

Catholic Parish of Blackiriars

Issue 25
19th April 2020
Year A

Under the care of the Dominican Fathers



VERITAS



Second Sunday of Easter

HOLY ROSARY CHURCH

Parish Priest
Fr Mannes Tellis OP
(To contact Please Text)
0414 396 532

Assistant Priest
Fr Rafael Cabezon OP

In residence
Fr Bernie Maxwell OP

Holy Rosary Church
Cnr Phillip Avenue &
Antill Street, Watson ACT

Postal Address
PO Box 900, Dickson
Ph. 6248 5925

Email: watson@cg.org.au
Website: www.cg.org.au/watson

Office Staff
Jacquie Cortese
Jim Smith

Holy Rosary Church
will be closed until
further notice.

**If you are in Urgent need
of a Priest out of office
hours call - 6248 8253**



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ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Entrance Antiphon

Receive the joy of your glory,
giving thanks to God,
who has called you into the heavenly kingdom,
alleluia.

FIRST READING

First Reading

Acts 2:42-47

*All who believed were together
and had all things in common.*

They devoted themselves
to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life,
to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.
Awe came upon everyone,
and many wonders and signs were done through the
apostles.
All who believed were together and had all things in
common;
they would sell their property and possessions
and divide them among all according to each one's need.
Every day they devoted themselves
to meeting together in the temple area
and to breaking bread in their homes.
They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart,
praising God and enjoying favour with all the people.
And every day the Lord added to their number those who
were being saved.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23

**Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
his love is everlasting.**

Let the house of Israel say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Let the house of Aaron say,
"His mercy endures forever."

Let those who fear the LORD say,
"His mercy endures forever." (R)

I was hard pressed and was falling,
but the LORD helped me.
My strength and my courage is the LORD,
and he has been my saviour.
The joyful shout of victory
in the tents of the just. (R)

The stone which the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.
By the LORD has this been done;
it is wonderful in our eyes.
This is the day the LORD has made;
let us be glad and rejoice in it. (R)

SECOND READING

Second Reading

1 Peter 1:3-9

*God has given us new birth to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to
an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfad-
ing, kept in heaven for you who by the power of God are
safeguarded through faith, to a salvation that is ready to
be revealed in the final time.

In this you rejoice, although now for a little while you may
have to suffer through various trials, so that the
genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is
perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for
praise, glory, and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ.
Although you have not seen him you love him;
even though you do not see him now yet believe in him,
you rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy,
as you attain the goal of your faith, the salvation of your
souls.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Gospel Acclamation

John 20:29

Alleluia, alleluia!

You believe in me, Thomas,
because you have seen me, says the Lord;
blessed are they who have not seen me,
but still believe!

Alleluia.

GOSPEL

Gospel

John 20:19-31

Eight days later, Jesus came and stood in their midst.

On the evening of that first day of the week,
when the doors were locked, where the disciples were,
for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst
and said to them, "Peace be with you."
When he had said this,
he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples re-
joiced when they saw the Lord.
Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you.
As the Father has sent me, so I send you."
And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said
to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.
Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them,
and whose sins you retain are retained."

Thomas, called Didymus, one of the Twelve,
was not with them when Jesus came.
So the other disciples said to him,
"We have seen the Lord."
But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in
his hands and put my finger into the nail marks
and put my hand into his side, I will not believe."
Now a week later his disciples were again inside
and Thomas was with them.

Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands, and bring your hand and put it into my side, and do not be unbelieving, but believe." Thomas answered and said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you come to believe because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

Now, Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book. But these are written that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.

FROM THE PARISH PRIEST

'by His wounds we are healed'. (Is 53:4-5)



It's interesting that sacred scripture encapsulates our emotions and situations rather aptly and today's holy gospel doesn't disappoint.

The disciples are in social isolation, though for a very different reason - "for fear of the Jews,". They are afraid. They have seen how a mob can be stirred up in such a way that an innocent man

could be put to death. They struggle to believe, how could this Jesus who promised so much, who raised the dead, gave sight to the blind, fed the hungry, reached out to those on the margins, forgave sinners, how can this great prophet be gone?

We may still feel the same too. Having been unable to attend the great ceremonies of Holy Week, we too are huddled up in our houses with the doors closed.

I visited one parishioner during the week and she was very sad she could not be at church for these great events, her faith in the risen Jesus being one of the great consolations of her life. I sympathised with her and I hope that in bringing her the risen Lord in Holy Communion her sadness could turn to joy, but only Jesus can give that peace and consolation. Indeed in our gospel this is what he does. Jesus first words to his friends are simply "Peace be with you".

In the context of his unjust trial, the mockery he underwent, the indignity of a public execution, and finally made to die with criminals, Jesus' only response is 'Peace be with you'.

What does Jesus do next? He shows them his wounds. Rather than show disgust for this gruesome exposition St John recounts his own memories of the event when he writes "the disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord". Jesus only response once again is "Peace be with you".

Then Jesus does a strange thing. Jesus breathes on his disciples giving them the Holy Spirit to forgive sin. In this rather bizarre act Jesus empowers his disciples to engage in the ministry of reconciliation, in a word extending Jesus' own ministry of bringing forgiveness and peace to those who are lost, least, and lame.

In his prophecy Isaiah recounts the following:

He took on our infirmities and carried our sorrows; yet we considered Him stricken by God, struck down and afflicted.

But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. (Is 53:4-5)

Truly by Jesus wounds we are healed. It is by Jesus taking on our own infirmities, sorrows and sins that we receive true freedom; freedom from the chains of our own wounded-ness, our own selfishness, our own weakness.

We can receive that forgiveness all the time in the Sacrament of Penance. In this Sacrament we experience personally the fact that Jesus' wounds heal us. There is no sin that cannot be forgiven by the wounds of Jesus.

The interesting thing is that Jesus keeps his wounds in his resurrected body. The resurrected body is not like the body we inhabit now; it is radiant, capable of superhuman activity and somehow... different. We know that Jesus' appearance somehow was different after his resurrection, so much so, the disciples who knew him whilst walking to Emmaus failed to recognise him at first. Yet, this glorified, risen, and different body carries with it the truly human too and this is evidenced in the marks of the passion which remain. Jesus' suffering and death were no fantasy, they were no show just for the day, rather his glorious wounds speak to us of the wounded-ness of our own bodies and minds and that no matter what it is only through these wounds we can find glory.

Currently there is a deep wound in our community through the closure of our churches and the scattering of our community, may the wounded Christ touch his wound to ours so that by his wounds we may be healed.

God love you all. You're all in my prayers

Fr Mannes OP

MY LORD AND MY GOD



LORD, HELP MY UNBELIEF

*Second Sunday of Easter (Low Sunday).
Fr Anthony Axe OP helps us to see how Thomas
in his doubt represents many Christians.*

Faith is a notoriously slippery customer. It is difficult to understand and difficult to grasp because it seems to come and go. For this reason, people are afraid of faith or rather of not having faith. What do you do to gain it or make it grow in strength? It seems to come easily to those people whose faith does not depend on their understanding what it is they believe. Sometimes it seems they are the only people who are certain of their faith. But most of us are waverers. Like the man in the gospels who asked Jesus to cure his epileptic son and who Jesus asked, 'Do you believe I can do this?' to which the man replied, 'I believe, Lord help my unbelief.'

This insecure type of faith has good biblical precedents and none as relevant to the problem as the story of Thomas in today's gospel. But it would be a mistake to start empathising with Thomas, because that's not what the story is there for. Thomas, like many of the gospel characters, is a type and what happens to them reflects the various situations we encounter throughout our Christian lives. So Peter denying three times that he ever knew Jesus resonates with us because of the betrayals we have been guilty of or suffered from. Martha and Mary, who epitomise service and study and the gap that seems to separate them, are meant to bring home to us the necessity and equality of both.

And so it is with poor 'doubting' Thomas. He is out when the risen Jesus appears to the disciples and so he misses the event. On his return, when the others tell him that Jesus has risen from the dead, he cannot bring himself to believe them. He is so vehement in his disbelief that he tells the others that until he sees and feels the wounds made by the crucifixion nails in Jesus' hands and the gash made by the spear in his side, he cannot believe. We can imagine the others being shocked at his attitude but I wonder what their reaction would have been if they had been in the same position. They had all fled like cowards when Jesus was arrested in Gethsemane so I suspect they would all have behaved in the same way that Thomas did. But this is nothing to be ashamed of. I suspect John, the writer of this particular gospel, is telling us that most people's faith cries out for some sort of proof.

Later, when Jesus appears to the disciples again and Thomas is present, he doesn't berate him because his faith is seemingly weaker than that of the other disciples. In fact, Jesus isn't interested in the others at all at this point. He compares Thomas with those people in the future who believe, even though there is no chance that they will ever see the risen Lord in the flesh. 'Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe,' Jesus says. We are those people who believe and have not seen. We are those people who, because we have not seen, sometimes find it difficult to believe. And that's not just belief in the Resurrection. It's belief in the whole religious thing, the entire God thing. We believe but we don't know where that belief comes from.

This resurrection appearance story, which seems like failure on the part of Thomas, is there paradoxically to give us encouragement with regard to our own faith. Jesus says that the people who have not seen his risen body yet believe are blessed, are happy.

Cont...

LORD, HELP MY UNBELIEF

Well perhaps they are but Jesus doesn't say that there are many of them around. Most Christians hang on to their belief, to their faith, because they have caught glimpses of the risen Lord. In our daily lives we occasionally experience something that speaks of God and the risen Jesus. The memory of them lingers in our hearts and it is this that we cannot let go of. We believe, and that is God's gift to us. When Jesus commends those who have not seen and yet who believe, he doesn't say how strongly they have to believe but simply that they believe, and that is what most of us do in varying degrees. We remain Christian because we believe and because we are hanging onto those glimpses of God we have experienced in our lives. What matters is not how much or how strongly we believe but that we do believe. It matters that we remember those times when God has been present to us, revealing that there is more to life than betrayal, war, violence, hatred, greed, selfishness and power-seeking.

But we live in hope that our faith will grow stronger as we learn to recognize the presence of the risen Lord in the world. Our faith may be like a grain of mustard seed but we have the promise that if we persevere it will become the greatest of all the trees and see us through. As with the apostle Thomas, it is through our doubt that we will gain our faith. And every so often we will catch a glimpse of God that takes our breath away.

<http://english.op.org/torch>

MY LORD AND MY GOD!

With quiet confidence I deliberately place myself before my loving and merciful God. May I be attentive to the Spirit praying within me; to be more aware in my daily life of his renewing presence and power.

I ask the Spirit to show me where in my life I need an awareness and gratitude of all that God gives me each day. I invite the Spirit to help me pray for that inner freedom which will urge me to say (with St Thomas) 'You truly are my Lord and my God – I want and I choose whatever will allow you to deepen your life in me.'

I speak to the Lord from my heart as Thomas did.

Second reading - I take time to come to quiet. I place God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, at the centre of my ponderings and yearnings. I read, slowly, this great letter of encouragement. What words or phrases strike me particularly? I might like to focus on God's mercy towards me.

Can I ever become truly aware that I can neither earn nor be deserving of such loving generosity? There may have been times when my faith has faced trials and has been tested. Perhaps, on occasions, it has been found wanting. Maybe I have felt afraid of the demands such belief might make of me? Do I worry what others might think of me? I talk to the Lord freely about these things.

I might like to end this period of prayer by asking for the grace to focus more on the strength of God's faith in me rather than on the weakness of my faith in God.

Gospel - 'Unless I can see...I refuse to believe'. This is understandable, but it often comes locked in the fear of what will follow if do I believe. I read this scene as if for the first time. I let Jesus stand before me (wherever I am now). I hear him say to me: 'Peace be with you...Put your finger here...doubt no longer...but believe.' How do I reply? I try to place all my trust and hope in Jesus.

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In perilous times of a global epidemic, it can be a great source of inspiration to draw from God's Word and others who went through suffering. In the Bible there is perhaps none greater than Job, for this.

The story of Job is about a righteous man who lived long ago. He has 10 children and is very wealthy. He fears God and shuns evil. Satan approaches God and gains permission to afflict Job by taking all his children, possessions and severely damaging his body. This story is known as, "the test of Job's faith".

I believe Job can teach us many things about God and life in hard times. Today, I want to draw your attention to four points that can help us navigate dark waters.

1 God is boasting about you

The reason Job caught the devil's attention in the first place, was because God had been boasting about him in Heaven (Job 1:8). Job entreated God's favour and this enraged the devil to conspire and want to harm him, in order to get Job to curse God (v11).

Whenever we go through undeserved trials, I believe God has been boasting about His Children. The Accuser has been enraged and is wanting to hurt us, but God has more faith in us than what our Accuser is saying, so He has allowed what we are going through. He knows that we won't curse Him and we can overcome what the enemy would throw at us.

2 Don't be a Job's Comforter

After Job is afflicted, he is overwhelmed with grief. He tears his clothes and sits ashes, he cuts his boils open with glass and sits in silence (2:8). He has three friends that come to mourn with and comfort him. As they sit with him they start to ponder, they say that Job must have done something wrong because God is just, and rewards our works – whether good or bad.

Many people (even believers) are also trying to figure out why we are facing this global pandemic. Many are laying the blame for Corona on China, 5G, New World Order, God's judgement, the mark of the beast or some other conspiracy.

At the end, the Lord said to one of Job's friends (42:7) "I am angry with you and your two friends, because you have not spoken the truth about me, as my servant Job has." Job's friends were finishing what the devil had started – accusing. Trying to reason and lay blame, is not God's way.

Job said to his friends (16:7), "You are miserable comforters, all of you! Will your long-winded speeches never end? What ails you that you keep on arguing? I also could speak like you, if you were in my place; I could make fine speeches against you and shake my head at you. But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief."

In a time of crisis, we can try to find fault and lay blame, or we can bring comfort to those who are going through the crisis. The Lord said that Job's way was right. Encouraging one another is a better way, a higher way, a way of trust and hope. Our compassion will seek to lighten others' loads and bring comfort and relief.

3 He didn't curse or blame, he worshipped and repented

Although the devil wanted Job to curse God, he never did. He fell down and worshipped God (1:20). Job was never in it for the blessings, he was in it because he genuinely loved, trusted and feared God. His friends tried to find a reason to blame Job. In all his suffering, Job is yearning to ask God, "Why?". God comes at the end and says He is God, there is none like Him. He lists some amazingly wonderful and complex things; which God created and says these are small things for God (ch 39-41).

God basically says that Job couldn't understand if God was to tell Him why. The lesson is we don't need to know why, we need to know that God knows why, and we can trust Him - He is good.

Job, even though he never sinned, repented for questioning God. I believe that there are two motives for questioning God; questions rooted in doubt or in faith. The name Job means turning. Job turned to God even though he didn't know why, he knew God. May we all have this kind of trust in God – a blindly trusting faith. He is worthy and worth it. He is amazing and ultimate goodness.

In the midst of the Corona pandemic, we don't have to know why or how, we need to trust God. He will come and He will save.

In the meantime we can use this time of lock down like a Butterfly uses a cocoon, to press into God and emerge transformed by His Word and His Spirit. To then go pollinate the world with the life giving gospel of Jesus.

4 It is still only Friday, Sunday is coming

Romans 8:28 says that God makes all things work together for our good. At the end of his ordeal, God comes and speaks face to face with Job and answers his question. Not with a direct reply, but with a deeper revelation of who God is. This is what will inevitably happen out of every hard situation in your life.



Cont... DO NOT BE AFRAID! I AM WITH YOU.

Your faith will be strengthened, and you will come out of it closer to God. Praise the Lord this isn't the only way our faith is refined, or we would be able to boast. God often also surprises us with gifts, which also serves to bolster our faith.

At the end of this God also blesses Job with double of everything he lost; double the children, double the stuff, and double the honour from both his friends and people afar (ch 42). On top of knowing God and His ways more, you will exit the trial with the double blessings. We call this, double for your trouble. This is the promise we can hold on to, given Job as an exemplar.

We look at the suffering of Job and call it the test of his faith, but what we miss is the context of it being 40 days in about 200 years. I would call it, "a momentary pause until the goodness of God is revealed." And this is what all our afflictions are. It's only a matter of time until God comes and reveals Himself and blesses us.

It's only a matter of time until Corona is but a distant memory. Out of this time, we will emerge better people and the earth will be a better place. God will restore double to those who suffered. Hopefully we be able to see this sooner rather than later.

Job ultimately points us to Jesus.

He is a type of Jesus – the suffering servant. Even though this suffering servant humbled himself and demonstrated love as strong as death, by taking on himself, our sinful nature and the curse of humanity, to the rugged cross – it was only a beginning to the story. The story ended with Jesus overcoming death and forever being seated at the right hand of the Father, in glory. He endures the pain of the cross for the joy, the victory – you and me, with Him forever.

All our hard times will inevitably deepen our faith and be rewarded by God's goodness and glory. They are an accelerator and promoter. We do not need to worry or fear when in the trial, because God is with us, He will make it turn out good.

FAITH

What a surprise for the disciples! The risen Christ comes to them through locked doors, breathes on them, and says, "Receive the Holy Spirit." By the power of the Spirit, the disciples will forgive sins and communicate the peace of Jesus himself. However, there is another part to this gospel story. The story revolves around Thomas but it is also about us. Sometimes we are like Thomas and miss the most important part of our faith, belief in Jesus! But "blest" are we who are guided in faith by the Holy Spirit.

There are times when a person needs to be alone to think about something, or to deal with a pain or hurt that others might not understand or share. At those times, we might be tempted to "lock the doors" of our hearts to those who may be able to help. Remember that the risen Jesus can come through locked doors! Ask him to send help, perhaps through a parent, teacher, or friend.

Thomas is known as "the Doubter." However sometimes doubt can be a good thing. Why? What did Thomas' doubt lead to? Thomas doubted and we still call him a saint. Doubt was only one part of his path in following Jesus. What is a good way to handle our doubts?

POPE FRANCIS AND THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS



The liturgical celebration that ended with a blessing *Urbi et Orbi* in an empty St. Peter's Square on Friday, March 27, was the image of a universal condition. The emptiness of the square absorbed into itself the voices of a world sick or at risk of illness, of those called to stay at home, in isolation or quarantine. Never has St. Peter's Square been more crowded with people as on that Friday.

With discretion Francis does not cease to be profoundly aware of the sobering events of this world. He does so from his Santa Marta residence; he does so with gestures and initiatives, and also with other interventions and messages.

Francis' voice resounds in a world thirsting for meaning. His voice is gentle, but also decisive and robust. Austen Ivereigh, a British scholar and journalist, the pontiff's biographer and a reliable interpreter of his thought interviewed Francis for *The Tablet* and *Commonweal Magazine*.

This interview is important and should be read with care because it helps us to move forward in this challenging time. Pope Francis spoke about how he is living and contemplating the coronavirus crisis. In a world in isolation as Easter draws near, he is preparing himself practically and spiritually for the consequences, and inviting humanity to convert to a different and better way of being. The pope is deeply troubled and grieved by so much suffering and sacrifice. But what shines through is his confidence in the possibility of transformation that is now being offered to us.

Questions

Many questions were answered orally, with recorded voice. How is the pope living through the pandemic, personally, practically and spiritually? How does he see the mission of the Church at this time? What does he think of the policies of governments in the face of the crisis, and what is it revealing about society? Does he also see in the crisis the possibility of change? Is ecological conversion possible? What of a more humane economy? And a more missionary and flexible Church? How can we live this Easter and what messages in particular does he have for the elderly, the young and the impoverished? These are some of the questions that Francis answers.

How can we be 'close' to others? Radical pastoral conversion
This is clearly a favorable time for "pastoral conversion." Those who travel with him on his journeys and audiences know how important direct contact with people is for Francis.

I remember that at the end of his visit to Colombia he seemed really tired. The papal retinue was surprised and heartened to see him rejuvenated by the joyful crowd awaiting him at the Nunciature.

POPE FRANCIS AND THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

And right there he made a spontaneous speech of great passion, accompanied by gestures that revealed an unsuspected strength. The pastor cannot be separated from the people.

The condition linked to the coronavirus crisis is one of “separation,” of painful but necessary distancing. How does the pope react? He says in this interview: “Thinking of people anoints me, it does me good, it takes me out of my self-preoccupation.” The very thought of the people of God confirms and reinvigorates pastoral conversion.

And Francis reflects on his Petrine ministry. He feels that now he must “accompany” the people; he must “stay close” to them. The passion to care is rooted in Francis. He sees the Church – as he told me in the interview for *La Civiltà Cattolica* in 2013 – as a “field hospital.” For this reason, Francis’ thinking stretches beyond the conventional. He does so by quoting from memory *The Betrothed*, a 19th century Italian novel set in a time of plague. He had already done so in Brazil, on his first apostolic journey, when he refused to travel in an armored car saying: “I couldn’t go to see these people, who have such a big heart, behind a glass screen.” The virus prevents physical contact for the good of all. And so Francis tries to understand how to be “close” now. This is the issue of the pontificate at the present moment.

The care of the future

But Francis also wonders what awaits him after the crisis as part of his “service as bishop of Rome, as head of the Church”? We feel all the drama of these words because of the awareness that the post-coronavirus period: “That aftermath has already begun to be revealed as tragic and painful.” He is living this moment “with great uncertainty,” like everyone else. And yet he knows that this is “a time for inventing, for creativity.” He had said this on March 27 in the empty square, declaring it is necessary “to give space to the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of arousing. It means finding the courage to open spaces where everyone can feel called, and to allow new forms of hospitality, fraternity and solidarity.” This is a time when we must prepare for a future that cannot be like the past. Uncertainty – which is the dominant feeling – must be combined with inventiveness in search of solutions. The Church herself must express “apostolic creativity, creativity purified of many useless things.”

The key word is *creativity*, then. If one examines the writings of Jorge Mario Bergoglio one understands how this word is precisely a key for him. He often uses it, for example, when he speaks to educators, teachers and catechists. Creativity helps people to be with incomplete, open thinking.

In this interview the pope recalls “a verse from the *Aeneid* in the midst of defeat: the counsel is not to give up, but save yourself for better times.” There is here a very strong message of hope, which resonates in the interview: “The creativity of the Christian needs to show forth in opening up new horizons, opening windows, opening transcendence toward God and toward people, and in creating new ways of being at home.” Here Francis repeats in an updated form the adage of an anonymous Jesuit: *Non coarctari a maximo sed contineri a minimo, divinum est*, that is,

POPE FRANCIS AND THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

“Do not be constrained by the greatest space, but be able to stay in the smallest space. This is divine.”

He knows that it is “not easy to be confined to your house.” But this “prepares for better times.” “Take care of yourself for a future that will come,” he exclaims, “we must face staying at home with all our creativity.”

The opportunity for economic and ecological conversion

But how? The economic thoughts of the pontiff return here; he knows well that we must fight against the “throwaway culture,” which risks managing the emergency with criteria that do not protect the weak and which, on the contrary, seem to favor the promotion of the strongest. “A photo appeared the other day of a parking lot in Las Vegas where the deprived had been put in quarantine. And the hotels were empty. But the homeless cannot go to a hotel,” he says.

He is “worried by the hypocrisy of certain political personalities who speak of facing up to the crisis, of the problem of hunger in the world, but who in the meantime manufacture weapons.”

And in the end he says: “we must slow down our rate of consumption and production and learn to understand and contemplate the natural world. And to reconnect with our real surroundings.” The Covid-19 crisis is an opportunity for social, economic and ecological conversion. In this situation we rediscover the significance of the encyclical *Laudato Si’*, his vision of the world.

Attention to the poor is central and they return to it again and again in this interview. Francis calls them the “deprived.” And he expresses himself by quoting Dostoevsky, who is very dear to him. The invitation is to descend into the “underground,” to turn to the “suffering flesh of the poor,” to *pietas*. This is an appeal for a more human world, which is the only one that can give substance to the future.

Francis’ gaze is rich both in direct pastoral experience and in the readings that nourished him. I note that they are the same readings that he mentioned to me in the interview he gave me in 2013: Manzoni, Virgil, Dostoevsky, Joseph Ma-lègue. The last-mentioned, the so-called “Catholic Proust,” a French writer dear to him, lends the expression “the new saints next door,” who in this difficult moment are the “doctors, volunteers, religious, priests, workers who carry out their duties to enable this society to function.”



Excerpt Fr Antonio Spadaro, SJ - Editor-in-Chief, *La Civiltà Cattolica*

DEDICATED TO THE BREAKING OF BREAD

The book of Acts describes the lifestyle of early Christians. They form a pure communal society. Each person contributes the common pool and receives an allotment of food. Of special note is the “breaking of bread”.

It was common to use large sheets of flat bread as utensils at a meal. Pieces of bread would be broken off to pick up greasy food. Normally the host would break his portion first. Jesus established a precedent of not taking his section first, thus making himself the last to get bread. This was a wonderful lesson in charity–thinking of others first.

DIVINE MERCY

St. Augustine called the eight days of Easter, referring to the Octave as 'Days of mercy and pardon.' Of course the Gospel text gives us the words of Jesus to his disciples who were gathered in a room with the doors closed for fear of the Jews. Jesus appeared to them and the first things he said to them was: 'Peace be with you.' Jesus went on to say after bestowing on the disciples the Holy Spirit: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.'

Pope John Paul II in his homily at the canonization of Sr. Faustina on the 30th April, 2000, said among other things that: 'It is important ... that we accept the whole message that comes to us from the word of God on this second Sunday of Easter, which from now on throughout the Church, will be called 'Divine Mercy Sunday.' The Pope also made clear that the image of the Divine mercy which St. Faustina saw represents the Risen Christ bringing mercy to the world.

The Holy Father said: 'Jesus shows His hands and His side [to the Apostles]. He points, that is, to the wounds of the Passion, especially the wound in His Heart, the source of which flows the great wave of mercy poured out on humanity. There are pamphlets at the doors of the church should you like to read more about this devotion.

LOOKING FOR SHANAHAN'S

Parishioners at St Mary's Bungendore are restoring the stained glass window and trying to locate descendants of the Shanahan's.

In 1874, *The Queanbeyan Age* said the stained glass window was the gift of Mrs Thomas Shanahan Junior of the Briars, Molonglo.

There were two Thomas Shanahans living at the Briars at the time.

The first was Thomas senior (1790-1874) buried in Bungendore cemetery and married to Catherine (1785-1882) buried at The Briars. The second is Thomas Shana-han Junior (1816-1884), married to Mary Mulcahy Shanahan who died on November 11, 1911 in Goulburn. Mary is buried at Bungendore Cemetery in an unmarked grave.

The parish believes the Mrs Thomas Shanaghan Junr named in the dedication panel of the window was Mary. The panel was installed most likely in the 1960s.

Thomas' headstone says he was a Magistrate of the Territory of New South Wales who died on April 16, 1884, aged 68. It would be nice to find the location of Mary's grave and mark it with a headstone.

If anyone knows of any descendants of Thomas and Mary Shanahan, could they contact Chair of the Parish Pastoral Committee David Webster at d.webster45@bigpond.com or 0417 235 492.



CHANGE OF DETAILS

Parishioners if have changed your address, phone number or email address or are leaving the Parish **Please** advise the Parish Office.

In Your Prayers please remember those in our community who are ill:

Alexia Harris, Maria Martiniello, Greg O'Neill, Una Bell, Mary Martin, Barbara Wilson, Mary Bui, Anne Corver, Fr Ellis Clifford, Maureen Dawes, Edith Jensen, Awny El-Ghitany, Fr Joe McGeehan, Joe Schimizzi, Elsie Laughton, June Pollard, Paul Neddrie, Beth Delos Santos, Margaret Sullivan, Rosa Maria Santos, Pamela Sandy, Frank Zobec, Zelma McManus, Elizabeth Webster, Philip Bailey, Mimma Giampietro, Catherine Feehan, Maureen Blood, Charlotte Woolner,

Our recently Deceased: May they find peace and comfort in the embrace of the Lord.

Anne Grieves, Bernard Slammon

ARCHDIOCESAN TRIBUNAL

With the pressures of modern life marriage breakdown affects many Australian families. For many in our community there can be a sense of isolation or even exclusion from the Church because of their marital status. The Tribunal can assist people who have experienced a marriage breakdown and establish whether they are free to enter a new union within the Catholic Church. Further information is available on the Archdiocesan website at www.cg.catholic.org.au under "Agencies & Services" or contact the: **Tribunal Office** Tel: 6201 9802 Email: tribunal@cg.catholic.org.au

CORONA VIRUS

Be careful, because people are going crazy from being on lock down! Actually I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster while drinking coffee and all of us agreed that things are getting bad. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything and certainly not to the fridge as he is acting cold and distant. I'm not talking to my hairdryer as she just talks hot air and the torch can't shed any light on it. The Hoover however just sucks it up. While the bin swallows anything you say and is just full of rubbish! My Kenwood chef is all mixed up! Not to mention what the toilet is full of...! Don't tell the colander anything, can't hold its own water. Worried about my stairs they seem to be up and down. In the end the iron calmed me down as she said everything will be fine no situation is too pressing. Unknown

CHURCH IS A PLACE WHERE SINS CAN BE FORGIVEN

'People frequently ask, "What is the Church?" Today's readings provide foundational images for God's own people. Three motifs characterize the appearance to Thomas: the greeting of peace, a gift of the risen Christ that casts out fear; the presence of the Holy Spirit manifest in the power to forgive and restrain sin; and the need for a faith that grows even without the tangible presence of Christ. Every Christian who envies the Easter experience of Jesus' first followers can pray daily Jesus' words to Thomas, "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

<http://www.chatswoodparish.org.au>