



ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH

52 Yarra Street
HEIDELBERG



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which our parish stands, the Wurundjeri-Balluk clan of the Woi wurrung people in the Kulin Nation.

Central to the mission of St John's Parish is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe and supportive environment in which to flourish.

21ST/22ND NOVEMBER 2020 - OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE, YEAR A

As you may know, Bishop Peter Elliott of our own archdiocese has recently fallen very ill and is still in intensive care at St Vincent's Hospital. He wrote an excellent piece about this feast of Christ the King many years ago that I still recall and thought you too might find it insightful. I have reproduced part of it here. I invite you to please keep the bishop in your prayers. - *Fr Joel*

On the Social Reign of Christ

In recent decades there has been a tendency to 'spiritualise' the reign of Christ. Certainly, the kingdom of heaven is 'within us', and Jesus should reign spiritually and morally in our lives. But once we reduce those words 'truth', 'life', 'holiness', 'grace', 'justice', 'love' and 'peace' to abstractions or nice sentiments then something is missing.

The social reign of Christ - the very expression is fraught with meaning, yet it may be threatening when we reflect on what it can mean. It challenges us. We may speculate, therefore, why Christ's social reign has been played down, spiritualised or even set aside.

Forty years ago, there was a nervous reaction against so-called 'triumphalism'. Moreover, some feared that a literal interpretation of Christ's reign on earth might herald establishing hieratic states or authoritarian systems. Some critics, on the one hand, and some imprudent partisans of Christ's social reign, on the other, were equally ill-informed in matters of history.

With different agendas they depicted the social reign of Christ the King in terms of the recovery of Christendom or the 'ancien regime' and 'integralism'. Then there were voices, and we still hear them, who say that the gilded image of a king is out of place in our grey world, awash with republics. Others contend that kingship does not accord well with the Church's social teachings and her struggle for justice, human rights and her favour for democracy.

Yet, within this modern social context it seems strange to me that Christ's social reign should be put aside or spiritualised. It is precisely when the Church is openly striving for truth, life, peace and justice in so many different social situations around the world that we need to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ the King. It is his Gospel which animates the social teachings of the Church. It is his reign that we seek to promote in struggling for truth, life and freedom.

If we do not always look to our King in personal faith, we cannot hold securely to his moral principles in legislation, law and policy. What is worse, we risk being seduced by anti-life ideologies, old and new, with all their enticing moral compromises, and that has been the fate of some politicians who yet claim membership of our Church.

Still, Jesus Christ will reign, no matter what secularists old or new attempt, no matter how grandiose their plans for social engineering may be, no matter what affluent forces they raise against human life, freedom, justice, married love and the family. He does reign, for he has conquered death by rising in his own body and ascending to glory. Thus we need to keep the vision of his Kingdom before us, for it is at the heart of the Gospels, the good news of his Resurrection.

ENCYCLICAL LETTER - FRATELLI TUTTI - AN OVERVIEW OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS ON FRATERNITY AND SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP

Link: http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html

CHAPTER 6: DIALOGUE AND FRIENDSHIP IN SOCIETY

Dialogue is respectful, strives for consensus, and seeks the truth. Dialogue opens the way to a culture of encounter so that encounter becomes a passion, a desire, and a way of life. Those who dialogue recognize, befriend, and respect other persons. Approaching, speaking, listening, looking at, coming to know and understand one another, and finding common ground: all these things are summed up in the one word "dialogue" (FT 198).

Cont'd...

PARISH PRIEST Fr Joel Peart
PARISH SECRETARY: Mary Peeris
PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL
CHAIR: Michelle Robertson
COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Domenica Ashworth;
Timothy Boyle
Margaret Bradley
Adrian Daly
Moira Di Cesare
Karen Frost
Russell Lew-Kee
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OFFICE HOURS:
Tue - Fri; 9:30am to 2:30pm
MASS TIMES: No Public Masses at
this time
RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION):
by appointment
WEDDINGS: By appointment
**FIRST RECONCILIATION,
FIRST COMMUNION,
CONFIRMATION:**
Parish Secretary (9457 1066)
LEGION OF MARY: meeting on
Zoom All Welcome. contact Sue
mob 0499260206.
PARISH PILGRIM STATUE OF MARY:
Statue not in circulation until
further notice mob Sue
0499260206
**ST JOHN'S CATHOLIC PARISH
PRIMARY SCHOOL:**
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HALL HIRE:
Contact parish office during
hours.

PARISH PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we the parishioners of St John's are grateful for all we have received from the men, women and children of our past. Help us to cherish and maintain our parish heritage. Most of all, enable us to be people who welcome the stranger, the needy, the sick and the lonely. Like St John, our patron saint, may we be people who love others, as your Son Jesus, asked us to do. We make this prayer, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

....CONT'D

A country flourishes when constructive dialogue occurs between its many rich cultural components: popular culture, university culture, youth culture, artistic culture, technological culture, economic culture, family culture and media culture (FT 199).

Authentic social dialogue involves the ability to respect the other's point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and concerns (FT 203). If society is to have a future, it must respect the truth of our human dignity and submit to that truth. A society is noble and decent not least for its support of the pursuit of truth and its adherence to the most basic of truths (FT 207). Relativism always brings the risk that some alleged truth or other will be imposed by the powerful or the clever (FT 209).

In a pluralistic society, dialogue is the best way to realize what should always be affirmed and respected apart from any ephemeral consensus. There are certain enduring values that make for a robust and solid social ethics (FT 211).

The dignity of others is to be respected in all circumstances, because human beings possess an intrinsic worth superior to that of material objects and contingent situations. This requires that they be treated differently (FT 213). Life is the art of encounter. Pope Francis has repeatedly invited us to build a culture of encounter capable of transcending our differences and divisions. This means working to create a many-faceted polyhedron which represents a society where differences coexist, complementing, enriching and reciprocally illuminating one another, even amid disagreements and reservations. This also means finding ways to include those on the peripheries of life (FT 215).

The word "culture" points to something deeply embedded within a people, its most cherished convictions and its way of life. To speak of a "culture of encounter" means that we, as a people, should be passionate about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone. This becomes an aspiration and a style of life. The subject of this culture is the people (FT 216).

The joy of acknowledging others implies the ability to recognize other people's right to be themselves and to be different. A realistic and inclusive social covenant must also be a "cultural covenant", one that respects and acknowledges the different worldviews, cultures and lifestyles that coexist in society (FT 219). A cultural covenant eschews a monolithic understanding of the identity of a particular place; it entails respect for diversity by offering opportunities for advancement and social integration to all (FT 220). Such a covenant also demands the realization that some things may have to be renounced for the common good (FT 221).

PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Sandra Ashton, Hubert Paul Parsons, Bernadette Ebert, Brett Sutterby, Elizabeth Sheppard, Carl Mc Carthy.

ANNIVERSARY: Stephen Smith, Kevin White, Alan Ingram.

PRAYER FOR THE SICK: Pauline Hewatt, Giovanni Mirabella, Patrick Morel, Sam Palmieri.

*Names on the sick list remain for six weeks, unless otherwise advised.
Please submit any items for the newsletter, including sick, recently deceased and anniversaries, by **Thursday morning**.*



VINNIES CHRISTMAS APPEAL: Christmas is approaching and our Parish would normally be asking for food and toy donations to provide Christmas hampers to our Vinnies community. This year, because of COVID-19, we are asking for parishioners and our school community to assist us with monetary donations. The money will be used to buy food and gift vouchers to be given to our vulnerable families. We are requesting that this be done by the 11th December, so we can deliver the vouchers in time for the recipients to shop for Christmas. Could you place your donations in an envelope, clearly marked "Vinnies Donation", and place it in the chute next to the front door of the Parish House, please. We thank you for your continuing support towards the St John's Vinnies Christmas appeal.

ST JOHN'S WALKING GROUP: is getting back together again on this Monday 23rd November leaving from outside the church in Yarra Street at 9am. For further information or to register please ring Jan on 0423 478 504.

COVID-SAFE MASSES AT ST JOHN'S: Inside the church Tuesday to Friday at 9am, Saturday at 9am & Vigil mass at 6pm. Sunday 9am & 10am. Email at heidelberg@cam.org.au or call parish office Tuesday to Friday on 9457 1066 between 9:30am and 2:30pm to make a booking.

PARISH CONTRIBUTIONS: Thank you to all who have continued to support the parish through this time. You can also give your contribution by using the link on the parish web site (bottom left) or by using our parish bank account details are Account name: St John's Catholic Parish, BSB: 633 000 Account Number: 138400957. Please indicate purpose of donation in the comments sections.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT? – CHRIST THE KING

This week's liturgy marks the end of the liturgical cycle. Next week begins the new year with the season of Advent. The liturgy is celebrated as the Feast of Christ the King – reminding us of a very imperial model of church and theology that reflected the structure of the Roman Empire and later, Feudal Europe. To have this reading on the feast of Christ the King is a powerful reminder of how Jesus envisaged the Kingdom of God. For Jesus, the Kingdom was not a rule of power and status but a rule of justice and peace for even the lowliest. It is an apt conclusion to the liturgical year.

STANDING BEFORE THE LORD NOW

The Gospel to conclude the Church's year appropriately evokes the great judgment instituted by the Shepherd-King at the end of time. The Christian tradition, especially in art (Michelangelo's painting in the Sistine Chapel) and music (Dies Irae), has often depicted the scene in terrifying literalness.

We may not today feel bound to such a literal understanding of imagery and motifs taken from the apocalyptic Jewish worldview of Jesus' day. But we have to recognize that what the Gospel wishes to communicate with great seriousness is that the final outcome of one's existence is irreversibly determined by the attitude and action one adopts in regard to fellow human beings here and now.

Nothing is said about correctness of faith, or the need to be free from, or to have obtained forgiveness for, all kinds of sin. The sole determinant is whether one has acted with care and compassion for people in various situations of need. Here the "greatest commandment of the law"—the twin love of God and of one's neighbour (22:36-40)—and the sense of Jesus as "Emmanuel" ("God with us" [1:23]) receives its most radical extension. The one who sits upon the throne as Judge, has so identified with even "the least" of his "brothers and sisters" that effective compassion shown or not shown to them has been shown or not shown to him.

There is no need to wait for the Son of Man to come in judgment; every time one encounters a fellow human being in need one already stands before the Judge and King.

Fr Brendan Byrne SJ



SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT – MATTHEW 25

This week's gospel passage comes as the third in a sequence of passages that make up Matthew Chapter 25. The chapter addresses the gospel's intended audience who were caught in a time of uncertainty. Many had expected the promised return of the Lord within their lifetime and had seen the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 CE as a sign that the end of days was approaching. The three gospel passages speak of continuing to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom and the need to act in a way that works to bring about the reign of God in the world.

FIRST READING

Ezekiel 34:11-12. 15-17

The Lord says this: I am going to look after my flock myself and keep all of it in view. As a shepherd keeps all his flock in view when he stands up in the middle of his scattered sheep, so shall I keep my sheep in view. I shall rescue them from wherever they have been scattered during the mist and darkness. I myself will pasture my sheep, I myself will show them where to rest – it is the Lord who speaks. I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall watch over the fat and healthy. I shall be a true shepherd to them.

As for you, my sheep, the Lord says this: I will judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and he-goats.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Psalm 22:1-3. 5-6

RESPONSE: The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.

Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.

R./

Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit.

He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.

R./

You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.

My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing.

R./

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.

In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever.

R./

SECOND READING

1 Corinthians 15:20-26. 28

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of all who have fallen asleep. Death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man. Just as all men die in Adam, so all men will be brought to life in Christ; but all of them in their proper order: Christ as the first-fruits and then, after the coming of Christ, those who belong to him. After that will come the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, having done away with every sovereignty, authority and power. For he must be king until he has put all his enemies under his feet and the last of the enemies to be destroyed is death. And when everything is subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subject in his turn to the One who subjected all things to him, so that God may be all in all.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David!

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Matthew 25:31-46

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left. Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?" And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me." Next he will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me." Then it will be their turn to ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?" Then he will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me." And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.'

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION PRAYER

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.