

THE VOICE



ORDINARY TIME

25th Sunday in
ORDINARY TIME
Year A

24th September 2017
Psalter Week 1

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Patricia Quinn (nee Cameron).
- **Anniversaries:**
Ron Dixon, James Casey,
Fr. Ashley Jones, Sara Selim,
Norrie Glacken, Kathleen Ellison,
Fr. Noel Carroll,
Fr. Terence (Terry) O'Brien,
Fr. Philip (Phil) Murphy,
Monsignor Vincent (Vince) Marley,
- **Remembrances:**
Carr Family,
Margarita, Leo and Alfred Bugeja,
Saviour Grima,
Lou, Denis and Joyce Glacken.
- **And the sick:**
Maryanne Diorio, Pat Burgmann,
Margarita Gomez, Mary Scarf,
June Towson, Therese Corner,
Peter Wellis, Audrey Barsenbach,
Margaret Davin, Helen Taylor,
Patricia Dwyer, Roy Beverage,
Brian Finlayson, Laura Krauss,
Nola McKeowen, Rene Glase,
Mary Drinan, Marylou Tafilagi,
Matilda Tawake, Mick Nino,
Kevin Houghton, Nellie Brown,
Ken Thorsen, Ian Wilks.

No Salvation outside the Church?

In May 2013, Pope Francis caused uproar amongst some Catholics and many fundamentalist Christians by stating in a homily, speaking of human beings generally: 'The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! "Father, the atheists?" Even the atheists. Everyone!' How can this be? How did the Church come to this point? One of the foundations of this teaching lies in today's Gospel story, or parable.

On the surface, this is a story of the day labourers of Jesus' time. They lived on the edge: one denarius a day would feed their family. If they did not work and get their pay by sunset, their families starved.

The 'early birds' contracted for the just wage of one denarius and did the hard yakka over the course of a long day. They were outraged when latecomers also received a denarius.

But, first, the complainants suffered no injustice. They still got the just wage of one denarius. Secondly, they were completely out of tune with the generosity, the large heartedness, of the landlord who wanted all those day labourers and their households to have their 'daily bread'.

But, who was Jesus really trying to shock out of their preconceptions? Why was this little parable so important that it circulated in the little Christian community of the first century?

There was great antagonism in the early church between the Jews who became followers of Jesus and the non-Jews, the 'Gentiles', such as Paul converted.

The Jewish Christians looked at their long history preparing for the coming of the

Messiah, the hardships and persecutions and exile endured. They had indeed borne the 'heat and burden of the day', generation after generation.

And, now, here were these Gentiles, non-Jews, who had done nothing by comparison. They were the 'Johnny-come-lateleys' who had perhaps done something in the last little while, and here was God showering them with the same grace of reconciliation in Jesus Christ and granting them whatever it took to enjoy the 'daily bread' of the Kingdom of God.

Jewish Christians of the Gospel time had to be shocked out of *their* idea that God's grace could *not* be lavished on those outside the traditional boundaries of the Chosen People.

Many Christians of our own time have to be shocked out of *their* idea that God's grace can *not* be lavished on those outside the traditional boundaries of those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

For the Catholic Church that shock came 500 years ago with the discovery of the new world by Christopher Columbus. Suddenly, the realisation hit the Eurocentric Church that millions of people in Central and South America had never heard the Gospel.

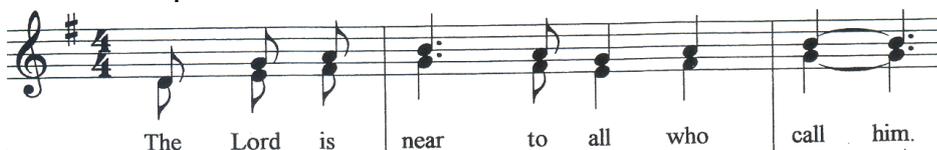
Were they saved?

The Popes of the 16th century reflected on this question. The old slogan 'No Salvation outside the Church' had to be abandoned in its crude form. It was enough that people responded to the grace of the Holy Spirit and led good lives in accordance with the promptings of that incognito Divine Presence in their conscience.

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Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Open our hearts, O Lord, to listen to the words of your Son. *Alleluia!*



Around the Parish

Social Justice this Sunday 24th September: In the Gospel for this year's Social Justice Sunday, Jesus tells the parable of the workers in the vineyard, where all become active contributors and are recognized for their human dignity. Inspired by this, the Statement calls us to build an economy founded on true solidarity with those who are the most vulnerable. Justice must be built into the very foundations of our community, and business can work for everybody's benefit, not just for shareholders. The excluded and vulnerable must have a voice in decision-making. Statements, prayer cards and 'Ten Steps' leaflets available in the gathering area.

Parish Email address: please see note on page 3.

The Just Word

'On Social Justice Sunday', and over the year ahead, we call on members of the Catholic community and broader society to consider where the economy serves us well and where it fails. Who are the ones excluded by

All Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and new members interested in joining the team are invited to afternoon tea with Fr. Timothy on Tuesday, 3rd October at 3pm in the Leo Mahon room. R.S.V.P. Phoebe Glacken Ph: 4341 6324.

Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Wynnie Fleming, Eden Haggett, Jesse Mitchell, Eva Nightingale and Alfie Wooden who were baptized last Sunday.

Many Thanks to the ladies who helped in the preparation and serving of sweets on Saturday for the ecumenical gathering and those who also cooked—much appreciated. Thanks also to Matthew French and his helpers for setting up the hall and stacking the chairs afterwards.

the economy of today's world? What is their experience and what do we need to do to ensure the economy works for every person and for society as a whole?

The answer is before us, in our

Readers and Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion Rosters available in Servers Sacristy.

Counselling Services: Third Year Bachelor of Counselling student available Mondays and Tuesdays 8am-1pm. Mary Mac's Place. Phone 4341 0584 or see staff for an appointment.

Planned Giving Envelopes: there are still several envelopes waiting to be collected. After next weekend they may be collected from the Parish Office.

Holy Land Pilgrimage Trip -17 days Pilgrimage to Jordan and Israel: leaving May 2018. Francis William, Co-ordinator of the Pilgrimage will hold a meeting this Sunday, at 10.30am now in the Leo Mahon room. Further information contact Francis William on 0404 893 877.

streets and our communities, in the many groups who have been disadvantaged by the operation of the economy.'

Social Justice Statement 2017-2018. Australian Catholic Bishops Conference.

From the Diocese and beyond

In the Footsteps of Mary MacKillop 2017 National Pilgrimage: The Sisters of St. Joseph invite you to the National Pilgrimage, giving you the opportunity to journey to significant places in Australia made holy by St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop. Commence Melbourne, 8th November, travel through Victoria and Sth. Australia, conclude 18th November in Sydney. Cost Ex Sydney: \$3,050.00 (all inclusive: airfares, accommodation, coach travel, admission fees and meals.) Single Supplement: \$610.00. Further information or a Pilgrimage brochure, contact Sr. Therese Leydon Ph: 8912 4845 or Sr. Annie Bond Ph: 8912 4818 or at MMP.NationalPilgrimage@sosj.org.au

The Gospel of Matthew: Journey into Discipleship: As we explore the Jewish-Christian tapestry of Matthew's Gospel, we discover again for ourselves who we are really called to be. Why are we called? To whom are we sent? Matthew will be

our guide into discipleship. Friday-Saturday 6-7 October. Caroline Chisholm Centre, Pennant Hills. Full details on brochures available in the gathering area. Lunch and morning tea included in fees.

The Faith We Believe: Breaking Open the Creed:

The Creed acts as a measure of correct belief, having being developed as a response to conflict concerning doctrine lasting several centuries. What were the controversies, and how were they resolved? This 2 session course will explore these questions and the meaning of the Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed, giving participants a sense of the underlying themes that run through the entire Catechism of the Catholic Church. Please come along for a deeper appreciation of what it means to state, "I believe..."
Presenter: David Patterson Catholic Life & Faith Formation. Course Duration: 2 x 2 hour sessions.
Session 1 - Thursday 28 September. Session 2 - Thursday 5 October. 10am-12pm. Parish

Hall, Wyong Parish, 23 Byron St. Wyong.
RSVP: by 25 September to office@wyongcatholicparish.com or 4352 1011 or David Patterson on 02 9847 0514 or David.patterson@dbb.org.au

Every Story has a Family: Telling the Christian Story of Family Life: A presentation by Most. Rev. Peter A. Comensoli. Thursday, 12th October, 10.30am -12.00pm. The Parish Centre, The Entrance, 239 The Entrance Rd. The Entrance. RSVP Tuesday, 10th October. What story the Christian family have to tell amidst the challenges and opportunities of today's living? Come and reflect with Bishop Peter on the Christian story of family life.

Cerdon College Merrylands 40th Year Reunion will be held Saturday, 14th October, Pyrmont Bridge Hotel. See Facebook Page: Cerdon College Class of 72 -75/77. Facebook Event: Event 40th Reunion Class of 75/77. Email: cerdonclass72.77@gmail.com or call Carmen on 0411 706 226.

You have treated them the same as us.'

New Testament Commentary by Mary Coloe PBVM

'This parable always makes me uncomfortable since I identify with the workers who came early in the morning and find myself saying, 'It's not fair,' and then 'God's not fair' – which is exactly the point of the parable. God is not fair! God doesn't measure things out according to what is deserved. God simply gives generously.

In my classes when I teach this parable I have students take the various roles and then imagine and enact what might have happened later that night in the local tavern. The feelings run high. Some want to work for this master again. Others aren't sure that he will act the same way in the future. He might have foolishly so overpaid the latecomers that he is short of money in the future. It all seems very haphazard. Others want to form a union and negotiate set wages for set times. Which just goes to show once again that God is not like us, or should I say, we are not like God. The words of Isaiah offer an appropriate response to this parable: 'For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are my ways your ways,' says the Lord.

The parable is unique to Matthew's Gospel and its place in the Gospel narrative is important. At the start of chapter 19, Matthew records that Jesus left Galilee and crossed into the Southern region of Judea, heading towards Jerusalem. Galilee has been a place where Jesus' teaching was generally welcomed. In Galilee he found both men and women prepared to become his disciples. Heading to Jerusalem though, is a journey into the centre of Jewish religious authority. It will be, for Jesus, the centre of conflict. There is a cost in this journey, for Jesus it will ultimately cost him his life. On this journey Jesus begins to teach in greater detail the cost of discipleship. Across chapters 18 and 19 Jesus teaches the rigorous demands of following him. The ethics of the reign of God ask more than the ethics of Moses. The model for Christian behaviour is to be based not on Moses, but on the model of God. And the God Jesus describes does not measure things as we do and does not act as we might expect.

Jesus begins the parable with the words, 'This is what the reign of God is like' (Matthew avoids the name of God and uses 'heaven'). Taking Jesus' words seriously he describes a ridiculously generous God who doesn't give what is earned or deserved but uses some other criteria. God's criteria are God's own selfless love.

In placing the parable here, in the narrative context of Jesus' journey to

Jerusalem and death, it may be that Matthew understands Jesus' death coming from that same source of utterly ridiculous love. The parable might then be read as a commentary on Jesus' own life, given to both the first comers and the late arrivals.

This concept of God's ridiculously gracious love humbles me. It's beyond my comprehension. Like most people I know, I have a suspicion that I've got to earn love – human or divine. That someone could simply love me! But this is what the parable asks us to consider. The reign of God is not something we earn or deserve through our own efforts. The Kin-dom is God's gift.

(Rather than use the image Kingdom, or Reign of God, I prefer to speak of the kin-dom of God. I do this to emphasise the relational aspects of the phrase and also to offer an alternative to the male image of God as King. Traditional theology speaks of God as a trinity of relationships and that through Baptism we are drawn into that communion becoming children of God.)



Good stewards follow the advice of St. Paul and conduct themselves — by wise use of their time and talents — in a way worthy of the Gospel of Christ.



Parish Email...

At present, the Parish Office is not receiving emails to our normal email addresses.

A gmail account has been set up if you need to contact us.....(thankfully the phones are still working!!).

It is.... sjbcoordinator@gmail.com

We will advise you when our old email is working again.

Thank you for your patience.

Raelene & Helen

