



Sunday 28th April 2024

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Steven Rigo **Assistant Priest:** Fr Ananda Maddineni MSFS

**Parish Pastoral Associates:** Sandy Starbuck & Sr. Margaret Sapsford

**The Partnered Parishes of:**

**St. Mary's**

204 Grimshaw St.,  
Greensborough, 3088

**Parish:** 9435 1543 **Presbytery:** 7036 9329

**Email:** [Greensborough@cam.org.au](mailto:Greensborough@cam.org.au)

**Website:** [www.cam1.org.au/greensborough](http://www.cam1.org.au/greensborough)

**Secretaries:** Lisa Leahy

**Mass Times**

**Tuesday to Friday:** Mass 9.15am

**Saturday:** Vigil Mass 6.30pm

**Sunday:** Mass 8.00am, 10.00am & 5.00pm

**Reconciliation Times**

**Saturday:** 5.45pm-6.15pm before evening  
Mass

**Parish School Principal**

Mrs. Marisa Matthys **Ph:** 9433 4000 **or Email**  
[principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@smgreensborough.catholic.edu.au)

**Sacred Heart & St Peter's**

25 Gipson Street,  
Diamond Creek 3089

**Parish:** 9401 6361

**Email:** [DiamondCreek@cam.org.au](mailto:DiamondCreek@cam.org.au)

**Website:** [www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek](http://www.pol.org.au/diamondcreek)

**Secretary:** Pat Guatta

**Mass Times**

**Wednesday & Friday:** Mass 9.15am

**St Peter's: 1st Saturday** 7.15pm

**Sunday:** Mass 9.00am

**Reconciliation Times**

**Friday:** 9.45am to 10.15am

**Acting Parish School Principal**

Mrs Gina Murphy **Ph:** 9438 1590 **or Email**  
[principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@shdiamondcreek.catholic.edu.au)

**St. Thomas the Apostle**

251 Diamond Creek Road,  
Greensborough Nth 3088

**Parish:** 9434 7373

**Email:** [greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au](mailto:greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au)

**Website:** [www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth](http://www.pol.org.au/greensboroughnorth)

**Secretary:** Lisa Leahy

**Mass Times**

**Tuesday & Thursday:** Mass 9.15am

**Saturday:** Vigil Mass 6.00pm

**Sunday:** Mass 10.30am

**Reconciliation Times**

**Saturday:** 9.30am to 10.00am

**Acting Parish School Principal**

Mrs Jo Nolen **Ph:** 9434 4565 **or Email**  
[principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au](mailto:principal@stgreensboroughnth.catholic.edu.au)

Please send any bulletin contributions to [greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au](mailto:greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au) by 12noon Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend bulletin. Thank you



**SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: I am the vine, you are the branches.**

*Almighty ever-living God, constantly accomplish the Paschal Mystery within us, that those you were pleased to make new in Holy Baptism may, under your protective care, bear much fruit and come to the joys of life eternal.*

*Fifth Sunday of Easter Year B, 28 April 2024.*

<https://www.australiancatholics.com.au/scripture-5-easter-year-b-2024>

Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne

[www.cam.org.au](http://www.cam.org.au)

St Mary's Facebook page

[facebook.com/stmarysgreensborough/](https://facebook.com/stmarysgreensborough/)



**Our Partnered Parishes respectfully acknowledge the Wurundjeri people who are the traditional custodians of this land and we pay respect to the Elders past and present.**

## PARTNERED PARISHES NEWS

### GOOD SHEPHERD SUNDAY 2024

On Saturday 4 May at 10.00am at the University of Divinity, Catholic Theological College, 278 Victoria Parade East Melbourne, there will be an information session on the Permanent Diaconate. Your help is needed to promote this vocation within your parish. Perhaps there are some male parishioners, married or single, between the age of 30 to 60 years, whom you could speak with concerning this call to ministry.

**LAMP:** LAMP Group invite you to attend **An evening with Sr Kerrin Caldwell SGS**, who will speak on the topic “Ageing and Awakening God’s surprising Gifts”.

*It will be held on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May at 7:30 pm in St Mary’s Gathering Space.*

*There will be a light supper afterwards. If you wish to attend, please ring or text Mary on 0412 813 512 before May 10<sup>th</sup>.*

**AUDIO DIVINA:** Audio-divina is a form of prayer, what you might call “sacred listening.” It is a lectio-divina inspired Podcast that features high-quality, well researched reflections provided by world-renowned biblical scholar Rev. Professor Francis J. Moloney SDB AM. TheRightDirt web project will be hosting this podcast, free of charge and which can be found on Spotify, Apple, and Amazon, as well as here at TheRightDirt website <https://therightdirt.com.au/>

*The Audio Divina will be posted each Wednesday night Melbourne time.*



## A PARTNERED PARISHES EVENT

There is much unrest in the world – Ukraine, Palestine, Israel, the traumatic and senseless stabbings in Sydney, protests across many countries, the lingering presence of COVID and long COVID resulting in ongoing health concerns for our communities, the damage we continue to inflict on our earthly home and the list is growing. The impact of this reality has each of us unsettled, afraid, searching for signs that will bring change – for the common good – signs God has not forsaken his people. Perhaps this feeling of uncertainty and vulnerability is similar to how the disciples were feeling the night of Pentecost.

They too were experiencing a sense of abandonment, their Teacher was gone, what were they to do?

They called upon God to come to their aid – through their prayer God’s Holy Spirit came upon them and their whole being filled with a powerful burning desire to go out and reassure people – God is with US! – His Son and our Savior is with us! Let us do the same – beginning with Prayer. With the support of the Partnered Parishes Pastoral Council of Sacred Heart, St Thomas’ and St Mary’s, I am asking those who would like to join me in planning our local “Fiat” in this Year of Prayer to say YES!. This event will be across our 3 communities and I would welcome an opportunity to meet with MANY! who will bring their creativity, their Spirit filled gifts to plan a wonderful prayer service for Peace.

Please contact me through the Parish Office – 9435 1543 or email me [sandy.starbuck@cam.org.au](mailto:sandy.starbuck@cam.org.au) and we will find a time to meet convenient for all.

### FAMILIES IN SPIRITUAL HARMONY



Calling all tweens, teens, young adults and families with children preparing for First Eucharist and Confirmation.

Are you looking for a place for you and your children to meaningfully connect with other Catholic families? We have the pleasure of introducing Families In Spiritual Harmony (**FISH**). This group has been created by families for families; with the objective of creating a spiritual safety-net for our youth and fostering our catholic community. It is open to everyone, and is for the benefit of all three of our parishes. We will focus on and encourage faith formation, reflection and discussion in these sessions – all whilst having some fun! These sessions will be held every Friday, from 7.00pm to 8.30pm.

On the first Friday of every month, we will also have

The First Friday's Devotion, along with confession, and all are welcome to join in.

We hope to see you all soon.

**Fr Ananda Maddineni**

### Join us for Fiat—A Weekend of Prayer Friday 31st May—Sunday 2nd June 2024

For the second year running, our local communities of grace across the Archdiocese of Melbourne will unite for a weekend of prayer from Friday 31 May to Sunday 2 June 2024.

Beginning with the Feast of the Visitation on Friday and concluding with the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ on Sunday, parishes, movements and communities are invited to host a time of prayer.

In March 2023, over 50 parishes and communities took part in the inaugural Fiat weekend meditating on Mary's 'yes' to the Lord. Inspired by Mary and Elizabeth's example and the immense gift of the Eucharist, Fiat 2024 promises to be a period of great grace and closeness to the Lord, as we ponder our own 'yes' as individuals, as local communities of grace, and as the local Church in Melbourne.

Fiat may be a time to explore various forms of prayer, particularly with Mary and the Eucharist. Click on the link below to find a regularly updated list of ideas and resources to help plan your local community's special time of prayer.

Parishes, communities and movements are invited to register their time of prayer via the link <https://melbournecatholic.org/fiat>

#### Your 'How to' guide to the Year of Prayer

On 24 December 2024, the Holy Door of St Peter's Basilica in Rome will open, commencing the Jubilee Year. To prepare for this year of celebration, Pope Francis invites us into a Year of Prayer throughout 2024, reflecting on the Jubilee's theme, 'Pilgrims of Hope.'

We have developed a practical guide, drawing on a resource from the Holy See's Dicastery for Evangelisation and our local context, to help parishes celebrate the Year of Prayer well over the coming months.

<https://melbournecatholic.org/uploads/documents/Year-of-Prayer-guide.pdf>



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SACRED HEART & ST PETER'S



**PARISH OFFICE HOURS:** *Tuesday & Thursday 10.00am-1.00pm, Wednesday & Friday 8.30am-2.30pm.*

Please send bulletin contributions by 12.00pm on Wednesday. Thank you

**WEEKDAY MASSES:** *While Fr Steven is on annual leave Sacred Heart have Liturgy of the Word 9.15am each Wednesday and Fr Ananda will celebrate 9.15am Mass on Fridays.*

**BAPTISMS:** we pray for Dahlia, Fiadh, Kaia, Lianah and Lenny and who will be welcomed into our community in April.

**MOTHER'S DAY RAFFLE:** prize is a patchwork quilt which is displayed in the church- tickets \$2 each or 6 for \$10.

**WOMEN'S DINNER Friday 3rd May @7pm Sacred Heart Parish**

Thank you to those who have already booked and confirmed by payment. Thanks also for all the generous donations for the raffle. Please remember to bring cash on the night to purchase raffle tickets. For catering purposes closing date is Wednesday April 24th. If you haven't already forwarded dietary requirements please do so by contacting either number below. Booking can be made by [www.trybooking.com/CQICQ](http://www.trybooking.com/CQICQ) correct payment at Parish Centre or contacting the numbers listed below. BYO Drinks and glasses. Donations for raffle can be left at Parish Centre also.

All enquiries Patricia 0418992488 Tonina 0419154524

**SACRED HEART MEMORIAL GARDEN PLAQUES:** The cost of supply and installation is \$350. Please contact Marg Farrell via email at [ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com](mailto:ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com) or leave a message with Pat in the Parish Office if you would like a loved one remembered in this way.

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:** Next PPC meeting is on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Suggestion box in church or email: [ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com](mailto:ppcdiamondcreek@gmail.com)

**SENIOR MOMENTS:** Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 12pm Lunch at Bridges Restaurant Hurstbridge

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> May 12pm Lunch & Scrabble in the Parish Centre.

**HALL HIRE:** Sacred Heart Hall is for hire. For all enquiries regarding cost and terms and conditions contact Alison Pieper on 0417571535 or [alisonpieper52@gmail.com](mailto:alisonpieper52@gmail.com)

### **ROSTERS:**

**Cleaning: Week 30<sup>th</sup> April** F. Geoghegan, P. Leonard

**St Peter's Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May 7.15pm**

Reader: B. Flynn

Commentator: R. Nicolaisen

**Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:**

*Mary O'Dea, Bernie Bourke, Lucy & Pat Cassin, Mervyn Bourke, Antonietta Nesci, Grace Wein, Chris Padget, Pam Collins, Katie Pittle, Catherine Leonard, Joan Moran, Bridie Burke, Thomas Keenan, Jacob Draper, Kath Rickard.*

**Recently deceased:**

**We pray for those who have died and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of April that they may enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:** *Frank Laffy, Gino Ongarello, Karen Ongarello, Frank Nihill, Grace Leonard, Freda Kennedy, Alan Ridsdale, Jane Coyle, Elaine Chapman.*

## **EVENTS ELSEWHERE**

### **CATHOLIC THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE Austin Cooper Symposium**

Catholic Theological College invites you to a hybrid symposium in honour of the Rev Professor Austin Cooper OMI AM (1931 – 2023) founding Master of CTC, historian, formator, and ecumenical friend. The symposium will feature speakers exploring Fr Austin's various contributions to Christian scholarship and formation, and as spiritual friend to so many.

- Cost: \$60 (lunch included) or \$30 (online attendance)

For more details, please see the attached flyer or [click here](#) to go to our website.

### **Engaging Your Faith online seminar series.**

Nine stand-alone sessions on a range of themes will be presented by members of our lecturing staff.

- These sessions would be an ideal opportunity for lay leaders and other interested people in your parish to explore the possibilities offered at CTC for personal, theological, and spiritual development.

- Cost: \$25 per session: General audience.

For more details, please see the attached flyer and bulletin notice, or [click here](#) to go to our website.



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST MARY'S

*Vision Statement "To be a vibrant Christian community engaging with the world"*

**PARISH OFFICE HOURS:** *Tuesday 11am-3pm, Wednesday 8am-12.00pm, Thursday 9am-3pm, Friday 11am-3pm*

**SANDY'S OFFICE HOURS:** *Tuesday & Wednesday 9.00am-5.30pm and Friday 9.00am-5.30pm*

Please send any bulletin contributions directly to [greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au](mailto:greensboroughnorth@cam.org.au) or [greensborough@cam.org.au](mailto:greensborough@cam.org.au) by 12noon Wednesday to ensure inclusion in the weekend combined bulletin. Thank you

**WEEKDAY MASSES:** *While Fr Steven is on annual leave we will have Liturgy of the Word at 9.15am on Tuesday and Friday and Fr Ananda will celebrate 9.15am Mass on Wednesday and Thursday.*

*On behalf of Fr Steven, Sandy and myself, we welcome Libby as a new member of our Administration team at St Mary's.*

*Libby will be working on Tuesday: 11.00am-3.00pm, Thursday: 9.00am-1.00pm and Friday: 11.00am-3.00pm*

*If you pop into the office please introduce yourself to Libby and we look forward to working together.*

*Lisa*

**SACRISTANS URGENTLY NEEDED** to set up the altar, offertory gifts and church before Mass and pack up after Mass. If you can help, even occasionally, to provide this service for our priests and our parishioners,

Please contact Marian [mariantacey@optusnet.com.au](mailto:mariantacey@optusnet.com.au)

**PROFESSOR SISTER MARY COLOE** an accomplished Scripture scholar and Presentation sister, will be delivering the homily at the 5 pm Mass at St. Mary's on Sunday May 5th. All are invited.

**WORKING WITH CHILDREN'S CHECKS:** It is important that all volunteers have an up to date WWCC, as our parish records are currently being audited.

**LADIES AUXILIARY:** Thank you to everyone who supported our plant Sale. Once again thank you to Benny, Paul, Barbara & Joe for transporting plants to gathering space. Great work Phil in propagating so many plants. Winter Warmers stall after Masses w/end 4th./5th May. Enquiries Maureen 9435 5906 Lucy 9435 6990

**MASS OF ANOINTING:** A Mass of the anointing will be celebrated at St Mary's Parish at 11.00am on Thursday 30th May, followed by a light lunch.

*For catering purposes if are attending could you please contact Geraldine on 0438 148896. All welcome.*

**MUSICIANS AND SINGERS:** Because of a copyright issue affecting all parishes we can no longer embed music into our slides on the data projector (until further notice). So you will notice that at some of our Masses there will be no music at all. Consequently, we are looking for volunteers who can play an instrument together with anyone who could lead the congregation in song at the 8am Mass or two Sundays at the 10am Mass. Please contact Megan via email [mamitchem@gmail.com](mailto:mamitchem@gmail.com) for further information.

**HOLY ROSARY** is recited every Thursday morning after 9.15am Mass.

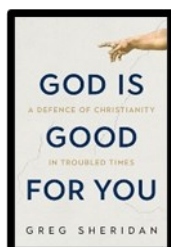
**THE PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY:** The prayer shawl ministry meets in the Gathering Space 10am - 12pm on Mondays. Enquiries: Maureen Leahy—0407 687 517; Anne Fleming— 0409 234 326.

**A LOST PROPERTY BOX** is on the lower shelf of the bench in the gathering space.

*Be informed, inspired and entertained*

## Book of the week

**God is good for you by Greg Sheridan (239 SHE).**



At a time of crisis for Christianity in the West, this book shows just why we need faith in our world. It shows us why Christianity is so vital for our personal and social well-being, and how modern Christians have never worked so hard to make the world a better place at a time when their faith has never been less valued. It carries a vital torch for Christianity in a way that's closely argued, warmly human, good humoured yet passionate, and, above all, convincing.

[cloud.collectorz.com/247780](http://cloud.collectorz.com/247780)



St Mary's Parish Library

**PLEASE PRAY FOR**

**Baptisms:**

***Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners & friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:***

Peter Mejak, Barbara Fernandez, Christos Pittas, Jocelyn Tibayan, Margaret Schreenan , Olivia MacDonald, Helen Quigley, Lorraine Alexander, Harley McAleer, Pat Milczakowsky, Rosie Bray, Peter Miles, Leon Gray, Amparp Sarmiento, Fr Terry Kean, Carlos Manabat, Maureen Carr

**Recently Deceased:**

***We Pray for those whose Anniversaries occur this week, may they enter joyfully into God's Kingdom:*** Stiven Novak, John Quigg,

Henry Coles, Conrado Pena, Barry Patmore, Flo Carver, Elizabeth Jowett, Agapito M Escanilla, Bob Bentley, Joe McGrath, Margaret Sequeira, Brian O'Connell, Duley Cranenburgh, Armando Borjal, Paul Farrugia, Eileen Pitts, Dorothy Rosewall, Franciszek Wojdyla, Fr Ambrose (Sam) Byrne SJ, Anna McManus, Sally Maskell, Lucy Boyd, Ted Moylan, Marjorie Howard, Rhonda Wilton, Doug Risson, Noel Devoy, Jenni Nailer, Max Parker, Pearl & Glenn Davis, Ruby Redmond, Rhonda Wilton, Margaret O'Malley, Reg Coyle Snr., Max O'Brien, Benjamin Potter, Gabriel Noel, Damian McDonald, John Archer, Heath Barratt, Kevin Manning, Daniel Rodgers, Joseph Monagle, Christopher Konda, Ada Ramos, Lenard Wright, Terry Hunniford, Hilda Schichmann, E.T. Mathew, Florizel Capuli, Lynda Furlong, Port Arthur Massacre, Honora Livy, Nellie Turner, Francesco Terminelli, Dan Quigley

**WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS**



“John the Beloved Disciple” course



“Moses - Beyond the Desert” course

Thank you for your prayers for my April mission to Goroka, Papua New Guinea with Fr Wahid Riad.

All went well, thank God.

There were many blessings experienced. The participants are eager to pass on to others what they have received.

Sandra Bishop

**JAMES**  
**Discerning**

**ZOOM course**

7 Tuesdays 7.30-9.00pm

April 23, 30

May 7, 14, 21, 28

June 4



The objective of the “James” course is to take a journey through the Letter of James, learning how to discern our own lives in the light of the Word of God.

It is not a comprehensive course on discernment, but rather an introduction, with some criteria in approaching the art of discerning.

Book before April 22 at: <https://www.trybooking.com/CQKNK>

Booking fee \$35, Concession \$25,

Overseas participant code: OVASEA



## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT ST THOMAS



**PARISH OFFICE HOURS:** *Tuesday & Friday: 8.00am-4.00pm Wednesdays 12.30pm,-4.00pm*

*Thursdays 8.00am-11.30am (Wednesday 8.00am-12.00pm & Thursday 12.00-3.00pm St Mary's)*

Please send bulletin contributions by 12.00pm on Wednesday. Thank you

**BAPTISMS:** Please keep in your prayers Olivia, Jude and Harvey who are being baptised later this month.

**WEEKDAY MASSES:** *While Fr Steven is on annual leave Fr Ananda will celebrate 9.15am Mass on Tuesdays and we will have Liturgy of the Word at 9.15am on Thursdays.*

**FUNERAL TUESDAY 30TH APRIL:** The funeral for Donie Lynch (Jean Lynch's husband) will be held on Tuesday 30th April at 2.00pm at St Thomas Church.

### **ST THOMAS PPC MEETING 17/04/2024**

- At our last Parish Pastoral Council meeting, Fr. Ananda shared a new initiative that will invite families from the three partnered parishes to attend a new program that will allow participant to explore deeper their catholic faith. St. Thomas Acting Principal shared that based on feedback First Communion will take place on Sunday's rather than at night.
- Feedback was given around the updated proposal to leasing parish land to open a Kindergarten after the previous proposal to open a childcare centre on site was declined by Nillumbik Council. The plans are about to be sent off to council for approval. If approved, the Kindergarten will be built during 2025 and opened in 2026.
- Further discussion was had about the future direction of the Parish Pastoral Council and its role in sustaining the parish.
- Planning for the celebration of St. Thomas the Apostle Church 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary continued.
- Next meeting 15th May 2024

New PPC email address: [StThomas.PPC@cam.org.au](mailto:StThomas.PPC@cam.org.au)

**BUILDING BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP – Change of Date:** Come up join us for a coffee and chat on **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May** at 1.30pm at Phoenix & Co, 285 Diamond Creek Rd Plenty. (Phoenix & Co is closed on Anzac Day). So I can book a table, please email [lilian.hobson@gmail.com](mailto:lilian.hobson@gmail.com) or text 0402 823 679. Everyone welcome! Lilian (on behalf of Marg).

### **25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEDICATION OF ST THOMAS THE APOSTLE CHURCH**

This year in August we will be celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Dedication of our beloved Church St Thomas the Apostle. This significant milestone calls for a memorable and joyous celebration befitting our shared faith and community spirit.

The Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) is seeking interested parishioners to form a small committee to bring together a celebration during and after 10.30am Mass on Sunday 18th August 2024.

This committee will be supported by the PPC and Liturgy Team and will be responsible for planning and organising the small festivities during and after mass on this special occasion. If you are interested and eager to contribute your talents and ideas to create a memorable event, we invite you to put your hand up to assist.

Let us come together as a parish community to honour the rich history and enduring spirit where we gather at St Thomas the Apostle. Please contact Lisa or Tim [stthomasppc@cam.org.au](mailto:stthomasppc@cam.org.au) if you are interested in getting involved.

Please contact Lisa or Tim at: [stthomasppc@cam.org.au](mailto:stthomasppc@cam.org.au) if you are interested in getting involved.

### **Roster for Weekend 4th & 5th May Saturday 6.00pm**

**Reader:** S. Mc Mahon    **Commentator:** J. Bohan    **Eucharistic Ministers:** M. Bedford, K. Salm    **Set Up:** Volunteer

### **Sunday 10.30am**

**Reader:** L. Hobson    **Commentator:** M. Bosco    **Eucharistic Ministers:** A. Kerr, C. O'Brien    **Set Up:** M. Bates

**St Thomas prayers are asked for the following Parishioners:**

**Our prayers have been asked for sick parishioners and friends that they may be healed & comforted during this time:**

*Miran Kasalo, Peter Kernjak, John Geretschlager, Dominic Cambareri, Fr Terry Kean, Dawn Ellis*

**We pray for those who have died recently including Marko Sabec and all those whose Anniversaries occur in the month of April that they may enter Joyfully into God's Kingdom:**

Mary Cho Nguyen, Prisca Rosario, Osvaldo Porcaro, Lina Betuna, Margaret Mc Carthy, Dino Bianchin, Bill Schultz, Brian Brown, Alessandro Sacchetta, Reg Cummins, Pat Hart, Iris Hartley, Joy Joseph, Roy Kilkenny, Anastasis Rendina, Sylvester Ellul, Rod Nettleton, Kathleen Jordan, Maria de Bartolo, Elaine Chapman, Shirley Bourke, Maria del Popolo, Rosa Alvaro, Dragan Zilic, Kaye Dixon, Therese Micallef



**Lectionary Art and Reflection by Jenny Close** The metaphor of the vine and branches has a hard message, but also a promise: if you are faithful to Jesus you will flourish, if not you will be rejected. This is one of the tough sayings of Jesus and one that openly declares the consequences of accepting or rejecting the message of Jesus. Fruit and fire are the images of promise and of threat in this message.

## Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year B

28 April 2024

### First Reading Acts 9:26-31

*He explained how the Lord appeared to Saul and spoke to him on his journey.*

When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea, and sent him off from there to Tarsus.

The churches throughout Judaea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.

### Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 21:26-28. 30-32. R. v.26**

*(R.) I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.*

or:

*(R.) Alleluia.*

1. My vows I will pay before those who fear him. The poor shall eat and shall have their fill. They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him. May their hearts live for ever and ever! (R.)
2. All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, all families of the nations worship before him. They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust. (R.)
3. And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him. They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come, declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn: 'These things the Lord has done.' (R.)

### Second Reading 1 Jn 3:18-24

*His commandments are these: that we believe and that we love one another.*

My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are the children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.

My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

### Gospel Acclamation Jn 15:4-5

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

*Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord;*

*my branches bear much fruit.*

*Alleluia!*

### Gospel Jn 15:1-8

*All who live in me, and I in them, bear much fruit.*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit all by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is like a branch that has been thrown away – he withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it. It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.'



### Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

We are too familiar with today's gospel. Christ is the vine and we are the branches, sometimes in need of a good pruning. But God's purpose is not to produce a perfect vineyard. It is to produce a full-bodied wine at the end of history.

There is a foretaste of this at every Mass. The wine we offer – 'fruit of the earth and work of human hands' – becomes the spiritual drink which best serves the purpose of our Heavenly Father. How does this happen?

For the Jewish people observing an animal whose throat is cut, it is obvious that the life drains out with the blood. 'Life' and 'blood' became synonyms. So, when the Jewish Jesus says of the wine in the chalice at the Last Supper: 'This is my blood', amongst other things he is saying: 'This is my life force, this is my very life given unreservedly for you.'

So, when we drink from the chalice at Holy Communion, the life of the Risen Lord courses through our bodies just as the sap of the vine courses through its branches. We share the same ultimate vitality so that our bodily existence builds into the Body of Christ. He becomes truly 'full-bodied' as the Divine Vignerone desires.

We could take a moment to pray that we respond to the pruning and the tending and the pressing by our Heavenly Father so as to contribute our distinctive character to the vintage at the end of history, the spiritual drink of the Kingdom of Heaven.

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