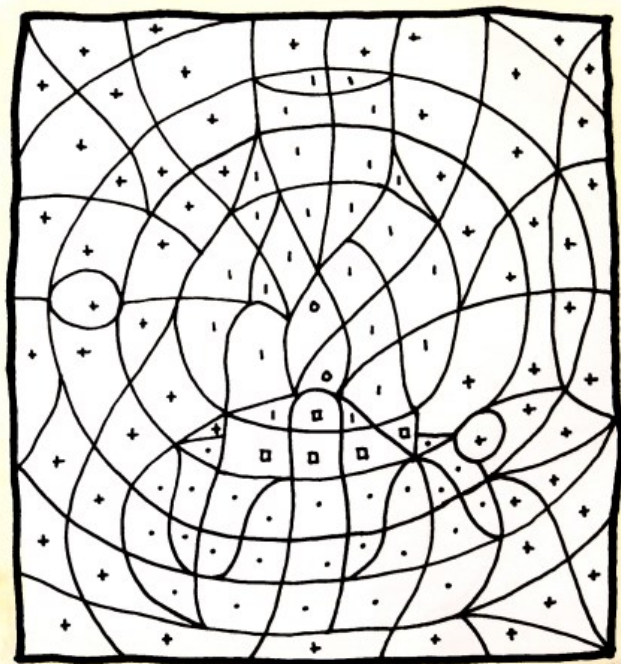


The Kids' Bulletin

Sunday February 5th, 2023
5th Sunday in Ordinary Time



Matt 5:13-16

What did Jesus tell us we should be like?
Colour in the spaces according to the code to find out!

- + blue
- white
- orange
- brown
- red



You are the Salt and Light!

Jesus says we are the salt of the earth. Have you ever tasted food that wasn't salty enough? It can taste pretty bland. But do you notice when food has the right amount of salt? Usually we don't think about it. It's kind of hiding in the food and making it taste good. Jesus wants us to be like the "salt" in the world, with the goodness and truth that He gives us.

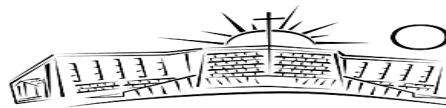
Jesus also says that we are the light of the world. Can you imagine a completely dark world: no sun or lights or anything? It would be pretty scary. You'd never know what was happening or where you were going. That's what the world can be like for people who don't have the light of God's truth. It's our job to bring the truth to the world so that everyone can see that God loves them.

We have to bring God's light everywhere we go. But we must be gentle with people who don't understand the truth. Otherwise it would be like shining a light in someone's eyes, and they wouldn't be able to see anything. We need to start out like little candles, lighting the way so that people can follow us toward God.



T	L	U	N	D	E	R	D	O	S
B	O	A	E	I	C	E	I	S	E
U	L	O	M	T	L	Y	E	E	I
T	H	E	F	P	H	L	T	N	G
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SALT
EARTH
TASTELESS
NOTHING
TRAMPLED
CITY
LIGHT
UNDERFOOT
HILLTOP
LAMP
TUB
SHINES
SIGHT
MEN
PRAISE



OUR LADY OF LOURDES
PARISH OF SEVEN HILLS
"Still a wonderful place to pray & stay"

7 Grantham Road, Seven Hills. NSW. 2147

Ph. 9622 2920

Email: secretary@olol7hills.com.au

Parish Priest: Fr Henry Huu Duc Tran
Parish Office Team: Rosie Sadipoor
Jane Nguyen
Kim Dang

Sacrament Co-Ordinator: Mrs Artelle Lenthall
Office Hours: Monday-Friday: 9am - 3.00pm
WEEKDAY MASS: Tues, Wed, Fri. 8.00am
Thursday 9.00am

WEEKEND MASS: Saturday Vigil 6pm

Parish School: OLOL 8869 6800
Principal: Ms Keiran Byrnes
Reconciliation: Saturday 4:30-5:30pm
Baptismal Preparation: 15th February 2023
Baptism: 19th February 2023

Parish Website: www.olol7hills.com.au
Pastoral Care of the Sick: Sandy Manamperi
0480 266 339

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/OLOL7Hills/>

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 5th February 2023 • Year A



Let us Pray for the Sick

Leonila Ahillon, George Alagiah, Neil Amarutunga, Mary Attard, Cynthia Avery, Rosella Booth, Anthony Janicska, John Glover, Blago Milicevic, William Orley, Sr Colleen O'Sullivan RSJ, Debra Price, Camy Ratnam, Sue Tipaldo, Phan Tran, Natalie Woodward.

If you would like to add to our Sick List or know of any Parishioner who is unwell please contact Father Henry or email the Parish office: secretary@olol7hills.com.au We can also arrange for Holy Communion or a visit if required.

Let us Pray for the Deceased

Recently Deceased: Francis Muscat, Bonosa Enfesta, John & William Formosa, Ranjan Fernando, Charlie Gauci, Estelle Hardwick, Adrian Pereira,

Anniversaries: Fredy Alphonse, Carmen Attard, Charlie Chircop, Sam Debattica, Sylvia Debattica, Antonia, Jim & Loui Dequala, E. Franklin, Sheela Franklin, Sam & Mary Gardia, Chinedu Joseph & Family, Pauline Meilak, Thomas Jnr Morrissey, Thelma Morrissey, Anton Motha, Stephen & Louis Mula, Jim & Philippa Muscat, Sashin Patrick, Mile Perak, Vivian Silva, Rosary Silva, Shane Vaz, Jim Vella, Hector & Rita Welgampola

Remembrance: France Angseeing, Roy, Mary & Des Barney, Sam Borg, Dennis Clarke, Peter Diab, Bebe Diab, Cini & Mangion Family, Melvyn Fernandes, M.A Fernando, Zaren & Sam Formosa, Christine Gomez, Desmon Grogen, Gerard Marcello, Mary Mifsud, Marcel Mohsen, Lourda Motha, Muscat Family, Josephine & Charles Muscat, Mary Muscat, John & Rosaline Ratnam, Rodrigues Family, Sem Serna, Debe Toufic, Jim Vella.

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.
By appearing in the grotto of Lourdes,
you were pleased to make it a privileged sanctuary,
from which you dispense your favours,
and already many sufferers have obtained the cure of their
infirmities, both spiritual and physical.
I come, therefore, with the most unbounded confidence
to implore your maternal intercession.
Obtain most loving mother, my requests,
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Amen.



REGULAR COLLECTIONS - First and Second

* **FIRST COLLECTION** and **Matt's Point** is 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

* **SECOND COLLECTION** or **Planned Giving Program**

On behalf of the Parish Community, I would like to thank you very much for your ongoing support, which has been absolutely vital in keeping our Parish going strong. Projects completed include the Hall Kitchen renovation, Parish Meeting Room painting, Parish Office and Meeting Room Roof painted, Church roof cleaned and ceiling repaired and painted.

ON-LINE BANK DONATIONS

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church.
BSB: 067 950
ACC: 000552
Reference: (Your Planned Giving envelope number or for a one off donation, 'DONATION')

IN-PERSON BANK DEPOSIT (at a Bank Inst / Branch)

Account Name: Seven Hills Catholic Church
BSB: 062 315
ACC ID # 00901486
AGENT # 660



FIRST READING

A reading from the prophet Isaiah 58:7-10

Thus says the Lord:

Share your bread with the hungry, and shelter the homeless poor; clothe the man you see to be naked and turn not from your own kin. Then your light will shine like the dawn and your wound be quickly healed over. Your integrity will go before you and the glory of the Lord behind you. Cry, and the Lord will answer; call, and he will say, 'I am here.' If you do away with the yoke, the clenched fist, the wicked word, if you give your bread to the hungry, and relief to the oppressed, your light will rise in the darkness, and your shadows become like noon.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

(R.) A light rises in the darkness for the upright.

He is light in the darkness for the upright:
he is generous, merciful and just.
The good man takes pity and lends,
he conducts his affairs with honour. **(R.)**

With a steadfast heart he will not fear;
open-handed, he gives to the poor;
his justice stands firm for ever.
His head will be raised in glory. **(R.)**

The just man will never waver:
he will be remembered for ever.
He has no fear of evil news;
with a firm heart he trusts in the Lord. **(R.)**

SECOND READING

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians 2:1-5

When I came to you, brothers, it was not with any show of oratory or philosophy, but simply to tell you what God had guaranteed. During my stay with you, the only knowledge I claimed to have was about Jesus, and only about him as the crucified Christ. Far from relying on any power of my own, I came among you in great 'fear and trembling' and in my speeches and the sermons that I gave, there were none of the arguments that belong to philosophy; only a demonstration of the power of the Spirit. And I did this so that your faith should not depend on human philosophy but on the power of God.

The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, Alleluia!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord; the man who follows me will have the light of life.
Alleluia!

GOSPEL

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:13-16

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.
'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

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/>



LOURDES OVER 50s GROUP
Over 50s Meeting Thursday 9th February 10.30am.
Please bring a plate for a shared lunch.
Look forward to seeing you there.

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 96222920

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>



FREE ZUMBA CLASSES
Every Tuesday and Thursday 6-7pm in the Hall.
Everyone Welcome!

Acolytes, Ministers, Readers and Altar Servers,
please remember to arrive 15 minutes before the beginning of Mass.

LOLO MINISTRY ROSTER

4/5 February 2023

Acolytes	Vigil: Frank Paiva 8am: Louis Fernandes 9.30am Kilifi Huihui
Ministers	Vigil: A. Bellissimo, A. Do Rosario 8am: F. Balatbat, L. Fernandes 9.30am: B. Chandler, S. Lenthall
Readers	Vigil: N. Do Rosario, L. Bellissimo 8am: J. Cabasa, K. Walker 9.30am Kamela Huihui, S.Manamperi
Altar Servers	Vigil: Amelia Laus, Lucas Laus 8am: VOLUNTEERS 9.30am C. Attard, M. Pieris
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	Tongan Choir
Flowers	Fenty, Gaby, Flo & Liz
Church cleaning	11 Feb Tongan Community
Welcomers	Vigil: John Jordan 8am: Rita Paolini 9.30am: Lena Falzon

11/12 February 2023

Acolytes	Vigil: John Jordan 8am: Terry Jordan 9.30am Ryan Epondulan
Ministers	Vigil: H. Gonzales, L. LaGuidara 8am: E. Gartner, E. Mui 9.30am: B. Chandler, P.Gow
Readers	Vigil: A. Pinch, M. Simic 8am: N. Arambulo, P. Ferriols 9.30am C.Diaz, F. Kennedy
Altar Servers	Vigil: A. La Guidara, C. La Guidara, A. Spadaro 8am: VOLUNTEERS 9.30am S.Culili, F. Wanandy
Morning tea (after 9.30am Mass)	LOLO Feast Day
Flowers	Claudette & Judith
Church cleaning	16 Feb C. Hutchings, A. Peatman
Welcomers	Vigil: Chricha Gonzales 8am: Joyce Hillbrick 9.30am: Kathy Chamberlain

LOLO PARISH CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2023

8	Parish Pastoral Council Meeting	7.30pm
9	Christ Community Prayer Group	9.30am
9	Over 50s Meeting	10.30am
9	Legion of Mary	1.30pm
12	LOLO FEAST DAY MASS & CELEBRATIONS	9.30am
12	Sacramental Enrolment Mass	9.30am
15	Sacramental Meeting	6.30pm
15	Baptism Preparation Program	7.30pm
18	Sacramental Meeting (RPT)	4.30pm

POPE FRANCIS' CATECHESIS ON THE PASSION OF EVANGELIZATION: The believer's apostolic zeal. *The call to the apostolate (Mt 9:9-13)*

Dear brothers and sisters, good morning!

Today we begin a new series of catecheses, dedicated to an urgent and decisive theme for Christian life: *the passion for evangelization*, that is, *apostolic zeal*. It is a vital dimension for the Church: the community of Jesus' disciples was in fact born apostolic, born missionary, not proselytizing. And from the start, we had to make this distinction: being missionary, being apostolic, evangelizing, is not the same as proselytizing. They have nothing to do with one another. It concerns a vital dimension for the Church. The community of disciples of Jesus was born apostolic and missionary. The Holy Spirit moulds her outwardly — a Church which goes forth, which goes out — so that she is not closed in on herself but outgoing, a contagious witness of Jesus — faith is also contagious — reaching out to radiate his light to the ends of the earth. It can happen, however, that the apostolic ardour, the desire to reach others with the good news of the Gospel, may diminish, become tepid. Sometimes it seems to be eclipsed; there are "closed-off" Christians, they don't think of others. But when Christian life loses sight of the horizon of evangelization, the horizon of proclamation, it grows sick: it closes in on itself, it becomes self-referential, it becomes atrophied. Without apostolic zeal, faith withers. Mission, on the other hand, is the oxygen of Christian life: it invigorates and purifies it. Let us embark, then, on a process of rediscovering the evangelizing passion, starting with the Scriptures and the Church's teaching, to draw apostolic zeal from its sources. Then we will approach some living sources, some witnesses who have rekindled the passion for the Gospel within the Church, so that they may help us rekindle the fire that the Holy Spirit wants to keep burning within us.

And today I would like to begin with a somewhat emblematic Gospel episode. We [just] heard it, the call of the Apostle Matthew. And he himself tells the story in his Gospel, which we have heard (cf. 9:9-13).

It all begins with Jesus, who, the text says, "saw a man". Few people saw Matthew as he was: they knew him as the one who was "sitting at the tax office" (v. 9). He was, in fact, a tax collector: that is, someone who collected taxes on behalf of the Roman Empire that occupied Palestine. In other words, he was a collaborator, a traitor to the people. We can imagine the contempt the people felt for him: he was a "publican", as they were called. But in the eyes of Jesus, Matthew is a man, with both his miseries and his greatness. Be aware of this: Jesus does not stop at the adjective — Jesus always seeks out the noun. "This person is a sinner, he's that kind of person..." these are adjectives: Jesus goes to the person, to the heart, "This is a person, this is a man, this is a woman". Jesus goes to the essence, the noun, never the adjective. He leaves aside the adjectives. And while there is distance between Matthew and his people — because they see the adjective, "publican" — Jesus draws near to him, because *every man* is loved by God. "Even this wretch"? Yes, even this wretch. Indeed, the Gospel says he came for this very wretch: "I have come for sinners, not for the righteous". This *gaze* of Jesus that sees the other, whoever he may be as the recipient of love, is really beautiful and it is the beginning of evangelizing passion. Everything starts from this gaze, which we learn from Jesus.

We can ask ourselves: how do we look upon others? How often do we see their faults and not their needs; how often do we label people according to what they do or what they think! Even as Christians we say to ourselves: is he one of us or not? This is not the gaze of Jesus: He always looks at each person with mercy and indeed with predilection. And Christians are called to do as Christ did, looking, like him, especially at the so-called "distant ones". Indeed, Matthew's account of the call ends with Jesus saying, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners" (v. 13). And if any one of us considers themselves righteous, Jesus is far away. He draws near to our limitations, to our miseries, in order to heal us.

It all starts, then, with the gaze of Jesus. "He saw a man", Matthew. This is followed — second step — by *a movement*. First the gaze: Jesus saw. Then the second step, movement. Matthew was sitting at the tax office; Jesus said to him: "Follow me". And "he rose and followed him" (v. 9). We note that the text emphasizes that "he rose". Why is this detail so important? Because in those days he who was seated had authority over the others who stood before him to listen to him or, as in that case, to pay taxes. He who sat, in short, had power. The first thing Jesus does is to detach Matthew from power: from sitting to receive others, He sets him in motion towards others, not receiving, no: he goes out to others. He makes him leave a position of supremacy in order to put him on an equal footing with his brothers and sisters, and open to him *the horizons of service*. This is what he does, and this is fundamental for Christians. Do we, disciples of Jesus, we, Church, sit around waiting for people to come, or do we know how to get up, to set out with others, to seek others? Saying, "But let them come to me, I am here, let them come", is a non-Christian position. No, you go to seek them out, you take the first step.

A look — Jesus saw; a movement — "he rose"; and third, *a destination*. After getting up and following Jesus, where will Matthew go? We might imagine that, having changed the man's life, the Master would lead him to new encounters, new spiritual experiences. No, or at least not immediately. First, Jesus goes to his home; there Matthew prepares "a great feast" for him, in which "a large crowd of tax collectors" — that is, people like him — takes part (cf. *Lk* 5:20). Matthew returns to his environment, but he returns there changed and with Jesus. His apostolic zeal does not begin in a new, pure place, an ideal place, far away, but instead he begins there where he lives, with the people he knows. Here is the message for us: we do not have to wait until we are perfect and have come a long way following Jesus to bear witness to him, no. Our proclamation begins today, there where we live. And it does not begin by trying to convince others, not to convince: but by bearing witness every day to the beauty of the Love that has looked upon us and lifted us up. And it is this beauty, communicating this beauty, that will convince people — not communicating ourselves but the Lord himself. We are the ones who proclaim the Lord. We do not proclaim ourselves, we do not proclaim a political party, an ideology. No: we proclaim Jesus. We need to put Jesus in contact with the people, without convincing them but allowing the Lord to do the convincing. For as Pope Benedict taught us, "The Church does not engage in proselytism. Instead, she grows by 'attraction'" (*Homily at the Mass for the Inauguration of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean*, Aparecida, 13 May 2007). Do not forget this: when you see Christians proselytizing, making a list of people to come... these are not Christians; they are pagans disguised as Christians, but the heart is pagan. The Church grows not by proselytism, it grows by attraction.

I remember once, in a hospital in Buenos Aires, the women religious who worked there left because they were too few, and they couldn't run the hospital. And a community of sisters from Korea came. And they arrived, let's say on a Monday for example (I don't remember the day). They took possession of the sisters' house in the hospital and on Tuesday they came down to visit the sick in the hospital, but they didn't speak a word of Spanish. They only spoke Korean and the patients were happy, because they commented: "Well done! These nuns, bravo, bravo!" "But what did the sister say to you"? "Nothing, but with her gaze she spoke to me, they communicated Jesus". Not to communicate ourselves but communicating Jesus, with a gaze, with gestures. This is attraction, the opposite of proselytism.

This attractive witness, this joyful witness is the goal to which Jesus leads us with his loving gaze and with the outgoing movement that his Spirit raises up in our hearts. And we can consider whether our gaze resembles that of Jesus, to attract the people, to bring them closer to the Church. Let us think about that.



FROM FR. HENRY DUC

Dear Friends,

When I was young, my parents entrusted me with the task to look after the kerosene lamps in the house. My job was to re-fill and trim them every day, clean the globes spotlessly and then light them up as soon as the night began to fall. My next brother got the job when I left for the seminary, but I was always given the job back every time I came home for a break.

I can't help but think about that little contribution of mine to help my parents many years ago as a young boy as I read the Gospel this weekend, the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary in which Jesus singles out the salt and the lamp as the two symbolic images to send out the message he means to teach the disciples.

As we know, the ordinary family in ancient Palestine lived in a one-room house illuminated at night by a single lamp on a stand and women were often tasked with the duty to make sure their family lamp got enough oil for the night. This was a very important task, since without the light of the lamp, family members would be kept in the dark all night long.

Jesus' salt imagery is also interesting, since the salt he talks about is rather different to the one we have in our kitchens today. It was some kind of the rock salt that Jewish women used to wrap in a clean cloth and dangle in a boiling pot of soup. When the soup was tasty enough, they removed the rock salt and kept it for the next use, till it lost the flavor. People then turned it into a cobblestone to pave the walkway.

Through the symbols of the salt and the lamp light following the Beatitudes promising his blessing and great rewards for the poor, the hungry and thirsty, the gentle, the merciful, the chaste, the peace makers and the persecuted, Jesus aims to encourage the disciples then and us today to lead others by example by putting his teachings into practice, meaning doing things that the Lord commanded the Israelites to do in the first reading today, such as 'share bread with the hungry, shelter the homeless poor, clothe the naked.'

Let us pray for the grace to help us always remain the good salt and light of Jesus for those around us through everything we do and say in our everyday lives.

Have a good witnessing week,

Fr. Henry

PARISH NEWS...

OUR LADY OF LOURDES PARISH FEAST DAY

ALL WELCOME!

We will celebrate our Parish Feast Day on
Sunday 12th February at the 9:30am Mass
followed by celebrations in the hall.

We are inviting parishioners to bring along a plate to share for lunch
after mass.

Please come along and join in commemorating this special day.
For further enquiries please contact Evelyn on 0437 572 636
or the parish office.



SACRAMENTAL PROCESS ENROLMENT MASS

Reconciliation and First Communion Enrolment Mass

Sunday 12th February at the 9:30am Mass, we will also welcome the children and their families from our parish enrolling in the sacramental program for 2023.

Please keep these children in your prayers as they begin this important part of their faith journey.

For parents wishing to have their child enrolled at this Mass who have not already received an enrolment form and information pack, please contact Artelle Lenthall as soon as possible. artelle@olol7hills.com.au

Evolutionary Spirituality Retreat: 3 – 5 March

The Social Justice group of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Seven Hills, invite you to an evolutionary spirituality retreat from Friday 3 March at 7pm to Sunday 5 March at 2pm at the Guntawang Environmental Bushland Retreat at Oakdale. During the weekend there will be times of reflection, dialogue and encounters within natural bushland. Registration is \$95 for the whole weekend.

To RSVP, please contact antiphon1@outlook.com or socialjustice@olol7hills.com.au or phone 0429 595 231.

PARISH LENTEN RETREAT

After a long break due to Covid, we are blessed to have our Parish Lenten retreat back this year, and Fr David Orr OSB accepted my invitation on behalf of the parish to come and lead us for the retreat on Saturday 4th March from 9.30am to 3pm.

Fr David has been an expert in liturgy and was involved in the Beatification Mass for Mary MacKillop on January 19, 1995, and I was fortunate to have him as my lecturer during my student days. Please spare that Saturday to join the retreat.

CHURCH VACUUMING

We urgently need extra people to do the church vacuuming once a month for about one hour mostly on a Wednesday after the 8.00 am Mass or on a Thursday after the 9.00 am Mass. If you can help either phone the **Parish Office 9622 2920 or Mary on 0447 676 371.**

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING

All members of our Parish Pastoral Council are invited to attend our first PPC meeting of the year on Wednesday 8th February at 7.30pm in the Parish Meeting Room.

Positions Vacant:

Parish Office Administration Assistant – St Thomas Aquinas Parish, Springwood.

Policy Coordinator – Diocese of Parramatta – **Applications close 10pm Monday 20 February**

People and Culture Adviser – Diocese of Parramatta – **Applications close 10pm Monday 20 February**

Diocesan World Day of the Sick Mass: 11 February

A Mass for the World Day of the Sick, including the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, will be held at 11am on Saturday 11 February 2023 at St Patrick's Church, Mary, Queen of the Family Parish, Blacktown. All are welcome, including those who may be sick, and those who care for the sick and dying and health care professionals. RSVPs are required by 6 February 2022 to hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org

MET Lenten Music Formation Session: 13 February

Musicians and liturgy planners are invited to attend an evening exploring music for Lent on Monday 13 February from 7pm to 8.30pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, Blacktown. The session will be presented by Eric Grella, Music Formation Facilitator, MET, and Assistant Music Director at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta. To RSVP, please contact hannah.portelli@parracatholic.org

MET Lenten Scripture Reflection Night: 21 February

Looking for a Scripture reflection session on the season of Lent? You and your key contacts are most welcome to attend the 2023 Diocesan Lenten Scripture Reflection Night with Dr Laurie Woods. Tuesday 21 February – 6:30PM to 8:30PM. Downstairs at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, 1-5 Marion Street, Blacktown. RSVP via <https://pfparra.org.au/lent2023>

MET – Worship Celebrating Holy Week Seminar: 4 March

The MET - Worship team are organising a seminar for acolytes and ministers at the altar (senior servers) in preparation for the celebration of Holy Week. Presented by liturgist Chris Ohlsen, the session will be held on Saturday 4 March from 9.30am to 3pm at the Bishop Bede Heather Centre, 1-5 Marion St Blacktown. Refreshments and lunch will be provided. To RSVP by 28 February, please contact mary.gale@parracatholic.org or phone (02) 8838 3456.

Last chance to secure your Diocese of Parramatta WYD23 Pilgrimage spot!

There are only 10 seats left on the Diocesan pilgrimage with Bishop Vincent to WYD23 in Lisbon! Young people aged 16-35 are encouraged to secure their place as soon as possible to avoid missing out. View the pilgrimage itinerary, inclusions, indicative pricing and registration information at www.parrawyd.org

Marriage Preparation Courses in 2023

Getting married in 2023? Let the Diocese of Parramatta help you prepare. Visit www.parracatholic.org/pmp to view weekend course dates in the New Year, to book and pay. An online preparation called *SmartLoving* can also be booked via the website. For more information, email met@parracatholic.org or phone Karin on 0419 242 435 or Marisa on 0412 280 017.

MET Natural Fertility assisting couples in 2023

MET Natural Fertility offers couples a NATURAL option to plan their families.

For more information or to book an appointment contact Catherine on 0400 427 605, email catherine.bourne@parracatholic.org or visit <https://parralmf.org.au/fertility/>

Sydney Alliance NSW Election Assembly: 28 February

Join Bishop Vincent Long and people from across the Diocese to participate in a NSW Election Assembly with NSW Treasurer Matt Kean (LIB), Shadow Treasurer Daniel Mookhey (ALP) and representatives of the crossbench. The assembly will focus on social justice issues like housing, climate and cost of living. The assembly will be held on Tuesday 28 February from 6:15pm – 8:15pm at the Morley Centre, 2 Darcy Rd, Westmead. Please register at <https://bit.ly/nswelectionassembly>.

Redefining Normal: Mental Health Workshop: 10 February

This workshop will introduce the “Curious Grace” model and focus on practical ways to support people with challenges in the fields of mental health and trauma, alcohol and drug addiction, gambling and other addictive behaviours. Friday 10 February, 9:30am – 12:30pm, St Joachim's Catholic Parish, 2 Mills St, Lidcombe. Please register at <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/511172640127>

Sacred Connections Retreat: Beginning 12 February

Beginning 12 February Jamberoo Abbey are hosting a series of online retreats pondering the values of Silence/Listening, Reverence and Community, which are integral to both Aboriginal and Benedictine Spirituality. All videos and texts from the retreat sessions will be available on the Jamberoo Abbey website. The cost of the retreat is \$300. Register online today at jamberooabbey.org.au/retreats/online-retreats. For enquiries and registration, contact onlineretreat@jamberooabbey.org.au.

Diocesan Food and Toiletries Drive for Refugees

Each week, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and the House of Welcome (HoW) provide much needed food and toiletry items to hundreds of Refugees from across the Diocese of Parramatta. These services depend on donations. You can organise a food and toiletries drive in your parish, school or workplace, or make a cash donation to support JRS and HoW. Find more information at parracatholic.org/diocesanfooddrive or call JRS on (02) 9356 3888 or HoW on (02) 9727 9290.

POPE FRANCIS PRAYER INTENTION FOR FEBRUARY

In his prayer intention video for February, Pope Francis asks parishes to truly be communities: places of listening and welcome whose doors are always open to all, no one excluded.

Parishes are not an exclusive clubs

In the video, which begins with an image of the outside of a beautiful but empty parish church, followed by that of the same church full of people, thus becoming even more beautiful, Pope Francis notes that every parish should to put a sign on their door saying, “Free Admission”.

In a press release accompanying the second prayer intention of 2023, the Pope's Worldwide Prayer network explains that with these words Pope Francis wants to remind all of us that there are no special requirements for entering, because, as he says, “parishes are not a club for the few, which give a certain kind of social belonging.”

Indeed, in Pope Francis' vision, parishes are “close-knit communities, without bureaucracy, people-centered — a place where the gift of the Sacraments can be found.”

This idea is conveyed by the images of the video coming from parishes around the world, which show get-togethers, talks, the distribution of aid to those most in need, visits to the elderly and the sick, pageants, and internal or external events.

Open doors

In his video, Pope Francis insists on this idea of parishes continuing along the path of being a center of welcome and listening:

“They have to become once again schools of service and generosity, with their doors always open to those who are excluded.

And to those included. To all.”

We can succeed, the Pope says, by being “daring”: rethinking “the style of our parochial communities” and “placing communion – communion of people, ecclesial communion – at the center.”

Pope Francis had already highlighted the centrality of the parish in making the Church closer to the people, in his [Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium](#), published at the beginning of his pontificate, in which he noted that they have the peculiarity of being “the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters”, and therefore should not become “a useless structure out of touch with people or a self-absorbed group made up of a chosen few”.

POPE FRANCIS AT ANGELUS

At the Angelus on Sunday, Pope Francis reflects on the first Beatitude and says that being “poor in spirit” requires us to welcome everything as God's gift and strive against society's throwaway mentality. *By Devin Watkins*

Pope Francis prayed the traditional Marian prayer of the Angelus on Sunday, and reflected on the first and fundamental Beatitude: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 5:1-12).

The “poor in spirit”, he noted, are those who recognize that they cannot rely on themselves or remain self-sufficient.

“They live as ‘beggars before God’. They feel their need for Him and recognize the good that comes from Him as a gift, as a grace.”

Treasuring every one of God's gifts

Pope Francis noted that the poor in spirit also “treasure what they receive” and therefore know that “no gift should go to waste”.

He then reflected at length on the actuality of this teaching of Jesus, since it runs up against much of our consumerist society that fails to appreciate the value of people and things.

“After the multiplication of the loaves and the fish, [Jesus] asks that the leftover food be gathered so that nothing would be wasted,” the Pope offered by way of example.

He offered Christians three challenges to combat the throwaway culture that predominates the world, especially in affluent societies.

Gift that we are

Pope Francis first challenged people “not to waste the gift that we are.”

He said each person is a good, independent of the gifts we have, since “every man or woman is rich not only in talents but in dignity.”

“Jesus reminds us that we are blessed not for what we have, but for who we are. Authentic poverty, therefore, is when a person lets go and throws him or herself away, wasting him or herself.”

Gifts that we have

The Pope then challenged us “not to waste the gifts that we have.”

He lamented that over a third of the world's food production goes to waste, even as many people die of hunger.

“Goods should be taken care of and shared in such a way that no one lacks what is necessary,” he said. “Rather than waste what we have, let us disseminate an ecology of justice and charity!”

Gifts of people

Pope Francis offered the third challenge “not to waste people.”

He said the throwaway culture uses people only so long as they are useful, after which the person is only a bother to society. Those most affected by this selfish mindset are “unborn children, the elderly, the needy, and the disadvantaged.”

“People are never to be thrown out, never! Every person is a sacred and unique gift, no matter what their age or condition is. Let us always respect and promote life!”

Examination of conscience

The Pope wrapped up his Angelus address with a series of questions we can ask ourselves to assess how we live our poverty of spirit.

“Do I know how to make room for God? Do I believe that he is my good, my true and great wealth? Do I believe that he loves me, or do I throw myself away in sadness, forgetting that I am a gift? And then – Am I careful not to waste? Am I responsible about how I use things, goods? Am I willing to share things with others? Lastly, Do I consider the weakest as precious gifts whom God asks me to care for? Do I remember the poor, those who are deprived of what is necessary?”