



St Patrick's Parish

PO Box 547, 65 Clarke St

Lilydale 3140

Ph. 9739 5977 0448 658 418

Email: Lilydale@cam.org.au

<http://stpatrickslilydale.cam.org.au>

Parish Priest: Rev. Fr. Francis Denton

Email: lilydale@cam.org.au

Secretary: Mrs Sharon Jacob

Pastor Emeritus: Fr John Dupuche

Pastoral Worker: Mrs Debbie Edwards

24TH & 25TH October 2020

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Year A)

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Exodus 22:20-26

A reading from the book of Exodus

If you are harsh with the widow or the orphan, my anger will rage against you.

The Lord said to Moses, 'Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

"If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

"If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 17:2-4, 47, 51

R. I love you, Lord, my strength.

I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise:
when I call I am saved from my foes.

R. I love you, Lord, my strength.

Long life to the Lord, my rock!
Praised be the God who saves me.
He has given great victories to his king
and shown his love for his anointed.

R. I love you, Lord, my strength.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

You turned away from idols to serve God and await his Son.

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread - and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: John 14:23

Alleluia, alleluia!

All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.
Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 22:34-40

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew
You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, 'Master, which is the greatest commandment of the Law?' Jesus said, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: You must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

General Intercessions

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST



PARISH PRAYER LIST

Recently Deceased:

Anniversaries: Jim Murphy

Sick: Joan Keuken, Angela Del Guidice, Lynne Fleming, Kim J, Cherie, Izaak, Anne-Maree Sullivan, Peter & Aurelia Di Ciero, Tony Cunningham, Claudette & Gilbert, Florens, Kate, Tim Lawson, John Hopper, Cassandra, Mary and John Hamilton, Carmel O'Healy, Michelle, Pat Robb, Robert Taylor, Nancy Leonard, Brian Walsh, Michael Paola, Barbara De Vincentiis, Emma, Wayne, Julian Monteiro, Dolly Maher, Salvacion Santos, Ricky, Giovanna Zammit, Michael Jordan, Anne Moroney, Catherine Fields, Sam Lawson, Trish Macpherson, Geoff, Grace Quinlivan, Bianca, , Mary Ovans, Stephen, Gael Holliday, Rob Meridith, Bill Meyer, Cathie & Jose Grima, Rose Roberts, Roman De Angelis, Tedi & Santi, Stephen Wakeham, Joe Di Battista, Gwen Weaver, June, Jenny Goh, Bill Moxey, Peter & Edna John, Paul Payne

Reconciliation By appointment

Anointing of the sick By appointment

Marriages: Please give at least six months' notice.

Baptism: Please contact parish office for details.

Parish office - Please call 0448 658 418

Pastoral worker - Please call 0448 664 731

St Vincent de Paul - If assistance is required please contact 1800 305 330 Mon-Fri 10.00am – 4.00pm

Care group Ann McCann, Debbie Edwards, Sharon Jacob, Contact Parish Office 0448 658 418



We are a child safe Parish

We have recently switched to NBN and having trouble



accessing our office phone message bank. If you need to contact the office please call 0448 658 418



If you would like to join in our next zoom this Sunday 25th October at **10am** please email the office lilydale@cam.org.au

This will be a fortnightly zoom gathering. St Patrick's Parish Lilydale is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82116359081?pwd=dWdOUdTdyMkNEWkg4SctPQXNWZkExZz09>

Link to weekly mass

A reminder that Fr Francis' Sunday Masses are recorded each weekend and are available on St Brigid's You Tube Channel each Sunday morning. Fr Francis records Masses from St Brigid's, St Patrick's and St Aloysius churches.

The link is accessible through St Brigid's Healesville's website, <http://www.stbrigidshalesville.cam.org.au/> or by searching St Brigid's Healesville on You Tube, or using the link: <https://bit.ly/StBsHville>

WEEKLY THANKSGIVING

Weekly Pledged Amount to Parish (thanksgiving only)

\$1404.50

Thanksgiving received weekending 18th October 2020

Thanksgiving Collection \$ 1376.60

Presbytery \$ 524.00

Restoration \$

Short fall of \$27.90

On Sport, Religion and Politics

This Saturday is one of Australia's most important religious feast days. I am speaking, of course of the AFL Grand Final! As I was listening to talk-back radio during the week I was struck by the outpouring of grief as Victorian footy fans lamented the loss of the Grand Final at the AFL's national shrine: the MCG. Some callers said it will be the first AFL Grand Final they will have miss in 60 years. One poor man broke down into tears, unable to finish his commentary. As the song goes, "it's more than a game". The sport/religion comparison is actually not entirely a joke. Professional sports have adopted an almost pseudo-religious cult-status. In our increasingly secular society it is interesting to observe how ritualised the AFL has become. Year after year the Grand Final follows the same, almost liturgical, structure – the same pre-games songs are sung, the players run through the banners, the awarding of medal and trophies, the victorious team's theme song, etc. Even lapsed and lukewarm footy fans come out to watch to Grand Final – there is a cultural expectation to be interested. Only a 'heathen' would thumb his nose at the Grand Final. The AFL is so like going to church that some fans even leave the stadium before the game (and final 'hymn') has finished!

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I can't profess to be a footy fanatic, yet I recognise that the excitement of footy finals offers a real sense of social cohesion, the importance of which shouldn't be underestimated. In our ever-more fragmented culture, the things that unite us as a culture have become rarer by the year. A century ago Australia was united by a common Christian culture. Even those who were not especially religious were shaped by the prevailing Christian values. Shops were always closed on Sundays; Public oaths were sworn on the Bible; Nor was there any controversy when each Australian State declared Good Friday and Christmas as public holidays. The

relics of Australia's Christian heritage are in a sharp state of decline, and have come to be regarded with growing suspicion and hostility. The end result is a dissolving of the social bonds that unite us, a process which seems to have accelerated on account of the COVID lockdown. Indeed, among the most absurd government mantras that has been repeated *ad nauseum* in the past seven months is the inherently contradictory slogan: "Staying apart, keeps us together." I don't know who they are trying to convince. Staying apart does not keep us together. Logically, staying apart keeps us divided, isolated, fragmented, lonely, frightened and weak. We *homo sapiens* are inherently social beings; we never flourish in isolation. The long-term effects of this policy of self-isolation is disastrous: socially, economically, psychologically, physically, and spiritually. Those who live alone are especially vulnerable. Human beings are remarkably resilient, but everyone has his/her breaking point. I think many Victorians are fast approaching that point.

These crippling restrictions are now being relaxed with mixed outcomes. As of the 2nd November restaurants and pubs will be able to serve up to 20 people indoors and 50 people outside, with no requirement to wear masks. Meanwhile churches and other places of worship are still not permitted to open their doors to the public, even with facemasks. Outdoor services will be permitted for up to 20 people. The inability of the Premier or DHHS to offer a rational medical or scientific justification for this blatant inconsistency unmasks (pardon the pun) a callousness and obtuseness that is hard to comprehend. There are also serious questions as to the legality of this forced closure of places of worship. As prominent human rights expert, Fr Frank Brennan SJ observed, "Victoria has a Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and guess what? There is nothing in the charter about the right to go to the library, the right to go to the pool, the right to go to the restaurant...but there *is* a particular provision about the right to practise your religion and not to be restrained in worship observance or practice." The Archbishop of Melbourne, Peter Comensoli has also expressed his bewilderment and frustration at the double-standard. In a recent opinion piece he wrote:

"People of faith have joined in the common work of co-operation with COVID restrictions at every stage this year. We've proven ourselves to be fair-minded and civil, patient and prepared. We've worked closely with the health department, local police, government authorities and other faith leaders to be

safe and responsible. We have been publicly recognised for these efforts. Churches may not be licensed premises, but they are highly regulated spaces, especially during times of worship. If there really is health advice suggesting places of worship are inherently riskier, I respectfully request to see it." (*Herald Sun*, 19/10/20).

Of course, the DHHS never bothered. The inescapable conclusion is that this government regards religion and people of faith with contempt. Spiritual needs are presumed to be imaginary and therefore not worth taking seriously. The good will of the people of Victoria has been ground down to dust. It is now manifestly clear to me that this is no longer about public health and safety, but is grubby game of politics. The message: God is "non-essential" for the State of Victoria.

In this particular game where the goal posts are always moving, and where the few options we have are tangled in reels of bureaucratic red tape, it is almost impossible to know what to do. Setting up outside for 20 people across four churches presents serious logistical problems. Ironically, it also presents health and safety concerns, particularly for the elderly, disabled and health compromised. The investment of time and energy required to set up and pack up daily, coupled with the necessary safeguards to ensure that the Sacred Liturgy and the Blessed Sacrament are not subjected to abuse is burdensome beyond comprehension. It is flummoxing when one considers how safe it would be to conduct these celebrations in the church. Working within the constraints of this legislated idiocy I will, however, do everything I can offer Mass and the sacraments to our parishioners. Once the Archdiocese's guidelines become clearer I will be eager to introduce a Sunday Mass at St Brigid's, Healesville, if it is at all possible. I'm also mindful that the first day of the new stage of restrictions is the 2nd November – All Soul's Day - so I will be anxious to offer the opportunity to attend Mass on this day to as many as possible. By next week the provisional Mass schedule will be clearer, in the meantime I'll continue to offer Masses outside at Lilydale. Please pray for me too, as I confess, my patience is wearing very thin.

Fr Francis Denton





From Debbie's Desk

Now that our children are back in their classrooms, our wonderful teachers will be reading stories to them in person every day, picking up again the work that parents have kept alive throughout lock down. The experiences of others, fictional characters and historical figures, grab us all in different ways, transporting us into experiences we ourselves may have not yet had the chance to try out. As we listen, watch, or read, our individual tastes kick in, and what might excite one individual may turn another off completely. Our individuality sets us apart from others in our human family, a great gift from God, inspiring us to learn from the experiences of others, and to filter what comes our way in order to keep what will be useful to our own particular situations. My own beautiful mum reminded me this week of a wonderful story that has always impressed me, one I heard many years ago, probably from her when I was a child. Worth sharing!

It starts with St Augustine of Hippo, a brilliant Saint of the Church, who was walking along a beach in the 5th century, wrestling with the mystery of how the Holy Trinity could possibly 'work', in order to put together his well-known theological work, 'On the Trinity'. St Augustine was the author of literally volumes of books about our Faith, encyclopaedia stuff, and he is regarded as one of the most brilliant authors in the Church's history. As he wandered along the water's edge, he was thinking hard about the mystery of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as 3 distinct 'persons', yet as one God, applying his great understanding of God's complexity in an effort to mine right in to this amazing miracle. He stopped to watch a little boy, who had dug a small hole in the sand. The child was running backwards and forwards to the sea carrying a seashell, filling it, and then emptying that tiny amount of water into the hole at each sprint, which of course then disappeared immediately into the sand. St Augustine asked the little boy what he was doing. The child told him that he was going to empty the entire ocean into the hole he had dug. When St Augustine pointed out that this would be totally impossible, the little boy observed "It is no more impossible than what you are trying to do – comprehend the immensity of the mystery of the Holy Trinity with your small intelligence." St Augustine glanced down the beach in his surprise, and then back to the boy, but in that split second, he had disappeared. Some believe the little child was an angel, a messenger from God, others, Jesus

himself, reminding St Augustine that God is so much bigger than all the human brain power we can possibly apply to understanding him. St Augustine learned through God's personal instruction that no matter how hard he might try to define God with words, or to fully understand him, he can never truly know his full magnificence in this world. The infinite God can be experienced, but not captured, through our finite human senses. 17 centuries later, I am retelling his story.

God's message to us today, as we contemplate St Augustine's experience, may be that we need to relax. We certainly need to do our part in searching for God, throwing ourselves open to his touch, but then we need to let him take us to himself, in the ways that he chooses to reveal himself to us. We accept this knowing that what he offers to one, he offers to all. He spoke to St Augustine in a dramatic way, he speaks to us too. We just need to keep our eyes, ears and hearts open to receive his instruction. God does have favourites! We are, each and every one of us, his favourite! Each of us walks an individual path in God's company, yet we all move as one to exactly the same destination, meeting God face to face in eternity, in the hope of the resurrection of Jesus.

Like all good teaching moments, we find a universe of potential in the story of St Augustine's experience of God, and we are invited to open ourselves to allow him to work within us in our turn, in whatever way he chooses. As I mentioned, this particular story starts with St Augustine. It continues with us. When have you had a visit from God?

Bible study group is every Thursday at 4pm. If you would like to join this online zoom please email the office lilydale@cam.org.au

