

**The readings this week are linked by images of nature, water, rain, growing crops and harvest.**

In the **First Reading**, the prophet Isaiah compares the word of God to the rain falling on the world, which ensures a good crop and thus feeds the people.

Continuing this agricultural theme, the Psalm gives thanks to the Lord for his care for the earth. The whole world rejoices and sings at the abundant harvest.

For Paul, in the **Second Reading**, the whole of creation still hopes to be freed. All of us have the responsibility to be its good stewards.

The Lord, of course, is constantly at our side, helping us to achieve this. Using images from the countryside familiar to his listeners, Jesus tells the crowds who follow him a parable. Here God acts as a sower, scattering seeds freely on ground which is not always ready or able to receive it. (**Gospel**)

This week, we might want to focus our prayers on the needs of our environment, the Lord's creation. We might pray for those who care for it, but also for those who seem intent on destroying it.

**REFLECTION.** How am I feeling today? I reflect on this. Whatever the answer, I take a deep breath and invite the Lord to be with me as I pray. Perhaps I take comfort in knowing that he, too, prayed this psalm many times. I read the psalm slowly, stopping when a line 'speaks' to me.

The psalmist praises God for his care of the earth. I ponder. How often do I petition the Lord, rather than praise him and give thanks? Looking at my life, I may realise how great God's influence has been.

Even if I live in a town, surrounded by concrete buildings, I can perhaps visualise meadows covered with flocks and valleys decked with wheat. They are the 'fruits of the earth and work of human hands' we celebrate in the Eucharist: God and people operating in close harmony. If I can, I express my gratitude in my own words.

I may pray for all those who do not realise how much we have been given and who destroy our environment, cutting down forests, culling wild animals for easy gain. May they come to see the harm they are doing. As my prayer comes to an end, I reflect on what I can do, in practical terms, to show how much I appreciate the Lord's wonderful creation. *Glory be ...*

**REFLECTION.** Today's Gospel is the familiar parable of the sower. Here we pray the shorter version, but the whole text is worth reading and pondering later.

I settle down to pray. Perhaps I have a lit candle nearby to remind me of Christ, the light of the world. I may try to put aside my everyday concerns by listening to some gentle, relaxing music.

In time, I read the story, perhaps several times. I try to put myself in the scene. Maybe I am part of the large crowd surrounding Jesus. How do I feel when he stands up and gets into a boat? I listen intently to him.

Maybe I have a garden or even a small plant pot on my windowsill, where I have tried to sow and grow some seeds. How far can I relate to the experience of the sower?

Perhaps I imagine that I am the soil on which the seeds are sown. What am I like? Am I a rich, well-manured loam, or a very thin, rocky topsoil? Are there other plants already growing there? I ponder. I may come to realise that the quality of my soil has changed over the years. Who or what has led to these changes?

I speak to the Lord freely, from my heart, and tell him what my deep longings are just now. I listen to what the Lord says to me, and take my leave with a slow, grateful sign of the cross.

*Prepared by St Bueno's Outreach in the Diocese of Wrexham*

*Image: depositphotos.com*



### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

#### GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you,  
we bless you,  
we adore you,  
we glorify you,  
we give you thanks for your great glory,  
Lord God, heavenly King,  
O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
Son of the Father,  
you take away the sins of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

#### FIRST READING *Isaiah 55:10-11*

*A Reading from the prophet Isaiah.*

Thus says the Lord: 'As the rain and the snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating, so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.'

The Word of the Lord.

#### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

*Psalm 64:10-14*

*R. Some seed fell into rich soil and produced its crop.*

1. You care for the earth, give it water, you fill it with riches.  
Your river in heaven brims over to provide its grain. R.

2. And thus you provide for the earth; you drench its furrows; you level it, soften it with showers; you bless its growth. R.
3. You crown the year with your goodness. Abundance flows in your steps, in the pastures of the wilderness it flows. R.
4. The hills are girded with joy, the meadows covered with flocks, the valleys are decked with wheat. They shout for joy, yes, they sing. R.

#### SECOND READING

*Romans 8:18-23*

*A reading from the letter of St. Paul to the Romans.*

I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us. The whole creation is eagerly waiting for God to reveal his sons. It was not for any fault on the part of creation that it was made unable to attain its purpose, it was made so by God; but creation still retains the hope of being freed, like us, from its slavery to decadence, to enjoy the same freedom and glory as the children of God. From the beginning till now the entire creation, as we know, has been groaning in one great act of giving birth; and not only creation, but all of us who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit, we too groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free.

The word of the Lord.

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

*IS 3:9. Jn6:68*

Alleluia, alleluia!  
Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:  
you have the message of eternal life.  
Alleluia!

#### GOSPEL

*Matthew 13:1-9*

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.*

Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside, but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the beach, and he told them many things in parables.

He said, 'Imagine a sower going out to sow. As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up straight away, because there was no depth of earth; but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Listen, anyone who has ears!'

The Gospel of the Lord.

#### CREED

I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
*(All bow during these two lines)*  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again  
from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting.  
Amen.

# ST PAUL'S PARISH

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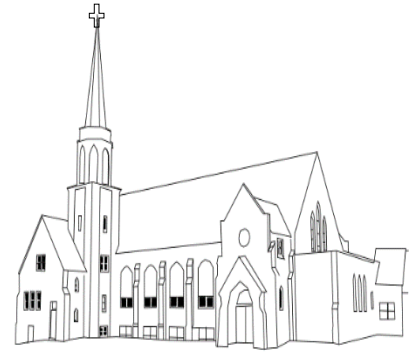
Parish Priest: Fr. Raymond Bugeja

Parish Secretary: Mrs Loretta Meilak

St Paul's School Principal: Mrs Maria Mercuri

School Tel: 9354-8970

*St Paul's Parish strives to create an environment where children are safe, respected and cared for.*



## PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

Mon - Friday: 10.30am to 3.30 pm.

## MASSES:

**Weekends: Saturday:** 6:00 pm (vigil),  
8.00pm (Neo Catechumenate)

**Sunday:** 9:00am, 10.30am (Italian),

**Weekdays: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri:** 10.00 am.

**CONFESSIONS:** Saturdays - 11am and 6.45pm

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY:** 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of month-9am Mass

**ADORATION:** First Friday of the month: 10.30 am to 12pm

**BAPTISMS:** Sundays at 12.00 pm.

**BAPTISM PREPERATION MEETINGS:** Once Monthly

**MARRIAGE PREP MEETINGS:** Wed 8pm or Sat 4pm

**WEDDING REHEARSALS:** Mon or Fri – 8pm

**COMMUNION TO THE HOUSEBOUND:** Thurs & Fri.

**COMMUNION TO SICK at Bupa & Northern Gardens:**  
every 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month.

**ANOINTING OF THE SICK:** 2 times a year (Lent & Advent).

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** 10am

**YOUTH & KIDS GROUP:** 4th Friday of the month.

**ITALIAN PRAYER GROUP:** Wednesdays at 10.30 am

**Legion of Mary:** Monday mornings at 10.30 am.

**Knights of the Southern Cross:** Monday mornings.

**ANNUAL ITALIAN FEASTS 2020:**

**St Joseph:** Sun 15<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm.

**Way of the Cross:** Good Friday at 7pm.

**St Anthony:** Sun 14<sup>th</sup> June at 10.30am

**St Gregory:** Sun 15<sup>th</sup> Nov at 10.30 am.

**Our Lady of Mt Carmel:** Sun 29<sup>th</sup> Nov at 2pm.

**St Lucy:** Sun 6<sup>th</sup> Dec at 2pm.

## JOKE OF THE WEEK:

Day 43 of social  
distancing:

Struck up a conversation  
with a spider  
today. Seems nice.  
He's a web designer.

## IMPORTANT NEWS:

**CHURCH CLOSURE, AGAIN.** This is a very brief message to you all regarding the Premier announcement regarding new restriction levels across Metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire.

Before sending updated Guidelines to you, we are waiting for clear directives as to the boundaries Parishes will fall under for the return to Level 3 Restrictions.

For those who sit clearly within metropolitan postcodes along with those in Mitchell Shire, Level 3 states:

- If you live in a restricted postcode you cannot attend a religious service. Online streaming of a service is allowed.
- Weddings in restricted postcodes can have a maximum of five people (the couple, two witnesses and the celebrant). You can travel to a wedding outside a restricted postcode. The restrictions apply based on the location of the wedding.
- Funerals held in restricted postcodes will be restricted to 10 mourners plus people required to conduct the funeral. You can travel to a funeral outside a restricted postcode. The restrictions apply based on the location of the funeral.
- Churches in restricted postcodes are closed for private worship or religious ceremonies (except for live streaming, Weddings and Funerals as directed).

There may be further directions to come, and we will endeavour to get these and all information to you as soon as possible.

With kindest regards,

**THANKSGIVING ENVELOPES.** Your continued support has been always appreciated, but especially, in these times that affected financially, everyone, including the parish. There is also the opportunity for cashless online payments via CDFPay for Parishes online payment portal. This site enables you to make quick and easy online thanksgiving payments. The St Paul's Catholic Church, Coburg site is live and can be found via this link: <https://secure.artezpacific.com/registant/donate.aspx?eventId=52905&spid=5635719>

Alternatively, the Parish Bank Details for Direct Debit are:

BSB: 083-347

Account Number: 67541 0884

Account Name: St Paul's Catholic Church

Thank you for your continued support of the parish during this difficult time.

Peace.

## WE PRAY FOR

We pray for those in our local community who are **sick** and vulnerable: may they see in us the followers of a God who heals and serves.

**Let us pray for those who have died**, Miranda Caramarco, Giuseppe Zampaglione, and those whose anniversaries we remember at this time: Marcello, Romano Passarini, Pompeo Paterno, that they may enter the peace of God.

## STEWARDSHIP:

***“The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word but then the cares of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit.” (Matt 13:22)***

Does the lure of riches and material goods choke God out of your life? Are you so caught up in earthly activities that you have no time for God? Gratitude and generosity are virtues that we should strive to do on a daily basis. Every decision we make either takes us one step closer to God or one step further away. What we receive at Mass every Sunday should be shared with others all the other days of the week as well.

## REFLECTION:

***“Full of Hope” But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold. (Matt 13:8)***

It might be easy to be discouraged these days. Many decry the direction of this nation and the world. Others say that they are unhappy with the Church. Still others are disappointed with their own lives and feel that God has not answered their prayers. Are things everywhere getting worse? I find it hard to judge. One could point to many things pro and con. But there is one thing I know for certain: The end will come for all. Time is short. Then God's Word will bring forth great fruit—thirty-, sixty-, one hundredfold—as today's gospel tells us. Despite what is happening around us, our hearts should be at peace and our vision full of hope. The seed that God has planted in our hearts will yield an abundant harvest.

***Msgr. Stephen J. Rossetti***

## PRAYER OF THE WEEK

Lord help me to remember that nothing is going to happen to me today that You and I together can't handle.

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK –

**Positive Thinking, and self-fulfilling prophecies and actions**

If you expect nothing, you're apt to be surprised. You'll get it.  
*Malcolm Forbes.*

## VOCATION VIEW

The seed of a vocation seeks fertile surroundings. Sometimes it gets stepped on, sometimes it gets choked, sometimes it lacks depth. But other times it is nourished by loving and caring friends.

## NEWS IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

**HEART OF LIFE 'Emotions as Guardians of our Soul'** - Reflection event via Zoom, Saturday 18 July 2020, 10am-1pm. Facilitated by Rev Dr Peter Bentley, this event offers participants the opportunity to explore which emotions are inviting us to pay attention to our authentic self. We will focus on some of the core emotions that regularly arise in everyday life and see how they contribute to alerting us to key areas of transformation. Cost \$25. Bookings and payment via Trybooking at <https://www.trybooking.com/BKJOS>. For more information, contact [holsc@bigpond.com](mailto:holsc@bigpond.com) or tel 9890 1101.

Dear friends in Christ,

Today's decision to place metropolitan Melbourne and the Mitchell Shire areas back into Stage 3 lockdown for the next six weeks from 11.59pm Wednesday 8 July is sobering news. It is truly disheartening, and will bring renewed distress to so many families and individuals.

These words from Psalm 22 have come immediately to my mind (words that were on the lips of Jesus as he was crucified): My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. (Ps 22.1-2)

Yet, I want to encourage you in grace, trusting in the abiding closeness of our loving Lord, who promised to be with us always.

In returning to Stage 3 restrictions in those specific areas, sadly the public celebration of Mass, which we have only just re-commenced, will need to go back to live-streaming; churches will need to be closed again to any private prayer; and the numbers allowed for funerals and weddings will be severely limited.

We expect specific details around the restrictions will be released by the civil authorities over the next 24 hours, and will be communicated to you as soon as possible. I ask for your patience in the meantime.

Now is a time for attentiveness to the care of one another. In the face of our own despondency and fears, our fatigue and anxieties, may we learn to hold firm in faith and hope, and experience sustaining moments of love. As the writer of the Letter to the Hebrews encouraged: Let us be concerned for each other, to stir a response in love and good works. (Heb 24.10)

Friends, while the Psalmist knew struggle and pain, there were also words of confidence that came from the heart: In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted, and you delivered them. To you they cried, and were saved; in you they trusted, and were not put to shame. (Ps 22.4-5)

May our Lord Jesus be with you, and may His Blessed Mother accompany us all.

With every grace and blessing, I remain, Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,

Archbishop Peter Comensoli

07.07.'20