



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.*

24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

13 September 2020

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

Greetings in the Lord!

Am sitting here on Thursday morning: the sun is shining; the birds are frisky and the 1st roses in the memorial gardens at SJ's and OLMC have bloomed; people are scared and the roads are eerily quiet. Nevertheless, the Lord is good and, thankfully, patient.

Some details for the funeral of Charles Portelli: Requiem Mass will be celebrated at OLMC on Tuesday at 10:30am. I think the Mass is being live-streamed through White Ladies so if you want to participate, login to their website and look for Charles. His real first name was Carmel, in case you get confused like I did at Caulfield Hospital.

This week's Gospel is about forgiveness and the relentless quest each of us needs to pursue in learning to forgive those who have hurt us. It's not easy sometimes; in fact, it can be dreadfully difficult especially if our memories of it are recent or the old wounds have been festering for a long time.

Many years ago I experienced a horrible situation where I was hurt very deeply. I must admit that I harboured the anger and resentment for years and my behaviour was abominable to that person. Needless to say, I was far from a model of forgiveness and even now I occasionally get flashbacks to the pain I experienced and also to the guilt I felt about hanging on to a form of hatred.

But one thing I've learned is to pray for the person who hurt me. I find myself often asking the Lord to help me see that person through his eyes, and this applies to all the people who occasionally give me the "irritants". I could use another word but I better not!

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.

OUR PARISH

Churches

St Joseph's
cnr Rouse & Stokes Streets
Port Melbourne

Our Lady of Mount Carmel
cnr Richardson & Wright Streets
Middle Park

Sunday Masses

6.00pm (Sat) Mount Carmel
9.00am Saint Joseph's
10.30am Mount Carmel

Reconciliation

after 9.00am Mass Saturday

Carmelite Parish Office

274 Rouse Street
Port Melbourne Vic 3207

Telephone 03 9681 9600
Facsimile 03 9681 9608

After Hours Emergency
0408 754 283

Email parish@sj-mc.org.au

Parish Website www.sj-mc.org.au

Carmelite Website
www.carmelites.org.au

Office Hours 9am-4pm (non COVID times)

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
(CLOSED TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS)

Parish Priest

Fr Hugh Brown OCarm

Parish Secretary

Anne Ierardo

Pastoral Life Co-ordinator

Michael Murray

Finance Officer

Shane Harrison

Facilities Manager

Ken Chaffer

Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School

Bank Street
South Melbourne Vic 3205

Telephone 03 9699 2928
Principal Simon Millar

PARISH OFFICE

IMPORTANT NOTICE RE THE PARISH OFFICE

Given the change in circumstances due to Stage 4 restrictions, the Parish Office will **NOT** be opened at all until the end of the **"state of disaster"**.

This means that no-one will answer phones and emails as regularly however, in a genuine emergency, please ring me on

0408 754 283

If I can't answer at the time, leave a message and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

WE REMEMBER

If you would like someone remembered in our sick list, recently deceased or anniversaries, then please contact the parish office by email: parish@sj-mc.org.au or by phone 9681 9600 and leave a message.

Those who are sick or ill and in need of prayer: Baby Luca, Thecla Broderick, Paul Caghi - Cao, Kelly Edwards, Frances Farrugia, Rose Fennell, Gary Finn, Maurice Fitzpatrick, Michael McGowan, Marino Mihocic, Sylvia Poliakova, Charles Portelli, Jim Power, Rafal Rafalski, Andrew Ratel, Michael Ristevski, Lucie Carmen Rodriguez, Lorraine Rohan, Keith Ryder, Helen Stanley, Jim Sullivan, Maureen Toohey, Troy Vincent, Julie Wain, Sr Barbara Walsh RSG, Jonathon Wil, Tami Yap.

Those whose have died recently: Charles Portelli, and all those who and all those affected by COVID_19.

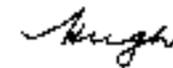
Those whose anniversaries of death occur about this time: Carmelite, James De Laurier.

IN OUR PARISH

One of the things I find about the Sacrament of Reconciliation is that when I have someone tell me about their own anger and "hatred" for another person, I always give them the penance of praying for that person. Not a few "Hail Mary's", though those don't go astray, but actually asking the Lord to let them see that person as He sees them.

The trouble is, of course, that God loves them, and I sometimes wonder whether God has any taste or not about people. The refreshing answer is, "NO!" God loves infinitely, kindly and sees beyond all the faults and scars and woundedness that each of us carries. Now, doesn't that give you the "irritants"? The point is that one day God will look us in the eye and say "Did you forgive so-and-so? Hopefully each of us can answer "Yes, Lord, I did the best that I could!"

Happy forgiving and keep safe.



Compassionate God

*Compassionate God,
in a world which is broke,
in communities which are divided,
with lives that are wounded -
we turn to you for healing.
We open our hearts to you
and receive encouragement;
we listen to your word
and find meaning;
we stretch out our hands to you
and find wholeness. Amen.*

Jan Sutch Pickard, Acorns and Archangels
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ARCHDIOCESE

**Archdiocesan Hotline for
COVID-19**

In light of changing advice and circumstances, please keep visiting this webpage: www.cam.org.au for quick access to the latest news, information and resources. Should you require any further information specific to a parish concern relating to COVID-19 and the guidelines produced by the Archdiocese, please contact the newly established service desk for our Priests and Parishes:

Phone: 9926 2469

Email: covid-19@cam.org.au

This phone line and email will be monitored Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm, by Archdiocesan staff.

THANK YOU

We understand that these are very unusual circumstances and difficult times for many people both emotionally and financially.

Thank you to our parishioners who have been continuing to send in their thanksgiving envelopes. If you would like to continue supporting our parish you might like to consider changing your contributions to EFT, direct debit or credit card deductions. Please contact the parish office to organise this.

Reflection by Artist- Jenny Close

Being forgiven is aligned to being freed from slavery in this week's gospel reading. Forgiveness and freedom are key values in 'the kingdom', where the chains of guilt and debt cannot withstand the force of persistent, heart-felt forgiveness. In the real world (especially in war-torn countries), forgiveness is a radical and even outrageous option. True forgiveness is a divine attribute, but one which is within our grasp – according to Jesus.



REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Charged with the rape and murder of a young woman, it only took the jury twenty minutes to return a guilty verdict for the three men in the dock. The courtroom erupted in cheers as the verdict was read out.

As the men were being led out of the courtroom the mother of two of them ran toward the dock yelling, 'I think what you've done is despicable, but I want you to know that I love you.'

Outside the courthouse, the media were expecting the parents of the victim to advocate capital punishment for the criminals. Instead, they said they wanted to forgive the perpetrators of this vicious crime. Everyone listened in disbelief.

No one at that courthouse was running away from the heinous nature of the crimes, nor from the punishment the men deserved, but the parents involved chose to focus on either love or forgiveness.

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us we should forgive each other seventy-seven times. Numbers are not randomly used in the Bible. 1, 3, 7, 12 and 40 all have specific meanings. To number something as seven is to describe it as being perfect. When we hear Jesus use this phrase we recall the story in the Book of Genesis of the seven days of creation where, on the seventh day, God looks at the result of his creative love and sees that it is very good. Jesus, using some shorthand, says that not only is forgiveness good, but that it is a creative act that gives life to the world and gives glory to those who exercise it.

In the 5th Century St Augustine said that forgiveness was like a mother who has two wonderful daughters named justice and compassion. In using such a metaphor Augustine knew that forgiveness was not a once-off event, it was a process that involved other virtues as well. Jesus teaches a similar lesson in today's Gospel, where he uses the image of the King settling his debts. Because the King is just, compassionate and forgiving, he rightly expects that, in turn, his steward will be so as well.

It's easy to be forgiving in the big picture. We can preach strongly about war, peace and reconciliation. It's quite another to forgive those closest to us. Sometimes the hardest place to be compassionate and just is our own home. If we are not speaking to a husband, wife, child, parent, sibling or friend then today's Gospel has a strong challenge right where we live.

Part of the problem is that we could have accepted the film Love Story's motto, 'Love means never having to say you're sorry'. This idea is many things, but it's not Christian. For followers of Jesus the exact opposite is true. We seek opportunities to forgive and ask for forgiveness.

Jesus doesn't tell us that forgiveness is easy, just necessary. To forgive someone in our family, our workplace, our circle of friends or in our Church is not to pretend that a sinful situation did not occur, but to face it head on and demand justice with compassion.

For when we stand before God with the weakness and sinfulness of our own life, God will not settle old scores, take revenge and exact retribution. Rather God will be perfectly just and completely compassionate. When we choose forgiveness over revenge, and love over hate we begin to glimpse God's creative goodness coming to perfection in us, because forgiveness is a participation in the very heart of God.

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READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

FIRST READING

Ecclesiasticus 27:30 – 28:7

Resentment and anger, these are foul things,
and both are found with the sinner.
He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord,
who keeps strict account of sin.
Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you,
and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.
If a man nurses anger against another,
can he then demand compassion from the Lord?
Showing no pity for a man like himself,
can he then plead for his own sins?
Mere creature of flesh, he cherishes resentment;
who will forgive him his sins?
Remember the last things, and stop hating,
remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments.
Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will;
remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: PSALM: 102: THE LORD IS KIND AND MERCIFUL

Psalm 102:1-4. 9-12. R. v.8

Response: ***The Lord is kind and merciful;
slow to anger and rich in compassion.***

My soul, give thanks to the Lord,
all my being, bless his holy name.
My soul, give thanks to the Lord
and never forget all his blessings.

Response

It is he who forgives all your guilt,
who heals every one of your ills,
who redeems your life from the grave,
who crowns you with love and compassion. **Response**

His wrath will come to an end;
he will not be angry for ever.
He does not treat us according to our sins
nor repay us according to our faults **Response**

For as the heavens are high above the earth
so strong is his love for those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west
so far does he remove our sins. **Response**

SECOND READING

Romans 14:7-9

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

GOSPEL

Matthew 18:21-35

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'

'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought

him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me", he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said. "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.'



**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.**