

data, dating as far back as 1996 in some categories.

Professor Gabrielle McMullen, the chair of the Australian Catholic Council for Pastoral Research, said profiles for individual parishes are expected to be available in early 2020. The diocesan social profiles have been published on the National Centre for Pastoral Research website at [www.ncpr.catholic.org.au](http://www.ncpr.catholic.org.au).

### **POPE ESTABLISHES SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD**

Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter, *Motu proprio* "Aperuit illis", published on 30 September, establishes that "the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God". The timing of the document is significant: 30 September is the Feast of St Jerome, the man who translated most of the Bible into Latin, and who famously said: "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ". This year also marks 1600 years since his death.

The title of the document, "Aperuit illis", is equally important. They are its opening words, taken from St Luke's Gospel, where the Evangelist describes how the Risen Jesus appeared to His disciples, and how "He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures".

Recalling the importance given by the Second Vatican Council to rediscovering Sacred Scripture for the life of the Church, Pope Francis says he wrote this Apostolic Letter in response to requests from the faithful around the world to celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God.

In the *Motu proprio* (literally, "of his own initiative"), Pope Francis declares that "the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time is to be devoted to the celebration, study and dissemination of the Word of God". This is more than a temporal coincidence, he explains: the celebration has "ecumenical value, since the Scriptures point out, for those who listen, the path to authentic and firm unity".

Pope Francis invites local communities to find ways to "mark this Sunday with a certain solemnity". He suggests that the sacred text be enthroned "in order to focus the attention of the assembly on the normative value of God's Word". In highlighting the proclamation of the Word of the Lord, it would be appropriate "to emphasize in the homily the honour that it is due", writes the Pope.

The Bible is not meant for a privileged few, continues Pope Francis. It belongs "to those called to hear its message and to recognize themselves in its words". The Bible cannot be monopolized or restricted to select groups either, he writes, because it is "the book of the Lord's people, who, in listening to it, move from dispersion and division towards unity".

"Pastors are primarily responsible for explaining Sacred Scripture and helping everyone to understand it", writes Pope Francis. Which is why the homily possesses "a quasi-sacramental character". He warns against improvising or giving "long, pedantic homilies or wandering off into unrelated topics".

Rather, he suggests using simple and suitable language. For many of the faithful, "this is the only opportunity they have to grasp the beauty of God's Word and to see it applied to their daily lives".

He uses the scene of the Risen Lord appearing to the disciples at Emmaus to demonstrate what he calls "the unbreakable bond between Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist". Since the Scriptures everywhere speak of Christ, he writes, "they enable us to believe that His death and resurrection are not myth but history, and are central to the faith of His disciples". When the sacraments are introduced and illumined by God's Word, explains the Pope, "they become ever more clearly the goal of a process whereby Christ opens our minds and hearts to acknowledge His saving work".

"The role of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures is primordial. Without the work of the Spirit, there would always be a risk of remaining limited to the written text alone. This would open the way to a fundamentalist reading, which needs to be avoid-

ed, lest we betray the inspired, dynamic and spiritual character of the sacred text". It is the Holy Spirit who "makes Sacred Scripture the living word of God, experienced and handed down in the faith of His holy people". He invites us never to take God's Word for granted, "but instead to let ourselves be nourished by it, in order to acknowledge and live fully our relationship with Him and with our brothers and sisters".

The Pope concludes his Apostolic Letter by defining "the great challenge before us in life: to listen to Sacred Scripture and then to practice mercy". God's Word "has the power to open our eyes and to enable us to renounce a stifling and barren individualism and instead to embark on a new path of sharing and solidarity".

The Letter closes with a reference to Our Lady, who accompanies us "on the journey of welcoming the Word of God", teaching us the joy of those who listen to that Word – and keep it.

### **POPE 2: NO ONE MUST BE EXCLUDED FROM SOCIETY**

Pope Francis reiterates the need for a society that excludes no one, regardless of when they arrived or where they came from. He reminded the faithful to be hospitable towards all those who arrive on our shores and in our societies.

He recalled the just celebrated liturgy dedicated to migrants and refugees during which, he said, "we renewed the Church's attention" to the many vulnerable people who are on the move." Together with the faithful of all the Dioceses in the world, the celebration of the *World Day of Migrants and Refugees* reaffirms that "no one be excluded from society, whether they be resident citizens for quite some time, or newly arrived". He also said that he was about to unveil a sculpture inspired by the passage from the Letter to the Hebrews: "Do not neglect hospitality, for through it some have unknowingly entertained angels. This sculpture, made of bronze and clay, depicts a group of migrants of various cultures and from different historic times. I wanted this artistic work to be placed here in St Peter's Square, so that it might remind everyone about the evangelical challenge of hospitality," he said.

### **POPE 3 CULTURE OF HOPE BY CARING**

**FOR THE YOUNG AND THE OLD** Pope Francis urges us to care for the young and for the old, in families and in society at large. To neglect children and the elderly because they are not productive is not a sign of God's presence.

God's love for his people is like a burning flame, notwithstanding the fact that His people betrayed Him and forgot about Him, His Love is such that His promise of salvation continues to be offered to each and every one of us.

Reflecting on the 8<sup>th</sup> chapter of Zechariah which says "I am intensely jealous for Zion," and "I will return to Zion," the Lord, the Pope said, is telling us that thanks to His love, Jerusalem will live. The Pope noted, the "signs of the presence of the Lord" with his people are clear. They are made evident by an abundance of life in families and in society: old men and women sitting in the streets, boys and girls playing.

When there is respect, care and love for life, this is a sign of God's presence in our communities. The presence of the elderly, he continued, is a sign of maturity. This is beautiful: "Old men and old women, each with staff in hand because of old age, shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem." And so many children too, he continued, who bring with them a swarm of activity. "The abundance of elderly people and children. This is the sign that when a people care for the old and for the young, and consider them a treasure, there is the presence of God, a promise of future," he said.

The Pope recalled the prophecy of Joel: "your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions" explaining that there is a reciprocal exchange between them, and that he said, is something that does not happen when the culture of waste prevails.

He described the culture of waste - a culture that "sends children on their way back to the sender" or that locks the elderly up in retirement homes because "they are not productive" and

perhaps hinder us in our everyday lives – as a ruinous one. Pope Francis recalled a story his own grandmother used to tell him about a family in which the father decided to move the grandfather to the kitchen during meal times because he would spill his soup and soil his clothes. "One day," the Pope said, "the father came home to find his son building himself a little table because he assumed that sooner or later he too would be a victim of that same kind of isolation." When you neglect children and the elderly, he said, you end up being part of those modern societies who have given life to a demographic winter. "When a country grows old and there are no children, when you don't see children's prams on the streets and you don't see pregnant women (...), when you read that in that country there are more pensioners than workers, it's tragic!" he said.

It's tragic also to lose the traditions passed down by the elder generations, the Pope said, describing traditions "not as museums," but as lessons for the future: "the lymph of the roots that make the tree grow and bear flowers and fruits".

At the heart of God's message, is a "culture of hope" which is represented by the old and the young. This is the sign that a people cherishes life, that there is a culture of hope: the care of the young and the elderly," he said, "they are the certainty of the survival of a country and of the Church."

Pope Francis concluded his homily recalling how during many of his journeys across the world, he has been struck by those parents who raise their children up to him when he passes by asking for a blessing, and at the same time showing him who their true treasure is.

*By Linda Bordoni*

### **POPE 4:LUKEWARM FAITH TURNS OUR LIVES INTO GRAVEYARDS**

Pope Francis invited the faithful not to content themselves with a fake inner peace that bears no fruit. Reflecting on the reading from the Book of Haggai, he spoke of how the Lord urges His people to reflect on their behavior and to change it by working to rebuild the House of God.

The prophet Haggai was trying to move the heart of the lazy people who had resigned themselves to a life of defeat. The Temple had been destroyed by enemies, all was in ruin, but those people let the years go by without taking any action. Then, he said, the Lord sent the prophet to "rebuild the Temple," but the hearts of the people were bitter and they had no wish to take risks and to work.

Those people "did not want to pick themselves up, to start again. They would not let the Lord help them to do so", and their excuse was that the time had not yet come. This is the same drama of so many lukewarm Christians who say "Yes, yes, Lord, it's fine ... but slowly, slowly, Lord, let's leave it like this ... I'll do it tomorrow!" Lukewarm spirituality leads to "a graveyard-like peace"

It leads so many to find excuses in uncertainty and fuels the tendency to procrastinate. It causes so many people to waste their lives and end up "in tatters because they have done nothing except nurture sentiments of peace and calm within themselves". But that, he said, "is the peace of graveyards".

He warned the faithful that when we become "spiritually lukewarm", we become half-Christians, without substance. Instead, the Lord wants conversion, today. Let us ask the Lord for the grace not to fall into that "half-Christian" spirit which makes us Christians without substance – "Rose water Christians" as some would say - Christians who perhaps "sowed a lot but reaped very little, lives that promised so much, and in the end did nothing". May the Lord help us, to "wake-up from a tepid spirit" and fight "this gentle anesthesia of spiritual life".

### **SOME COUNSELS ON FAITH AND RELIGION FOR OUR PRESENT GENERATION**

It's no secret that today we're witnessing a massive decline in church attendance and, seemingly, a parallel loss of interest in religion. The former mindset, within which we worried, sometimes obsessively, about sin, church-going, and heaven and hell

no longer holds sway for millions of people. As one parent, worried about the religious state of his children, shared with me recently, "our old religious concerns never ever darken their minds." What's to be said in the face of this?

Admittedly, I may not be the person best-suited to offer that advice. I'm over 70 years old, a spiritual writer whose main focus of research and teaching right now is on the spirituality of aging, and I'm a Roman Catholic priest, a religious insider, who can be perceived as simply a salesman for religion and the churches.

But, despite that, here are some counsels on faith and religion for today's generation.

First: **Search honestly.** God's first concern is not whether you're going to church or not, but whether you are staying honest in your search for truth and meaning. When the Apostle Thomas, doubts the reality of the resurrection, Jesus doesn't scold him, but simply asks him to stretch out his hand and continuing searching, trusting that if he searches honestly he will eventually find the truth. The same is true for us. All we have to do is be honest, to not lie, to acknowledge truth as it meets us. In John's Gospel, Jesus sets out only one condition to come to God: Be honest and never refuse to acknowledge what's true, no matter how inconvenient. But the key is to be honest! If we're honest we will eventually find meaning and that will lead us where we need to go – perhaps even to a church door somewhere. But even if it doesn't, God will find us. The mystery of Christ is bigger than we imagine.

Second: **Listen to what's deepest inside you.** Soul is a precious commodity. Make sure you honor yours. Honor the voice inside your soul. Deeper than the many enticing voices you hear in world inviting you in every direction is a voice inside you which, like an insatiable thirst, reminds you always of the truth of this prayer from Saint Augustine: You have made us for yourself, Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Stay in touch with that voice. You will hear it in your restlessness and it will, in the words of Karl Rahner, teach you something that's initially is hard to bear but eventually sets you free: In the torment of the insufficiency of everything attainable, we eventually learn that here in this life there is no finished symphony.

Third: **Beware the crowd!** In the Gospels the word "crowd" is almost always pejorative. For good reason: Crowds don't have a mind and the energy of a crowd is often dangerous. So beware of what Milan Kundera calls "the great march", namely, the propensity to be led by ideology, group-think, the latest trend, the popular person or thing, the false feeling of being right because the majority of people feel that way, and the social pressures coming from both the right and the left. Be true to yourself. Be the lonely prophet who's not afraid to be alone on the outside. Dream. Be idealistic. Protect your soul. Don't give it away cheaply.

Fourth: **Don't confuse faith with the churches** – but don't write off the churches too quickly. When they ask those without religious affiliation today why they aren't religious invariably their answer is: "I just don't believe it anymore." But what's the "it" which they no longer believe? What they don't believe anymore isn't in fact the truth about God, faith, and religion, but rather what they've heard about God, faith, and religion. Sort that out and you will find that you do have faith. Moreover, don't write off the churches too quickly. They have real faults; you're not wrong about that, but they're still the best GPS available to help you find your way to meaning. They're a roadmap drawn up by millions of explorers who have walked the road before you. You can ignore them, but then be alert to God's gentle voice often saying: "Recalculating". God will get you home, but the churches can help.

Fifth: **Don't forget about the poor.** When you touch the poor, you're touching God and, as Jesus says, at the judgment day we will be judged by how we served the poor. (PTO p4)

# The Liturgy of the Word

## A reading from the prophet Habakkuk Hab 1:2-3; 2:2-4

How long, Lord, am I to cry for help while you will not listen; to cry 'Oppression!' in your ear and you will not save? Why do you set injustice before me, why do you look on where there is tyranny? Outrage and violence, this is all I see, all is contention, and discord flourishes. Then the Lord answered and said, 'Write the vision down, inscribe it on tablets to be easily read, since this vision is for its own time only: eager for its own fulfilment, it does not deceive; if it comes slowly, wait, for come it will, without fail. See how he flags, he whose soul is not at rights, but the upright man will live by his faithfulness.'

## Responsorial Psalm Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R. v.8

**(R.) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the rock who saves us.  
Let us come before him, giving thanks, with songs let us hail the Lord. (R.)  
2. Come in; let us bow and bend low; let us kneel before the God who made us for he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture, the flock that is led by his hand. (R.)
3. O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert when your fathers put me to the test; when they tried me, though they saw my work.' (R.)

## A reading from the second letter of St Paul to Timothy 2 Tm 1:6-8, 13-14

I am reminding you to fan into a flame the gift that God gave you when I laid my hands on you. God's gift was not a spirit of timidity, but the Spirit of power, and love, and self-control. So you are never to be ashamed of witnessing to the Lord, or ashamed of me for being his prisoner; but with me, bear the hardships for the sake of the Good News, relying on the power of God. Keep as your pattern the sound teaching you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. You have been trusted to look after something precious; guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.

## Alleluia, alleluia!

The word of the Lord stands for ever; it is the word given to you, the Good News.

## Alleluia!

## A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 17:5-10

The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith.' The Lord replied, 'Were your faith the size of a mustard seed you could say to this mulberry tree, "Be uprooted and planted in the sea", and it would obey you. 'Which of you, with a servant ploughing or minding sheep, would say to him when he returned from the fields, "Come and have your meal immediately"? Would he not be more likely to say, "Get my supper laid; make yourself tidy and wait on me while I eat and drink. You can eat and drink yourself afterwards"? Must he be grateful to the servant for doing what he was told? So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, "We are merely servants: we have done no more than our duty."' "

**(continued from p3)** Give yourself away in some form of altruism, knowing, as Jesus puts it, that it's not those who say Lord, Lord, who go to heaven but those who serve others. In your search, you need to get a letter of reference from the poor. Sixth: **Look among your contemporaries for a patron to inspire you.** Jean Vanier, Henri Nouwen, Thomas Merton, Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Simone Weil, Etty Hillesum, and Dag Hammarskjold, among others – they've all navigated your issues. -Fr Ron Rolheiser

## 3pm NEXT SUNDAY: BODALLA ECUMENICAL EVENT:



Thanks to those who have put in time and energy to prepare for this celebration next Sunday; it's at 3pm at St Edmund's, proceeding (by car!) to All Saints at about 3.30pm.

The themes are appreciation, ecumenism, history & holiness.

The Mort Family have played such a significant role. John Henry Newman's canonization holds in the Vatican! All are welcome!



## SACRED HEART PARISH

**Moruya**, Moruya Heads, Mossy Point, Broulee, **Tuross Head**, Congo, Bodalla.  
36 Queen Street (PO Box 23), Moruya, NSW, 2537.  
Phone: (02) 4474 2024; Fr Steve: 047 807 3995  
Emails: Moruya@cg.org.au; stephen.astill@cg.org.au  
Website: <http://cg.org.au/Moruya>

**Parish Administrator:** Fr Stephen Astill SJ;

**Cleaner:** Mrs Sue Fawcett

**Tuross Caring Group:** 0497 315 534

**Moruya Caring Group:** 0431 354 993

**PARISH SCHOOLS:** **St Mary's Parish Primary School**

Principal: Mrs Noelene O'Neill

**Carroll College** Principal: Mrs Jacqui Heffernan

**OCTOBER STARTS NEW INTENTION: A Missionary "Spring" in the Church** That the breath of the Holy Spirit engender a new missionary "spring" in the Church. All Catholics (and any others of good will) are invited and even urged to take up this lovely intention for daily prayer during October.

**ROSARY IN THE PARK:** Come to Russ Martin Park at 11am on Saturday, 12/10/19, for this prayer. Contact: Michael or Karen 4474 3325 or 0474939979.

**BLESSING OF PETS & OTHER ANIMALS:** On Friday this past week, it was the Feast of St Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals. The occasion was a joyful one, in which people and pets related well to their own kind, but there was also quite a lot of 'inter-species' appreciation! A number of the dogs present were of the same age and shared a refugee history, and while some humans were of the same age, none revealed a refugee history.

Other animals and pets would have come but for different reasons were not actually present; these included a black snake, Shetland ponies, parrots, fish, etc. We counted them as being present 'in spirit'

We recalled the various animals, etc, that had particular connections with God, Jesus and the Spirit, like the dove (Spirit), lion (God), Lamb (Jesus) and Mother hen (Jesus).

Pets and people thought the day was fine and all together look forward to next year's celebration, hoping to meet more new friends then.

**PARISH ADMINISTRATION:** The least fun most clergy have in parish life and ministry is administration. We didn't become priests enthused by forms, financial matters, bureaucracy, etc. However, I'm pleased to announce that what I've been promising for some months about the organisation of Planned Giving envelopes has taken a major step forward, thanks to the visit of Mrs Deb Foote, the parish support person for the Archdiocese. She came on Thursday, fulfilling my request for a visit. You may remember there was a lot of confusion about the numbers of the boxes of envelopes which people either took or were assigned. Would anyone using Planned Envelope #20 or 404 please notify the Parish Office on Tuesday? It is a matter of quite some importance to the smooth administration of both the parish and the Archdiocese for all the Planned Giving envelopes be linked to names, etc, of donors. Thanks from both the parish and the Archdiocese to all for your generosity and faithfulness at this time as well as over the past years.

**CATHOLIC MISSION APPEAL** This comes up on October 20, and the focus country this year is Ghana, in West Africa. Envelopes will be available from next weekend. Please assemble your financial resources to make your contribution on the appeal day.

**INSIGHTS INTO THE LIVES OF CATHOLICS** New reports published this week will help bishops and Church leaders respond to the needs of their local communities, says Trudy

## TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(Year C) 6/10/2019

**Weekend Masses:** Saturday Vigil 6pm Moruya;

Sunday at 'The Pines', Tuross 8am; Moruya 10am

**Weekday Masses:** Monday Communion Service 9.15am; Weekday Masses: Tues 5.30pm, Thurs & Fri 9.15am. Note: This week, no 9.15am Mass. Wednesdays 2pm Banksia Village -**Rosary** after Mass

**Reconciliation:** Saturday 10—10.30am

**Baptisms, Anointings, Weddings & Funerals** by appointment.

**For the sick:** Fr Kevin Murphy, Peter Morris, Debbie Morris, Gail Moss, Kay Morton, Lauri-Anne Foran, John Bolton & Olivia Russell (baby).

## PRAYER FOR THE BLESSING OF RAIN

Lord God,

Bless Australia – our *Great South Land of the Holy Spirit*.

Grant, that as the *Cross* shines in our southern skies, so may Christ bring light to our nation, to its peoples old and new.

May we receive the blessing of abundant rain so that the "desert blooms with the life that lies in wait."

We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

**On Friday night, the rain came! Here is some Scripture to help in your prayers of thanksgiving:**

**Hosea 10.12** Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap the fruit of unfailing love, and break up your unplowed ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, until he comes and showers his righteousness on you.

**Isaiah 55.10** As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, **Joel 2.23** Be glad, people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you the autumn rains because he is faithful. He sends you abundant showers, both autumn and spring rains, as before.

**Lev 26.4** I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit.

**Mt 5.45** that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

**Ps 72.6** May he be like rain falling on a mown field, like showers watering the earth.

Dantis, director of the National Centre for Pastoral Research. Drawing on Australian Bureau of Statistics data from the 2016 Census, the diocesan social profiles provide insights into the demographics of the Catholic population in all 28 geographical dioceses. The reports show that the lives of Catholics, individually and collectively, can vary widely in different parts of the country. "While the overall Catholic population fell – both numerically and as a proportion of the overall population – between 2011 and 2016, that doesn't mean the drop has been experienced in all dioceses," Dr Dantis said. In the Wollongong, Sale, Rockhampton, Perth and Bunbury dioceses, for example, there were numerical increases. "These profiles help bishops and their key advisors to understand the Catholic population in their own diocese and can be used in conjunction with information like parish Mass attendance to tailor their ministries to their communities," she said. Among the information contained in the diocesan profiles is the median age of Catholics, the proportion of Catholics in the diocese, the prevalence of Catholics who speak a language other than English at home and the percentage of Catholic couples where one person is from another religious background. The reports compare the 2016 statistics with previous Census