

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.

Why Football in Victoria is a Religion

MELBOURNE DEMONS V WESTERN BULLDOGS - 2021

Melbourne Football Club has won **12** VFL/AFL Premierships with the first coming in 1900 and most recent occurring in 1964.

The Dogs have won only **two** VFL/AFL premierships, in 1954 and 2016.

Football matches have been played in Victoria since 1850. However, the game between Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar in 1858 is generally acknowledged as the first 'official' game of Australian football. A year later, the first rules of football were adopted.

The international news story of 1879 had been the heroic death of Prince Eugene Louis Napoleon, the 'Prince Imperial' and heir to the French throne, when ambushed by Zulu warriors during the Anglo-Zulu war in Africa. Out of respect to him, the Footscray Football Club changed their name, in 1880, to the Prince Imperial Football Club. After two seasons the 'Prince Imperials' struggled to attract playing members regularly and it was decided, in 1882, to revert back to the name 'Footscray', to be more identifiable with the district. In 1883, Footscray printed their first membership ticket and offered a silver cup, won by Charlie Lovett, for the 'Best all round man'.

In 1886, Footscray gained admission to the Victorian Football Association (VFA) after amalgamating with the Footscray Cricket Club to form a 'senior football club' and satisfying the VFA's prerequisite of 80 members and possession of an enclosed playing ground. The Footscray Council allowed use of the Western Reserve, located within an area set aside in 1860 as Footscray's early botanical gardens, which was already home to the cricket club. This ground, the football club's home ever since, has been referred to by several names over the ensuing years, including the Gardens Reserve, Western Reserve, Footscray City Oval, Western Oval and Whitten Oval.

Footscray won their first VFA match against St Kilda in 1886 but struggled to have an impact for the remainder of the decade, especially against more established clubs.

In 1954, Footscray finished second, achieving the double chance – on schedule, according to Sutton's four-year plan. The Bulldogs disposed of minor premiers Geelong in the second semi-final and met Melbourne in the grand final. The day was a glorious one, with Footscray dominating from the outset and doubling Melbourne's score, 15-12 (102) to 7-9 (51).

Melbourne Premierships 1900/1926/1939/1940/1941/1948/1955/1956/1957/1959/1960 & 1964. It's history is famous too.

A loosely organised side played as 'Melbourne' on several occasions in 1858. The club was officially formed the following year on 14 May 1859. It is **the world's oldest football club of any code that is now professional.**



May the best side win, and hopefully it will be a wonderful GAME to watch!

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

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Barry Caldwell

Parish Office

86 Mayona Road

9435 4742

Mon - Fri 9am-3pm

montmorency@cam.org.au

Kate Kogler:

Parish Secretary

eltham@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: Philip Cachia: 9435 8474

principal@sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

www.sfxmontmorency.catholic.edu.au

Holy Trinity Primary School

Principal: Vince Bumpstead: 9431 0888

principal@htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

www.htelthamnth.catholic.edu.au

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Acting Principal: Therese Stewart: 9439 7824

school@olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

www.olhceltham.catholic.edu.au

RECONCILIATION

available upon request

please call the Parish Office 9435 4742

Collections: 12 September 2021—LOCKDOWN

Community	Thanksgiving	Presbytery
OLHC		
SFX		



Please help our parish continue our important pastoral activities.

You can give an offering online today with CDFpay.

Find our parish by visiting:

<https://bit.ly/CDFpayEltham> or <https://bit.ly/CDFpayMontmorency>



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:

Paul Collins, Eva Crowe, Ruth Elliott

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

Debbie Edgley (nee Vanderwert), Kate Lagerewskij

Eltham

For the recently deceased:

For those whose anniversaries are at this time:

*Rosa & Salvatore Ficarra, George Gunton
Onofrio Saltalamacchia*

For those in need of healing, remembering especially:

*Savannah (5 years old - seriously ill),
Violetta, Ryan Bennett, Lucy Bibby,, Denice Donnellan,
Lidia Marazzato, Tom Nolan, Paul O'Dell, Les Robertson,
Christine Scott, Rosemary Scully, Barbara Snopkowski
Ibyszek Wojciechowski, Sylvek Zyleviczcz*

To include an anniversary please contact Parish House
9435 4742 or eltham@cam.org.au.

Monty & Eltham Calendar of Events

Saturday 18

6:00pm Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

Sunday 19

8:30am Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

10:00am Mass - CANCELLED Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms - CANCELLED Montmorency

Tuesday 21

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

10:00am Craft Group - CANCELLED Montmorency

11:00am Prayer Shawl - CANCELLED Eltham

Wednesday 22

6:30am Meditation - CANCELLED Montmorency

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Eltham

Thursday 23

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

10:30am ASRC - CANCELLED Montmorency

Friday 24

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Eltham

Saturday 25

6:00pm Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

Sunday 26

8:30am Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

10:00am Mass - CANCELLED Eltham

12:00pm Baptisms - CANCELLED Montmorency

Tuesday 28

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

Wednesday 29

6:30am Meditation - CANCELLED Montmorency

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Eltham

Thursday 30

9:30am Mass - CANCELLED Montmorency

10:30am ASRC - CANCELLED Montmorency

Friday 1 October

25th SUNDAY OF THE YEAR 2021

Some of you have heard me refer to a book, 'Kitchen Table Wisdom' by a Jewish doctor, Rachel Remen. Let me share a few of her words from her reflection on 'embracing life'.

She remembers as a child how her parents kept a giant jigsaw puzzle set up on a table in the living room. Her father always hid the box top and the idea was to put the pieces together without knowing the picture ahead of time. Different members of the family and visiting friends would work on it, sometimes only for a few minutes.

Over the years, Rachel became quite good at the puzzles and she loved it when the first hint of a pattern would emerge and she could see what had been there, hidden, all along.

She remembers as a three or four old child her first experience of a jigsaw puzzle. She didn't understand what had to happen, she was on her own and she didn't like some of the pieces; they were dark and seemed like spiders. They made her feel uncomfortable. So she hid some of these pieces under a sofa cushion. Needless to say, the puzzle didn't come together and it wasn't until her mother counted all the pieces and realised there were over a hundred pieces missing.'

Rachel 'fessed up' and her mother took the pieces from under the cushion and completed the puzzle. As piece after piece was put in place, Rachel remembers being astounded. She had not known there would be a picture. It was quite beautiful, a peaceful scene of a deserted beach. Without the pieces she had hidden, the game made no sense.

Rachel reflects on all this in real life terms. In thinking about life, she sees the dark pieces, the sad and painful events of life as having their place. As she writes, "We are always putting the pieces together without knowing the picture ahead of time. I have been with many people in times of profound loss and grief when an unsuspected meaning begins to emerge from the fragments of their lives.

"Their losses and suffering have not caused them to reject life, have not cast them into a place of resentment, victimization or bitterness.....From such people I have learned a new definition of joy, that seems to be a part of an unconditional wish to live, not holding back because life may not meet our preferences and expectationsa willingness to accept the whole, and to show up to meet whatever is there."

Rachel's words in many ways resonate with today's Gospel. The disciples had no idea of what it meant to follow Jesus. It was like a jigsaw to them. Jesus tried to prepare them, naming the dark pieces of the puzzle, in speaking of the road to Calvary. And he told them, life is not about who is the greatest, or who wins and loses. It's about service, about giving your life, about having time for the most vulnerable, about welcoming a child.

The disciples didn't understand and they tried to hide the dark pieces under the sofa cushion of their own expectations. They learnt the way eventually.

And it's like this for us. None of us like the dark pieces of the puzzle of life. If we hide them, the puzzle will never reveal its full picture. We all meet our times of pain and suffering, and we have unmet expectations. Yet somehow an unsuspected meaning can begin to emerge from these fragments of our lives when we put them into the picture without hiding them.

Like the disciples in today's Gospel, it takes time to learn this, but learn it we must if we are to find the joy that Rachel Remen speaks of, and if we are to follow Jesus. Some of us are finding Covid 19 lockdown a dark time. The dark pieces of the jigsaw are in the picture of life, and in fact they may well be the most important pieces.

Terry



Students - Confirmation & First Eucharist 2021

Dear Parents and Students in our Parish & Government Schools,

We hope this letter finds you well and that you and your families are coping with the lockdowns as best you can. The measures set in place by the Victorian Government, Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (M.A.C.S) and the Archdiocese of Melbourne, in response to the Coronavirus have had significant impacts on the way communities can gather to worship, pray and celebrate Sacramental milestones. Baptisms, weddings, even the ordinations for new priests for this year, have been postponed. Our entire Catholic worshipping community has been affected. Our Sacramental program for our students within our parishes was disrupted in 2020 and now we are facing the same disappointments with the running of our programs in 2021. As a result we have had to make some significant decisions as to how our, **'Parent Initiated, School Supported and Parish-Based'** Sacramental program within the Parishes of Montmorency and Eltham will look for the remainder of the 2021 School year.



Confirmation

Unfortunately the Sacrament of Confirmation will not go ahead as planned at St Patrick's Cathedral on Sunday 24th October 2021. At this present moment, as we end Term 3, we are still unclear as to how Term 4 and students returning to school will look. So we find ourselves in exactly the same predicament as last year. With this narrow window of school life returning we will not be able to hold any Confirmation celebrations this year. We hope in the coming months the Year 6 students will be able to have a conversation with our local Bishop, Terry Curtin to acknowledge our preparation for Confirmation. Even this conversation may have to happen by Zoom. Any further arrangements for future Confirmation for this year's Year 6 students into 2022 will be decided once we are clear with a new way forward. We will then make contact with you.



First Eucharist

The Sacrament of First Eucharist is unable to continue this year with our students in Year 5. Our Cathedral and Churches are still closed and when we are able to open, density limits will be of such restriction that we will be unable to celebrate First Eucharist within the Parish Masses with any significant numbers of family present. Therefore, unfortunately we have had to make the sad decision not to continue with our First Eucharist plans in place in 2021.

We are truly saddened and disappointed by the disruptions occurring to our Sacramental program. However, hopefully this information gives you some clarity. Obviously returning to school in 2022, including our Sacramental programs moving forward, we will have to come up with some very creative ideas with regards to delayed Confirmations and First Eucharist celebrations in Parish life. For the past two years this Coronavirus has deeply disrupted our normal pathways of faith and worship celebrations. We are deeply sorry for this inconvenience and we look forward to working in partnership with you next year.



Warmest love and regards, Michael F Sierakowski, Moderator

One of the ironies of Henri Nouwen's sudden death 25 years ago was that a writer beset by a sense of homelessness and so beloved of restless seekers should die on a rare stopover in his home country, surrounded by his family / by Robert Ellsberg

The anguish of the healer

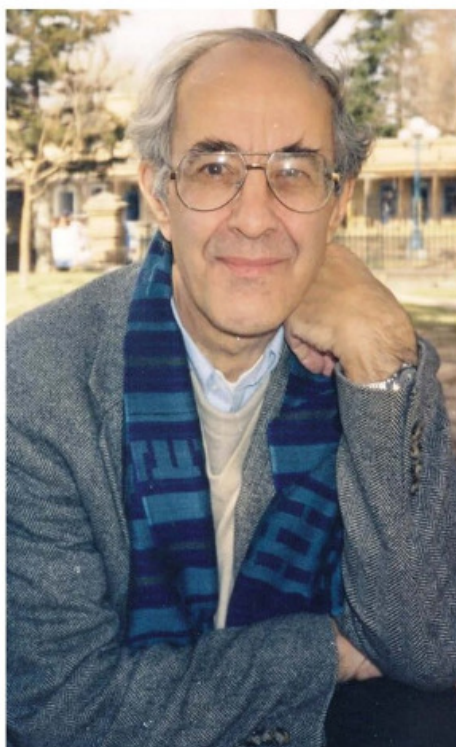
I was astonished, and at first disbelieving, 25 years ago, to learn that my friend Henri Nouwen had died on 21 September 1996, during a stopover in Amsterdam on his way to Russia. In contrast, the news just days before that he had suffered a mild heart attack had come as no surprise. Henri was notoriously overworked, careless about his need for rest while travelling about giving talks, visiting friends and writing books at a furious pace - even in the midst of a "sabbatical year". Surely he would recover.

I myself had seen him only weeks before, when he visited my home to deliver the manuscript of his latest book, *Adam: God's Beloved*. Henri's original plan had been to write a book about the Apostles' Creed, but this had taken a completely different turn after the death of Adam, a severely disabled young man assigned to Henri's care during his early years as chaplain at the L'Arche Daybreak community in Richmond Hill, Ontario. In surprising ways, Adam had become, for Henri, a deep spiritual guide, and in his life and death he saw a personal re-enactment of the gospel story. Adam announced "the marvellous message of God ... Life is a gift. Each one of us is unique, known by name, and loved by the One who fashioned us".

If not the Apostles' Creed, the book was certainly an expression of Henri's personal creed, a summary of what he had learned in his 10 years as a member of the L'Arche community. In ways we could not have foreseen, it would turn out to be his final statement.

Following the news of Adam's death, Henri had rushed back to Toronto from his sabbatical to share in the community's loss and mourning. As he would later write, in staring at Adam's body, so still and quiet, he sensed that the young man was telling him, "Don't be afraid, Henri. Let my death help you to befriend yours. When you are no longer afraid of your own death, then you can live fully, freely, and joyfully."

When in August, Henri brought me the manuscript, he did not speak of death. In fact he spoke excitedly about his upcoming sixty-fifth birthday. He played with my children. He spoke of his plans to travel to St Petersburg in Russia to film a documentary about his favourite painting, Rembrandt's *Return of the Prodigal Son*. (One of the ironies of his sudden death was that a man so beset by



Henri Nouwen: 'a companion to all restless seekers'

a sense of homelessness should die on a stopover in his home country, surrounded by his elderly father and siblings.) If anything, Henri had seemed uncharacteristically free and joyful that evening. Touched by our encounter, I sent him a gift - a plaque of the cover for one of his books, with a letter expressing my thanks for his years of friendship.

I had known Henri for 20 years, since first meeting him as a very young editor of *The Catholic Worker*. (Our friendship endured the memory that I had once rejected one of his articles.) Our paths crossed at many points. We would overlap at Harvard Divinity School. He helped with a connection to Maryknoll in Latin America that led to my life's work at Maryknoll's Orbis Books. He was present for so many of the important moments of my life.

And yet our relationship was not without strain. Henri freely shared his own struggles with his readers. It was part of the reason for his popularity - the fact that he was evidently a "wounded healer". He had a great gift of friendship - often sending gifts and flowers, or calling to remember an anniversary or birthday. But underneath was a man beset by anxieties about his identity and

self-worth, always hungry for affirmation, always in search of a place to call "home".

His call to serve as a chaplain at Daybreak had marked the beginning of a fruitful and healing time in his life. There, in his last 10 years, he found the community he had been seeking - a place where he was known and loved for who he was, with all his gifts and broken pieces. Whether writing about peace, or community, or the spiritual life, his work took on a new depth and authenticity.

In his famous and most successful book, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, he wrote of his initial identification with the younger son in the gospel parable, craving his father's love; and then with the resentful elder brother. He was in the process of recognising and growing into his call to identify with a different character in the story: *to become the father*.

Henri's arrival at Daybreak had coincided with my move to Orbis Books, which brought increasing occasions to meet and work together over the years. The dynamic between us had changed very much for the better by this time. Only later, in reading *Adam*, did I learn the details of the deep emotional breakdown he had suffered in his early time at Daybreak - an experience of total darkness, "a bottomless abyss". Yet, he wrote, he had come to realise he was not abandoned. With the support of friends and intensive counselling, he was able to break through and to emerge more whole, more at peace with himself, and with a deeper trust in what he called "the inner voice of love", a voice calling him "beyond the boundaries of my short life, to where Christ is all in all".

Yet, as I learned in reading his posthumous *Sabbatical Journey*, these struggles were never totally resolved. "I sometimes wonder how I am going to survive emotionally," he wrote. Perhaps his great wound would never go away. But perhaps this would "was a gateway to my salvation, a door to glory, and a passage to freedom". Perhaps this wound was a "gift in disguise". Perhaps these experiences were leading to a place "where I'm learning to let go of fear and surrender my spirit into the hands of One whose acceptance has no limits". Perhaps.

Henri's funeral was held in Toronto, among his Daybreak community and (continued page 6)

(from page 5)

friends. I flew up from New York for the day, and saw Henri for the last time in his priestly garb, lying in a colourfully decorated wooden coffin. I was struck by the sight of his enormous hands - usually in constant motion, whether fidgeting or dramatizing his words and inner feelings. Now they were completely still. I had no words for what I felt.

But when I returned to the office the next day, I found waiting for me an envelope in Henri's familiar hand. Inside was a letter he had written 10 days before his

death, thanking me for the plaque I had sent, and expressing his gratitude for our friendship. He closed: "I look forward to working with you in the years ahead."

It was the first sign that my relationship with Henri was not over. In concluding his book on Adam, he had written "Is this when the resurrection began, in the midst of my grief? ... Mourning turns to dancing, grief turns to joy, despair turns to hope, and fear turns to love. Then hesitantly someone is saying, 'He is risen, he is risen indeed.'" Henri Nouwen is not the kind of person likely to be canonised. Yet, for all the

broken pieces of his own complex humanity, his life tells a story marked by grace, conversion and steady growth in the spiritual life. He is a companion to all restless seekers, a guide who travelled without maps, uncertain where his journey would take him, but always trusting that God would be with him at the end and would welcome him to his true home.

Robert Ellsberg is the publisher of Orbis Books and the author of many books, including *The Saints' Guide to Happiness* and *A Living Gospel: Reading God's Story in Holy Lives*



Lockdown Light

A weekly series bringing 'light' to this time of lockdown...

Lockdown Light — week three

A weekly series bringing 'light' to this time of lockdown ...

Well and truly done with sourdough starters? Not interested in another DIY project? To help fill the void during lockdown, each week we'll suggest some inspiring content to bring 'light' to this difficult time. Pop on the kettle and check out the recommendations below.

Resources for Christian living: Making the most of lockdown

In this blog post, local Melbourne mum of six, Kate Moriarty, shares some fun and creative ideas to help families make the most of their time together in lockdown. Find out more at www.bit.ly/ChristianLiving3

Getting to know your Bible: Opening up the Old Testament

Getting Started: This video by Bible Snap brings you the Old Testament in 8 minutes, with a comprehensive overview of where the books and people fit in the timeline of history. Watch at www.bit.ly/BibleGettingStarted3

Going Deeper: Exodus is one of the key books of the Old Testament. Hear about the pivotal events in Exodus from a range of other Christian Biblical scholars and theological experts in this 10-minute video. View here www.bit.ly/BibleGoingDeeper3

Are You Called to be a Spiritual Director? A Pastoral Supervisor? Or a compassionate listener to others? We invite you to a Taster Session (via Zoom), on Saturday 2 October 2021 at 9.30am-11am AEST to explore whether one of these ministries may be for you. Come and experience in a facilitated group via Zoom: a) the Siloam Program for the Formation of Spiritual Directors, b) the Emmaus Supervision Program, or c) Let the Heart Listen. Each of these courses is available in 2022 in-person (Covid-permitting) or via Zoom. To register for the free Taster event, please click the link on our home page at www.heartoflife.melbourne, or contact us at secretary@heartoflife.melbourne or tel (03) 9890 1101.



CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE
OF MELBOURNE

Applications are invited from suitably qualified and experienced people for the positions of:

- **Parish Secretary, Catholic Parish of Castlemaine**
- **Cook, Bayside Catholic Mission, Brighton**
- **Content Developer, Proclaim – Office of Mission Renewal, East Melbourne**
- **Expression of Interest, Formation, East Melbourne**

Further details of the above positions can be found on the Archdiocese website at: <https://melbournecatholic.org/job-vacancies>

Prayers of the Faithful for 19 Sep 2021 25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Leader: The psalm today tells us that ‘the Lord upholds our lives’, so we ask confidently that God hears our prayers offered today.

May the Church continue to offer hope and guidance to all people throughout the world, especially in this difficult time when world peace is threatened and when we are struggling to contain the pandemic. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

May we, as followers of Christ, remember to reach out to those who are lonely or struggling, especially as a result of the lockdown. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

May our Church and political leaders be mindful of the sanctity of life from conception to death and work to protect the vulnerable of any age. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

We pray for all those people in Afghanistan who are in danger, and those still hoping to be evacuated to safety. May our politicians listen to our plea for urgent humanitarian action *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

We pray for all those who are dealing with mental illness, that they will come to know that God will sustain them through the dark days. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

We pray for those children who have had baptism, First Eucharist or Confirmation cancelled, that they will be able to receive the sacraments soon. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

We pray for all those who are ill, especially those listed in the bullet, that they will experience the healing power of God’s love. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

We pray for those who have died recently and for those whose anniversaries occur at this time, including *Paul Collins, Eva Crowe, Ruth Elliott, Rosa & Salvatore Ficarra, George Gunton and Onofrio Saltalamacchia*. May they rest in peace in God’s loving arms. *Let us pray to the Lord. Lord, hear our prayer.*

Leader: O God, hear these prayers, offered to you in the confidence that you are with us always and we ‘praise your name for it is good’.

All: Amen

On 19 September 2021, we mark Social Services Sunday within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. On this day we invite all 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 43 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 recent [2021/22 Social Justice Statement](#) – *Cry of the Earth Cry of the Poor* – released by the Australian Catholic bishops, which reminds us of the social mission of the Church and which urges us to reflect on ‘the bigger picture’ and to act together on social, economic and ecological issues. Together, we all have a role to play in building a just and equitable society, where all have equal opportunities to flourish and prosper.

Gospel - Mark 9:30-37

After leaving the mountain Jesus and his disciples made their way through Galilee; and he did not want anyone to know, because he was instructing his disciples; he was telling them, 'The Son of Man will be delivered into the hands of men; they will put him to death; and three days after he has been put to death he will rise again.' But they did not understand what he said and were afraid to ask him.

They came to Capernaum, and when he was in the house he asked them, 'What were you arguing about on the road?' They said nothing because they had been arguing which of them was the greatest. So he sat down, called the Twelve to him and said, 'If anyone wants to be first, he must make himself last of all and servant of all.' He then took a little child, set him in front of them, put his arms round him, and said to them, 'Anyone who welcomes one of these little children in my name, welcomes me; and anyone who welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.'



Reflection

At this point the lectionary omits the story of the transfiguration, presumably because we hear it every year on the Second Sunday of Lent. It also leaves out the story of the exorcism that follows. Curiously this episode has been completely omitted from the three-year Sunday cycle, even though it is recorded in each of the synoptic gospels.

Today's gospel text begins with verse 30 but not before the lectionary inserts a phrase adapted from verse 9. This connects the reading with the transfiguration: "After leaving the mountain..." Jesus attempts to instruct his disciples about his true identity and impending fate, but typically "they did not understand what he was saying and were afraid to ask him".

Perhaps they did understand all too well, for it immediately becomes evident that the disciples are ambitious for power and glory, not humiliation and suffering. Jesus' teaching is unambiguous. The disciples are to devote themselves to service, not aggrandisement. As the gospel now reads, the child becomes the symbol of those who have no favours to grant in return for being paid attention.

The reading is a dynamic combination of action and dialogue. What Jesus has to say is serious and should be delivered accordingly.

Break Open the Word 2021

God of wonders, you show us your beauty in all created things. Help us to pay attention: to the taste of the ocean on our lips, the warmth of the sun on our hands, the song of birds in the morning and evening, the fragrance of the earth after rain, and to the star that guides us.

Creator God, we stand in awe of all that you have made. Fill our hearts with gratitude for every good gift, great and small, that feeds and forms us, inviting and enabling us to become people who are fully alive in your amazing grace.

Amen