



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 14th Sunday of Ordinary Time, Year C – 7 July 2019

A priest hospital chaplain once told me that he never went about his duties alone – he always carried the Blessed Sacrament with him. Perhaps all priests have this same sense as they go about their parish work each day. Visiting the sick, the priest may have the Blessed Sacrament with him, but he certainly would have the Holy Oil with him to administer the Anointing of the Sick. Wherever he goes – especially if it's a visit to the parish school – the priest is greeted “Good morning Father”: the title “Father” a constant reminder of the priest's special role as a father to all in the parish, especially the young. Priests always experience the warmest of welcomes when they visit the families of the parish – he gets to know them, and they have the opportunity to offer kind hospitality, share their lives and their homes, and perhaps ask a question or two, and receive advice and encouragement. As he administers the Sacraments – celebrating daily Mass, baptizing small children, hearing confessions, preparing young couples for marriage, bringing comfort to the bereaved and presiding at funerals – the priest knows that he is standing in Christ's shoes, he is there because the people of God look to Christ who is our Good Shepherd, Lord and Friend.

Today Jesus sends out his first disciples on a mission experience. He is giving them a trial run, as they visit towns and villages to share the Gospel as agents of peace, ambassadors of Christ. What Jesus calls them to do is a job description for the daily work of priests and disciples of Christ still today. The Gospel of peace is a Gospel of hope, joy, comfort, freedom. Christians are not just do-gooders, nor is our faith just a set of platitudes, happy sayings backed up with a few songs we sing together at Sunday Mass. On Easter Sunday churches in Sri Lanka were blown up and Christians young and old killed. That terrible news was well reported by Australian media. But during the week, I read about a similar attack on a cathedral in the Philippines last January. Perhaps you've also heard about other acts of terrorism visited on churches overseas. A friend who lives in France told me that not a week goes by without fires being set in churches in towns and villages throughout France and not only Notre Dame in Paris.

At Mass here each weekend, we are glad to see a number of university students. How do you find life on campus? What's the atmosphere like there? How easy is it to sustain Christian faith, to keep your peace of mind, to feel that you are not alone in what could be – I'm sure – a fairly anti-Christian if not hostile environment? Leading up to the same sex marriage survey, all of us know that in many work places people were under all sorts of pressure. A fellow I know who works for Australia Post told me that each morning for months and months his daily email was filled with propaganda about gay marriage. No doubt Qantas employees experienced the same thing. This sort of thing can be depressing and wearying. It can also work to wear us down and to make us feel that we are the odd man out, that we don't fit in in our modern 21st century amoral and confused society.

“Let your first words be peace to this house.” That’s us – agents of peace, missionaries of mercy, our arms outstretched in welcome, our hearts over-flowing with compassion. But we can also feel anything but peaceful or merciful when everything that we know to be right and true is challenged or dismissed: that we can be made to feel that we are anything but compassionate, welcoming or open when in fact our religion calls us to be patient, generous, kind. To respond to opposition with love. To find answers in prayer. To draw renewed strength and light from God’s Word and the support we receive from our weekly Sunday Mass, as God gathers his holy people, and feeds us with the Eucharist.

Gospel peace affirms our respect for life.

Gospel peace affirms the unique love of husband and wife in Christian marriage.

Gospel peace affirms that children are a gift, entrusted by God to loving parents to raise, educate and form in the ways of faith.

Gospel peace affirms the mystery of the Church, the Body of Christ, Christ’s living and saving presence in the world, Christ’s voice proclaiming his Gospel day by day.

Gospel peace is what we feel now, sheltered here in God’s House.

Gospel peace is the mission we receive and live as we go from Mass today, “glorifying the Lord by our life”.