



MANLY FRESHWATER..CATHOLIC PARISH

Mary Immaculate and St John the Baptist Churches

Sixth Sunday of Easter - 17th May 2020

Dear Friends,

I hope you are all keeping warm and well.

We have Great News, our Churches are now open everyday commencing this Friday 15th May for private prayer, with a limit of 10 people in the Church at any one time.

We will be commencing **Weekday Masses from Tuesday to Friday at Manly and Freshwater** at the normal 9.15am time and there will be an additional Mass at 12noon at Manly with a limit of 10 people plus the Priest at each of the Masses.

Sunday Masses will resume on the weekend of the 23rd/24th of May. Masses will be held at the normal times at both Churches with a limit of 10 people plus the Priest at each of these Masses.

These arrangements are contingent on practicing strict social distancing of 4 square metres per person and hand hygiene through the ready use of sanitiser.

Unfortunately, because of these limitations it will not be possible for everyone to attend Mass each week. The Diocese has suggested a roster be drawn up where parishioners will register for a particular Mass in advance on Weekday or Sundays. Please note that Bishop Anthony advises that the obligation to attend Mass on Sunday is still suspended.

Live Streaming of the 6pm Vigil Mass will continue.

To register your desire to attend a Sunday or Weekday Mass please pop into the Parish Office or call 9977 5822. (Please do not email your request). In these early stages as we settle into this new routine please be aware that you may not be able attend the Masses that you request.

We ask you to please be patient and flexible about the Mass time that you get. My intention is that as many of you as possible will be able to attend Mass on a Sunday or a weekday. Please understand that with the present restrictions it will not be possible to offer Mass attendance every week especially on Sundays. We look forward to further relaxation of restrictions as stage 2 allowing 20 people and stage 3 allowing 100 people are introduced by the NSW Government when it is safe to do so.

Reconciliation will now be celebrated in the Church from this Saturday 16th May at the normal time of 10am.

Over the week some of our Parish groups (10 people only) will be meeting again. During this coming week we will be celebrating a Baptism, a Wedding and First Reconciliation (individually) with our children from the Parish. Sadly, over this past week we have celebrated the Funerals of four members of our Parish Community at Freshwater. Please see the Recently Deceased on page 2. Please pray for them and their families.

It has been great seeing the Teachers and Children back at School, and Fr Paul and I look forward with enthusiasm to seeing many of you in the weeks ahead.

**PLEASE REMEMBER THIS WEEKEND NO MASSES IN THE CHURCH
LIVE STREAMING ONLY**



LIVE STREAMING OF MASS

Facebook and YouTube – manlyfreshwaterparish

Youtube – access through playlist Saturday 6pm Mass



This weekend we will be holding our final CWF Appeal for this Financial Year – more information can be found on Page 3 – Thank You on your ongoing support.

Parish Pastoral Council: Paul Pervan (Chair), Ian Press (Deputy Chair), Margaret Dent (Secretary), Ivica Covic; Laurie de Ambrosio; Joanne Druery; Robert Marshall; Michael McGrath
St Mary's Primary School 9977 2225 Principal: Paul McGuire
St John the Baptist Primary School 9939 6699 Principal: Judy Slattery
St Paul's Catholic College 9977 5111 Principal: Chris Browne
Stella Maris College 9977 5144 Principal: Elizabeth Carnegie



Home Delivery – If you know someone who would like a bulletin delivered please call the Parish Office on 9977 5822.

May 2020	Year A
Mon 18/5 – 6th week of Easter	Acts 16:11-15; Jn 15:26-16:4
Tue 19/5 – 6th week of Easter	Acts 16:22-34; Jn 16:5-11
Wed 20/5 – 6th week of Easter	Acts 17:15,22-18:1; Jn 16:12-15
Thurs 21/5 – 6th week of Easter	Acts 18:1-8; Jn 16:16-20
Fri 22/5 – 6th week of Easter	Acts 18:9-18; Jn 16:20-23
Sat 23/5 – 5th week of Easter	Acts 18:23-28; Jn 16:23-28
Sun 24/5 – The Ascension of the Lord	Acts 1:1-11; Eph 1:17-23; Mt 28:16-20

THE CATHOLIC WEEKLY
 Now available to everyone online at
www.catholicweekly.com.au

Visiting sick at home - If you, or if you know of anyone who are unwell and would like a home visit please contact the parish office 9977 5822 to organise for Communion or Anointing.

LET US PRAY FOR 17th May 2020

Recently Deceased: Ann Irvin; Margaret Crowley; Dorothy O'Neill, Barry Timmony; Patrick Hertslet

Anniversary:

Prayers for the sick in our parish: Eugenia Cavazzoni, Gavin Greenwood, Zacchaeus Emmanuel Joseph Ratnam; Mark Taylor; Kay Flenady; Leon Cochrane; Robina Dwyer; Prionsias Kearney; Brian Davies; Majella McLoughlin; Debbie Vernon; Desmond Connors; Lauren Hannahan; Rosalba Galuis; Vanessa Squirrell; Judith McKenzie; Jonathan Keil; Les Reilly; Wayne Smedley; Margaret Burridge; John Beninati

Sacrament of Reconciliation
Saturdays 10am -11am
in the Parish Church at Manly

Manly Freshwater Parish promotes **SAFEGUARDING** which involves the implementation of proactive, common sense and practical ideas that ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults in our community



Pope Francis Prayer belongs to everyone: to men and women of every religion, and probably even to those who profess no religion. Prayer is born within the secrecy of our being, in that interior place that spiritual writers often call the "heart". #GeneralAudience



St Vincent De Paul Notice during COVID-19 lockdown

For assistance with food, clothing or other emergencies please call St Vincent de Paul Northern Beaches Regional Office 9905 0424.

If you would like to donate nonperishable food, it can be dropped off at 684 Pittwater Road, Brookvale-rear entrance (off the carpark)

If you wish to donate clothing it will be accepted at the SVDP Shop Brookvale, Rogers Street, between 9am – 3pm.

Parish Priest: Fr David Taylor
Assistant Priest: Fr Paul Kim
Parish Secretaries: Jenny Beninati & Paula Martin
Pastoral Coordinator: Michelle Ellis

Administration Office:
 After Hours Urgent Sick Calls: 0499 910 010
 Presbytery: 9977 2100
manlyfreshwaterparish@bbcatholic.org.au
www.bbcatholic.org.au/manlyfreshwater
Reconciliation: Manly Sat 10am – 11am

PARISH SOCIAL MEDIA

Parish facebook:
facebook.com/manlyfreshwaterparish

YouTube: [Manlyfreshwaterparish](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2EIGEu7)
Or bit.ly/2EIGEu7 or [frpaulkim](https://www.facebook.com/frpaulkim)
 (one word with no space). You can view the YouTube videos thru the parish facebook, click on the link

Parish website:
bbcatholic.org.au/manlyfreshwater

HOLY WATER – Blessed "holy water" is really Easter water, the water of Baptism. Fr David has blessed holy water which is available to anyone who would like to bring a container to collect some. The Urn with the water will be in the foyer of the Parish Centre.



Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You; never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

Sunday and Weekday Masses

If you have registered to attend a Mass at Manly or Freshwater we ask that you kindly observe the following guidelines:

- Please arrive no later than 5 minutes before Mass is due to commence.
- When you arrive your name will be marked off the register (a requirement of the NSW Government).
- You must use the hand sanitizer provided and observe social distancing at all time.
- Please sit only in the marked areas of the pews at the front of the Churches.
- Please observe social distancing at Holy Communion, which will only be given in the hand.
- During the Masses the Church doors will be closed.
- If you are feeling unwell please do not attend the Mass you are registered for and advise the Parish Office, so as to allow someone else on the waiting list to attend.

Please note registration can only be made in person at the Parish Office or by calling 9977 5822. No online registrations.

First Reconciliation Program



Over the next few weeks the Children from the Parish who have completed the Preparation program will be invited to make their First Reconciliation individually. We will be contacting the Parents and asking them to make an appointment for their children with Fr David.

Please remember the Children and their Parents in your prayers.

We will also be commencing our First Holy Communion and Confirmation Programs in the near future (dates to be advised).

ARE YOU OK? Are you finding it difficult during these uncertain times of COVID-19?

Would you like to have a chat with someone over the phone? Or someone to help you do your grocery shopping?

Please let us know by contacting the Parish Office manlyfreshwaterparish@bbcatholic.org.au 9977822

Learning from Home SRE Lessons

The Department of Education has approved the continuation of SRE classes during the COVID-19 period via a Learning from Home model.

Catholic SRE lessons are available online at the following link: [Catholic SRE Online](#)

PIETY STORE MANLY

As You are aware the Church is closed but the Piety store will continue to operate. If you would like to purchase any items please call into the Parish Office during working hours. The Piety Store has a wide range of goods including Bibles, Divine Mercy items, rosaries, CD's and much more



CHARITABLE WORKS FUND

Thank you for your continued connection.

We are so grateful to our community who demonstrate their love for their neighbours by generously supporting the Charitable Works Fund.

This is our final appeal for this financial year and the balance of the quota for the Parish is \$10,000.00

When you give to the CWF, you can be assured that your donation is working for the faith and the people of the Diocese of Broken Bay.

Donations \$2 and over are tax-deductible. Click on this link to give to CWF www.givenow.com.au/cwf or post your cheque into the Parish Office or deposit into our account

Acc Name: Manly Freshwater Parish

Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank

Acc# 13958001

BSB: 062 784 Please include your name and CWF as the reference

May 2020 CWF video <https://youtu.be/NIVvTxTsDTw>

SUPPORTING YOUR PARISH DURING COVID-19

Even though we are unable to gather together for Mass on Sundays, much of the life of the parish is continuing. Most of our parish income comes from your donations given at Mass, either in planned giving envelopes, direct debit or loose on the second collection as well as your generous support of our Priests through the first collection.

While our two Churches are closed we ask those of you who normally make their offerings in cash or through the envelopes on the plate, to please consider using our Planned Giving Program by **Credit Card**. If you would like to contribute by Credit Card please contact the Parish Office on 9977 5822 or manlyfreshwaterparish@bbcatholic.org.au.



Alternatively, you can make a donation **directly to our Parish Bank Accounts**. (details below)

Parish Bank Account -2nd collection funds the running of the Parish

Acc Name: Manly Freshwater Parish

Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank

Acc# 13958001

BSB: 062 784 Please include your name as reference or envelope number

Parish Bank Account -1st collection Support of our Priests

Acc Name: Manly Freshwater Parish Pastoral

Bank Name: Commonwealth Bank

Acc# 13958002

BSB - 062 784

Your regular donation will give the parish a reliable income so that we can be here to support people who are in need right now, and to be ready for you when we can worship and celebrate the Liturgy again together.

I am very grateful for your continued prayers and support. You are in my daily prayers. *Fr David*

Pope Francis urges the Church to celebrate Laudato Si' Week



-This year is the fifth anniversary of Laudato Si', which was signed on 24 May 2015.

Pope Francis' encyclical on care for our common home, *Laudato Si'*, is an inspiration during moments of difficulty. It encourages us to reflect on the values we share and create a more just and sustainable future.

The theme of Laudato Si' Week is "everything is connected." During Laudato Si' Week, we come together as one people around the world to prayerfully discern the lessons of this moment. While the world experiences a history-defining crisis, we reflect and prepare to build a better world.

Laudato Si' has been welcomed as a document of deep and abiding beauty, and it has prompted people around the world to reflect more deeply on Creator and creation. Its vision of integral ecology, which sees connections between how we treat God, nature, and each other, offers simple but profound truths about the bonds that unite us.

Everything is connected

We're living through history-shaping events. *Laudato Si'* teaches us how to build a better world—together.

People everywhere are crying out for hope, and our faith is urgently needed to light the way. **For Laudato Si' Week, 16-24 May**, Catholics are uniting in solidarity for a more just and sustainable future.

Stand united with our brothers and sisters in faith as we grow through the crisis of this moment to build a better tomorrow.

- Reflect and prepare through online trainings, 16-23 May
- Join the worldwide day of prayer, 24 May
- Put preparation into action during the Season of Creation, this September



<https://laudatosiweek.org/>

You are invited to join the ACBC Office for Social Justice Facebook Event

<https://facebook.com/events/s/global-day-of-prayer-laudatosi/641022539824305/?ti=ia>



Introduction to Laudato Si'

Pope Francis issued the encyclical *Laudato Si'* (On the Care of Our Common Home) in 2015. In it he responds to the ecological crisis. Francis builds on the teachings of Saint John XXIII, Blessed Paul VI and Benedict XVI on environmental matters. This encyclical takes its name from the famous canticle of the creatures by St Francis of Assisi.

Contemplating the Ecological Crisis

Pope Francis begins by contemplating the ecological crisis. He reflects on problems such as pollution, waste, the throw away culture, climate change, the water crisis, loss of biodiversity, links between ecological degradation and inequality, urbanisation, and the weak international political responses that have been made to date.

Along with wisdom from other sciences, Pope Francis believes that faith has a contribution to make. Chapter 2 sets out a Biblical vision of creation and the place of human beings within it.

The Human Origins of the Crisis

In Chapter 3, Pope Francis stresses that the roots of the ecological crisis are human in origin. He discusses what he calls a technocratic paradigm, and anthropocentrism. Francis says that a technocratic paradigm that treats everything as an object to be used to generate profit has become globalised. He also criticises anthropocentrism which leads human beings not to value and respect the intrinsic dignity of other creatures and elements of creation.

Integral Ecology

In Chapter 4 Francis sets out an alternative vision of integral ecology. It stresses the interconnections between the environment and the human and social dimensions of the current crisis. He calls for an integral and sustainable human development which respects intergenerational justice.

Approaches to Action

Chapter 5 identifies five approaches to action: dialogue on the environment in the international community; new national and local policies and laws; transparent political processes; a dialogue between politics and economy for the sake of human fulfilment; and a dialogue between science and religion.

Spirituality & Education

Pope Francis concludes that above all it is human beings that must change. In Chapter 6 he calls us all to turn away from consumerism and to adopt a simpler, more sustainable lifestyle. Francis also calls for ecological education and also an ecological conversion. Christian spirituality can foster a new understanding of quality of life, and a deeper appreciation of the interconnectedness of all of God's creation.

Full Text Access the full text of the encyclical [here](#)

https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

PLEASE NOTE: TO ACCESS PROGRAMS RIGHT CLICK ON THE UNDERLINED COLORED HYPERLINK AND THEN CLICK ON OPEN HYPERLINK

ONLINE BIBLE STUDIES

Ascension Press Facebook page has a couple of Bible Studies available. These studies can be used individually or in a small group setting to allow for sharing and reflection. *Bible in a Month with Jeff Cavins* is a four session series, looking at the overall big picture of the Bible. *Walking Towards Eternity with Jeff Cavins* is an 8-session virtual study all about hope amid suffering. **Hyperlink** - [Ascension Facebook Page](#)

Laudate (App) This free App has a large number of resources at hand, including the day's Readings; the Liturgy of the Hours; the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Prayers. Download for Apple and Android.

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference information online about streamed Masses and prayers on ACBC website in coronavirus portal: www.catholic.org.au/coronavirus

Pray As You Go Start the day with a reflection on the day's Reading, with music, Scripture reading, and guided reflection.. <https://pray-as-you-go.org/> or download App on Apple or Android

Heart to Heart eSeminar -Join Archbishop Prowse from the Archdiocese of Canberra-Goulburn as he presents the Heart to Heart eSeminar each **Tuesday and Thursday at 2pm**.

The eSeminar will be drawn from one of the Archbishop's favourite verses, Psalm 42 verse 7, "deep calling unto deep" and will explore "the depths of God speaking to the depths of humanity" especially during this time.

Hyperlink - [Heart to Heart eSeminar](#)

The Eucharist in Scripture

For a limited time, during this isolation period, the St Paul Centre has made available for free a study on the Eucharist in Scripture presented by Dr Scott Hahn.

This 8-part series is Dr Scott Hahn's most popular study and will increase devotion and understanding of the Blessed Sacrament, preparing the heart of each person for when we will gather once again for the celebration of Mass.

Hyperlink - [The Eucharist in Scripture](#)



Sharing the Word eLibrary

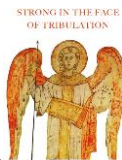
Sharing the Word eLibrary is an extensive resource compiled and maintained by Catholic Mission (Australia). This rich resource gives access to over 12000 free books, articles, journals, Church documents, theses, podcasts etc. Every item in this eLibrary is fully catalogued and can be easily found in multiple ways via subject headings, tags, keywords, contents lists, abstracts, etc.

Hyperlink - [Sharing the Word eLibrary](#)



Strong in the Face of Tribulation

Dicastery for Communication of the Holy See
The Holy See has collated a downloadable book containing prayers, supplications and the Pope's homilies as a resource to support the People of God during this time of trial.



Hyperlink - [Read Strong in the Face of Tribulation](#)



The Mary Month of May

Catholic Momcast

Join Danielle Bean and Fr Jim Phalan CSC, to talk about devotion to Mary for the month of May. Discussion will include a look at the history of honouring Mary in May and why this continues to be fitting for us today

Hyperlink - [Download and listen to Podcast](#)

REFLECTION



The Spirit will testify to me

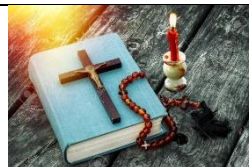
Even though we remain conscious of the real trauma that many continue to struggle with today, there is a sense of joy in this week's readings.

We hear of it arising from the marvellous acts of the apostles (**First Reading**), and also in the **Psalm**, a hymn rejoicing in the great things the Lord has done for his people.

In the same way, we have a taste of this joy in the **Gospel** promise: the Spirit will be given to us, and the Lord will be in us and we in the Lord.

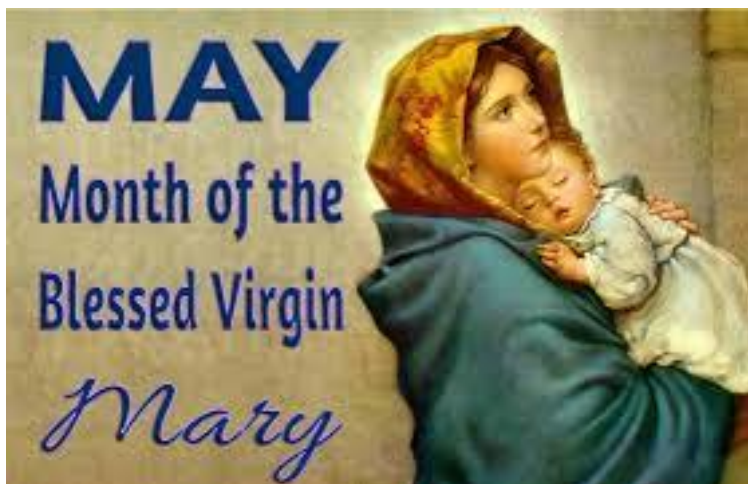
Even the afflictions meted out to the followers of Christ (**Second Reading**) could not diminish their gratitude for the Lord. This was bound up in the hope of the Resurrection which gave them, as it today gives us, the reason to respect one another and to reverence the Lord.

This week, let's pray that the trials we have faced over the past months, and the sufferings we continue to endure, will not hold back the life of the Spirit in us. In all things, may we speak with joy of the good things the Lord has done and continues to work in our lives. *Pathways to God 2020*



The Mass is streamed live each Week -here are some suggestions on how to watch the Mass online in a spiritual and fruitful way:

- Prepare yourself and take time out of your Saturday night or Sunday to watch the Mass.
- Create a prayer space:
 - Include symbols such as a Cross, Rosary beads, a Bible or even flowers;
 - Light a candle;
 - Foster an atmosphere that allows for reflection, praise, thanksgiving and intercession.
- Be fully present and participate in the Mass as much as possible
 - Make the Sign of the Cross;
 - Sit down, stand and kneel at the appropriate times;
 - Join in the responses as you would normally;
 - Read the Readings for the Mass;
 - Sing hymns and songs;
 - Recite the prayer for spiritual communion.
 - Remain in silence and reflect prayerfully





'The failure to identify, train and empower those the Spirit endows with gifts of service.'

By Thomas O'Loughlin

The Catholic Church has just marked "Vocations Sunday" – and in this crisis it raises some important questions.

Right now, most of us have now had more than a month of lockdown. Most of us are longing for it to be over, and (apart from ending every call or email with "Stay safe!") we like to complain about the problems caused by lockdown.

But, perhaps more quietly, we have to grudgingly admit that we have experienced many positives during this time and discovered things about ourselves and our relationships with the people around us.

Lots of people have discovered that we live in communities: we need each other and we depend on others. Some people have made a basic moral discovery: we are responsible for one another.

Discovering "vocation" in the deep sense

There are things that I do that can damage you, there are things that you do which may damage the others: every act, maybe as simple as keeping 2m apart when shopping, is part of a moral universe.

This discovery led to a friend emailing me that she had discovered that "morality was not about rules laid down by the Church, but a matter of being responsible in the group I am part of".

Hurray! I was saddened that the notion that we are creatures in society, with a duty of mutual care, came as a discovery and as the opposite of what she took to be the morality preached by the Church, but I was overjoyed that this was a major step on her pilgrimage of faith, her path.

She had discovered part of her own humanity and what that called on her to do. This is vocation in the deep sense.

In this crisis period, the task of the pastors – those intended to help their sisters and brother along the way – is to foster and affirm such vocational discovery.

All I could do was to send her a copy the *Didache*: it is about a small-sized Church – less than a hundred people – who had a sense of belonging within a covenant as a community, it calls them to a moral lifestyle, and they have to look out for one another.

I hope she will read it and it will help her recognise that Christianity is the opposite of an ethical individualism.

While the world is up-side-down

Perhaps the greatest discovery about vocation is that capitalism's values cut right through the Christian view of life as vocation. The sense of vocation is the belief that we are called to exercise our skills for the building up of the whole people. Before the crisis how many of us had slipped into the view that human importance is derived from earning potential?

The value we give to a job is a direct consequence of the amount of salary that it can attract. In this view, the more

I can generate income, the more I am worth in salary, and so the more I am worth in the economy, and so the more significant I am.

It seems so logical that we do not question it, normally. But this time is not normal.

We realise that nurses – and nursing is often seen as a demeaning job because it involves service to others – are the difference between life and death, then we see that this is what is really valuable rather than their ability to generate cash.

We have discovered that we need those who empty bins, drive delivery lorries and do a hundred other humdrum jobs.

Called to serve

I am not a dreamer who imagines that this realisation will last: capitalism has been too successful over centuries at bringing material progress (despite its costs) for it to be abandoned now – it will return!

But right now, let us see this inversion in our values as mirroring the inversion of values that is part of the Jesus vision. Right now we can read this account of an early Christian dispute and actually hear it:

A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors.

But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves (Lk 22, 24).

We could also take notice that for John the Evangelist, the main happening in his Last Supper narrative is about mutual service. Jesus – the Lord and the teacher – takes on the task of a lowest female house slave and washes their feet.

This is an inversion of the world values, gender roles, and social order. Needless to say it was controversial – Peter wanted nothing to do with it – and has remained so. Cardinal Robert Sarah, head of the Congregation for Divine Worship at the Vatican, recently pointed out that the feet washing ritual on Holy Thursday is never anything more than optional!

But it was not optional for Jesus and he did not intend it to be optional for any of us who call themselves disciples. It was not a display of humanity ('big boss nice to little people') as it is often caricatured in our liturgy, but a display of the world of Christian relationship.

More challenging vision of discipleship

Moreover, Jesus did not tell those there to wash the followers' feet, but that each person who wants to belong to Jesus and wishes to 'have a share in him' should wash the feet of others.

During this crisis we have found ourselves doing all sorts of small acts of service for one another. Are we



discovering in this process that this is part of our Christian vocation?

In this situation we might be able to hear this even more challenging vision of discipleship:

And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself.

Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I

doing, but later you will understand."

Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no share with me."

Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" Jesus said to him, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you."

For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord — and you are right, for that is what I am.

So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.

Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them (Jn 13:3-17).

Vocations Sunday

The Fourth Sunday of Easter is usually referred to as "Vocations Sunday" because the shepherd/flock imagery in chapter 10 of John's gospel is interpreted at an image of the pastor (clergy) and his people.

But I believe that "Vocations Sunday" is a misnomer. It should be called "Recruitment Sunday".

Calling it "Vocations Sunday" when the aim is to pray for more unmarried men to volunteer to be presbyters (in most places we never even think about nuns or religious brothers) has two effects.

First, we think that a vocation is equivalent to becoming a full-time religious person: someone who takes on all that is associated with "a priest". How often have I heard a man say, "I have no vocation", when what he meant was that he did not want to be a cleric.

Second, it forgets that every formal ministry — such as that of being a presbyter — is but a part of an individual Christian's vocation. Let's try to unravel this.

Every Christian has a vocation — it is wrapped up in the particularity of your life. You see the need there in front

of you, you know what can be done, and what you can do, and you respond: this is the essence of vocation.

It is constant in that we are always being called to build the kingdom in response to the Spirit's promptings and empowered for what is needed by the Spirit. There is no vacation from vocation, but what it calls us to do is ever changing.

Discovering one's calling A friend of mine now has discovered that he has the skills of a teacher because he has to help in home-schooling his two kids during this crisis. I know someone else who led prayer, i.e. presided at a liturgy, in their family for the first time on Easter Sunday.

Another has discovered the skills of the listener as lonely people need to talk, and this list goes on and on. As I move through the demands of my life I am called to use my gifts to build the kingdom of holiness, grace, justice, peace and love. Then there are fixed ministries: skills we need as a Church.

We need those who can read, interpret and preach. We need people who have the skill to gather a community around them. We need those who can lead people in prayer.

We have to identify people who show these skills, and then help them to develop them and make them better in their tasks. Instead of recruitment for a special corps of clergy, we should think of finding ministers more in terms of a job-search or skills audit in a community.

If we believe that the Spirit is moving in the community of the baptised, then a 'vocations crisis' is nonsense. It is only a crisis of us failing to look, train, and empower.

Or maybe — just as in so many other areas of life — we have got it all so confused that we cannot see the wood for the trees.

This coronavirus crisis is throwing all our assumptions into the air! Where they will land we do not yet know, we do not know if things will really change or slip back to "normal".

But after this latest "Vocations Sunday" we might make a start on a new way of living. Our focus today would not be on clergy recruitment, but on helping each Christian to see that she/he has a vocation as they respond to needs in their community.

This is a hard process of listening and then there is the challenge of doing. Then later we might find that individuals also have skills in the communities' worship.

These people would be identified by a process of community discernment (can this person lead prayer and interpret the demands of discipleship for us?), rather than by a willingness to accept a priori criteria from a bygone age (e.g. male, celibate, full-time and willing to belong within a clerical corps). If we moved to that, then we could really call this Fourth Sunday of Easter: Vocations Sunday.

Thomas O'Loughlin is a priest of the Catholic diocese of Arundel and Brighton and professor of historical theology at the University of Nottingham (UK). His latest book is Eating Together, Becoming One: Taking Up Pope Francis's Call to Theologians (Liturgical Press, 2019). Article from La Croix International



Fifth Sunday of Easter – 10th May 2020

First Reading *Acts 8:5-8, 14-17 (JB)*

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The word of the Lord

All: Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm *Ps 65:1-7, 16, 20 (JB)*

R. Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

Cry out with joy to God all the earth, O sing to the glory of his name. O render him glorious praise. Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds! R.

'Before you all the earth shall bow; shall sing to you, sing to your name!' Come and see the works of God, tremendous his deeds among men. R.

He turned the sea into dry land, they passed through the river dry-shod. Let our joy then be in him; he rules for ever by his might. R.

Come and hear, all who fear God. I will tell what he did for my soul: Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer nor withhold his love from me. R.

Second Reading *1 Peter 3:15-18 (JB)*

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

The word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation *cf John 14:18 (JB)*

Alleluia, alleluia!

The Lord said: I will not leave you orphans.

I will come back to you, and your hearts will rejoice.

Alleluia!

Gospel *John 14:15-21 (JB)*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

I shall ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'If you love me you will keep my commandments. I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever, that Spirit of truth whom the world can never receive since it neither sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he is with you, he is in you. I will not leave your orphans; I will come back to you. In a short time the world will no longer see me; but you will see me, because I live and you will live. On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you. Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

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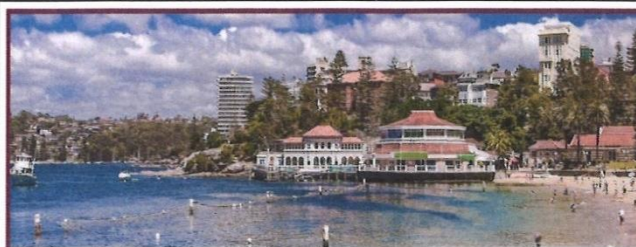
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