



HOLY EUCHARIST PARISH

1A Oleander Drive, St Albans South 3021
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TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B 21 & 22 AUGUST 2021

REDEMPTORIST COMMUNITY

Mission Leader

Fr Peter Danh CSsR

Parish Priest

Fr Vincent Long Pham CSsR

Assistant Parish Priest

Fr Vinsensius (Lovin) Lolo CSsR

Fr Oche Matutina CSsR

Fr Patrick Corbett CSsR

Parish Secretary

Mary-Lucy Atonio PH: 9366 1310

Parish School Principal

Michael Bonnici PH: 8312 0900

Filipino Chaplain

Fr Joselito Asis

South Sudanese Chaplain

Deacon George B.P.Meat

SPECIAL NOTICE

Dear Parishioners,

Due to the Current Covid19 situation, the Church and Parish Office will be closed, therefore:

- ◆ **Tues-Sat:** No Community Masses until further notice

Only Online Mass

Sunday: 10:30am English

12:00pm Vietnamese

Live streaming on:

1. Parish Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/HolyEucharistChurch>

2. Parish Youtube Channel:

bit.ly/HolyEucharistYoutube

3. Parish Website: you can join the live mass or join at any time convenient to you. http://www.holyeuchariststalbans.org/mass_stream.html

4. <https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansOfficials>

THE LIVING WORD

First reading Joshua 24:1-2,15-18

We will serve the Lord, for he is our God

Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel together at Shechem; then he called the elders, leaders, judges and scribes of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. Then Joshua said to all the people, 'If you will not serve the Lord, choose today whom you wish to serve, whether the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are now living. As for me and my House, we will serve the Lord.'

The people answered, 'We have no intention of deserting the Lord and serving other gods! Was it not the Lord our God who brought us and our ancestors out of the land of Egypt, the house of slavery, who worked those great wonders before our eyes and preserved us all along the way we travelled and among all the peoples through whom we journeyed? What is more, the Lord drove all those peoples out before us, as well as the Amorites who used to live in this country. We too will serve the Lord, for he is our God.'

Responsorial Psalm Ps.33(34):2-3,16-23

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

I will bless the Lord at all times,
his praise always on my lips;
in the Lord my soul shall make its boast.
The humble shall hear and be glad.

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

The Lord turns his face against the wicked
to destroy their remembrance from the earth.
The Lord turns his eyes to the just
and his ears to their appeal.

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

They call and the Lord hears
and rescues them in all their distress.
The Lord is close to the broken-hearted;
those whose spirit is crushed he will save.

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Many are the trials of the just man
but from them all the Lord will rescue him.
He will keep guard over all his bones,
not one of his bones shall be broken.

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Evil brings death to the wicked;
those who hate the good are doomed.
The Lord ransoms the souls of his servants.
Those who hide in him shall not be condemned.

Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.

Second reading Ephesians 5:21-32

Christ loves the Church, because it is his body

Give way to one another in obedience to Christ. Wives should regard their husbands as they regard the Lord, since as Christ is head of the Church and saves the whole body, so is a husband the head of his wife; and as the Church submits to Christ, so should wives to their husbands, in everything. Husbands should love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and sacrificed himself for her to make her holy. He made her clean by washing her in water with a form of words, so that when he took her to himself she would be glorious, with no speck or wrinkle or anything like that, but holy and faultless. In the same way, husbands must love their wives as they love their own bodies; for a man to love his wife is for him to love himself. A man never hates his own body, but he feeds it and looks after it; and that is the way Christ treats the Church, because it is his body – and we are its living parts. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one body. This mystery has many implications; but I am saying it applies to Christ and the Church.

Gospel Acclamation of John 6:63. 68

Alleluia, alleluia!

Your words, Lord, are spirit and life:
you have the words of everlasting life.

Alleluia!

Gospel Luke John 6:60-69

Who shall we go to? You are the Holy One of God

After hearing his doctrine many of the followers of Jesus said, ‘This is intolerable language. How could anyone accept it?’ Jesus was aware that his followers were complaining about it and said, ‘Does this upset you? What if you should see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before?’

‘It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life.’

‘But there are some of you who do not believe.’ For Jesus knew from the outset those who did not believe, and who it was that would betray him. He went on, ‘This is why I told you that no one could come to me unless the Father allows him.’ After this, many of his disciples left him and stopped going with him.

Then Jesus said to the Twelve, ‘What about you, do you want to go away too?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘Lord, who shall we go to? You have the message of eternal life, and we believe; we know that you are the Holy One of God.’

REFLECTION ON THE GOSPEL

If we have trouble understanding and coming to terms with the teachings of Jesus in the gospel, then we can take some comfort from the reaction of the disciples in John’s community some decades after the death of Jesus. It seems that it was not only the members of the Jewish synagogue who were offended by his teaching, but also those Jews who had accepted Jesus as Messiah or Christ and had joined the community of believers. ‘This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?’ they complain. They are referring to his teaching on the ‘bread’ that he will give them. Once again, Jesus’ response introduces new teaching, teaching that can only raise more questions in their minds. He links ‘spirit’ with ‘life’. Having used the term ‘flesh’ of his body and of the life that he offers to those who eat of his flesh, he now introduces an element of doubt: flesh is now ‘useless’! We must be careful not to interpret this literally. It is typical of John to use the same word in a variety of ways. Here ‘flesh’ is used negatively and metaphorically to refer to human weakness and sinfulness in contrast with ‘spirit’ which evokes the creative spirit of God that moved over the waters at creation and the spirit of God that informed the word of the prophets. The Johannine Jesus lays the ground for offering progressively deeper insights into his identity and destiny and into the meaning of a gospel way of life. The reference to his ‘ascending’ recalls the earlier part of the gospel where he is presented as the pre-existent one, the one who comes from God and has already ascended to God (John 3:13). Once again, we are confronted with an ancient cosmology that places God in the heavens above. After his death, Jesus will tell Mary Magdalene that he has not yet ascended and instructs her to tell the disciples that he is ascending to God (20:17). It seems that John wants to keep emphasising the origins of Jesus as the eternal Word and the Wisdom of God.

There are many who refuse to grapple with the complexities and implications of his teaching and they turn away. Jesus asks his closest followers if they too will desert. Peter speaks for himself and his companions when he declares their undying allegiance: ‘To whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.’ Eternal life is the Johannine equivalent of the ‘kingdom of God’ or ‘of the heavens’ of the other gospels. Most of us have wanted to abandon our commitment at some time or another. There are times when it seems to be all too hard. Peter’s declaration is a sobering one for us in times of doubt and an encouragement for those of us who seek to understand more deeply and to keep believing despite the challenges.

By Veronica M. Lawson RSM

CATHOLIC CHARITY CONCERNED FOR SAFETY OF CHRISTIANS IN AFGHANISTAN

A Catholic charitable organization working in Afghanistan said Sunday it fears for the safety of Christians in the country, and that the group may need to suspend its activities as instability increases.

Caritas Italiana, a charity of the Italian Catholic bishops, has been present in Afghanistan since the 1990s. In a press release Aug. 15, the organization said its current focus in Afghanistan is helping vulnerable minors.

“But the instability of the situation will lead to the suspension of all activities,” the statement said, adding that “fears are growing about the possibility of maintaining a presence even in the future, as well as for the safety of the few Afghans of Christian belief.”

Caritas Italiana also said the few Catholic priests and religious in Afghanistan are also being left with no choice but to leave.

Taliban insurgents have taken over many cities in Afghanistan in the past week following the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the country.

With the collapse of Afghanistan’s government, Taliban fighters seized the capital city of Kabul Aug. 15, taking control of the presidential palace and declaring the war in Afghanistan to be over.

The Kabul airport has reportedly been in chaos since Sunday, as Afghan men and women rushed runways in an attempt to flee the country.

The Christian community is very small in the Islamic country, where Afghan people can be ostracized or can even face violence and death for professing the Christian faith. In 2018, there were an estimated 200 Catholics in the country.

There is a single Catholic Church, located in the Italian embassy in Kabul, which is operated under the Catholic mission sui juris of Afghanistan.

“The Christian community is a small but significant community which in recent years has shown attention towards the poorest and most fragile,” Caritas Italiana said.

The organization stated that “after a twenty-year war of incalculable human costs and billions of euros in expenditure, the withdrawal of the U.S. military is leaving the country in a tragic void.”

“As always, the weakest will pay the highest price, already in the tens of thousands fleeing the combat zones, while the Taliban are now in the capital, Kabul.”

“Together with the staff of the embassies, even the very few priests, men and women religious who are in Kabul are preparing for their forced return,” the charity said.

Pope Francis asked for prayers for the people of Afghanistan after praying the Angelus, a traditional Marian prayer, on Sunday.

“I ask all of you to pray with me to the God of peace so that the clamor of weapons might cease and solutions can be found at the table of dialogue,” he said. “Only thus can the battered population of that country – men, women, elderly and children – return to their own homes, and live in peace and security, in total mutual respect.”

Caritas Italiana said it is assessing the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan at the Afghanistan border.

“In these hours, a growing mass of refugees are fleeing the war zones, increasing the pressure in the direction of the surrounding countries,” it said. “Even Western countries will find themselves facing increasing pressure from people fleeing this country.”

The Italian charity said in the 2000s it supported a large program of emergency aid, rehabilitation, and development in Afghanistan, including the construction of four schools and 100 houses, and the return of 483 refugee families to the Panshir valley.

By Hannah Brockhaus

POPE FRANCIS URGES PEOPLE TO GET VACCINATED AGAINST COVID-19

Pope Francis launches a powerful appeal for people to get vaccinated with approved Covid-19 vaccines, calling it “an act of love.”

The Pope has joined his voice to those of Bishops across North and South America to urge people to get jabbed against Covid-19.

In a video message produced in conjunction with the Ad Council, Pope Francis praised the work of researchers and scientists in producing safe and effective Covid-19 vaccines.

“Thanks to God’s grace and to the work of many, we now have vaccines to protect us from Covid-19,” he said in the video released on Wednesday.

He added that vaccines “bring hope to end the pandemic, but only if they are available to all and if we collaborate with one another.”

Vaccination is an act of love

Pope Francis went on to say that getting a Covid jab that is “authorized by the respective authorities” is an “act of love.”



Helping other do the same, he said, is also an act of love. “Love for oneself, love for our families and

friends, and love for all peoples. Love is also social and political.” The Pope noted that social and political love is built up through “small, individual gestures capable of transforming and improving societies.”

“Getting vaccinated is a simple yet profound way to care for one another, especially the most vulnerable,” he said.

Pope Francis then prayed to God that “each one of us can make his or her own small gesture of love.”

“No matter how small, love is always grand,” he said. “Small gestures for a better future.”

‘Strength of faith’

The Pope was joined in the video by several Cardinals and Archbishops from across the Americas.

Archbishop Jose Gomez, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Archbishop of Los Angeles, lamented the suffering and death the pandemic has wrought across the globe.

He prayed that God might “grant us the grace to face it with the strength of faith, ensuring that vaccines are available for all, so that we can all get immunized.”

Mexican Cardinal Carlos Aguiar Retes linked Covid-19 jabs to a better future for all.

“From North to South America, we support vaccinations for all,” said the Cardinal.

Safe, effective vaccines

Honduran Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga said the world has much to learn from the coronavirus.

“But one thing is certain: the authorized vaccines are effective, and are here to save lives,” he said. “They are the key to a path of personal and universal healing.”

Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes praised the “heroic efforts” of health professionals in developing “safe and effective” jabs.

He also repeated the Pope’s affirmation that “getting vaccinated is an act of love”.

Salvadorian Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chavez said vaccination helps protect the most vulnerable.

“Our choice to get vaccinated affects others,” he said, adding that it is a moral responsibility.

Unity across the Americas

Peruvian Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos rounded out the testimonies contained in the video with an appeal to unity.

“We are united—North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean—to promote and support vaccination for all,” he said, encouraging everyone to “act responsibly, as members of the great human family, seeking and protecting our integral health and universal vaccination.”

By Devin Watkins

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

Foodbank is asking for a Volunteer Driver to help with Thursday & Friday morning deliveries.

Call the Parish Office on 9366 1310 for more details.

LET US PRAY FOR

The Sick

Toni Antonowicz, Linda Ratbone, Anna, Maria Kim, Yulette Tanner, Jessie Spiteri, Stella Sandle, Frank, Doris Carabott.

Recently Deceased

Fr. Russel Morison CSsR, Jose B. Medalle.

Anniversaries

Norberto Laririt, Criselda Fernandez, Angela Chircop, Maria Vu Thi Yeu Thuong, Peter Disco, Frank Kreuger, Richard Curmi, Iro & Jessie Vella, Anthony Gatt, Nazareno Spiteri, Antonio Mifsud, Philip Gauci, George & Angela Bugeja, Wayne Camilleri, Bartolo family, Brincat & Galea family, Vincent Duong Kham Su, Mary Camilleri & Family, Joseph, Frank & John Xerri, Charlie Xerri, Lewis Spiteri, Raymond Abela and All Souls.

SAFETY FOR ALL

Holy Eucharist Parish is committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children, young people and vulnerable adults.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Holy Eucharist parish respectfully acknowledges the Wurundjer people as the traditional custodians of the land on which we reside and worship.

VOCATION VIEW

Jesus, teach us about life everlasting: "Your words Lord are spirit and life ..." It is this that gives us hope when we despair, a way of living when we stray from God's way. "The words I have spoken are spirit and they are life." It is God's words that we need to hear to lift our spirit and give life. Pray for vocations.

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