



THE CARMELITE

Parish of Port Melbourne and Middle Park
in the care of the Carmelites since 1882

*We acknowledge the Yalukit Willam Clan, the traditional owners and
custodians of this land. We pay our respects to them.
May we walk gently here.*

25th Sunday of Ordinary Time

20 September 2020

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

Greetings to you all!

This Sunday is the 25th Sunday of the Year so we are rapidly steaming towards the end of the liturgical year in December.

Life here in Melbourne is still painfully restricted and it is becoming more anxious-ridden for many of us. The more people I talk to the more disenchanted things seem to be becoming for the community with the Government and the Police force.

There appears to be an erosion of trust and confidence in institutions that we have traditionally supported and respected. The limitation on the rights of the community seem to be getting a deeper cynicism and anger and legitimate questions are not being answered with transparency and honesty. It is amazing that we need a royal commission into the Aged Care sector and the Hotel Quarantine debacle. You would think that people might be more understanding if they felt they were trusted with information and integrity and a bit of humility.

This erosion of confidence in the Government (at all levels) and the forces that are supposed to monitor safety and security like the Police (State and Federal) demands that these bodies need to act cautiously, with compassion, patience and humanity.

The ring of steel that is being set up around Melbourne speaks of a community that is being dictated to by fear and a presumption that people will do the wrong thing. Some do; however, most of us don't do the wrong thing. In fact, most people are very conscientious in doing the responsible things needed at this time.

As far as I can see the Government and the Police need to lighten up a little. Yes, their jobs are difficult and many people are stupid, thoughtless and negligent. But the majority in the community are reasonable people and they should be treated with respect and courtesy. My heart goes out to those in healthcare who, under

Both our Churches are fitted with a hearing induction loop. Please use the 'T' or other appropriate switch on your hearing aid. Please tell us if you experience any difficulty.

So the Landowner came to the market square of the town:

6am – he took the fittest and experienced

9am – he took the best of the rest

12 noon – he took the best of the rest

3am – he took the best of the rest

5pm – he took the dregs, the desperate, the unemployable

6pm – Wages: the last were the first to be paid, the first last. All got the same pay!

6:30pm – Murmurings, complaints, anger

7pm – Conflict resolution: The Landowner gives the facts

“Why be angry because I am generous?”

Reflection: The Landowner is God. Everyone is equal in God’s sight – but he has a special regard for the battlers, losers, the victims – at the wrong end of the social ladder.

“Let that mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, our Lord” (1Cor 2:16)

In Jesus we see the mind of the Father at work And in others too, Mother Teresa, Vincent de Paul, Mary McKillop How about us?



“The Port Melbourne/Middle Park conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society would like to say a big thank you to all our parishioners, who donated so generously to our Winter Appeal this year. We collected \$3,755 as a result, which is a fantastic achievement during these challenging times. Our conference continues to operate during these stage 4 lockdowns as we are an essential community service. We conduct phone interviews with our clients in the community and then drop off the material aid in their letter boxes or at their door step. All of this would not have been possible, if not for the work of our fantastic group of volunteers, without whose help and dedication we would have been struggling to continue with our good works during this pandemic”.

Spending Saturday with Saint Mary

Book Review:

Mary MacKillop’s Portland Years 1862-1866

by Bernard Wallace 2nd Edition

**** Stars/5

By Emily Rudov

I live my life in books. From one book pile to the next shaky hap-hazard castle-shaped book pile.

Between the despair and idle bouts of frustrated energy, Lockdown for me has been one rather fat and dusty reading pile that clutters and spreads itself, bursting across a series of bookshelves that spread and stretch across the hallway, the lounge room and almost every free inch of our small and cozy living space, when you come to our place you’re bound to get a couple of books with your cup of tea, as we are not in short supply, and they just keep magically appearing everywhere.

Between the yellowing historical romances, and all the reading I should do (but never do), between the prayer books and the Beatrix Potter’s, I discovered this gem last Saturday, which I had picked up four years ago (and forgot about), from one of my weekly trips usually on a Friday into the city for Mass and a book-buying, exploring adventure at The Central Catholic Bookshop right near Melbourne Central Station.. (ah..those were the days.. clutching my Starbucks perusing the bookshelves and discovering many bookish gems from Mother Teresa, Edith Stein, Biblical Theology.. and the list goes on and on...) those were the days when I would leave many dollars lighter but incredibly happy, grinning from ear to ear, ruminating on all the learning and faith journeys to be endeavored ahead..

So this short little gem (which can be consumed with a cup of coffee – as it is only 67 pages long) is all about the adventures that Saint Mary MacKillop enjoyed in her time as she lived in the coastal town of Portland, Victoria. For the purposes of this review, I will claim to be a local girl, as I was born and bred in the nearby coastal town of Warrnambool, Victoria, (which is about an hours drive from Portland), and I was always fascinated, absorbed really in the fact that a beautiful Saint lived and breathed and had adventures on a similar stomping ground to my own. Fast forward some 200+ years later, Portland has majorly

expanded since the four years our dear saint Mary spent there as Governess and Teacher to the little ones. It is interesting to note that the Glenelg Shire, promote a Mary MacKillop tour, sharing all the sites where she lived and worked and shared meaningful times in the country locale. (On a personal note: this Mary MacKillop tour is something I have added to the rather long list of things to do once out of Stage 4 Lockdown..)



To get to the point, this is a wonderful depiction of a young Mary MacKillop, in the early years of her twenties, as she finds herself as a Governess to her aunt's children, her cousins, Sarah, Bella and Till, and boy, did poor Mary have her hands full with her charges! I would recommend you read on, to find out just how our darling Mary dealt with her precocious and sometimes difficult cousins, about Mary's letters to Father Julian Edmund Tenison Woods pleading for advice on how to maintain

a domestic harmony and equilibrium with the girls, and about her becoming solidified in her spiritual vs. temporal vocation to be a nun, to be a Christian educator, to help, assist and educate the poor, lowly and disadvantaged. What struck me as a reader, was the tension and difficulties she had within her family, how her family were dependent upon young Mary to make a living to sustain them in their difficulties, and the tumultuous relationship she had with her father Alexander, and how she handled it all with such grace and fortitude.

Expert Historian Bernard Wallace, outlines the riches of Mary, her discipline, her vision – even as a young woman in her twenties to set up 'Bay View House, Portland, Establishment for Young Ladies,' with her sisters and mother, to help educate women who really couldn't afford an education, whilst all the time she worked at the local Catholic school also, educating the young of the day. What touched me were her vitality, energy, and her passion for her faith, to bring the faith to those who were really struggling and really needed it. It was consoling to read about her very human and personal struggles – her financial struggles (not making enough money from teaching to pay for the Bay View House rent – and having to negotiate with Landlords), her family struggles (with her father who had a passion for theology, but also had a way of making life incredibly difficult for Mary and her sister Lexie, as you will no doubt read about within this little gem – and how grief played a devastating part in the early chapters of Mary's life – losing her father Alexander, her sister Maggie to Rheumatic fever at 29, her brother John at 22 from Tetanus, Lexie (who was a Good Shepherd Sister) at 33, and her brother Peter who was a Jesuit, passed away at the young age of 21. All these formative experiences shaped the Mary we know and love. The

book is rich with stories about the local characters and personalities of the country town, friends of Mary, career-troubles she encountered, and photos, illustrations, and information about her faith-life, the church she attended All Saints Church Portland, her friendships with the priests of her Parish, and later biographical information about Mary's journey from young woman to Superior General of the Josephite Order, to the beautifully celebrated Australian Saint that we love.



Basically I could gush about this inspiring little book forever and spill all the saucy details, but I won't. I will clamp my mouth shut and just humbly retreat to my dusty little book pile in search of the next gem, in the hope of an encounter of more Mary MacKillop-like inspiration. May we carry a little piece of Mary with us all.

Book:

Mary MacKillop's Portland Years
1862-1866

by Bernard Wallace
2nd edition

First published 2010

Second edition 2016

Published by B.A. Wallace

PO Box 325

Portland Vic 3305

Printed by E. Davis & Sons Pty Ltd

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Purchased at:

Central Catholic Bookshop

322 Lonsdale Street

Melbourne, Victoria, 3000

Australia

Ph: (03) 9639 0844

**Please note that the bookshop isn't open at the moment for in-store sales but they are available via phone and their website for orders and enquiries from Monday to Friday 11am-4pm. During the Coronavirus pandemic, I have purchased a few book orders with the Central Catholic Bookshop and I am happy to note that the orders were a pleasant and speedy delivery process and a joy to receive.



We proclaim a crucified Christ
1 Cor 1:23

16 September 2020

To the People and Clergy of the Archdiocese of Melbourne

Dear friends in Christ,

As we now welcome the beginnings of easing in COVID-19 Restrictions in Victoria, I would like to take this opportunity to write to you, the Clergy and people of our Archdiocese. It is great news that regional Victoria will, from tonight, move into the Third Step of the Roadmap to reopening, which includes our parishes located outside the metropolitan zone. However, we have a long way to go.

The deprivation in sacramental life has been a profound loss for our people. As well as all the other sufferings of the Pandemic, the sense of estrangement from the Eucharist has been a particular struggle for Catholics. The Mass is our primary means of gathering together in faith; it is the source and summit of our Christian life, and its life-giving nourishment and healing is dearly missed.

In the midst of this loss, I am grateful to our Priests and Deacons for continuing to serve the faithful, for sharing a sacramental ministry even under strict conditions, and for being alongside our people and their loved ones in times of death and grief. Thank you for your faithfulness.

All of us are anxious to open church doors, but I want to emphasise our need to be creative in the ways we do so, especially with the thousands of children who have been waiting for Sacraments of Initiation. Countless Catholic families are awaiting Baptism, Reconciliation, Holy Communion and Confirmation for their children. Adults, too, have longed to be received into the life of the Church. We shall be exploring possibilities such as outdoor liturgies in parish and school settings to facilitate these crucial events of grace and welcome.

Throughout the pandemic, I have been advocating directly with the Government, reminding authorities continually of our respectful compliance with each stage of restrictions, and seeking a fair consideration in what is permitted. The Catholic

community throughout the pandemic has been constructive and positive. We have, and continue to act in a mature way, caring for the safety and vulnerability of Victorians facing great risk. Thankfully the signs of driving down COVID numbers are looking good at this moment and Catholics join other people of faith in giving thanks for this outcome and working to ensure the steps ahead do not take us backward.

Now, it is essential that the Government does not treat faith communities as an afterthought to the opening up of other sectors. Our churches are locations for communities of care and essential service, and must be treated fairly and reasonably.

Practically speaking, I have been in discussion with the Premier to thank him for overturning the restriction on spiritual ministry to the sick and the dying, and have assured him that the Catholic Church is able to manage restrictions (including good hygiene, face coverings, social distancing and density requirements). If pubs and restaurants can open, then places of worship should be open under similar conditions and numbers.

If case numbers track well, I expect we will see larger outdoor gatherings in regional Victoria become possible over the next few weeks, and proportionate opportunities for gathering in metropolitan Melbourne. I am hopeful that this may occur sometime in October, which would be a deeply welcomed improvement on the current Roadmap indications. If we can open our churches, even for outdoor gatherings, then we should open them.

The Deputy Premier and the Multicultural Affairs Minister are conducting discussions this month through the Multifaith Leaders Forum. The Archdiocese will be contributing to these meetings. In addition I will continue to engage with the Premier and Ministers directly on the Church's need for opening doors, carefully and safely.

Be assured of my ongoing closeness in prayer and concern. I have heard your cry, and I am working to bring your voice to the authorities. The Lord has promised he will be with us always; let us place our hope in Him.

With every grace and blessing, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli
Archbishop of Melbourne

Social Services Sunday, 20th September – a time to reflect and give thanks

On 20th September 2020, we mark Social Services Sunday within the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne. On this day we are invited to give thanks and pray for all who stand with and provide support to those who are marginalised and vulnerable within our communities. We recognise with deep gratitude, those working within Catholic Social Services Victoria's 45 member organisations, the 7,000 staff and 17,000 volunteers, who together, serve more than 200,000 people in need each year. We also give thanks for all in our parishes, who are so often at the forefront of providing practical support and care to those in need within their local communities, and beyond. We call to mind the 2020/21 Social Justice Statement brought out recently by the Australian Catholic bishops, *To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today*, and so draw your attention to a recent event hosted by CSSV, *Counselling and Therapeutic Support in a Time of COVID*, which provided an opportunity to become more familiar with mental health services, and how to practically reach out for or point to assistance. Parishioners will find the resources in this article helpful.

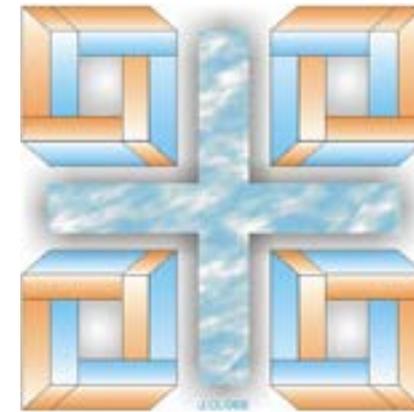
Prayer for Courage and Compassion

Compassionate God,
Your unconditional love for all
inspires our hearts and empowers our actions
for those who are most vulnerable.
May we boldly and humbly serve one another
and be steadfast in our work for justice for all people.
Keep our hearts open to the joys and the hopes of our world,
and our ears ready to hear your call
to truth, justice and reconciliation.
Let us continue to draw inspiration and strength
from those, like St Mary MacKillop,
on whose shoulders we stand.
We gather in Jesus' name
to be nourished and to move forward together
in hope and joy.
Amen.

LITURGICAL ART

Reflection by Artist- Jenny Close

The Kingdom of heaven is like . . . 'a topsy-turvy environment in which 'the last will be first and the first will be last'. The Kingdom, the way Jesus describes it here, is similar to an optical illusion, where earthly logic is confounded. Some of the values we take for granted are turned upside down and our priorities are rearranged, for example generosity has precedence over equity. This parable would be seriously problematic for labour and capital alike in today's world.



REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

The film *Forrest Gump* was once described as the 'battler's triumph'. On one level it was about how the last will be first. This story picks up where the film left off. *Forrest Gump* dies and goes to heaven. On arrival St Peter informs him that there are three questions he has to answer before he can enter.

- 1) What days of the week begin with the letter T?
- 2) How many seconds are there in a year?
- 3) What is God's first name?

Forrest answers straight away, 'Shucks, there are two days in the week beginning with the letter T - Today and Tomorrow.' St Peter replies,

'That's not what I was thinking, but you have a point. How about the next one?' 'I think the only answer can be twelve.' 'Twelve?' St Peter asks. 'Shucks, there's gotta be twelve: January 2nd, February 2nd, March 2nd. . . .' 'Hold it', interrupts St Peter, 'I see

where you're going with this. Let's go to the final question. "Sure," says Forrest, it's Andy! 'Andy?' exclaims an exasperated St Peter. 'OK, I can understand how you came up with your answers to my first two questions, but just how in the world did you come up with Andy as God's first name?' "Shucks, that was the easiest one of all," Forrest replied. 'I learned it from the hymn . . . ANDY walks with me, ANDY talks with me, ANDY tells me I am his own.' St Peter opened the pearly gates and yelled, 'Run Forrest, run!'

In today's Gospel, in which the first labourers are paid the same wage as the afternoon workers, what the early birds didn't reckon on was that they could have come much later and got the same deal.

We would cynically call the afternoon workers, 'Johnny-come-latelies' and chances are if we were confronted with the same situation we would be with the complainers. This story was important to the early Church because generations of Jews waited and longed for the Messiah and, like the first workers, they were the first to respond to the call of Jesus and to work in the field of his Kingdom. For some of the early Jewish-Christians, including St Peter, it came as a surprise that the Lord was calling Gentiles to the life and work of Jesus' Kingdom as well.

We can imagine that it rankled some of the early birds to see these Johnny-come-latelies taking charge of the Christian mission. This wasn't how it was supposed to be! This story, then, is a wonderful commentary on how fickle we are and, luckily for us, how extraordinarily generous God is. What we see in ourselves and others is only a glimpse of what God is like. God is so much more: more loving; more forgiving; more compassionate; and more just.

And because God is so much greater than anything we could ask or imagine, we are constantly surprised at how he turns our expectations, our fears and predictions upside down. We constantly look for God in the big and spectacular and he comes to us poor, naked, sick, in prison and hungry. God speaks through the most surprising people at the most surprising times.

That's why those people who have decided that God can only work in certain ways, places, people, institutions and times so often end up at the end of the line when it comes to religious wisdom. Michael McGirr in his excellent book, *Things You Get for Free* argues that there is a crisis of belief today, but that it's not the way we often think. In a brilliant turning of the tables, McGirr says that the crisis of belief is that people inside the Church sometimes cannot believe that people outside its traditional structures can experience the love of Jesus. God loves and guides the Church, but is not bound by it. God is busy about making sure those who might be last have a chance to come in first.

Rather than resent this, however, let's thank God for being bigger than we are and for being just to all of us, no matter when, or how, we get the Word.

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READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

FIRST READING

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.
Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.
Let him turn back to the Lord who will take pity on him,
to our God who is rich in forgiving;
for my thoughts are not your thoughts,
my ways not your ways – it is the Lord who speaks.
Yes, the heavens are as high above earth
as my ways are above your ways,
my thoughts above your thoughts.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: PSALM: 144: THE LORD IS NEAR

Ps 144:2-3. 8-9. 17-18. R. v.18

Response: *The Lord is near to all who call him.*

I will bless you day after day
and praise your name for ever.
the Lord is great, highly to be praised,
his greatness cannot be measured.

Response

The Lord is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in love.
How good is the Lord to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

Response

The Lord is just in all his ways
and loving in all his deeds.
He is close to all who call him,
who call on him from their hearts.

Response

SECOND READING

Philippians 1:20-24. 27

Christ will be glorified in my body, whether by my life or by my death. Life to me, of course, is Christ, but then death would bring me something more; but then again, if living in this body means doing work which is having good results – I do not know what I should choose. I am caught in this dilemma: I want to be gone and be with Christ, which would be very much the better, but for me to stay alive in this body is a more urgent need for your sake.

Avoid anything in your everyday lives that would be unworthy of the gospel of Christ.

GOSPEL

Matthew 20:1-16

Jesus said to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner going out at daybreak to hire workers for his vineyard. He made an agreement with the workers for one denarius a day, and sent them to his vineyard. Going out at about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the market place and said to them, "You go to my vineyard too and I will give you a fair wage." So they went. At about



the sixth hour and again at about the ninth hour, he went out and did the same. Then at about the eleventh hour he went out and found more men standing round, and he said to them, "Why have you been standing here idle all day?" "Because no one has hired us" they answered. He said to them, "You go into my vineyard too." In the evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his bailiff, "Call the workers and pay them their wages, starting with the last arrivals and ending with the first." So those who were hired at about the eleventh hour came forward and received one denarius each. When the first came, they expected to get more, but they too received one denarius each. They took it, but grumbled at the landowner. "The men who came last" they said "have done only one hour, and you have treated them the same as us, though we have done a heavy day's work in all the heat." He answered one of them and said, "My friend, I am not being unjust to you; did we not agree on one denarius? Take your earnings and go. I choose to

pay the last-comer as much as I pay you. Have I no right to do what I like with my own? Why be envious because I am generous?" Thus the last will be first, and the first, last.'

**THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF PORT MELBOURNE AND MIDDLE PARK
IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING A SAFE AND NURTURING CULTURE
FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR PARISH.**