

**CATHOLIC PARISH OF HEALESVILLE, INCORPORATING HEALESVILLE (ST BRIGID'S),
YARRA GLEN (ST ALOYSIUS) & MARYSVILLE (OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS)**



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TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (Year A) 4th OCTOBER 2020

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Isaiah 5:1-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

Let me sing to my friend the song of his love for his vineyard. My friend has a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug the soil, cleared it of stones, and planted choice vines in it. In the middle he built a tower, he dug a press there too. He expected it to yield grapes, but sour grapes were all that it gave. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, I ask you to judge between my vineyard and me. What could I have done for my vineyard that I have not done? I expected it to yield grapes. Why did it yield sour grapes instead? Very well, I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge for it to be grazed on, and knock down its wall for it to be trampled on. I will lay it waste, unpruned, undug; overgrown by the briar and the thorn. I will command the clouds to rain no rain on it. Yes, the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the House of Israel, and the men of Judah that chosen plant. He expected justice, but found bloodshed, integrity, but only a cry of distress.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 79:9, 12-16, 19-20

R. The vineyard of the Lord is the house of Israel.

You brought a vine out of Egypt;
to plant it you drove out the nations.
It stretched out its branches to the sea,
to the Great River it stretched out its shoots. **R.**

Then why have you broken down its walls?
It is plucked by all who pass by.
It is ravaged by the boar of the forest,
devoured by the beasts of the field. **R.**

God of hosts, turn again, we implore,
look down from heaven and see.
Visit this vine and protect it,
the vine your right hand has planted. **R.**
And we shall never forsake you again:
give us life that we may call upon your name.
God of hosts, bring us back;
let your face shine on us and we shall be saved. **R.**

Second Reading: Philippians 4:6-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians

There is no need to worry; but if there is anything you need, pray for it, asking God for it with prayer and thanksgiving, and that peace of God, which is so much greater than we can understand, will guard your hearts and your thoughts, in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honour, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. Keep doing all the things that you learnt from me and have been taught by me and have heard or seen that I do. Then the God of peace will be with you.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: cf John 15:15

Alleluia, alleluia! I call you friends, says the Lord, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father. **Alleluia!**

Gospel: Matthew 21:33-43

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people: 'Listen to another parable. There was a man, a landowner, who planted a vineyard; he fenced it round, dug a winepress in it and built a tower; then he leased it to tenants and went abroad. When vintage time drew near he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his servants, thrashed one, killed another and stoned a third. Next he sent some more servants, this time a larger number, and they dealt with them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them. "They will respect my son," he said. But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, "This is the heir. Come on, let us kill him and take over his inheritance." So they seized him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?' They answered, 'He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will deliver the produce to him when the season arrives.' Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the scriptures: It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone. This was the Lord's doing and it is wonderful to see? 'I tell you, then, that the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.'

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

FROM FR FRANCIS

October – The Month of the Rosary

As we enter into the seventh month of our mandatory home-detention the mood is lightened by the change of seasons: footy finals, warmer days and the beginning of Daylight Saving Time herald the approach of Summer, after what has been a dark and bitter winter for many. We're also reminded of the Church's tradition of honouring October as a month dedicated to the Rosary. In particular, this coming Wednesday 7th October is the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (AKA Our Lady of Victories). The date commemorates the Victorious Battle of Lepanto (7th October 1571), one of the greatest naval conflicts in history, and one that proved decisive for the future of Christian Europe. In the lead up to this battle the rosary was taken up as the secret 'spiritual weapon' in the face of the real threat posed by the vast fleet of the Ottoman Turkish Empire. As Christians we face the advance of evil in various guises in every age. Particularly as our churches remain closed we should endeavour to renew our daily commitment to praying the rosary, for peace, conversion of heart and deliverance from the forces of evil in our times.

Update Regarding New COVID Guidelines – Commencement of Eucharistic Adoration

In a gesture of staggering magnanimity the Victorian Government has now permitted five people to gather outside their churches. No, that's not a typo: I did in fact mean *outside* their churches. With zero consideration given to the individual capacity of each parish church, a blanket ruling has been made that no public religious ceremonies may take place inside churches. Every day we see a continuous stream of people coming and going from supermarkets. People are free to pick all their own items including fresh produce with their bare hands. Interestingly not a single case of COVID19 has been traced back to supermarkets in Australia. When one considers the infinitesimally remote health risk of attending a church service compared to the potential health risk of shopping it's implausible to claim the latter is safe while the former poses a grave danger to the public. The arbitrariness of the current restrictions is genuinely perplexing. Through the worst phase of the Victorian "State of Emergency" funerals continued to be safely conducted with ten mourners, not including the celebrant, cantor, server or funeral directors. So why is it that as we emerge from the crisis, baptisms and weddings are considered 'unsafe' and can only be performed outside with four attendees? I have no answers, I'm afraid.

Life entails risk. Life also entails benefits. We live each day in the tension of the 'risk-benefit' equation. There is never a morning where we get out of bed without facing the risk that at some point of the day we may face injury or harm. Despite this reality most people manage to muster the heroic courage to emerge from their beds each morning. Risk is a part of life, but it is always a calculated risk. People drive cars in spite of the very real dangers that driving presents because society recognises that the benefits of vehicle mobility outweigh the dangers. It would demonstrate a foolishly narrow field of vision for a government to ban all driving on the basis that it must 'save lives at any cost'. All human activity is subject to this risk-benefit analysis. The 6 month-long suspension of virtually all human activity except eating and sleeping on the grounds of avoiding a virus that affects a miniscule fraction of the population does not strike me as rational or justifiable. It is hardly a recipe for good health or 'wellness' in a wholistic sense. Aside from the State's Act of Assisted (Economic) Suicide the government's absence of consideration for the spiritual, emotional and psychological well-being of its citizens is catastrophically short-sighted. Even those with no religious

convictions recognise the widespread importance of faith and community for people's well-being from a purely sociologically perspective. How much more should Christians be convinced of the supreme necessity of being free to practice their Faith? The reluctance of church and faith leaders to defend basic religious liberties is frankly galling. One expects the secular State to say that religious practice is non-essential. One does not expect religious leaders to vigorously agree with them.

As time goes on I am less convinced that the government is acting in good faith (pun intended). The new provisions are so arbitrary, inconsistent and onerous that the impression one has is of a government hell-bent on extirpating all religious practice from the state. Our Lord teaches us in his Bread of Life discourse: "Do not labour for the bread which perishes, but for the bread which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give to you" (John 6:27). When he is challenged Jesus responds with greater insistence: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, *you have no life in you*; he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood *has eternal life*, and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:53-54). The World promises what it cannot give: eternal life and deliverance from the certainty of dying. Perversely, in doing so it denies us the one thing that can truly bring us eternal life – He who is the Bread of Life. For six months the People of God have been virtually starved to spiritual death by depriving them of regular access to the Sacraments. How can we hope to measure the sum of human misery this has caused? My heart breaks as I daily encounter the human toll of this injustice.

This week the Archdiocese of Melbourne dispatched its latest guidelines, which among other things permit Masses and sacraments to be conducted at a place outside, 'proximate to the church.' As a pastor of souls, I am grievously conflicted over these new provisions. On the one hand, I want to give as many people as possible the opportunity to receive the sacraments; on the other hand, I must ensure that the Church's sacraments and sacred liturgies are safe-guarded from abuse and sacrilegious degradation by burdensome or profane interpolations. The Mass is the most sacred gift Jesus Christ entrusted to the Church – since it is the gift of His very Self – His own Body and Blood. Such a treasure must necessarily be protected against practices that risk subjecting the most Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to trivialisation. I have no interest in presiding over 'Eucharistic picnics' on the lawn. The perennial law of the Church requires that Mass be offered on a permanent, consecrated altar that is worthy of so solemn an action. Exceptional circumstances (such as war) permit the Mass to be offered outside consecrated churches/chapels, however this is never to be seen as a normal occurrence. Requiring the congregation to wear masks during Mass, incessant hand-sanitising, and other bureaucratic measures become an irritant and a distraction, and risk rendering the sacred action of the Liturgy to a piece of political propaganda designed to perpetuate fear. I cannot permit Our Eucharistic Lord to be subjected to such a grotesque indignity. In the 'cost-benefit' analysis I cannot justify offering Mass under these conditions. For this reason, I will continue to offer Mass privately where the Law of the Church can be duly observed.

At the same time, I am distressed at the thought of the flock of Christ being deprived of their Eucharistic Lord. For this reason, I have decided to trial an hour of Eucharistic Adoration daily from Tuesday through to Sunday from 9:00am to 10:00am in the undercover area of the presbytery verandah at Lilydale parish. This conforms to the requirements established by both the Government and the Archdiocese. Only five may attend at any one time and will be required to observe the standard 'safety' measures (face-masks, social distancing, etc.). You will need to pre-book in advance via the parish phone number: 0448 658 418. Please note:

the parish cannot afford to incur the exorbitant fines for breach of compliance so it will be strictly five only. For practical and logistical reasons this Holy Hour will be run only at St Patrick's Lilydale. This will no doubt be very disappointing to the parishioners of Healesville parish, however there is no suitable place at either St Brigid's or St Aloysius' where this could be held without exposing people to the elements. Of course, all parishioners from Lilydale, Healesville and Yarra Glen alike are most welcome to book a time for adoration. I will strive to ensure that as many people as possible are given the opportunity to spend time with our Lord in Adoration. All going well, these times of daily adoration will continue until such a time as we can recommence our regular Mass schedule.

If you share my concern for access to the Sacraments, you may wish to sign the petition below.

<https://www.ipetitions.com/petition/faith-equality>

WEEKLY MASSES ARE AVAILABLE ON OUR ST BRIGID'S YOU TUBE CHANNEL

A reminder that Fr Francis' Sunday Masses are recorded each weekend and are available on St Brigid's You Tube Channel each Sunday morning. The link is accessible through St Brigid's Healesville's website, or by searching St Brigid's Healesville on You Tube, or using the link: **<https://bit.ly/StBsHville>** This week's Mass comes from St Aloysius in Yarra Glen.

MARCH FOR THE BABIES 2020

Live Streamed *March for the Babies 2020* 10th October 2020 at 1.00 pm.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, this year's Annual March for the Babies will be a live streamed event. Join in online for Victoria's largest pro-life event in defence of the victims of Victoria's inhumane abortion laws, unborn children and their mothers. Featured speakers, powerful testimonies, music and opportunities to promote the "culture of life". Link: www.mftb.online

KEEPING US CONNECTED

Please email the office if you would like to participate in:

- **The Parish Grapevine** which advises of deaths, funerals or other parish news.
- **A regular Bible Study/Faith Reflection Group led by Fr Francis** via video chat on a phone, ipad or computer.

Don't forget to check out **the Living Faith page on St Brigid's website!** Once you have read the bulletin on our website, stay on to have a look around. Elissa keeps us up to date with the latest news and provides us with awesome resources to assist our prayer life and enhance our reflection time with the Lord. Thanks Elissa!

RIDE ON MOWER REQUIRED

If anyone can assist us to source a second hand ride-on mower, please contact Debbie. We would greatly appreciate advice from someone in the trade, or an offer to sell or donate a ride-on mower in good condition.

THANKSGIVING TOTAL TO 28TH SEPTEMBER

St Brigid's: Church: \$265 Presbytery: \$50



PLEASE PRAY:

FOR THOSE WHO HAVE DIED RECENTLY

Albert Slawinski, Maureen Fogarty, Bob Barclay

FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK

Babies Emmett, Noah Glen Christie, Tedi and Santi; Roman, Blake Smith, Trish Leahy, John Snell, Abby Sharp, Peter Munro, Megan, Bernie Jansen, Andrew Sharp, John, Glenn, Lyn Francis, Dorothy Barber, Fiona, Annie Preuss, Michelle Ryan, Damian, John, Alison, Heather, Julie Bates, Garry Dettman, Bradley Jordan, Jeanette Henkel, Richard Galbraith, Debbie Huby, Geoff Lucas, Sandra Donkin, Dorothy Fraser, Glen, Fred Bullas, Fred Coullas, Evie Gleeson, Indy Dawes, Rade Krstic, Megan Williams, Michael Wood, Bill Howie, Jennie, Michael, Margo & Stephen Youngberry, Marie Hammond, John Mulholland, Rhiannon Days, Val Savitt, Ron Garland, Jaz Nueber, James Cooney, Robert, Mary & Gerard Bariola, Tilly Van der Zee, Lydia, Joyce Slattery, Lawrie Field, Annie, Bob Ireland, Val & Michael Christie, Ted & Peter Bowling, Natasha, Mia, James, Richard Adams, Mitchell & Wynn Wilson, Carina Warton, Anne Bateman, Veronica Ireland.

FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES ARE IN OCTOBER

Michael O'Meara (04.10.80), Vincent Jones (05.10.04), Barbara Smythe (05.10.07), William Howie (07.10.94), Andre Smith (08.10.08), Florence Walker (09.10.07), Sarah Field (12.10.58), Ella Morley (14.10.08), Ronald Stevens (17.10.00), Robbie Ireland Jnr (20.10.90), Angelina Pretto (Mioni) (21.10.00), Shirley O'Meara (22.10.10), Christopher Perry (23.10.01), Jacinta Chandler (24.10.01), Sam Galletti (27.10.13), Betty Ireland (29.10.97), Enid Jarrett (28.10.93), Frank O'Halloran (31.10.12), Filippo Mingerulli, Francesca Bellucci, Anne Ashdown

