

## E-Newsletter 7th Edition

### Sunday, May 17, 2020

## Sixth Sunday of Easter. Year A

### Readings for the Sixth Sunday of Easter. Year A

**FIRST READING:** Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

**PSALM:** Ps 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16+20. "Let all the earth cry out to God with joy"

**SECOND READING:** 1 Pet 3:15-18

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:** (John 14:23). Alleluia, alleluia! All who love me will keep my words, and my Father will love them and we will come to them.

**GOSPEL:** John 14:15-21

## God's in charge and God is with us through everything!

**"I will ask the Father, and he will send you another helper"**

### THE PASTOR'S POST

This time of isolation has given us all plenty of time to think, which can go one of two ways. We can make positive decisions about how we manage our changed circumstances so that we don't let this virulent virus take more of a toll than it should, or can we add to its damage by worrying what major changes will happen to the world, or at least our little part of it. Some of the phone calls we have been receiving at the office ask the questions for which there is no viable, immediate answer.

Questions like:

*When will the Churches be open again?*

*What will happen if people get too used to not coming to Church?*

*Why would God allow this to happen to the world?*

*What is God trying to say to us through this virus?*



While the questions are understandable they have no reasonable answer, since they require us to be able to foretell the future, and as much as I have pretended to have that ability, I can only speculate and try to offer words of hope. I do not believe that my God would visit this virus on the world to teach us a lesson or punish us for some world-wide misdemeanor. I do, however, believe that God is speaking loudly to us at this time about our care for one another and making sure that we keep the person of Jesus close to us at all times. We are asked to discover new ways of being "church" even though we are not able to gather as a congregation.

Through all this time of isolation, which I prefer to call 'solitude', there is so much about our nature that is becoming clearer, particularly the way we notice the way people are relating to one another and trying to reach out in support and finding new creative ways to connect, when the old familiar ways have been removed.

We could do no better than to see how Jesus prepared his apostles for the “new world’ they were going to live and work in when he was no longer physically with them. Like us, they had to discover new ways for new times. So he reminded them that they are the ones who have already been instructed as to how best to cope. They had the lessons to help them manage, even though they may have had to let go of some of the securities that had become so familiar.

He said, “*You are witnesses to this*”. Before leaving his disciples, Jesus commissioned them to preach the Gospel to the whole world. It was no longer just about them. They had graduated from his missionary school and we now asked to think beyond themselves and reach out beyond their immediate comforts. Those early days must have surely given the cause for concern. They no doubt felt as inadequate as we sometimes do. In order to help them carry out that mission he promised to send them a new resource, a new insight, a new way of being disciples - the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost day he would fulfill that promise.

The task of preaching the Gospel to the world now depends on us. We are Christ’s witnesses. It is both a privilege and a daunting task. However, we are told we can rely on the help of the Holy Spirit. But how are we supposed to witness?

There is the **witness of words**: We witness by professing our faith, firstly to ourselves, reminding us what it is that we believe, particularly in times of uncertainty. This includes studying it, questioning it to see if it stands up to contradictions or contrary opinions, explaining it and, on occasion, being prepared to defend it. Have I ever implored the assistance of the Holy Spirit to guide me when I had no idea how and where to go?

There is the **witness of deeds**: We all know that actions speak louder than words. “*Never recommend anything unless you can provide a sample*”, said Henry Thoreau, the 19<sup>th</sup> century American philosopher. In other words, don’t tell me how to cope in this time of the pandemic, show me. Do I add the stress of others’ lives by speaking of life’s problems or do I bring light to the darkness of those problems.

There is the **witness of one’s life**: The witness of a Christian life is more powerful than any argument. The witness that the world finds most compelling is that of concern for people and of charity towards the poor, the weak, and those who are suffering. The generosity underlying this attitude and these actions stands in marked contrast to human selfishness. It raises precise questions which lead to God and the Gospel. A commitment to peace, to justice, to human rights, is a witness to the Gospel.

Finally, there is the **witness of one’s death**: This is not a witness asked of many, but the Church has been built on the blood of the martyrs. They are people whose strength of faith and conviction is truly inspiring. When forced to choose, which one of us could say with Thomas à Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury (d.1170) *I am ready to die for my Lord that in my blood the Church may obtain liberty and peace.*

Jesus has taken a great risk. He is relying on his disciples (and now us) to ensure that his Gospel is preached and lived. He needs us to witness his presence in the world, perhaps more now than ever before as the world asks questions about why this is happening to us now. To do this we must, like the disciples ‘stay in the city ‘ a while i.e. spend time in a community of faith and prayer and wait this time out until we are ‘clothed with the power from on high’ – so that we might be ready to accept the gift of the Holy Spirit which comes to us at Pentecost.

**Fr Peter Dillon PP.**

(Image - Shutterstock licensed stock vector ID: 645875977. The Descent of the Holy Spirit. Abstract artistic modern digital colour sketch illustration. By Thoom)

## MONTH OF MARY

The month of May is traditionally the Month of Mary, the Blessed Mother of Jesus and our heavenly mother. There are two major feasts dedicated to Mary this month and next. The Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians, Patroness of Australia, (25th May), and the newly instituted commemoration of Mary the Mother of the Church for the Monday after Pentecost Sunday, (June 1st) as well as the memorial of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, (June 20th). Our Church has always benefited from the prayers and motherly care of Mary and our nation needs Our Lady's care more than ever at this time.

A huge thank you to the students of St Kevin's school who drew some beautiful pictures in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary for this special month. God bless.



## GOD ABIDING WITH US AND IN US - The Gospel this weekend

Jesus asked the apostles to love him and to follow his commandments, for this is the way to have life. This is the way to experience the love of the Heavenly Father. There is really only one commandment, the single command to love. If we love Jesus, then we have love for one another. When we live the values and commands Jesus lived in his own life—humility, joy, peace, compassion and love—we are doing the will of the Father. It is also the Spirit of Truth who helps us to understand the presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in our lives even now and always.

**Fr. Paul Kelly**



Photo by Joseph Barrientos on Unsplash

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## HEALTH AND GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS UPDATE (COVID-19)

Here is the latest update from the Archdiocese, as pertains to what we are able to do here in this Parish.

### TO THE PASTORS AND PEOPLE OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE

In light of the Premier's announcement to ease restrictions from 16 May and in consultation with local government and the Episcopal Council, we have taken the decision to implement the following protocols for churches and services in the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

These protocols will be in effect through to 12 June 2020 and are subject to change with any ongoing amendments to Queensland Health guidelines.

#### Protocols that remain in place:

- The celebration of Mass continues to be suspended at this time.
- Priests will continue to celebrate Mass (the Mass for the people) on Sundays without a congregation, with people able to follow Masses live-streamed from their parish or from the Cathedral on Sundays and weekdays.
- No one is to enter a church, parish building or Archdiocesan workplace if feeling ill.

**Updates to existing protocols from 11:59 pm on 15 May** (note that in all cases, the rules of one person per 4 square metres, 1.5 metres between people, and hygiene protocols remain paramount, they are an individual and collective responsibility):

- The limit for the Masses for the people will increase to no more than 10 people in attendance, which includes the camera operator if live-streaming.
- Funerals may be conducted with a maximum capacity of up to 20 people indoors and 30 people outdoors.
- Weddings may be conducted with a maximum capacity of up to 10 people.
- Baptisms have a maximum capacity of up to 10 people.
  - **[From Surfers Parish - Please note that the following section is not being implemented here at this stage as logistics prevent it. We will seek to implement the following stage at a later time when a greater number of people are able to gather]**
- Churches, which are in a position to do so, are allowed to open for private prayer for up to 10 people at one time during specific hours as determined by each parish, with the requirement for visitors to sanitise upon entry and exit.
  - Occupancy of the space will need to be monitored at all times by a designated marshal, who is not over 70 years of age.
  - The designated marshal is required to record in writing the name, phone number and time of visit for each visitor as protection to assist with contact tracing if necessary.
  - Work Health and Safety will provide cleaning protocols however, it is the responsibility of each parish to provide cleaning supplies.
  - It is understood that not all parishes will have the capacity to maintain ongoing monitoring or hygiene protocols for private prayer at this time.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

**Most Reverend Ken Howell**

*Auxiliary Bishop*

## COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS - A further note, from Fr Paul:

As you know, the Federal Government recently announced the beginning of easing of restrictions from the 15th May 2020. This is following a three-step plan, of which step one is presently being activated. It is important to note that this three-step plan is dependent on there not being any major flare-ups of cases, and in the event of such unfortunate possibility, these steps may be delayed or even possibly reversed partially or fully.

However, we are hopeful that things progress as planned. Another important point is to note that even at stage three, the number of people able to gather inside for a church gathering will be 100, which is still well below the numbers we regularly have on weekends. Stages one and two are even less than this, at 10 and 20 people plus social distancing.

Given this, we are presently assuming that we may be one of the later groups to be able to resume our normal schedules and possibly no earlier than June/July at best. This may change, but we do want to caution against any jumping to conclusions. Our Churches really fit into a different category from the three proposed. It is almost as if there is needed a stage FOUR, which has yet to be officially proposed.

We understand the desire of everyone to return to the Masses and sacraments, but we continue to cooperate with the policies developed to ensure the health and wellbeing of everyone.

Presently, the Queensland Government has announced the implementation of step one. There will be an easing of restrictions from 11:59 pm on the 15th May which will allow for gatherings of up to 10 people for weddings, places of worship and religious ceremonies. Funerals will be increased to a maximum capacity of 20 people indoors and 30 people outdoors. So, for the time being, no public masses with congregations or gatherings in church will be occurring except for funerals, weddings and some baptisms.

## CURRENT PARISH OPERATING PROTOCOL

Just a reminder that, in line with health guidelines, the **office is not open for pop-in visits**. The Parish has phone contact hours Monday to Friday 9 am until 12 noon, where we will endeavour to answer the phone for any inquiries. We are also contactable anytime via email [surfers@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:surfers@bne.catholic.net.au). In the case of **emergencies**, there is also the same parish office number (with a button option to press for emergency contact) for the on-call priest 24/7. The less face-to-face contact in these times of pandemic, the quicker we hope this situation can return to "normal." The Parish phone number is 5572 5433.

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## RELIGIOUS GOODS SHOP

Two popular items sold in our Parish Piety Shops are the -

**Brown Scapular:** Many Catholics love their Brown Scapular.

This scapular was given to Saint Simon Stock, the first vicar general of the Carmelite order, by Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Our Lady of Mount Carmel said to St. Simon Stock, "Take this scapular, it shall be a sign of salvation, a protection in danger and a pledge of peace.

Whosoever dies wearing this scapular shall not suffer eternal fire." Today many wear a brown scapular as a devotion to Mary and a sign of their trust in her promises for salvation that she made to those who faithfully wear a brown scapular.

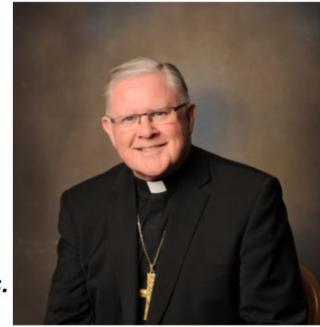
**Green Scapular:** The Green Scapular is known for bringing both spiritual and physical healing to those who wear it. They typically invoke the blessings of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and come with a Jubilee medal cross of St. Benedict. The Jubilee medal cross of St. Benedict is the most highly-indulged medal in the Catholic Church. For those that are especially in need of healing, this could be the perfect scapular.

For inquiries regarding the Piety Shops at Sacred Heart and St Vincent's Churches please contact Pat by email [svcoordinator40@gmail.com](mailto:svcoordinator40@gmail.com) or give her a call on 0404 805 819





## **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS PREVENTION AND PROTECTION POLICY**



*...for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.*

Mark 10.14

**The Archdiocese of Brisbane holds that children, young people and vulnerable adults are a gift from God with an intrinsic right to dignity of life, respect and security from physical and emotional harm.**

**They are to be treasured, nurtured and safeguarded by all.**

This means that everyone in the church must ensure that the fundamental rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults are respected. This will be achieved through the development of respectful relationships and a commitment to safety embracing appropriate boundaries, behaviours and practices, in accordance with the Archdiocesan *Code of Ethical Behaviour* and adherence to legislative imperatives of the State.

**This policy applies to Clergy, Religious, Staff, Parishioners, Volunteers, students on placement and Visitors to our sites.**

In order to support this policy it is mandatory that all Parishes and Agencies of the Archdiocese engage in the following four strategies:

1. safe recruitment and selection practices – helping prevent those who pose a risk to children from holding positions of trust;
2. adhering to the code of ethical behaviour – having clear guidelines that set out what is and is not acceptable behaviour as an essential part of keeping children safe;
3. operating safe activities for children – can help ensure a safe environment for children;
4. mandatory reporting of harm or suspected harm.

The Archdiocese is committed to safeguarding children through vigilant prevention and protection practices as prescribed by the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference and legislation.

**Most Rev Mark Coleridge  
Archbishop of Brisbane**

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*Name: AD16\_APB01\_Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Prevention and Protection Policy*

*Statement Policy Owner: Office for Safeguarding Services*

*Version: February 2019*

*Review Date: 2019 pending the release of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards by CPSL*

*Hardcopies of this document are considered uncontrolled. Please refer to the intranet (AI) for the latest version.*

## PEACE BE WITH YOU!

Peace can be elusive—even when there isn't a global health-scare. How can we find peace? Father Clifford Hennings, OFM, offers some tips on finding and keeping the peace of mind that eludes us.

May Clifford's words bring you peace

[Fr Hennings Finding Peace](#)

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## PARISH FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Our faith sustains us through challenging times. Now, more than ever, your support is needed to help our Parish to continue valuable pastoral activities and to provide ongoing sustainability. To assist you to support the Parish during this time of isolation, you can give via



<http://parishgiving.brisbanecatholic.org.au>

We will continue to serve you through online resources and webcasts. If you are able to continue to support us, we would be most grateful. For all those who have been making payments via credit card and those who have donated directly into the parish account, we thank you. The spirit of generosity is alive in our parish. If you would like confirmation of your donation or a receipt emailed to you please contact me at

[manager.surfers@bne.catholic.net.au](mailto:manager.surfers@bne.catholic.net.au)

Yours faithfully,

**Sonya Slater, Parish Manager**

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## FAITH AT HOME: Spiritual Nourishment

- Six Ways to Pray from Six Great Saints. By Gloria Hutchinson. Published by Franciscan Media.
- Prayer: Our Deepest Longing. By Ronald Rolheiser. Published by Franciscan Media

## GOSPEL RESOURCES - Sixth Sunday of Easter: Readings, Commentaries, & Prayers

In preparation for the Sixth Sunday of Easter. The resources can also be found on the Liturgy Brisbane website and will be updated each week.

[Sunday Readings: Read at Home](#)

In these unique times where our Sunday Masses have been suspended, you may wish to read the Sunday readings and associated commentaries at home.

[Family Prayer: Week by Week](#)

This resource is designed for families with young children and has been a joint endeavour of Liturgy Brisbane and Evangelisation Brisbane. An extract from the Sunday gospel is provided, along with some reflection questions, family activities and a worksheet for children.

**SUNDAY READINGS**  
READ AT HOME

**FAMILY PRAYER**  
WEEK BY WEEK

## THE CATHOLIC LEADER

The Catholic Leader dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2020 digital edition is now available [here](#)

The Catholic Leader digital edition is also available at

<https://catholicleader.com.au/digital-newspaper-covid19>

The flipbook is downloadable in PDF and printable. First, enter full-screen mode by clicking the 'full-screen' button in the centre of the pages. Using the icons above the newspaper, you can select print or download. Alternatively, you can visit the website: <https://catholicleader.com.au/>

## A HANDY RESOURCE FOR PRE-FUNERAL PREPARATION (From our local Parish community)

We often receive requests from people who would like to have peace of mind for themselves and their families by pre-planning any funeral arrangements, so they can leave these instructions with their other documents and know that their wishes for a Catholic ceremony will be fulfilled. We have developed a new form that can be helpful for people who want to pre-plan aspects of a future funeral. It can also be used by people who are preparing for the imminent passing of a loved one, or for preparing a funeral for a loved one who has passed away. Here at the parish, we are happy to help out in the time of bereavement but this resource is a great help for people to begin preparing. Naturally, the priest for a funeral will be in contact with a bereaved family and help put all the plans together at a time of loss. Please find this resource which may be very helpful, especially in these times of isolation and social distancing, where it is very difficult or impossible for people to gather to prepare for these important events.

Here is the link: <https://fs19.formsite.com/paulkelly/form7/index.html>



Photo by Fabrice Nerfin on Unsplash

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## ONLINE PILGRIMAGE PROGRAM FOR CATHOLICS

By David Ryan. (Article from The Catholic Weekly [here](#))

In the midst of a global pandemic, the seeds of hope are stirring for innovations in the living of the faith. For Brisbane Catholic Martin Brennan, who was inspired by Pope Francis' Easter message, this has manifested in the 'Pentecost Pilgrimage' – an online pilgrimage of prayer resources open to faithful across the world via Zoom.

The pilgrimage is a way of circumventing the effects of COVID-19 on the faithful's access to the sacramental life so crucial to the tangible Catholic faith. The Pentecost Pilgrimage was partly inspired by the Virtual Catholic Conference in early April that gathered over 65, 000 Catholics internationally for 26 hours. Over the course of six weeks beginning on the weekend of Sunday 26th April until Sunday 31 May – Pentecost, pilgrims will enjoy over 20 talks, which run for 20 minutes, released every Wednesday and Sunday from internationally acclaimed speakers including Dr Ralph Martin and Dr Mary Healy. Australian speakers include Archbishop Julian Porteous of Hobart and Robert Falzon of menALIVE.

Pilgrims who register their participation will have free access to all talks and pilgrims will be afforded the opportunity to speak online with some of the speakers. **It is not too late to join.**

Register now at [www.pentecostpilgrimage.com](http://www.pentecostpilgrimage.com)



## PRAYER

Our prayers and thoughts go out to parishioners Yvonne & Tony Wienand whose daughter passed away recently. May Patricia Briggs Wienand rest in the peace of Christ and may consolation and strength be given to her family.

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## PLEASE PRAY

### IN OUR HEARTS AND PRAYERS AT THIS TIME

**FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK:** All suffering from the effects of Covid-19.

Also, the following who are ill (not Covid-19): George & Margaret Cook, Baby Charbel Raphael, Angela Duvnjak, Judy Dempsey, Monica Bailey, Rachel Raines, Savannah Ayoub, Lisa Mangan, Colin Virtue, Ann Harris, Ann-Marie Loder, Angel Salvador, Brian Woodgate, Kate Smith, Tricia Baumann, Gus Reeves, Baby Maeve Lombard, Kathy Kiely, Greg Sharah, Sr. Christine Chia, Kurt and Betty Hilleshiem, Judy Ferraro, Ron Perry, Kim Parkes, Rosslyn Wallis, Jabour Haddad, Yvonne Lofthouse, Maureen Murphy, Peter Walsh, Arthur Haddad, Jean Di Benedetto, Damian Callinan, Rosemary Wales, Peter Allsopp, Yvonne Campesi, Louis Couch, Steve Wayt, Michael Tracey, Joanne Mooney, Joanne Parkes, Peter O'Brien, Michelle MacDonald, John & Molly Robinson, Mary Kerr, Eileen McCarthy.

**RECENTLY DECEASED:** Brian Elsmore, Patricia Briggs, Bryan James Telfer, Phillipa Hayes, Leo Barry Pearman, Jim Carroll, Nicholas Braid, Yvonne Holt, Nic Angelucci.

**ANNIVERSARY:** John McGrath, Maria Zervos, John Zervos. Veronica Bond, Pat Rainbird, Gordon Lepp, Frank Glynn, Leonie Kennedy, Sarah Rolfe, Barry Toomey, Joan McDonnell.

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## STAYING CONNECTED AND RESOURCES FOR PRAYER AT HOME

### Home Resources:

You can visit the [Stay Connected](#) page on our website to find an extensive list of information and resources to help during these times of isolation.

Below are quick links to enable you to stay in touch with our Parish and help you celebrate Mass from home:

**Liturgy for you at Home (produced by SPP):** <https://soundcloud.com/user-633212303/tracks>

**Weekly Homily (produced by SPP):** <https://homilycatholic.blogspot.com>

**Surfers Paradise Parish Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/surferscatholic/>

**Breaking Parish News (SPP Blog):** <https://news-parish.blogspot.com/>

**Livestream Catholic Mass** (from Brisbane Cathedral, usually around 10 am): [St Stephen's Cathedral live webcast](#)

**Video on Demand of Masses:** <https://www.youtube.com/user/CatholicBrisbane/videos>

**Mass for You at Home (free-to-air TV):**

Channel 10, Sundays 6:00 - 6:30 am and on-demand [at https://10play.com.au/mass-for-you-at-home](https://10play.com.au/mass-for-you-at-home)

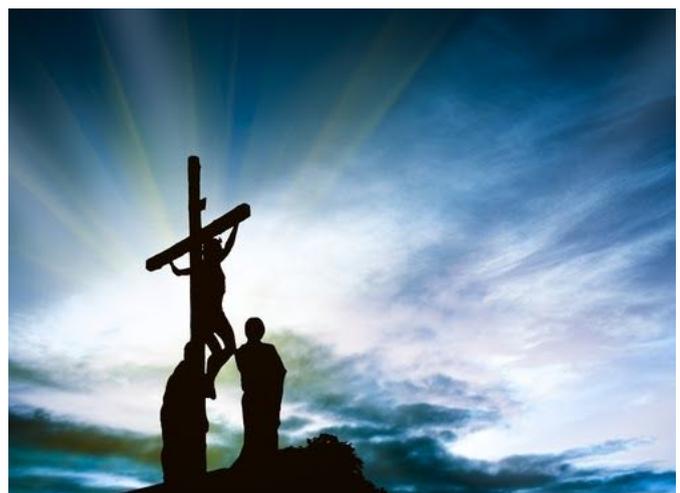
also available on Foxtel 173 Aurora Channel

## LITANY OF COMPASSION FOR THE SICK

We pray with special love and concern for all those who are ill or infirm, asking the Lord for his consoling grace to strengthen the sick in times of trial.

**R/ Lord, be close to give your comfort.**

- When pain or distress is overwhelming: R/ Lord, be close to give your comfort.
- When the healing process goes slower than hoped: R/
- When terrified by treatments or therapy: R/
- When it's hard to let go of long-held plans: R/
- When the feeling of alienation arises: R/
- When worn out and weary: R/
- When troubled by impatience and negativity: R/
- When loneliness adds to anxiety: R/
- When sickness makes it difficult to communicate: R/
- When discouragement or despondency sets in: R/
- When fear makes it impossible to face the future: R/
- When the ravages of disease attack self-esteem: R/
- When anger and resentment assail: R/
- When beset by worry or fretfulness: R/
- When it's hard to rely on others for care: R/
- When envy arises toward those who are healthy: R/
- When pessimism or cynicism holds sway: R/



- When anguish is intensified by the need for reconciliation: R/
- When sickness is mistaken for punishment: R/
- When loved ones are far away: R/
- When sickness causes financial hardship that leads to worry or despair: R/
- When afflicted by the feeling of nothing to hope for: R/
- When weakness makes it impossible even to think: R/
- When friends withdraw, fearful of disease: R/
- When illness makes those who are suffering moody or irritable: R/
- When haunted by regret and the shame of past sins: R/
- When it's difficult to sleep: R/
- When there's a loss of appetite: R/
- When there's resistance to necessary change: R/
- When tempted by denial: R/
- When nobody seems to understand: R/
- When bound to home or when restricted in movement: R/
- When listlessness and apathy threaten: R/
- When medication seems to make things worse: R/
- When all that's needed is a caring touch: R/
- When it's impossible to maintain familiar routines: R/
- When it's hard to find the strength to go on: R/
- When it becomes difficult to pray: R/
- When suffering of any sort becomes hard to bear: R/
- When death draws near R/



### Closing Prayer

Most merciful Father, your beloved Son showed special compassion to lepers, tenderness to those long sick, and healing to the infirm laid before him. We place before you all those who are ill and in need of healing grace. May the love and mercy of the Divine Physician raise up all who suffer from sickness and restore them to health and peace. We ask this in the name of Jesus.

(From <https://us.magnificat.net/free>)

[Prayer Card Version Here](#)

(Image: Shutterstock licensed stock photo ID: 94641448. Calvary By WDG Photo)

## LOOKING TO HISTORY FOR CHRISTIAN INSPIRATION

MAY 08, 2020: EPISCOPAL CONFERENCES (Retrieved from [Zenti](#))

### **‘In the face of the wholesale death of war, we are either struck dumb or cling to the Christ’s Cross’**

Cardinal Vincent Nichols of Westminster preached this homily at a special Thanksgiving Mass to mark the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Day (VE Day) and the end of World War Two in Europe.

### Homily

I am not old enough to remember VE Day! Many of you are! I just about remember that exciting feeling when rationing of sweets ended and there was a steady supply of butter. But the excitement of 8 May 1945 was too early for me.

Today gives us all an opportunity to recall afresh the excitement of victory in the enormous effort of that terrible war. Images of that excitement abound today, and this Memorial Day will be rounded off by Her Majesty the Queen herself.

On Sunday 13 May 1945, a Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated here in this Cathedral by Cardinal Griffin. He spoke of the pride in the armed forces, in the example set by the King and Queen, in the leadership of Winston Churchill. He described the war as a fight to the death against totalitarianism and added, I quote, “an ugly word for an ugly thing which means that the State lays claim to the bodies and souls of its citizens, usurping the place of God”. That ugliness we saw in its fullness particularly in the “ghastly truth of the concentration camps.”

Ronnie Knox, that great preacher, pointed the way in which we were to thank God. I quote: “Thank God not so much because our enemies have been humiliated because one more warning has been pasted up on the notice-board of history against the drunkard’s dream of world-conquest.” It was a time of great rejoicing indeed. But there was also

much sorrow in that rejoicing: so many not coming home; so many lost lives at home; so much destruction. Sense had to be made of all the death and suffering: lives were taken and many lives given.

In the prayers of those days, as in these days too, the reality and cost of self-sacrifice are central. Indeed, the ultimate prayer we have been given, the prayer of the Mass, has at this heart the act of self-sacrifice: the mystery of the Word of God in our flesh, offering himself in sacrifice for our freedom.

In the face of the ugly and wholesale death of war, we are either struck dumb or we cling to the Cross of Christ. He alone gives death and suffering a new and redemptive dimension. He gave of himself that we might live. So too did so many.

In his Godhead Jesus has victory over death; in his humanity, he gives us a share in that victory, such that we, can our turn, can make an offering of our suffering and even of life itself. No wonder the words of the hymn Abide with me strike such a deep chord in our land. "Hold thou thy Cross before my closing eyes... in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me". This, too, we remember today with profound thankfulness.

There was another sense in the hearts of many on that day in May seventy-five years ago. They knew that huge challenges lay ahead. Social order and society had to be rebuilt, not just here but in so many other countries, too. New dangers stalked the world: poverty, long-term unemployment, rancour, and discord which had to be overcome if a true peace, always more than the absence of war, was to be constructed.

History tells us that in the post-war years some great achievements emerged from dialogue and mutual effort. A need was recognized for more than a renewed economy. A renewal of spirit, a renewal of identity, a renewal of values and personal moral vision was needed to replace the deconstruction of so much in the brutality of warfare. The vision of faith, the Christian faith, played a crucial part in that effort, notably in the construction of a renewed system of education. Similarly, the NHS emerged, and social renewal in housing and welfare. It was a time of building, houses, and souls. That too must be part of our reflection today, and part of our thanksgiving.

Now we are living through our own crisis. Today we work hard for victory over this devastating virus. Today we see the patterns of self-sacrifice emerge again from the depths of the human soul. Today we begin to glimpse the immensity of the task that lies ahead, with poverty, unemployment, vast movements of vulnerable people just some of the challenges we face. We too need all our resources to meet these challenges and refashion a society that is intent on ignoring no-one, no matter how weak.

In these weeks we are working together to ensure that no-one, no matter how weak, is left without the medical care they need in this pandemic. That pattern and intent can truly be a model, a pointer, for the society we want to fashion anew in our day. Through our politics, through our business and enterprise, through our education, through our families, through our faith we can fashion a society focussed on and dedicated to the common good, a good from which no one, absolutely no one, is excluded.

Victory in Europe, 8 May 1945, was a marvellous moment. The war continued in the Far East until September. But it was a moment of such invigorating joy that we do well to remember and celebrate it in thanksgiving and prayer. May God bless all those who won for us that victory. May God bless us all in our present struggle. May God and the light that He alone can give, always be our guide and our strength. Amen.

**Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster**



Cardinal Vincent Nichols - Bishops' Conference Of England And Wales

## POPE'S HOMILY: JESUS, OUR CONSOLER

MAY 08, 2020. By Borah Castellano Lubov. Via [Zenit news](#).

Jesus is our consoler.

Today, May 8th, Pope Francis gave this advice to those watching his private daily Mass at his residence Casa Santa Marta, reported Vatican News.

In his homily, the Holy Father reflected on today's Gospel, where Jesus consoled the disciples when they had become melancholy upon learning from the Lord, that one of them would betray Him.

Consolation, the Argentinian Pontiff observed, can come in different forms: genuine, formal, or even inauthentic.

But Jesus's way of consoling us in times of difficulty, he clarified, is different, as it takes three forms: nearness, truth and hope.

Jesus' consolation, he underscored, is never distant, but always close.

When Jesus consoles, He does not use empty words. He says to us "I am here; I am with you." The force of His presence and His closeness speaks to us even though it is silent.

Reflecting on truth, Pope Francis remarked that the Gospel passage demonstrates that Jesus did not hide the truth from His disciples.

Jesus spoke the truth gently, without seeking to hurt His disciples. Jesus, the Jesuit Pope expressed, speaks the truth because he is "the Way, the Truth and the Life."

Turning to hope, Jesus consoled His disciples and restored their hope.

Francis reminded that Jesus said: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. In my Father's house, there are many dwelling places. I am going to prepare a place for you," (Jn. 14:2).

Jesus, the Holy Father also reassured, goes ahead of us to open the doors of heaven for all of us.

"As Jesus reassures His disciples that He would come back to take them with Him," the Pontiff noted, "so He will come back to take us. Jesus does not promise that we will not suffer but rather that when we do, he will be close to us to console us."

Francis acknowledged that it is "not easy to allow ourselves to be consoled by the Lord." In bad times, he noted, we may become angry with God and we do not allow Him to console us.

Pope Francis concluded, praying: Pope Francis prayed that we might allow ourselves to be consoled by the Lord. His consolation "is nearness, He is truth, and He opens the doors of hope".

The Masses in Francis' chapel normally welcome a small group of faithful, but due to recent measures taken by the Vatican, are now being kept private, without their participation. The Holy Week and Easter celebrations in the Vatican were also done without the presence of the faithful but were able to be watched via streaming.

It was announced at the start of the lockdowns in Italy that the Pope would have these Masses, in this period, be available to all the world's faithful, via streaming on Vatican Media, on weekdays, at 7 am Rome time, (3 pm Queensland time), along with his weekly Angelus and General Audiences.

On May 4th, the country entered its so-called 'Phase 2', where it will slowly relax some of the lockdown restrictions.

Public Masses in Italy with the faithful will resume on Monday, May 18th, according to a statement of the Italian Bishops' Conference. There will continue to be various safety measures in place, in order to protect the faithful.

In Italy where nearly 30,000 people have died from COVID19, public Masses are still prohibited. To date, in the Vatican, there have been twelve cases of coronavirus in the Vatican, confirmed a recent statement from the Director of the Holy See Press Office, Matteo Bruni.

The Vatican Museums are closed, along with the Vatican's other similar museums. There have also been various guidelines implemented throughout the Vatican, to prevent the spread of the virus.

For anyone interested, the Pope's Masses at Santa Marta can be watched live and can be watched afterwards on Vatican YouTube. Below is a link to today's Mass.



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## A note from Archbishop Mark

2020 continues to conjure up topsy-turvy situations. Just as autumn is upon us the Government appears ready to ease some of the COVID19 restrictions, which will prompt a spring-like rush to get out and about. Whilst it's hard to predict what the world will look like after coronavirus, there is one constant thread we'll be able to trace back pre and post the pandemic - the generosity of the human spirit. As recent events prove, just try and put us in a box and it still seeps out in countless different ways. This edition of The Good News is infused with a similar spirit: stories of those thankful for even the smallest signs of God's grace or still prepared to do their bit in spite of the changed circumstances.



During National Volunteer Week, Jeanette Ayre is certainly among those worth celebrating. The Kangaroo Point East Brisbane parishioner is using technology to continue touching people's lives with music. [Read Jeanette's story here.](#)

St Augustine's College students brave the shave and raise much needed funds for a charity dear to them. [Read more.](#)



We have a God who has got our back and will always be there to journey with us along the way.

[Watch Fr Chukwudi's homily on our YouTube channel.](#)

