



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

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**8<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

**SAINT MARY OF THE CROSS (Year B)**

**First Reading: 1 Kings 17:8-16**

A reading from the first book of Kings

And then the word of the Lord came to Elijah, 'Up and go to Zarephath, a Sidonian town, and stay there. I have ordered a widow there to give you food.' So he went off to Sidon. And when he reached the city gate, there was a widow gathering sticks; addressing her he said, 'Please bring a little water in a vessel for me to drink.' She was setting off to bring it when he called after her. 'Please' he said 'bring me a scrap of bread in your hand.' 'As the Lord your God lives,' she replied 'I have no baked bread, but only a handful of meal in a jar and a little oil in a jug; I am just gathering a stick or two to go and prepare this for myself and my son to eat, and then we shall die.' But Elijah said to her, 'Do not be afraid, go ahead and do as you have said; but first make a little scone of it for me and bring it to me, and then make some for yourself and your son. For thus the Lord speaks, the God of Israel:

"Jar of meal shall not be spent,  
jug of oil shall not be emptied,  
before the day when the Lord sends  
rain on the face of the earth"

The woman went and did as Elijah told her and they ate the food, she, himself and her son. The jar of meal was not spent nor the jug of oil emptied, just as the Lord had foretold through Elijah.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Responsorial Psalm: Ps 62:1-8**

**R. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.**

O God, you are my God, for you I long;  
for you my soul is thirsting.  
My body pines for you  
like a dry, weary land without water.

**R. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.**

So I gaze on you in the sanctuary  
to see your strength and your glory.  
For your love is better than life,  
my lips will speak your praise.

So I will bless you all my life,  
in your name I will lift up my hands.  
My soul shall be filled as with a banquet,  
my mouth shall praise you with joy.

**R. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.**

On my bed I remember you.  
On you I muse through the night  
for you have been my help;  
in the shadow of your wings I rejoice.

**R. My soul clings to you; your right hand holds me fast.**

**Second Reading: Colossians 3:12-17**

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Colossians

You are God's chosen race, his saints; he loves you and you should be clothed in sincere compassion, in kindness and humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with one another; forgive each other as soon as a quarrel begins. The Lord has forgiven you; now you must do the same. Over all these clothes, to keep them together and complete them, put on love. And may the peace of Christ reign in your hearts, because it is for this that you were called together as parts of one body. Always be thankful. Let the message of Christ, in all its richness, find a home with you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and never say or do anything except in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**Gospel Acclamation: Matthew 27:55**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Many women were there by the cross, watching from a distance,  
the same women who had followed Jesus and looked after him.

Alleluia!

**Gospel: Matthew 6:25-34**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew  
Do not worry about your life.  
Jesus said to his disciples:  
That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life  
and what you are to eat,  
nor about your body and how you are to clothe it.  
Surely life means more than food, and the body more  
than clothing!  
Look at the birds in the sky.  
They do not sow or reap or gather into barns;  
yet your heavenly Father feeds them.  
Are you not worth much more than they are?  
Can any of you, for all his worrying,  
add one single cubit to his span of life?  
And why worry about clothing?  
Think of the flowers growing in the fields;  
they never have to work or spin;  
yet I assure you that not even Solomon in all his regalia  
was robed like one of these.  
Now if that is how God clothes the grass in the field  
which is there today and thrown into the furnace  
tomorrow,  
will he not much more look after you, you men of little  
faith?  
So do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat?  
What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?"  
It is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things.  
Your heavenly Father knows you need them all.  
Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his  
righteousness,  
and all these other things will be given you as well.  
So do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take  
care of itself.  
Each day has enough trouble of its own.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Due to the lockdown, we are **not able to attend Mass** this week. Fr Francis will be recording Mass and it will be available on the you tube channel on Sunday morning. The link is accessible through St Brigid's Healesville's website, <http://www.stbrigidshhealesville.cam.org.au/> or by searching St Brigid's Healesville on You Tube, or using the link: <https://bit.ly/StBsHville>

**Thanksgiving**

**St Brigid's Healesville, -27/6/21**

Thanksgiving: \$467.35  
Presbytery: \$148.10  
Peters Pence \$187.70

**St Brigid's Healesville, -4/7/21**

Thanksgiving: \$516.05

Presbytery: \$165.55

**St Brigid's Healesville, -11/7/21**

Thanksgiving: \$401.45

Presbytery: \$131.65

**St Brigid's Healesville, -1/8/21**

Thanksgiving: \$512.00

Presbytery: \$262.50

**Our Lady of the Snows, Marysville 15<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

Thanksgiving: \$71.00

**Rosters**

**8<sup>th</sup> August 2021:**

**Reader:** A. Houlihan

**Cuppa:**

**Church cleaning:**

**15<sup>th</sup> August 2021:**

**Reader:** V. Ireland

**Cuppa:** M Jeffcott

**Church cleaning:** Tony & Cath O'Halloran

**QR CODE APP** - Please download the Services Victoria app from the Apple App Store for iPhones (<https://bit.ly/SBHCO>), or the Google Play Store for Android phones (<https://bit.ly/SBSAFE>). This will make check in a bit more efficient. Our Covid Marshall will be checking the 'ticks' so please remember to QR Code. Help is available for those who find this difficult to do.

**St Brigid's Safeguarding Committee**

Child Protection is a major priority for our Parish, and the time has come for us to welcome a new committee to oversee our compliance with the extensive Catholic Church, Federal and State Government requirements in regard to this critical issue. The team will also be available to assist parishioners with anything related to safeguarding children, young adults and the vulnerable, so please feel free to approach any of the team with your questions or comments. The committee has already met to review our Safeguarding Policy, Parish Commitment Statement and Code of Conduct and to begin to work through the mandatory, extensive self-audit tool that will assist us to ensure that we, as a Parish, are keeping everyone as safe as possible. Members are renewing their training and becoming well-versed with current protocols, which are constantly under review. This is a big job, and we thank our committee for their generous commitment. Team members are all actively involved within our Parish, and within the wider community, in roles that demand a high degree of awareness of keeping kids and the vulnerable safe. We are indeed blessed to have such a highly attuned and qualified group working for us and with us.

Team 2021 is: **Cath O'Halloran**, parishioner and a valued member of St Brigid's Primary teaching staff; **Debbie Edwards**, Parish Pastoral Worker, volunteer for the VCCEM, assisting with emergency pastoral support in times of disaster; **Fr Francis**, Parish Administrator; **John Barrett**, parishioner and Chair of the Lookout for Children group in Healesville; **Rod Hysted**, famous for achieving all things IT in our church, President of HICCI and working part-time in the Victorian Government Education System; **Sharon Jacob**, Parish Secretary, active volunteer for Stable One, caring for the homeless.

More news to follow!

### Mary MacKillop and the Bishop's "terrible mistake"

There is one event in the life of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop that sets her hagiography at odds with most of the lives of the saints, namely the incident of her infamous 'excommunication'. I thought I'd write on this matter since it is something that has been frequently misunderstood and even misrepresented. What does it mean to be excommunicated? On what grounds was Mary MacKillop excommunicated and was it valid? And what lesson might we draw from this episode?

To be 'excommunicated' (*ex + communio*) means to be placed 'outside' of the 'communion' with the Church. Excommunications can be incurred *latae sententiae* – which means they come into effect by the very act committed, in the case of reserved sins (eg. procuring an abortion (Can.1398)). Bishops (or the Pope) also have the authority to issue an excommunication to specific individuals for a grave reason, after a due process. The penalty of excommunication is never supposed to be punitive but rather medicinal – a wake-up designed to prompt a change of heart. For example, when St Ambrose excommunicated the Emperor Theodosius it was to prompt him to repent for the massacre of civilians he had ordered. Ambrose prevented Theodosius from even entering the door of his cathedral. The Emperor was prompted to publicly repent for his sins, and so he was restored to communion, and even died on very good terms with the saintly bishop of Milan.

It has never been the faith of the Church that the Pope or Bishops wield absolute spiritual power. God alone has supreme authority. Those who exercise authority in the Church are always themselves subject to Divine authority, and answerable to Christ, the Just Judge. When throughout history Popes and bishops have acted as tyrants they do so as an abuse of their legitimate authority. They most certainly do *not* have the authority to arbitrarily excommunicate whomsoever they wish. There has to be a grave cause, and a due process to clarify that the accused is in fact guilty of obstinately persisting in some grave sin.

This is important to understand because in the case of Mary MacKillop there was absolutely no justifiable grounds nor a due process followed for a valid excommunication. The matter has been rigorously examined by theologians and canonists who present a common consensus that the excommunication was null and void from the outset. Fr Paul Gardiner SJ (who was the postulator of Mary MacKillop's cause for canonisation), has written a forensic account of the events leading up to the excommunication to show how absurd and baseless the attempted excommunication was, and that it was considered doubtful from the outset, even by Mary herself. (Gardiner, *Mary MacKillop: An Extraordinary Australian*: David Ell Publishing, North Sydney, 1993).

It ought to be noted that Bishop Sheil of Adelaide was elderly and in very poor health physically and mentally. He had been absent from his diocese for a prolonged period on account of being called to participate in the First Vatican Council (1869-1870). In the bishop's absence numerous priests hostile to the newly founded Josephites had been busy fomenting ill-will towards the sisters and their co-founders, Mother Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods. When Sheil returned to the diocese in 1871 it was in a state of chaos, and the Josephites found themselves at the centre of the controversy. One of the key protagonists was Fr Horan who had a personal vendetta against Fr Woods. Fr Horan became a close confidant of Bishop Shiel, and did everything he could to blacken the name of the Josephites in retribution. Horan succeeded in convincing Bishop Sheil that the Josephites were a rogue force in the diocese and that Mary MacKillop was acting in contempt of the bishop's authority.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Mary MacKillop and the Josephite sisters had made vows under a Rule that Bishop Sheil himself had approved, in which Mary was the Superior. Now the bishop wanted to radically change the rule, placing himself in charge of the nuns and the dividing the sisters into choir nuns and lay sisters in a manner that was completely at odds with the vows they had made and the original teaching charism of the order. The bishop turned it into a test of the sisters' obedience to his authority. He failed to appreciate that the sisters were justly bound to observe the rule they had already bound themselves to under oath. In his fury the bishop gave them the choice to obey or be dispensed from their vows. Mary MacKillop in good conscience could not acquiesce to such a radical departure from the original spirit of the order she founded and so accepted that if it came to it, she would be dispensed from her vows to pursue her calling elsewhere if necessary. In the heat of the moment the bishop arrived and summoning Mary to the chapel declared her excommunicated. When news reached Melbourne, Bishop Goold lamented, "Poor Dr Sheil, he must labour under mental disease," expressing what was in fact the common consensus.

The fact that Bishop Sheil attempted to excommunicate Mary MacKillop has over the decades been treated as an almost salacious controversy, one that has been hijacked to refashion Mary MacKillop as a kind of religious 'Ned Kelly' – resisting the authorities in a power struggle. There is an anti-authoritarian streak in the Australian psyche that is enamoured by the legend of the nun that "stood up to the bishop". In reality this interpretation would have been profoundly distressing to Mary herself. There was nothing remotely rebellious in the nature of Mary; she was in every way a model of obedience and respect to those in Office, in spite of the shameful mistreatment and outright injustice that she and her sisters were repeatedly subjected to by numerous bishops and priests. Her primary obedience was owed to God and the vows she had made to him; she felt no ill-will to the bishop, but was clear in her duty to follow the dictates of conscience.

The attempted excommunication of St Mary of the Cross is a particularly egregious example of *spiritual* abuse. This ugly event in the life of Mary MacKillop is a reminder of the limits of ecclesiastical authority, and that the obedience owed to those in Office must always fall within the rule of both Church and Divine Law. The fact that Mary MacKillop continued receiving Holy Communion (albeit secretly) even after the event shows that she clearly recognised that the excommunication was invalid and not binding. As the saying goes, 'an unjust law, is no law at all'. In the case of Bishop Sheil, it is to his credit that on his death bed the following year (1872), he deeply repented of what he had done, and sought out Mother Mary to have the matter resolved. Gardiner notes "there was no formal request on her part, no penance imposed, no retraction demanded, and no preconditions laid down. This amounted to an admission that the censure had not been valid." (p.110). He admitted to acting unjustly and assured her of his intent to make amends.

When one looks at such a grave abuse of authority to which Mary Mackillop was subjected to one can merely gaze in awe at how flawlessly she conducted herself throughout this trial. St Thomas Aquinas defines 'virtue' as being the mean between two extremes. The magnitude of Mary Mackillop's heroic virtue was on full display in this supreme moment: she remained completely self-composed, neither falling to pieces, nor reacting with rage. She did not act with contemptuous indifference to the bishop's actions nor did she lapse into obsequious submission. She humbly but firmly stood her ground, confident that she was acting according to the dictates of a higher authority, always guarding against speaking ill of the Bishop. Notwithstanding the incredible suffering and distress the controversy caused her, in the most gracious of understatement St Mary of the Cross merely stating, "the dear old Bishop has made a terrible mistake." Yes, it was a terrible mistake, but one that

enabled the heroic virtue of a truly remarkable saint to shine all the more brightly.

*Yours in Christ,  
Fr Francis Denton*

### **Debbie's Thoughts**

Every so often in my column I like to revisit the beautiful prayers that we pray after Holy Communion at a funeral Mass. It seems to me most appropriate to consider them this week, just after the awesome celebration of the Transfiguration, where Jesus revealed to us just a little taste of the glory that awaits those who love him, as they pass from this world to eternal life. From personal experience I know that during the funeral for someone precious we often miss the prayers that are prayed for them. The sheer enormity of what is happening around us as we prepare to say goodbye can be overwhelming, like a giant powerful wave carrying us 'on'. We may not absorb what is being said at that confronting time, the wave can be very high and very fast indeed, and we may be fully occupied with simply staying upright as the funeral procession prepares to leave the church, pushing us to the moment when we face our final parting.

There is a trilogy of prayers prayed as Mass concludes, making up the Final Commendation of the deceased person to God's loving care. Firstly, there is an Invitation to Prayer, followed by the Song of Farewell, which is often sung. The Prayer of Commendation follows. I doubt whether any of these prayers requires much commentary from me. For those who have faced this sadness, simply reading through the words may speak to you better than I ever could. For those who will face this moment in the future, reading through the prayers now allows us to appreciate them without having to deal with the specific pain of separation as well. Preparation ahead of a crisis never lacks wisdom in my book. I remind you of the theme of the Funeral Liturgy, 'life has not ended, it has simply changed' and I leave you with these beautiful, comforting prayers, and your own thoughts.

### **Prayers of Commendation**

#### **Invitation to Prayer**

Before we go our separate ways, let us take leave of our brother/sister. May our farewell express our affection for him/her, may it ease our sadness and strengthen our hope. One day we shall joyfully greet him/her again when the love of Christ, which conquers all things, destroys even death itself.

#### **Song of Farewell**

Saints of God, come to his/her aid!

Hasten to meet him/her, angels of the Lord!

Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

May Christ, who called you, take you to himself;

may angels lead you to the bosom of Abraham.

Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

Eternal rest grant unto him/her, O Lord,

and let perpetual light shine upon him/her.

Receive his/her soul and present him/her to God the Most High.

### **Prayer of Commendation**

Into your hands, Father of mercies, we commend our brother/sister in the sure and certain hope that, together with all who have died in Christ, he/she will rise with him on the last day. We give you thanks for the blessings which you bestowed upon {Name/s of the deceased} in this life: they are signs to us of your goodness and of our fellowship with the saints in Christ. Merciful Lord, turn toward us and listen to our prayers: open the gates of paradise to your servant and help us who remain to comfort one another with assurances of faith, until we all meet in Christ and are with you and with our brother/sister forever. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Procession to the Place of Committal**

In peace, let us take our brother/sister to his/her place of rest. May the angels lead you into paradise; may the martyrs come to welcome you and take you to the holy city, the new and eternal Jerusalem.

### **HICCI AGM**

#### **Advanced notice for your diary**

The HICCI Annual General Meeting will take place on September the 19th, in the Saint Brigid's Parish Hall. Hopefully, we will be able to meet in person this year. More information will follow closer to the date.

Also, if anyone can help with catering for a light supper, similar to the last AGM at our church, that would be wonderful. Please contact Rod Hysted on 0409 523 031, if you can help.

Lastly, If you would like to nominate as the Saint Brigid's representative on the HICCI Committee of Management, please contact Rod on the above phone number.

### **PARISH PRAYER LIST**

**Recently Deceased:** Jackie DeKoning

**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, 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, Anne Bateman, Veronica Ireland, Wendy Turner (Ireland), Lauren, Brooke, Anthony, Laura Baosde Pinto, Michelle, Judy, Annette Fromholtz, John Wray

### **FOR THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES ARE IN AUGUST**

John McDonald (03.08.93), Patricia Newell (06.08.07), John Youngberry (07.08.79), Barbara Pollard (11.08.09), Andrew Sotko (14.08.07), Fr Loughnan (15.08.02), Bernadette Hanley (18.08.09), Mary Thomas (19.08.07), Douglas Ireland (21.08.79), Zandor Hunka (22.08.06), Alison Snell (25.08.02) Maria Slawinski (25.08.82), Gerald Slattery, Derek Beeby, Tilly Blackburn, Thea Humphries, Maggie Lloyd-Smith, Margaret Pomeroy (23.08.19), Rosemary Fries (10.08), Albert Slawinski, Maureen Fogarty, Bob Barclay.