if you are still having difficulty.



So for now we pray, and hold each in our hearts and invisible arms, knowing we are all held in the heart of our loving God. We will come out the other side of this richer, stronger, more loving and more grateful for our many gifts. Keep hope alive and trust we will see the Light shine once again in every heart and eye... stronger than before. God is near.

Patsy Mob: 0429 439 675

For a Benedictine monk, lockdown has been a time of refreshment and abundance, of a deeper appreciation of the monastic life of solitude, silence and joy / **BY LUKE BELL**

Finding the one thing necessary

Her Majesty the Queen spoke to the nation with remarkable compassion during the lockdown. Acutely sensitive to the pain of separation people were experiencing, she spoke of the hope of meeting again, of re-establishing communion. She also recommended meditation and prayer. That too is communion, for prayer in union with the suffering Christ is a oneness with all of suffering humanity. That was our particular calling at this time: to offer prayer, especially the sacrifice of Christ in the Mass, in solidarity with all who were troubled. Yet it has also been a privileged time of retreat for us, of re-centering to equip us better to reach out to others when no longer separated from them in the flesh.

Here in the monastery of Our Lady of Quarr on the Isle of Wight (pioneer of pandemic precautions), it has brought an extraordinary clarity of vision and grace. Our monastic vows have come into brilliantly sharp focus. These (and they are specifically Benedictine) are: stability, conversion of life and obedience. Our calling to be true to these is a calling to a good and happy life. This works in ordinary circumstance; in these extraordinary circumstances it has worked wonders. The lockdown has shown us their essence; it has obliged us to be faithful to what is central to them; it has made us truly happy.

Stability became mandatory. Government ministers told us: "Stay at home." Of course for many folk that was a bitter imposition, but for us for whom abiding in God depends on not gadding about, it was a godsend. And here's a marvellous thing: our monastic enclosure, like Hermione Granger's magic tent, became much bigger. The size of

what you have is relative to the size of what others have got. It was a privilege to take 20 minutes to run around grounds that border the sea, symbol of eternity. To run through the freshly green pastures as the birds sang (avian flu for them now a dim ancestral memory), to stride into the sea (from what I inwardly christened "Idyll Bay") as the sun rose (leaving a habit and towel hanging from an inclining tree), to swim on my back looking at the lingering moon in the newly blue sky, when (in the words of the song) "the green was so green and the blue was so blue" - what was this but a promise of paradise, an earnest of eternity, an intuition of immortality? And there was such a spring, such sunshine.

Conversion of life is adapting to monastic practices: in effect, adjusting to lockdown. Like Captain Chesley B. Sullenberger landing his plane on the Hudson River, like Leonard Cohen singing "Hallelujah" as the sun set over the Glastonbury Festival, like Winston Churchill taking on the premiership, we had been prepared by all of our (monastic) life for this moment, the moment lockdown came. And it gave us what we needed to go deeper into this life, to have it more abundantly.

It gave us silence and a deeper recollection. As flights stopped, the sky became free of machinery telling us, as it were, that with less to occupy us at this time we could look more directly at heaven. Silence is beneficial for monks because the cloistered life is much concerned with what happens to the heart. St Benedict speaks of our hearts overflowing with the inexpressible delight of love as we run on the path of God's commandments. To go in that direction one needs the quiet to be able to listen to the heart, its



loves, hopes and fears. Ultimately one needs to listen to the silence in the heart that is deeper than all of these and speak a word of prayer there. That is how we grow in love: that and staying in the same place with the same people, avoiding the evasions of looking for things to do elsewhere. Staying at home is the way to grow larger-hearted, as this is the only realistic alternative to the doomed project of making other people larger-minded. It begins with patience, first with oneself and then with others, letting them be who they are, and ends with gratitude for who they are. Even the fact that there are failures in all of this only helps because it shows us what we have to work on.

So not only did the monastic enclosure (and our hearts) grow larger, so did our household. The people the government gave us permission not to keep our distance from became more important. By the same dynamic, as our enclosure became bigger, so did our social milieu become wider and more interesting: we lived in a community such as few households enjoyed. As well as monks we had a couple of associates sharing aspects of our life, an aspirant to the monastic life, a young guest and an intern who stayed beyond the time of his internship and became



Quarr Abbey provided the perfect place to reap the benefits of the lockdown

another aspirant under the guidance of the novice master. With fewer tasks to preoccupy us, we found the family spirit among us flourished.

And our life became rebalanced towards its more contemplative aspect. Benedictine life is both about being open to God and being open to the stranger who comes to the monastery, and the two aspects are involved with each other. The greater emphasis on the first during the months of greater retreat was a strengthening for the second. It trained us in giving each person and thing the stillness of an undivided attention and the homage of all the time needed. Manual labour is a tradition of monastic life and we had time to recover the fullness of this in tasks such as cooking and rearranging library books - things that would have been outsourced or deferred before lockdown curtailed business - and this work gave us its traditional blessing of taking us out of our heads and into our hearts. That is where we want to be because that is where our true work is, for our lives are a response to the beatitude promising the sight of God to the pure in heart.

The greatest blessing of all came from the way the lockdown intensified the effect of our vow of obedience. In its essence, this is

handing over control of our lives so that we invest our hearts not in our own plans and projects but in God's will for us. The truly wonderful thing about the lockdown was that we did not know what was going to happen: we couldn't even *think* we knew what would happen. That meant that we could not live in the future, even in the collective projects of our community of society. And we couldn't live in the past either because they did things differently there - even songs and stories from the past were unconvincing because they were about people living according to different rules. So we had no alternative but to live in the present. There, and there only, is where God is to be found. And there, instead of the paltry projections of the self, is discovered the reality of God's loving providence since (in St Paul's words) "we know that for those who love God all things work together for good".

For me, that was the most beautiful grace of the lockdown: being able to let go of the illusion (known as such in the head) that somehow through what I wanted and decided I could (with or without others) direct the future to deliver to my heart that happiness for which it longs when all along God was saying to it: you don't need to concern yourself with that, I know what will make you happy and whatever happens will happen because I know it will make you happy - that is my only agenda and everything is in my hands and everything is at the service of this. My heart heard this love speaking in the silence and in the solitude, heard a call to enjoy life to the full with the most reckless insouciance, for nothing matters except the one necessary thing of attending to this love, gifted to us and for us to give to both God and neighbour.

That love unites us to Christ and to others as we pray the psalms in the liturgy, singing: "I will say to the Lord, 'My refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust.' for he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence."

Luke Bell OSB is a monk of Quarr Abbey. His most recent book, *Staying Tender: Contemplation, Pathway to Compassion*, is published by Angelico Press.



Child Safeguarding: e-Safety

We know that the lockdown has reduced opportunities to come together in a physical sense to worship together.

As the importance of staying connected remains a paramount consideration, maintaining safety in the online environment becomes even more critical.

Hence, information about e-safety considerations for connecting with children and young people and maintaining safety in the online environment needs to be considered.

The e-Safety Commissioner has developed some excellent resources to support organisations, parents, children and young people to stay safe online: [e-Safety Commissioner resources](#) which we encourage you to access.

The following link provides a very useful resource for parents titled: **COVID-19 Online Safety Guide for Parents**, which parents may find useful in navigating the online environment with their children.

(<https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/covid-19>)

Peter



For anyone wishing to obtain a paper copy of the bulletin each week, either for yourself or to deliver to a fellow parishioner who is in isolation, please note that copies are available at both St Francis Xavier & Our Lady Help of Christians each Friday afternoon (after 3pm). Copies are placed in outdoor document holders, to the right of the church entrance door.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact the office on 9435 2178 or via email if you have any concerns or suggestions.



55 years!

This weekend marks the
**55th Anniversary of
 St Francis Xavier Church**
 being Blessed and Opened.

This anniversary is significant, particularly at this time of the COVID-19 Pandemic. It is so important and appropriate to reflect on the growth of our rich St Francis Xavier faith community.

The Church provides a gathering place for all... a place to pray together... a place to sit at the Eucharistic table... a place to celebrate many special sacramental occasions... and where wonderfully supportive, loving, and caring friendships have been formed and nurtured.

Like so many parishioners, we look forward to post-pandemic times when we are able to join with others, returning to share and care for each other, in person.

From 25th July 1965 there has been a plaque in the Church Foyer, unfortunately it has gone missing in recent years. The plaque read as follows:

THIS CHURCH OF ST FRANCIS XAVIER
 MONTMORENCY WAS BLESSED & OPENED
 BY THE MOST REV. JUSTIN SIMONDS D D
 PHD, ARCHBISHOP OF MELBOURNE ON
 JULY 25TH 1965. THE PARISH PRIEST
 BEING REV. FATHER BRENDAN TORR

It would be an interesting exercise to ponder what could be written on a plaque to mark the opening of our church doors at the beginning of the post-pandemic era of St Francis Xavier Parish Community!!!

Blessings to all, Elizabeth & David Warrillow

Rosters - 1 & 2 August

<i>Montmorency</i>	
Capuana, Marisa	PRY
Giddens, Matt	GRDN
<i>Eltham</i>	
Frediani, Gabriella	Altar Society
Scannell Family	Pilgrim Rosary Statue

A New Family Join Our Parish

We welcome Gary, Monic and Yzabelle Fanlo to our parish. There is a story to tell about this family...



In September 2019, Gary and Monic Fanlo came to Australia as students. They are both trained nurses in the Philippines and had been accepted to enter the required nursing course in Australia to enable them to work in Australia and gain experience and give to our communities. They had been wishing for some years to grow their family, but it hadn't happened. They had money set aside for their stay, as well as

private health insurance as required by the Australian authorities.

In November, they found that they were expecting their first child. What joy! They booked tickets to return to the Philippines for the birth of their child in March, but COVID-19 shutdown came into force. They couldn't leave Australia.

A beautiful baby girl was born, with a large growth on her neck known as Lymphatic Malformation (Cystic Hygroma/Lymphangioma) - a large growth on the right side of her neck. This needs to be operated on when she reaches six months of age.

Following the birth of Yzabelle at North Park hospital, she was transferred to the Royal Children's Hospital for four days for monitoring, and then discharged. The costs for both hospitals were extremely high, with money currently still owing. Gary is nursing in aged care when he can get shifts.

This family is caught in a very difficult situation not of their doing, and they need our support. Are you able to assist Gary, Monic & Yzabelle? Do you have any suggestions? If you are able to assist in any way, or wish to discuss this matter, please contact me on papel-imports@bigpond.com or 0411 196 395. Thank you
 Glensy Gayfer

Calendar of Events

<i>Sunday, 26 July</i>		
10:00am	Eltham	Mass - live-streamed (https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE)
<i>Sunday, 2 August</i>		
8:30am	Montmorency	Mass - live-streamed (https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE)
<i>Sunday, 9 August</i>		
10:00am	Eltham	Mass - live-streamed (https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE)
<i>Sunday, 16 August</i>		
8:30am	Montmorency	Mass - live-streamed (https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE)
<i>Sunday, 23 August</i>		
10:00am	Eltham	Mass - live-streamed (https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE)
<i>Sunday, 30 August</i>		
8:30am	Montmorency	Mass - live-streamed (https://bit.ly/2ZNZxaE)

Homily - Terry

Have you heard the story of the Old Indian Chief who was coming to the end of his life and it was time for him to choose one of his three sons to lead the tribe?

He asked to see his sons and he said to them, "When I die one of you must succeed me as the leader of our tribe. I want each of you to climb our holy mountain and bring back something of beauty. The one whose gift is most outstanding will succeed me."

The sons left the father and each of them followed the path deep into the forest, marvelling at the height of the trees and then climbing the mountain, so ancient and stony. After some days they returned from their travels.

The first son brought his father a flower from the summit: rare, beautiful and delicate, with a preciousness that called for great care. The second son brought a stone: colourful, smooth and round, polished by rain and sandy winds. The third son's had was empty.

When asked why he had empty hands, the third son said, "Father, I have brought nothing back to you. As I stood at the peak of our holy mountain, I saw on the other side of the mountain a beautiful land filled with green pastures and a crystal lake. I breathed in the mist and caught in my eyes the glisten of the sun. And I had a vision of where our tribe could go for a better life. I was so overwhelmed by what I saw and by what I was thinking that I returned with nothing."

And the father replied, "You shall be our tribe's leader for you have brought back the most precious gift of all - the gift of a vision for a better future."

The gift of a vision for a better future. What a precious gift and something many of us are thinking about as we come to terms with COVID-19 and its impact on our lives, families, our communities, our church, our nation, our world. Perhaps we are thinking the world will never be the same again. How long will we be in lockdown and will we ever be free of this virus? It's like that old saying, 'we can't see the forest for the trees'. And in a way we are all searching for a better vision. What will be the way forward?

In our Sunday readings today, we hear the story of Solomon, newly appointed leader of his tribe, having a dream where God asked him to make a wish. And Solomon asked the Lord God for a heart to understand between good and evil. He did not ask for a long life for himself, or riches, or success in war and the Lord God was pleased with Solomon's request and said: 'I will give you a heart wise and shrewd as none before you and none ever after you.'

The gift of discernment. The gift of a heart wise and shrewd. We surely seek this in finding our way into the future and we pray for our leaders as they discern the future.

Who knows how the future will unfold, but is there an invitation for us to look at our ways of living and see where we can respond to the challenges of COVID-19? Are there some learnings that will remain with us when we hope COVID-19 is no longer a threat? Perhaps in the silence we have discovered new ways of appreciating life. The taste of food, the warm water of a shower, the call from a friend, the blessing of a food parcel left on our doorstep.

Perhaps we are growing in compassion, for people who are infected with the disease, for health professionals in their care of COVID-19 patients, for those who have lost their jobs, for children and students who are really struggling with on-line learning.

We don't know what the future will be like, but we pray for a discerning heart for ourselves and for the leaders of our tribe. It may be too early to have a vision of a better future, but as the days unfold, we will be looking for leaders who are wise and shrewd, and can see the road ahead. And we hope and pray that all of us will find that road and walk it with compassion and gratitude.

Gospel: Matthew 13:44-52

Jesus said to the crowds, 'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off happy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls; when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea that brings in a haul of all kinds. When it is full, the fishermen haul it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in a basket and throw away those that are no use. This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the just to throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

'Have you understood all this?' they said, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Well, then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old.'



Reflection

As on last Sunday the gospel reading contains a group of three parables. These, along with a short summation, conclude the discourse in Matthew's gospel specifically devoted to Jesus' teaching in parables.

The first two form a pair. Put simply, they liken the kingdom of heaven to a treasure that is worth risking everything to gain. However each of these two condensed stories has its own emphasis and invites its own insights. They take some unpacking. Together they throw down the gauntlet to the listener. They demand a radical reappraisal of what really matters, and decisive action to choose the one thing that does, the kingdom.

The third parable seems to be addressing a different issue. What should the faith community do about the mix of saints and sinners that it finds in its midst? Like last week's parable of the wheat and the weeds, the story seems to advise patience and trust. There does not need to be premature judgement or precipitate action to sort out the weeds from the wheat; this will be done by God at the end of time.

The entire Parable Sermon is rounded out with a saying that might well describe Matthew's own understanding of his role as an evangelist - a scribe who brings things new and old out of his storehouse.

Break Open the Word 2020

You are invited to join us for a special **Prison Fellowship Thanksgiving Service** to acknowledge and celebrate 40 years of Prison Fellowship Ministry in Victoria from 1980-2020.

At a special meeting at Camberwell Uniting Church on 31st July, 1980 a motion was passed which stated: "That a Victorian Branch of Prison Fellowship be formed and should be formally titled 'Prison Fellowship of Australia, Victorian Committee.'

A lot has happened since then and we have so much to be thankful for.

The Thanksgiving Service will be held via zoom from 6.30pm-7.30pm on **Thursday 30 July, 2020**. Details are as follows:

Topic: Prison Fellowship Victoria 40 Years Thanksgiving Service
Time: Jul 30, 2020 06:30 PM Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney
Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82448490213>
Meeting ID: 824 4849 0213

Thank you for your contribution to this ministry and I hope that you can join us.

Take care and God bless,

Richard Feeney
Prison Fellowship Australia
State Manager



Prison Fellowship Australia
WE GET THROUGH.