



The Parish of Saint Anthony Glen Huntly

74 Grange Road, Glen Huntly VIC 3163

☎ Telephone: (03) 9569 2099

✉ glenhuntlycaulfield@cam.org.au

www.cam.org.au/glenhuntlycaulfield

ABN: 70548 570 366

Homily at Mass 13th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C – 30 June 2019

Eleven young men and two Melbourne priests flew out from Tullamarine during the week. Their first stop is Rome, where they will have attended Mass at St Peter's celebrated by Pope Francis. During that Mass Pope Francis will give Archbishop Comensoli the Pallium – a long strip of wool, decorated with crosses. Archbishop Comensoli will be invested with the Pallium at Mass at St Patrick's Cathedral on Thursday 1 August. The Pallium is a symbolic vestment, a sign of the unity between Archbishops and the Holy Father. As he places it over his vestments, worn on his shoulders, the Archbishop is always reminded of his ministry as a shepherd; like Christ he carries all of us – sheep and lambs of Christ's flock – on his shoulders, carrying us through this life to the life of eternity of Heaven.

From Rome our young Melbourne travelers all make their way to Spain to walk the long road of the Camino to the city of Compostela and the Shrine of the apostle of St James. The Camino is an ancient pilgrim path – it goes back to the Middle Ages, to a time when brave pilgrims made their way to any number of great shrines sacred to Christians. The best of them all was – and remains – Jerusalem, as well as Rome and up until the Reformation, the shrine of St Thomas Beckett, the bishop martyr, at Canterbury in England.

Just picture them. Setting off together full of beans, full of energy, smiles, joking, perhaps a song or two, all of them feeling fit and healthy. But as they make their way, day after day, the demands of the pilgrimage begin to kick in. The heat of the sun – Europe is going through a hot summer, something like 40° most days. On their back each pilgrim carries all he needs in a backpack. Each night nothing better than dormitory accommodation, rooms shared with strangers, perhaps a primitive shower, the same clothes each day quickly rinsed out and left to dry overnight, fairly basic and plain food: the pilgrimage is certainly no gourmet experience. The pilgrimage also involves walking – day after day, mile after mile, one foot after the other. Even the best walking shoes won't save you from callouses, blisters, sore feet, even the occasional rolled ankle.

Today we pick up once again the Church's Ordinary Time. We've now finished a long stretch of fasting and feasting – Lent, the Easter season, the great feast days of Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi. And now Jesus turns his face towards Jerusalem and all that awaits him there: betrayal, trial, his Cross, death and burial, the Resurrection. He hits the ground running, and he expects his apostles and us disciples to keep up. Our Lord's goal is Jerusalem. Our goal is the new and heavenly Jerusalem where Christ is King and Lord, where God is worshipped in endless praise with the song of the angels, Our Lady and the saints.

But what is our experience along the way? A vital pit stop is this weekly meeting with our brothers and sisters, all of us pilgrims. We need Sunday Mass to encourage us, to nourish us, support us. We cannot live Christian life or aim for Heaven alone. We need our family the Church; we need the community life that we share together.

Along the way during Ordinary Time, we encounter the saints – men and women who have walked the pilgrim path already. We look to the apostles and Our Lady. We meet saints from early Christian history: We meet saints from every country, every century – even Mary McKillop born here in Melbourne. We learn from the saints so many individual ways to follow Christ – there are saints for priests like St John Vianney. There are saints for the young like St Aloysius Gonzaga and St Maria Goretti. There are saints for married people like Louis and Zelig Martin, the parents of St Therese. There are saints that come to our rescue like our good friend and patron St Anthony. There are friends who walk beside us and protect us like our Guardian Angel.

As our young Melbourne pilgrims walk along the roads of Spain towards Compostela there will be lots of conversations: chit-chat amongst themselves to begin with, and then perhaps conversations that go a bit deeper. The priests who are walking with them might be tapped on the shoulder for a private talk, a bit of advice, perhaps some spiritual direction, perhaps the question of vocation, even the sacrament of Reconciliation.

The Camino pilgrimage can be a reflection of the whole Christian journey, the whole of life encapsulated in just a couple of weeks. Conversation is part of our daily experience – topics that come up, ideas that call for thought and a response, deep sharing sometimes, a bit of advice and help and encouragement we seek from mum and dad, our priest, a wise friend. And daily conversation with God as well – that's what the saints call prayer.