



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.*

21st Sunday of Ordinary Time

23 August 2020

My dear Parishioners and Friends,

Hope all is well with you.

Today we are printing a COVID-19 Prayer, courtesy of Ann Rochford. On Wednesday evening I was called to emergency at the Alfred for an elderly lady who was COVID positive. Sadly, she died just before I arrived but I did manage to spend some time with her and her son and daughter-in-law. Please pray for her and her family among the too many people who are dying as a result of this virus.

Also, thanks to Marie Callaghan for sending through this wonderful reflection.

Keep safe and well.

Blessings.

Reflection from Marie Callaghan

Like Joan Cusack (Parish Newsletter reflection, 2nd August) I too was welcomed into the Catholic faith as an adult. I had been a parishioner of Our Lady of Mount Carmel for some years when my first child Veronica started preparing for her first communion and we were simultaneously organising the baptism for our third child, Alice. I mentioned to Father Shane O'Connor at the time that maybe I should join the church as I had long felt the desire to receive communion with my husband Frank and our family.

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, Kevin, Brodie, Paul Caghi - Cao, Kelly Edwards, Rose Fennell, Gary Finn, Maurice Fitzpatrick, Michael McGowan, Marino Mihocic, Sylvia Poliakova, Charles Portelli, Rafal Rafalski, 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: All those who and all those affected by COVID_ 19.

Those whose anniversaries of death occur about this time: Carmelites, Brocard Leybourne, Charles Haughey and Tarcisius Licari.

IN OUR PARISH

He welcomed me to the church with open arms. An RCIA program had just started so I was invited to start the program. Like Joan, I had experienced a strong Presbyterian upbringing. I still fondly look back on the very many songs we sang at Church (We did sing a lot of Onward Christian Soldiers and always finished with The Lord is My Shepherd).

I completed the RCIA program and received the sacraments of Baptism, my First Communion, followed by my Confirmation at the Easter Vigil, during which my daughter Alice was baptised at the same mass. Coincidentally just two years later my son Frank Junior was baptised at the very same Easter Vigil. So, as you can see, Easter is a very special time for our family. Even as I write this, I am filled with happy memories of Anne Ierardo singing Water of Life as the font was filled with holy water for the mass. Two decades later I still find myself humming this very song.

In moving from my Presbyterian upbringing to the Catholic faith the difference that stands out to me, is the sacraments. I find the sacraments in the church reassuring. The Eucharist can be strengthening and the Reconciliation at times of stress can calm you and provide direction and reassurance.

My must-go-to-masses are The Annual Carmelite Mothers Mass and The Remembrance Mass in November. My own mother passed away when I was very young and so I always enjoyed attending the mass, hearing the wisdom of other Mothers as I raised my family. As time has gone on, I, like many of us, have experienced other significant losses of family and friends. These masses continue to be a special time for me to reflect, pray and thank God for their presence and guidance in my life.

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.

COVID-19 Prayer

So far, I have spoken about the calming reassurance and guidance I receive from the sacraments, and from the various masses at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, but how to find this same sense of calm in our current way of socially distanced living? Well for me, the gem I have discovered during this time was my daughter Grace's graduation present she had received from Loreto Mandeville Hall, a beautifully bound book "Finding Gods Traces" written by Michael McGirr.

There is a reading, reflection and prayer for each day of the year and I have been enjoying discovering a new entry each morning. One recent reading that stood out to me was Mark 9.7 – ***"Then a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and a voice came from the cloud, 'This is my son who I love. Listen to him'".*** The reflection from this day was about the first Atom Bomb (6th August 1945) and it ended with a quote from Albert Einstein who was horrified by this use of science and wrote ***"The most beautiful thing we can experience is the Mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science. He to whom the emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead: his eyes are closed."***

This quote seems particularly poignant in the context of today's strange and worrying times. Maybe in this time of forced home retreat we can find solace in the simple pleasures we may have forgotten. An old record, a former hobby picked back up, an adventurous new recipe, gardening and tending to nature, relaxed walks at sunset, and enjoying the company of those we are in lockdown with. These are the things that have brought me a sense of calm these last few months. It is in this calm that I reflect and pray for those doing it tough at the moment. Those who live alone, those in inadequate housing, those experiencing financial challenges and those feeling overwhelmed by this situation. I pray that they find their own source of calm and steadiness as we all find our own way of getting through this challenging time.



Loving and Caring God of us all,

May we, who are experiencing the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia and are coming to terms with a new reality, remember the words of the scripture "Be still and know that I am God".

May we, who as adults struggling to process what is happening in our world, remember children who are fearful of a reality they cannot comprehend.

May we, who complain about the scarcity of commodities, remember those who are working to maintain the supply chain.

May we, who observe the long queues of those seeking support, remember those for whom there is no government assistance or financial aid.

May we, who rely on essential services, especially those in the medical profession, remember all those working on the front line.

May we, who work to end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity, remember those living and working in vulnerable communities.

May we, who are working from home, remember those who have no employment or home from which to work.

May we, who have access to medical facilities and services, remember those who do not have basic health care.

May we, who are beginning to experience border closures, remember refugees who cannot return home.

May we give thanks for those who are working to help or bring some kindness, joy or humour to others, which shows us that the light of Christ lives.

During this time of isolation as we close our doors, may we continue to keep our hearts open to our family, friends, local and global communities.

We ask these prayers in the name of Jesus. Amen

Acknowledgements: Spirituality in the Pub (slightly adapted).

Reflection by Artist- Jenny Close

Jesus asked 'but who do you say that I am?' and Peter replied 'you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' His reply has three distinct ideas in it: Messiah, the Son of God and the living God. The first is the role that Jesus plays in salvation history, the second is his nature as a person of the Trinity and the third is about the nature of God who is the source of life and active in the life of the world. Peter used words weighty with theology, but I suspect his faith more than his understanding was being expressed here. In any case, his reply is life-affirming theology. That God became human, shows the intimate relationship between God and creation. Integral to that relationship is God's willingness to be recognised in creation, especially in the person of Jesus.



REFLECTION ON THIS WEEK'S READINGS

A furore broke out in a country diocese some years ago about the retreat style of a priest who was taking Catholic students in their last year of high school or who were attending university away for weekend retreats. On the Friday night of the retreat this priest would tell the young people that by the end of the weekend they should make a decision about their Christian faith.

Some parents were shocked that their young people were given an ultimatum that included the possibility of rejecting their faith. The priest replied that Catholic youth have to make all sorts of decisions regarding career, lifestyle, residence, studies and relationships. Religion, he contended, often fell by the wayside, either not important enough on which to make a decision, or relegated to the personal shelf of neglect to be possibly taken down and dusted off years later for a hatching, matching or dispatching. The priest argued that this wasn't good enough. After 12 years of Catholic education or many years of catechetics the Church had to take the risk of calling for a personal decision for faith. Some of the young people consciously chose membership in the Church. In making such a profession of faith many reported having a deep encounter with God and an experience of their faith in Christ. Other students made decisions against belonging to the Church, which is, of course, never irrevocable.

The entire retreat process was based on the question in today's Gospel: 'Who do you say that I am?'

The disciples, reflecting on their experiences with Jesus, offer various possibilities, but it is Peter who says that Jesus is the revelation of God for the world. This is the great profession of faith and the basis on which the Church comes into being.

And what was true then, is true now. At some point, if we want our faith to move from being a code of law, a concept, or some excellent ideas to something we can experience, we must take the faith of the Church, which has nurtured us up to now, and make it our own. In doing so, when we encounter Christ, we contribute to the re-founding of the Church in our generation.

Just being part of the 'Catholic crowd' is hardly the challenge Jesus presents to the disciples in today's Gospel. We are commissioned like the disciples to bear witness to Christ's personal love in the workplace, with our friends and in our families.

It's always helpful to be reminded that we might be the only face of Catholicism, or even Christianity, that another person may encounter. The way in which we bind them up or set them free might be the measure by which they judge if the Church is the face of Christ in today's world and whether they could find a home with us.

And it all hinges on that great question which is asked of each of us today: 'Who do you say that I am?' How we answer this question reveals so much, including whether Christ is an idea we like, or the object of our passion.

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READINGS FOR THIS WEEKEND

FIRST READING

Isaiah 22:19-23

Thus says the Lord of hosts to Shebna, the master of the palace:

I dismiss you from your office,
I remove you from your post,
and the same day I call on my servant
Eliakim son of Hilkiyah.
I invest him with your robe,
gird him with your sash,
entrust him with your authority;
and he shall be a father
to the inhabitants of Jerusalem
and to the House of Judah.
I place the key of the House of David
on his shoulder;
should he open, no one shall close,
should he close, no one shall open.
I drive him like a peg
into a firm place;
he will become a throne of glory
for his father's house.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM: PSALM 137 LORD, YOUR LOVE IS ETERNAL

Psalms 137:1-3. 6. 8. R. v.8

Response: *Lord, your love is eternal;
do not forsake the work of your hands.*

Verses:

I thank you, Lord, with all my heart,
you have heard the words of my mouth.
Before the angels I will bless you.
I will adore before your holy temple. **Response**

I thank you for your faithfulness and love
which excel all we ever knew of you.
On the day I called, you answered;
you increased the strength of my soul. **Response**

The Lord is high yet he looks on the lowly
and the haughty he knows from afar.
Your love, O Lord, is eternal,
discard not the work of your hands. **Response**

SECOND READING

Romans 11:33-36

How rich are the depths of God – how deep his wisdom and knowledge – and how impossible to penetrate his motives or understand his methods! Who could ever know the mind of the Lord? Who could ever be his counsellor? Who could ever give him anything or lend him anything? All that exists comes from him; all is by him and for him. To him be glory for ever! Amen.

GOSPEL

Matthew 16:13-20

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi he put this question to his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say he is John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' 'But you,' he said 'who do you say I am?' Then Simon Peter spoke up, 'You are the Christ,' he said, 'the Son of the living God.' Jesus replied, 'Simon son of Jonah, you are a happy man! Because it was not flesh and blood that revealed this to you but my Father in heaven. So I now say to you: You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church. And the gates of the underworld can never hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven: whatever you bind on earth shall be considered bound in heaven; whatever you loose on earth shall be considered loosed in heaven.' Then he gave the disciples strict orders not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.



**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.**