

The Kids' Bulletin

November 20th, 2022
Feast of Christ the King

Christ is the King!

Today is the feast of Christ the King. When Jesus was on earth, many of His followers thought that He was going to be a normal sort of king, with a kingdom and soldiers and everything. Is that what Jesus did?

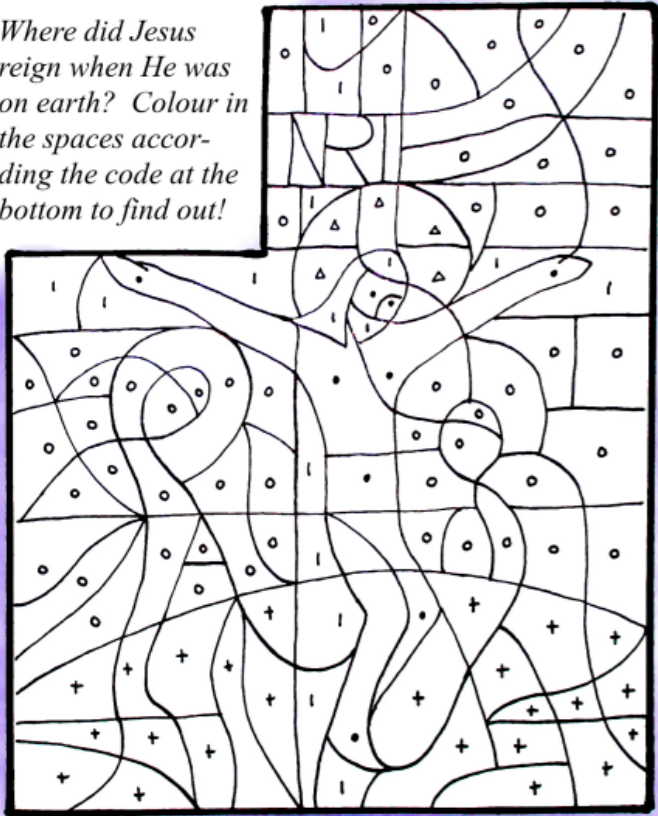
Before He died, Jesus said that His kingdom was not in this world. Do you know where Jesus' kingdom is?

Did you know that the Kingdom of Heaven is not just in Heaven? It's in the soul of every person who follows Jesus. Do you try to be like Jesus? Is He your king?

Here is a little prayer you can say to Jesus any time you think of Him, maybe every time you see a picture of Him:

Jesus, you are my King and my God and I love you.
Help me to be your good servant!

Make sure you do something special today to celebrate the feast of Christ the King!



- skin colour
- blue
- brown
- yellow
- green

Luke 23:35-43

Christ the King Word-Find

Word-Find grid containing words like: JESUS, KING, HEAVEN, PEACE, LOVE, REDEEMER, etc.

Christ the King

When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left. Luke 23:33 (NIV)



Crossword puzzle with clues for Christ the King. Includes a small illustration of a crown and a cross.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS. Contact information for the parish, including address, phone, email, and a list of parish members and staff.

OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, KING OF THE UNIVERSE 20 November 2022 • Year C

Let us Pray for the Sick. List of names for the sick. Let us Pray for the Deceased. List of names for the deceased. Anniversaries. List of names for anniversaries.

COVID-19 UPDATE. FACE MASKS ENCOURAGED. PLEASE DO NOT ATTEND IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ANY FLU LIKE SYMPTOMS.

November Remembrance—Book of Eternal Life. Our Lady of Lourdes. Ever Immaculate Virgin, Mother of mercy, health of the sick, refuge of sinners, comfort of the afflicted, you know my needs, my troubles, my sufferings; cast on me a look of pity.

REGULAR COLLECTIONS - First and Second. FIRST COLLECTION and Matt's Point are for the support of Priests throughout the Diocese. ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS. Account name: Parramatta Diocesan Clergy. BSB: 067 950. ACC: 00 00 4265. Reference: Seven Hills - 6035.

First Reading

A reading from the second book of Samuel 5:1-3

All the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron. ‘Look’ they said ‘we are your own flesh and blood. In days past when Saul was our king, it was you who led Israel in all their exploits; and the Lord said to you, “You are the man who shall be shepherd of my people Israel, you shall be the leader of Israel.”’ So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron, and King David made a pact with them at Hebron in the presence of the Lord, and they anointed David king of Israel. **The Word of the Lord.**

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.

I rejoiced when I heard them say:
‘Let us go to God’s house.’
And now our feet are standing
within your gates, O Jerusalem. **(R.)**

Jerusalem is built as a city
strongly compact.
It is there that the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord. **(R.)**

SECOND READING

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Colossians 1:12-20

We give thanks to the Father who has made it possible for you to join the saints and with them to inherit the light. Because that is what he has done: he has taken us out of the power of darkness and created a place for us in the kingdom of the Son that he loves, and in him, we gain our freedom, the forgiveness of our sins. He is the image of the unseen God and the first-born of all creation, for in him were created all things in heaven and on earth: everything visible and everything invisible, Thrones, Dominations, Sovereignities, Powers – all things were created through him and for him. Before anything was created, he existed, and he holds all things in unity. Now the Church is his body, he is its head. As he is the Beginning, he was first to be born from the dead, so that he should be first in every way; because God wanted all perfection to be found in him and all things to be reconciled through him and for him, everything in heaven and everything on earth, when he made peace by his death on the cross.**The Word of the Lord.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia!

Blessed is he who inherits the kingdom of David our Father;
blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke 23: 35-43

The people stayed there before the cross watching Jesus. As for the leaders, they jeered at him. ‘He saved others,’ they said, ‘let him save himself if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One.’ The soldiers mocked him too, and when they approached to offer him vinegar they said, ‘If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself.’ Above him there was an inscription: ‘This is the King of the Jews.’ One of the criminals hanging there abused him. ‘Are you not the Christ?’ he said. ‘Save yourself and us as well.’ But the other spoke up and rebuked him. ‘Have you no fear of God at all?’ he said. ‘You got the same sentence as he did, but in our case we deserved it: we are paying for what we did. But this man has done nothing wrong. Jesus,’ he said, ‘remember me when you come into your kingdom.’ ‘Indeed, I promise you,’ he replied, ‘today you will be with me in paradise.’ **The Gospel of the Lord.**



PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Most Blessed Sacrament of the altar.
I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally,
come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen

GENERAL NOTICES...

NEW TO OUR LADY OF LOURDES? HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU?

Welcome. Wherever you are in your faith journey, it is great to have you. Please visit our website or call the parish office. We’re here to serve you. www.olol7hills.org.au

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

SICK AND/OR HOMEBOUND?

Would you like to receive Communion? Or seriously ill or in danger of death? We have dedicated ministers who can visit and bring you communion. Feel free to approach or call Fr Henry for the Holy Anointing of the Sick. Please call the parish office 9622 2920.

FUNERALS

When a funeral is to be celebrated, please contact Fr. Henry before contacting the funeral home. Funerals are not permitted on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation.

BAPTISM

Parents desiring Baptism for their children are encouraged to contact the Parish Office to arrange for the required preparation class for parents.

SCAM ALERT!!

Beware of any suspicious emails or text messages. Call the parish office for verification.

MASS INTENTIONS

All Mass intentions must be submitted to the Parish Office on or before Thursday.

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP

Meet the second Friday of every month in the Parish Hall at 7pm
For more information contact Ian Epondulan: youtholol7h@gmail.com



KEEP UP TO DATE By visiting our parish website with news , the bulletin, prayers and much more - a great way to stay up to date with what’s on in our parish.
Visit www.olol7hills.org.au

LEGION OF MARY

Thursdays at 1.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome.

CHRIST COMMUNITY PRAYER GROUP

Thursdays at 9.30am in the Parish Meeting Room. All Welcome.

VINNIES SUPPORT CENTRES ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO THOSE IN

NEED St Vincent de Paul Support Centres across Greater Sydney are still available and taking calls to arrange for food vouchers or other items to be provided to those in need. If you need assistance, call the Support Centres in Blacktown on (02) 8861 9777, Harris Park on (02) 8861 9757 and Penrith on (02) 8861 9770. To find out more about what support is available, visit <http://vinnies.org.au/covidsupportnsw>



EMERGENCY

Ukraine Appeal

Help provide urgent humanitarian assistance to people in Ukraine.

DONATE TODAY

www.caritas.org.au/ukraine

1800 024 413 toll free



LOLO MINISTRY ROSTER

19/20 November 2022

Acolytes	Vigil: John Jordan 8am: Ryan Epondulan 9.30am: Eugene Miu
Ministers	Vigil: L & A Bellissimo 8am: A. Joseph, B. Motha 9.30am: C & H Gonzales
Readers	Vigil: Alison Punch 8am: P. Ferriols, A. McNally 9.30am: M. Aquino, H. Katopau
Altar Servers	Vigil: A. Bagatella, D & J Sant 8.00am: Volunteers 9.30am: C & O Katopau, M. Pieris
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Parish Office
Flowers	Fennie & Angela
Church cleaning	23 Nov Sue Abela, Jessie Borg & Anne McNally
Welcomers	Vigil: J. Deloso 8am: R. Paolini 9.30am: K. Chamberlain

26/27 November 2022

Acolytes	Vigil: Derick Soares 8am: Terry Jordan 9.30am: Ramzee Michael
Ministers	Vigil: L. La Guidara, R. Soares 8am: F. Balatbat, Volunteer 9.30am: M. Michael, Eugene Miu
Readers	Vigil: S. Menezes, C. Rodrigues 8am: E. Hien, K. Walker 9.30am: A. Joseph, S. Manamperi
Altar Servers	Vigil: A. La Guidara, C. La Guidara, Volunteer. 8.00am: Volunteers 9.30am: Leo Culili, Sofia Culili, Volunteer.
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Couples for Christ
Flowers	Fennie & Angela
Church cleaning	3 Dec Judith Deloso
Welcomers	Vigil: John Jordan 8am: Volunteers 9.30am: Volunteers

LOLO PARISH CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

24	Christ Community Prayer Group	1:30pm
24	Legion of Mary	1.30pm
24	Finance Meeting	8.00pm
26	Bishop's Christmas Appeal	
27	First Day of Advent	

POPE FRANCIS LUNCH WITH THE POOR OF ROME *By Vatican News staff reporter*

Pope Francis welcomed over 1,300 people assisted by Caritas Rome and the St. Egidio Community for a special lunch on Sunday's annual World Day of the Poor.

The annual lunch took place thanks to the organization provided by the [Section for Fundamental Questions of Evangelisation in the World](#), part of the Dicastery for Evangelization. Italy's d'Amico Società di Navigazione company sponsored the meal. According to the local Catholic charity of Italy, Caritas Italiana, those living in poverty number 5.6 million in Italy, 1.4 million, of whom are children.

Multiple initiatives

Other initiatives at the Vatican coinciding with the World Day of the Poor included health services offered throughout the week in St. Peter's Square for the disadvantaged.

Those struggling with poverty often have difficulty or the impossibility of accessing medical care. The mobile clinic facilities in St. Peter's Square are providing medical checkups and medicines, including screening and treatments for HIV, hepatitis and tuberculosis.

The services have returned to the square after a two year halt due to restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic. The project is realised thanks to the help of Cuamm doctors, the PTV Policlinico Tor Vergata Foundation, the Red Cross Volunteer Nurse Corps, the Red Cross, the BIOS Group, the Misericordia association, SIMIT (Italian Society of Infectious Diseases and Tropical Diseases) and the SIMG (Italian Society of General Medicine and Primary Care), with the medical team of Prof. Loris Pagano and Prof. Giulio Nati. Clinical tests are provided by the GILEAD company.

Helping the needy

Food parcels for 5,000 families are also being distributed via the network of parishes in Rome.

Parish priests requesting this help are receiving the assortment of food items to serve the families in their areas needing this help. Italy's Elite Supermarket chain donated the products totalling some 10 tons of pasta, 5 tons of rice, flour, sugar, salt and coffee, and five thousand liters of oil and milk. Each parcel brings together an assortment of food basics for households. The food storage, warehousing, and logistical support are provided by the Fiera di Roma company. DRIVALIA of the FCA bank Group provided vans for the delivery of the food parcels.

Finally, outreach to assist families struggling with high energy bills due worsened by rapid inflation in recent months is also being provided. Payments of gas and electric bills are being offered thanks to the generosity of Italy's insurance group, UnipolSai Assicurazioni.

POPE FRANCIS: PRIESTLY FORMATION AT THE HEART OF EVANGELISATION *By Christopher Wells*

Speaking with rectors and formators of Latin American seminaries on Thursday morning, Pope Francis insisted that "all priestly formation, particularly that of future pastors, is at the heart of evangelization."

The formators are taking part in a course in Rome organized by the Dicastery for the Clergy.

In his prepared remarks, Pope Francis emphasized the continuity between the formation guidelines produced by his immediate predecessors, while highlighting "one of the great contributions" of the current program, which focuses on formation that is "unique, integral, communitarian, and missionary."

Community of disciples

The Holy Father reflected especially on the communitarian aspect of formation, which requires a sufficient number of formators and seminarians to form a real community. This, he said, will often require a greater commitment to creating or consolidating "interdiocesan, provincial, or regional seminaries."

Pope Francis also recalled the importance of the human dimension of formation, noting that seminarians and future priests are "fellow disciples," like all the Christian faithful, with human needs and weaknesses.

Priestly formation, he said, is called to acknowledge and integrate both human weakness and divine grace, to lead seminarians on a journey of "faith and integral maturity," following in the footsteps of the incarnate Son of God.

Christian example

Pope Francis went on to consider the important role of formators, who teach "more by [the example of] their own lives than by their words." This, he said, requires human maturity; and he reminded formators that they must continually renew their own configuration to Christ.

As an indicator of spiritual and human maturity, the Pope pointed to "the ability to listen and the art of dialogue," which begins from dialogue with God in prayer. And he reminded formators once again that their own lives are the "fundamental factors" at their disposal "to make their service to seminarians and other priests effective."

Dialogue of life and service

Finally, Pope Francis spoke about the role of seminary rectors, who are called especially to care for the members of their formation team.

"The rector," he said, "must show a constant concern for each of the formators, maintaining an open and sincere dialogue about their life and service," while helping them overcome difficulties in their sometimes challenging ministry.

The Holy Father concluded his address by expressing the gratitude of the whole Church to rectors and formators, "for dedicating [their] life and ministry to the future pastors who will be your brothers in the presbyterate and who, united and under the guidance of the Bishop, will cast the nets of the Gospel as authentic fishers of men."



FROM FR. HENRY DUC

Dear Friends,

Like previous years, we mark the end of our liturgical year with the feast of Christ, the King, established in 1925 by Pope Pius XI for the Church to celebrate the sovereignty of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the King of kings all forms of earthly governments and authorities.

Through the celebration of Christ's Kingship, the Church means to send out this twofold message: number one, Christ is King not in any ordinary sense, for he is the Son of God, the Savior who came to obtain salvation for all peoples by his life death and Resurrection, a number two, his royal title is universal in a way that his sovereignty includes all peoples and nations under his authority.

Historically this feast came to birth as a Church response to the rise of nationalism and Fascism in Europe, and the war Putin has waged against Ukraine and claimed to be his attempt to counter the Fascist force reminds us so much of what happened in Europe nearly a century ago, though his claim is anything but true.

In the Gospel today, Luke the evangelist takes us through Jesus' last moment on the Cross: The soldiers fed him with vinegar and mockingly called him 'the king of the Jews, while he was being hung below this inscription: 'This is the King of the Jews', and the good thief pleaded with Jesus not to forget him when he enters His kingdom. Here, Luke seems to tell us that Jesus truly is the King, but his kingship is beyond what we experience and expect, since he accepted to be treated as a criminal through his hang on the Cross despite his innocence. However, he didn't remain in such a state of humiliation forever, since he did rise up triumphantly from the dead after three days in the tomb.

In short, by going through His Passion and humiliated death of the Cross to the glorious Resurrection, our King Jesus has encouraged us his followers to follow his footsteps by embracing our troubles and sufferings and turning them into moments to bring us glory in heaven.

Let us pray today for the grace to help us accept and deal with our daily issues with courage, and most importantly turn them into useful tools to open the heavenly Kingdom where Christ our King is reigning with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Have a Christ-oriented week.

Fr Henry

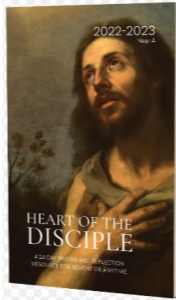
PARISH NEWS...

FR HENRY'S ANNUAL RETREAT

As required for all clergy, Fr Henry will be away for a week long retreat from Monday 21 to Friday 25 November, and we are blessed to have Fr Ed available to provide Mass supplies for the Parish. Thank you Fr Ed so much for his generosity.

PARISH BOOK OF REMEMBRANCE

Our Book of remembrance will be on display in front of the Altar at all Masses throughout November and rest at the Baptismal font before Mass, and all are welcome to enter the names of the deceased.



"Heart of the Disciple" is a new 28-day reflection resource that can be used during Advent by individuals and groups, or at any time during the 2022-2023 liturgical year. Its main purpose is to help us to find a few minutes each day to practice what it means to sit with God and to trust God to lead us forward. **\$5.00 from the Piety Shop**

OFFICE FOR SAFEGUARDING OFFERING FACE TO FACE TRAINING TO KEEP OUR PARISHES SAFE.

The Office for Safeguarding is providing an opportunity for all of us to develop our awareness and skills in ensuring our parishes are safe and welcoming places for all.

Tuesday 22 November 2022, 10:00am to 12:00pm

Bishop Bede Heather Centre

1-5 Marion St, Blacktown

Please register via email:

safeguardingtraining@parracatholic.org

POSITIONS VACANT OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

There are a number of voluntary jobs that urgently need filling. If you can assist with any of them please put your name down on the sheet at the side entrance to the church. Vacuuming of the church usually once a month for about one hour on most Wednesdays after the 8am morning Mass ie 8.45 am or on a Thursday after the 9am morning Mass ie at 9.45 am.

If you don't like vacuuming, there is dusting of the pews, emptying the church garbage bins, tidying up the church, cleaning the glass doors and windows (no higher than you can reach), crying-room glass, mopping the church side porches, etc.

We also urgently need someone to wash and iron the weekly altar cloths, etc used during the week, and wash the main altar and side altar cloths, plus the priest's albs, chasuble, tabernacle covers, etc, when necessary.

Phone Mary on 0447 676 371 for any enquiries.

BISHOP'S CHRISTMAS APPEAL NEXT SUNDAY 27 NOVEMBER.

We invite parishes to show compassion once again for the poor, marginalized, and socially excluded. The Bishop's Appeal is raising funds for Catholic Care's Assistance with Care and Housing service to help our homeless brothers and sisters to find a safe and secure place to call home.



PARRAMATTA CATHOLIC FOUNDATION

No one should be without a place to call home.

Help Catholic Care end homelessness in our community.

Please give generously to the Bishop's Christmas Appeal

DONATE NOW

DIOCESAN NEWS

MASS & PRAYERS FOR THE DECEASED CLERGY

25 November The Diocese of Parramatta invites you to its first official Mass for our deceased clergy on Friday 25 November at 10.30am at St Bernadette's Parish, Castle Hill, followed by prayers at the gravesites of clergy buried in Castle Hill Cemetery. All are welcome to attend and give your gift of prayer to those whose lives were dedicated to bringing us all closer to Christ.

GLENBROOK PARISH ADVENT CONCERT: 27 November

You are invited to St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook's Advent Concert, as part of their 'Music for the Soul' series on Sunday 27 November at 3pm in the Parish Church. Tickets are \$30 per person. For more information, contact the parish office on (02) 4742 6958 or email secr-tary@stfinbars.org.au

GLENBROOK PARISH ADVENT RETREAT: 10 December

You are invited to join St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook for their Advent Retreat, titled, 'Jesus the greatest gift from God' on Saturday 10 December from 9am to 3pm. Most Rev David Walker, Bishop Emeritus of Broken Bay, will be the guest presenter. For more information and to RSVP, please contact the parish office on (02) 4742 6958 or secr-tary@stfinbars.org.au

FIRST CPR TRAINING EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST!

The Diocese of Parramatta is participating in a program called FirstCPR that involves education and training in responding to cardiac arrest in the community. The program will provide you with CPR accredited training to parish staff and volunteers and is free of charge. Sessions will be organised across the Diocese and require a minimum of 10 people per session. For more information, and to express your interest, please visit <https://parracatholic.org/cpr-training-eoi/>

MARAYONG PARISH SOCIAL JUSTICE 26 NOVEMBER

St Andrew the Apostle Parish, Marayong, will be holding a concert to raise funds for their Social Justice initiatives to mentor refugees and help them settle in Australia. The concert will be held on Saturday 26 November, from 7pm at the St Andrew School Hall. Each concert ticket is \$10 and are available by contacting the parish office on (02) 9622 0817. The support of your parish/group would be very much appreciated.

DIVINE RETREAT CENTRE SPIRITUAL RETREAT

21 November The Divine Retreat Centre is hosting a spiritual retreat from 7pm to 9pm on Monday 21 November at St Patrick's Church, Wallsend. Bookings are required and limited numbers are available. Please call (02) 4372 1598 or email dracsydney@gmail.com to confirm attendance. Visit www.divineretreatcentre.org.au for more information.

YOUNG ADULT FAITH FORMATION 13 November

Young Adult Faith Formation sessions continue on Sunday 13 November 2022 at The Hustle, Unit 4, 4-6 Purdy Rd, Minchinbury at 7pm. The speakers are **Cardinal Joseph Coutts**, Archbishop Emeritus of Karachi, Pakistan, and **Miss Regina Lynch**, International Head of Projects, ACN International (Germany). They will speak of the suffering Church and share inspiring stories of the Witnesses of Faith; those brothers and sisters following Christ amidst oppression and persecution. All adults 18-35 are encouraged to come along and enjoy some faith formation and fellowship!

SAFEGUARDING RESPONDING TO DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE TRAINING: 22 NOVEMBER

You are invited to a face-to-face training on the topic "Developing a Respectful Response to Domestic and Family Violence" on Tuesday 22 November from 10am to 12pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre in Blacktown. The training is based on the Australian Bishops' 2022-23 Social Justice Statement and hosted by the Office for Safeguarding, MET – Peace, Justice, Ecology, and Catholic Care. Please register for this elective safeguarding module and help raise awareness about domestic violence. Email safeguardingtraining@parracatholic.org

CARITAS AUSTRALIA'S ADVENT 2022 RESOURCES

Journey through Advent with Caritas Australia's new Parish Resources, useful for small groups or individuals. Exploring seasonal themes of peace, hope, joy and love through a social justice lens, this resource offers Gospel readings, stories of people Caritas Australia serves, reflection questions, prayers, song suggestions and ideas for putting faith into action. Visit www.caritas.org.au/advent to download the resource.

PALMS AUSTRALIA – Roll up your sleeves, make a difference overseas

Do you require professional renewal, or are you seeking a retirement challenge? Communities in countries such as American Samoa, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tanzania and Timor-Leste are asking for qualified and experienced Australians to mentor their people in education, health, administration, agriculture and more. Embrace one of the Palms Australia mission opportunities abroad by visiting www.palms.org.au, or by calling (02) 9560 5333 or 0422 472 567

JOIN THE CATHOLIC BUSHWALKING CLUB

The Sydney-based Catholic Bushwalking Club seeking new members to join their club. Membership is not restricted to Catholics, and is open to all who share an interest in bushwalking and the outdoors. Membership offers a choice of graded walks for a variety of fitness levels on most weekends, and some on weekdays. To learn more about the Club and to become a member, visit <http://www.cbcsnw.org.au/> or call Adriana on 0478 919 427.

SYDNEY ALLIANCE ASSEMBLY with NSW Treasurer Matt Kean: 30 November

You are invited to join people from across the Diocese of Parramatta to participate in a Sydney Alliance Assembly. At this event, we will discuss the issues of housing, cost of living, energy, and climate change with NSW Treasurer Matt Kean on Wednesday 30 November from 6pm–8pm (dinner provided) at Parramatta Mission, 119 Macquarie St, Parramatta. Please register at www.bit.ly/3hHJQNv. For any questions, please contact Quyen Nguyen at qnguyen@sydneyalliance.org.au or 0451 018 808.

Positions Vacant:

Personal Assistant, Sisters of Mercy Parramatta. Full-time position and based at Parramatta. Please contact Anthony Spata at REACH Human Resources for further information on [0402 210 055](tel:0402210055).

POPE FRANCIS AT ANGELUS

Dear brothers and sisters, *buongiorno*, blessed Sunday!

Today's Gospel takes us to Jerusalem, in the most sacred place: the temple. There, around Jesus, some people speak about the magnificence of that grandiose building, "adorned with costly stones" (Lk 21:5). But the Lord states, "there will not be left a stone upon another stone that will not be thrown down" (Lk 21:6). He then adds to the story, explaining how in history almost everything collapses: there will be, he says, revolutions and wars, earthquakes and famines, pestilence and persecution (cf. vv. 9-17). As if to say: one should not place too much trust in earthly realities, which pass. These are wise words, which can however make us somewhat bitter. There are already many things going wrong. Why does the Lord even make such negative pronouncements? In reality his intention is not to be negative, it is otherwise – to give us a valuable teaching, that is, the way out of all this precariousness. And what is the way out? How can we come out of this reality that passes and passes, and will be no more?

It lies in a word that will perhaps surprise us. Christ reveals it in the final phrase of the Gospel, when he says: "By your perseverance you will secure your lives" (v. 19). *Perseverance*. What is perseverance? The word indicates being "very strict"; but strict in what sense? With oneself, considering oneself not up to standard? No. With others, becoming rigid and inflexible? Not this either. Jesus asks us to be "strict", uncompromising, persistent in what he has at heart, in what counts. Because, what truly counts, very often does not coincide with what attracts our interest. Like those people at the temple, we often prioritize the work of our hands, our achievements, our religious and civil traditions, our sacred and social symbols. This is fine, but we accord too much priority to them. These things are important, but they pass away. Instead, Jesus says to concentrate on what remains, to avoid devoting our life to building something that will then be destroyed, like that temple, and forgetting to build what will not collapse, to build on his word, on love, on goodness. To be persevering, to be strict and resolute in building on what does not pass away.

This, then, is perseverance: *building goodness every day*. To persevere is to remain constant in goodness, especially when the reality around us urges us to do otherwise. Let us reflect on a few examples: I know that prayer is important, but, like everyone, I too always have a lot to do, and so I put it off: "No, I am busy now, I can't, I'll do it later". Or, I see many crafty people who take advantage of situations, who dodge the rules, and so I too stop observing them and persevering in justice and legality: "But if these scoundrels do it, so will I!". Beware of this! And again: I carry out service in the Church, for the community, for the poor, but I see that many people in their free time think only of enjoying themselves, and so I feel like giving up and do what they do. Because I do not see results, or I get bored, or it does not make me happy.

Persevering, instead, is *remaining* in goodness. Let us ask ourselves: what is my perseverance like? Am I constant, or do I live faith, justice and charity according to the moment: I pray if I feel like it; I am fair, willing and helpful if it suits me; whereas if I am dissatisfied, if no-one thanks me, do I stop? In short, do my prayer and service depend on circumstances or on a heart that is steadfast in the Lord? If we persevere – Jesus reminds us – we have nothing to fear, even in the sad and ugly events of life, not even in the evil we see around us, because we remain grounded in the good. Dostoevsky wrote: "Have no fear of men's sin. Love a man even in his sin, for that is the semblance of Divine Love and is the highest love on earth" (*The Brothers Karamazov*, II, 6, 3g). Perseverance is the reflection in the world of God's love, because God's love is faithful, it is persevering, it never changes.

May Our Lady, servant of the Lord, persevering in prayer (cf. Acts 1:12), fortify our perseverance.

After the Angelus

Dear brothers and sisters!

Tomorrow will be the first anniversary of the launch of the *Laudato si'* Platform for Action, which promotes ecological conversion and lifestyles consistent with it. I would like to thank all those who have embraced this initiative: there are around six thousand participants, including individuals, families, associations, businesses, and religious, cultural and healthcare institutions. It is an excellent start to a seven-year journey aimed at responding to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. I encourage this mission, crucial for the future of humanity, so that it may foster in everyone a genuine commitment to the care of creation.

From this perspective, I would like to recall the COP27 Summit on Climate Change, which is taking place in Egypt. I hope that steps forward will be made, with courage and determination, in the wake of the Paris Agreement.

Let us always remain close to our brothers and sisters in martyred Ukraine. Close in prayer and with concrete solidarity.

Peace is possible! Let us not resign ourselves to war.

And I greet you all, pilgrims from Italy and various countries, families, parishes, associations and individual faithful. In particular, I greet the "El Shaddai" charismatic group from the United States of America, the Uruguayan "bandoneon" musicians – I see your flag there, bravo! – the Romanian Greek-Catholic Mission of Paris, the school pastoral representatives from Limoges and Tulle with their respective bishops, and the members of the Eritrean community of Milan, to whom I assure my prayer for their country. I am glad to welcome the altar servers of Ovada, the "Nuova Famiglia" cooperative of Monza, the civil protection of Lecco, the faithful of Perugia, Pisa, Sassari, Catania and Bisceglie, and the boys and girls of the *Immacolata*.

I wish you all a good Sunday. Please, do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch, and *arrivederci*