



**St John
Vianney**
Parish Morisset



THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A 29 OCTOBER 2023

At the time of Jesus, 'the Law' consisted of 613 commandments.

In today's Gospel Jesus was asked to name the greatest commandment. Jesus responded by naming two, but made them of equal importance, 'love of God and love of neighbour'.

In the 60s and 70s, at the height of the Vietnam War, there was a popular song, called, 'What the World Needs Now Is Love'. This song understandably struck a chord with many people.

Today at a time when the global structures of the human community are faltering, what the world needs now, more than ever, is the witness of a community committed to living out the demands of Christian love.

Reflecting on the bottom line as committed Christians, could not be more relevant for us, in our current political and economic climate.



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Awabakal People who, long before us lived, loved, educated and raised their children on this Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we recognise the young people who are our future. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our communities. We respect their deep physical and spiritual connections to Country through their stories, traditions and living cultures.

PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM: Uta France
John France

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SACRAMENTAL PRIEST: Fr John Purnell

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Juliet Hutchins
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Morisset Parish Bulletin Items: morparish@mn.catholic.org.au
(Please submit all Bulletin Notice requests to the parish office by 2pm Wednesdays)

Email the Parish Office to Subscribe for an Electronic Bulletin .

UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :

Saturday	28th October 5pm Mass—Cooranbong
Sunday	29th October 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	31st October 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Wednesday	1st November 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Saturday	4th November 5pm Family Mass—Morisset
Sunday	5th November 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	7th November 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Saturday	11th November 5pm Mass—Cooranbong
Sunday	12th November 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	14th November 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Saturday	18th November 5pm Family Mass—Morisset
Sunday	19th November 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	21st November 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset

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Reflection for The Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A — 29th October 2023

Today in our Gospel, we see Jesus surrounded by Pharisees. They were somewhat like hostile news reporters hustling a political candidate. Everyone was shouting out questions. A lawyer came forward and asked, 'Teacher which is the greatest commandment in the law? It was a tricky question because the 'Law' had 613 commandments.

Jesus responded by naming two, but made them of equal importance, 'love of God and love of neighbour'. Do we love our neighbour as ourselves? The answer is probably, 'No'

At a time when the global structures of humanity is faltering, the world needs more than ever the witness of a community, united in its effort to honour the dignity and worth of every human person, no matter their race, colour or social condition, to serve the common good, and live as one with God's creation.

The scripture readings this Sunday speak to us about the importance of being such a community, Jesus summons us to live and relate to each other in a way that is different to the trickle-down, and survival of the fittest economic model. We are called to practice an ethic of concern, care, and support for one another, so no one is excluded from the table or left behind.

We live in uncertain and challenging times. Our world may not be spinning out of control. but this year 2023, has seen a fair share of chaos, division, and uncertainty. As Catholics we are called more than ever, to act with wisdom, integrity, and truth. It is important that we do not lose sight of our calling, which is to actively prepare for the coming of the Kingdom and not fall victim to apathy, indifference, and complacency.

The mission of the church is to bring the world to know God's love. Knowing that we are loved, we are to pass it on to others. This is the meaning of the commandment, that cover the duties of a loving relationship with God: the remainder are practical guidelines on relationship with others.

Jesus does not promise us that the love of God and neighbour is going to cost us nothing. The commandment to love seems very simple, but it is the hardest of all to live out.

How do these two commandments sit with us?

John France.

Pope Francis' prayer intention for October 2023

That the Church may adopt listening and dialogue as a lifestyle at every level, and allow herself to be guided by the Holy Spirit towards the peripheries of the world.

St Vincent DePaul Christmas Appeal

The Annual St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal will be held on the weekend of the 18th and 19th of November.

Feast of All Saints

To celebrate All Saints Day, (Wednesday 1st November) Mass will be held in the Morisset Church at 9.30am.

This day is an opportunity for us to join with the whole Church in celebrating the Solemnity of All Saints, both those officially canonised, as well as the multitudes who are not. We give thanks to God for the witness of their lives even if they were cut short by violence, tragedy, or persecution.

This year marks the 13th anniversary of our first Australian saint, Mary Mackillop. We honour Mary, who embodied characteristics that typify the best of the Australian spirit. It was the genius of Mary that saw Christ in every person. We realise more and more, as Mary did, the need to stand up for the lives and dignity of the needy, defenceless, and vulnerable.

Christmas

As you are probably aware Christmas Eve 2023 is on Sunday 24th December.

Mass Times 23/24/25. December

Saturday 23rd December Vigil Mass 5pm Cooranbong. Church

Sunday 24th December Mass 9.30am Morisset. Church.

Sunday 24th (Christmas Eve) Mass 6pm Morisset Showground.

Monday 25th (Christmas Day) Mass 9.30am. Morisset Church.

Christmas Planning Meeting.

A planning meeting to organize Christmas Eve 2023 at the Morisset Showground was held in the Callinan Centre last Tuesday 24th October. As you can appreciate many volunteers are required for this event.

Points of Interest from the meeting.:

Christmas Eve Mass (Sunday 24th December) will be held in the 'breezeway' at the Morisset Showground 6pm. Carols will commence at 5.40pm.

A 'working bee' to set up Mass on Sunday 24th, will commence at 12Noon. (Chairs & Stage).

One collection (buckets at the entry to the breezeway) Plenty of parking space. Disabled parking available. An electronic 'sign-up' sheet for people to consider help with Christmas, to be sent to parishioners.

Thank you to the people who have volunteered to help with Set up/Pack up and Liturgical ministries. A call for volunteers will continue for the next two weeks.



Hearts on Fire
FEET ON THE MOVE

catholic mission

Freecall: 1800 257 296
catholicmission.org.au/timor

Thank you for your generous partnership with life-changing mission programs, like supporting Sr Carolina and the Salesian Sisters and their work through the Maria Auxiliadora Clinic in Venilale, Timor-Leste.

Your gift is helping the Sr Carolina continue to provide life-saving treatment and access to resources on health and well-being. Your gift also supports mission programs around the world that reach out and give life to those in most need.

To learn more about the impact of your support, visit catholicmission.org.au/our-work, where you can also sign-up for our regular newsletter.

If you have not yet had the opportunity to give, please do so at catholicmission.org.au/timor. Your action will make a real, lasting impact.

Safeguarding Standard 8 SAFE PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS

Physical and online environments promote safety and contain appropriate safeguards to minimise the opportunity for children and adults to be harmed.

Standard 8 focuses on the responsibility of organisations to minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur in both physical and online environments.

It requires both the organisation and its personnel to be proactive in recognising and mitigating safeguarding risks.

The core aspects of this responsibility are the Code of Conduct, the Safeguarding Policy, and the Safeguarding Risk Management Strategy, which outline appropriate supervision, oversight and behaviour towards children and adults at risk.

This includes considerations of managing risks associated with third parties or contractors and use of facilities by others.

Melbourne Cup

On Tuesday 7th November 2023 there will be a Melbourne Cup Lunch, in the Callinan Centre commencing at 12.30pm for sweeps, and Lunch will be served at 1pm. Cost is \$20, and numbers will be capped at 40 people.

Marcia and Michell will be at Mass to take your name if you would like to come. There will be a prize for the best hat / fascinator.

November

The whole month of November, has traditionally been dedicated to the theme of those who have died. The month begins with the feast of All Saints on November 1 and the next day is the feast of All Souls. This has continued throughout the centuries, and one of the most ancient customs related to respect for the dead is to visit graves and pray there in memory of their loved ones.

Some Points to Ponder.

Traditions have always been an important dimension of celebrating faith. Each age is a time of special grace, including our age of high technology.

Did you Know?

Nursing Facilities-Anointing of the Sick

The anointing of the sick is one of the seven sacraments. The Second Vatican Council determined that as soon as one of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for that person to receive the sacrament of anointing has arrived.

Often our priests are called to a Nursing Facility to deliver the 'Last Rites' to a family member or friend who has died. Unfortunately, some families and individuals do not call the parish for a priest until after their loved one has died. Sacraments are celebrated for the living not for the dead. The dead are effectively helped by the prayers of the living. The priest will however offer prayers, a symbolic gesture of the sign of the cross on the forehead, and a blessing as spiritual comfort for the grieving family and friends

We should endeavour to ensure that a delay in calling for a priest does not occur.

aMeN caMiNo 2024

The purpose of pilgrimage is journey. Camino has a long and established Christian history, it means 'road' or 'way'. A famous Camino is St James Way or Camino de Santiago in Spain. The first Christian movement in the 1st Century was known as 'The Way'.

The aMeN CaMiNo is a response to a desire to be in communion with each other and our sacred earth. It is an opportuni-

ty to pause from routine, immerse yourself in reflection, contemplation and to provide a moment of space for each person to be conscious of God's gift of Grace.

Amen is the word Christian's use to say 'Yes, we are on our way to God.' By joining us on the "aMeN CaMiNo", you are saying yes to something in your heart which is calling you.

The aMeN caMiNo takes place over five consecutive days. The pilgrimage starts at St John's Chapel, Maitland and concludes at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Hamilton. Pilgrims will walk an average of 20km per day through the beautiful landscape of bush, beach and beyond which we are blessed to have in our backyard. We will also be holding a weekend experience.

If you are interested and would like to know more, join us at this information session.

Date: 13 November Venue: Online Time: 7:00 – 8:00pm

To register go to: www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/amen-camino/

Pastoral Placement Program

Applications are now open for the 2024 Pastoral Placement Program!

The Pastoral Placement Program offers participants an experience of ministry in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. The purpose of this program is to enable participants the opportunity to experience different workplaces and ministries across the diocese. These 'on the ground' ministry work placements help participants explore the opportunities that are available to them to serve God and the local community of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. The Pastoral Placement Program provides participants a year-long discernment journey, involving the see, judge, act philosophy, to make an informed choice about the possibility of their future ministry or career choices.

For more information and to learn to how to apply go to: www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/pastoral-placement-program/

Gaza Crisis Appeal

An estimated 1 million people have been displaced in Gaza with immediate food, shelter, health, and psychosocial needs.

"This is a period of incredible turmoil and sadness. The escalation of violence has only exacerbated needs for the people in Gaza and West Bank, who already live in dire conditions. We are working with our partners on the ground to provide comprehensive and critical support to over 17,000 families affected by this devastating conflict," Sally Thomas, Humanitarian Lead, Caritas Australia said.

With your support, we will be able to help our partners on the ground to assist people displaced and affected by the current conflict.

Please donate to Caritas Australia's Gaza Crisis Appeal. You can donate online www.caritas.org.au/gaza or phone 1800 024 413

Laudato Si' (Praise Be)

On October 4, Pope Francis issued an apostolic exhortation titled *Laudate Deum* (Praise God) 8 years after his ground breaking encyclical on integral ecology, *Laudato Si'* (Praise Be). He says that our responses to the suffering of our common home have not been adequate and our planet may be reaching the breaking point. The Pope's message is still the same, but he has provided us with an update on developments which only increase the need for urgent action to address the ecological crises we face.

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns offers us 5 takeaways from the document: Read the full document at: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/

SUPPORTING THE CLERGY / 1st Collection

If you would like to make contributions to support the Clergy / 1st Collection please do so at Mass in the BLUE bucket or electronically using the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page, Diocese App, Bank Account Name: CCF BSB: 062815 No: 00328161 Ref: 5016 1st Collection or set up a direct debit contact the parish office for this option.

SUPPORTING OUR PARISH / 2nd Collection

If you would like to make contributions to support our Parish please do so at Mass via the RED bucket or deposit directly into the Parish Account our details are: Account Name: CCF BSB:062815 Account Number: 00328161 one of the following Payment References are required by CCF for all deposits: 5004 or 5004 + SURNAME or 5004 + PG + your Giver Number, or 5004 + PG + SURNAME, or you can use the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page or the Diocese App. If you are considering taking up **planned giving** you may like to know that **a percentage of the contributions are tax deductible**. If you would like to know more or set up planned giving please contact the Parish Office.

WEEKEND ROSTERS			
		<u>THIS WEEK</u>	<u>NEXT WEEK</u>
<u>PRESIDERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	Mass Mass	Mass Mass
<u>PROCLAIMERS:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Vipan D Whitten	P Melvey C Lawandos
<u>PSALMIST:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	H White J Shamley	D Joyce K Lendon
<u>GIFTS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Vipan B Cox A Walker G Walker	J Vipan C Tuck K Amon H White
<u>SERVERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Melvey V Paulo C Lawandos	J Lawandos R Lawandos M Melvey
<u>Av</u>	5PM 9.30AM	D Peterson M Foo	U France D Peterson
<u>WELCOMERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	H White P Melvey P Herbert	A Dussin P Herbert H White J France
<u>CHURCH CLEANING</u>	COOR MOR	P Stewart P Herbert T Alexander	XXXX B Hutcheson

Our Parish supports The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle in its zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Every one of us must each day commit ourselves individually and collectively to safeguard each child and every vulnerable person to whom we minister and interact with. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding P:02 4979 1390 or email: childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au, or visit their website for further information www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au.

UPCOMING FEAST DAYS MEMORIALS AND SOLEMINITIES

SAINTS SIMON AND JUDE (F) - 28TH OCT
ALL SAINTS (S) - 1ST NOV
THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED— 2ND NOV
SAINT CHARLES BORROMEO (M) - 4TH NOV
THE DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA (F) - 9TH NOV
SAINT LEO THE GREAT (M) - 10TH NOV
SAINT MARTIN OF TOURS (M) - 11TH NOV
SAINT ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY (M) - 17TH NOV
PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (M) - 21ST NOV

Please pray for all those who are sick: in hospital or at home, especially those living with a life threatening disease:

Margo Cluff, Clare Wallington, Donna Hazzard, Pam Mullaly, Mary Johnson, Tintumol Thomas, Les Findley, Peter Martyn, Bernadette Martin, Joan Gillett, Bruce Gillett.



Please pray for those who have been called to eternal life may they always be in our prayers.

Prayer Requests for the Bulletin

If you would like the parish to pray for a family member who is sick, recently deceased or you would like remembered please call or email the parish office or complete a prayer card for each person and place in the mail box near the parish office door. Cards are available at the back of the church and at the Parish Office.

All prayer requests require permission from a family member or the person. Due to Australian privacy laws.

An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus,
I believe that You
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.
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.



Live stream Mass every Sunday at 9.30am at www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream



We are committed to the
**NATIONAL CATHOLIC
SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS**



SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE
Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A
Sunday 29 Oct 2023

The Introductory Rites

Acknowledgement of Country

We Acknowledge the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation. We especially acknowledge the Awabakal and Darkinjung peoples who were the original custodians of the land this parish sits on.

Gathering

The Lectionary/Roman Missal or a Bible may be placed on a table together with a candle and a cross.

Sign of the Cross

Leader:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All:

Amen.

Greeting

Leader:

Blessed be Jesus who makes us one,
and strengthens us
by the power of his Spirit.

All:

Blessed be God forever.

Introductory Remarks

Leader (in these or similar words):

Friends in Christ,
although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day,
we gather in God's name
for when two or more come together
God is always with us.

We worship in union with the whole Church
keeping this day of the Lord holy.

Opening Rite

LITANY OF PRAISE

Leader:

Before listening to the Word of God
let us praise the Lord Jesus Christ
who has raised us to new life.

A brief period of silence follows.

Leader:

Lord Jesus, you are the model for all believers: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you hear the cries of the poor: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you command us to love God and each other: Lord,
have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Leader:

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.

All:

Amen.

Opening Prayer

Leader:

Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

hear our prayer and bring light
God our Father
you have called us to love you
with our whole being.
Help us to live out your commandment of love
by serving you and loving our neighbour.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

All:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Exodus 22:20-26

A reading from the book of Exodus

If you are harsh with the widow or the orphan, my anger will rage against you.

The Lord said to Moses, "Tell the sons of Israel this, "You must not molest the stranger or oppress him, for you lived as strangers in the land of Egypt. You must not be harsh with the widow, or with the orphan; if you are harsh with them, they will surely cry out to me, and be sure I shall hear their cry; my anger will flare and I shall kill you with the sword, your own wives will be widows, your own children orphans.

"If you lend money to any of my people, to any poor man among you, you must not play the usurer with him: you must not demand interest from him.

"If you take another's cloak as a pledge, you must give it back to him before sunset. It is all the covering he has; it is the cloak he wraps his body in; what else would he sleep in? If he cries to me, I will listen, for I am full of pity."

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 17:2-4. 47. 51. R. v.2

(R.) I love you, Lord, my strength.

1. I love you, Lord, my strength,
my rock, my fortress, my saviour.
My God is the rock where I take refuge;
my shield, my mighty help, my stronghold.
The Lord is worthy of all praise:
when I call I am saved from my foes. **(R.)**
2. Long life to the Lord, my rock!
Praised be the God who saves me.
He has given great victories to his king
and shown his love for his anointed. **(R.)**

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Thessalonians

You turned away from idols to serve God and await his Son.

You observed the sort of life we lived when we were with you, which was for your instruction, and you were led to become imitators of us, and of the Lord; and it was with the joy of the Holy Spirit that you took to the gospel, in spite of the great

opposition all round you. This has made you the great example to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia since it was from you that the word of the Lord started to spread – and not only throughout Macedonia and Achaia, for the news of your faith in God has spread everywhere. We do not need to tell other people about it: other people tell us how we started the work among you, how you broke with idolatry when you were converted to God and became servants of the real, living God; and how you are now waiting for Jesus, his Son, whom he raised from the dead, to come from heaven to save us from the retribution which is coming.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Gospel

Reader:

From the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

All:

Glory to you, O Lord.

Matthew 22:34-40

You shall love the Lord your God and your neighbour as yourself.

When the Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees they got together and, to disconcert him, one of them put a question, ‘Master, which is the greatest commandment of the law?’ Jesus said, ‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second resembles it: you must love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments hang the whole Law, and the Prophets also.’

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All are seated.

Reflection on the Word

Q. How might bystanders have reacted to Jesus’ encounter with the Pharisees?

Q. How might loving God with all your heart, soul and mind affect the way you live your life?

Q. What actions can you take to better recognise the importance of God in your life?

Q. In your local situation, who are the ‘neighbours’ not loved as we love ourselves?

Q. What actions can you take to better love your neighbour as you love yourself?

Profession of Faith

Leader:

In union with the whole Church
let us profess our faith.

All:

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;**

**on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of the Faithful

Leader: Brothers and sisters, as servants of God, let us bring our prayers before the Lord.

Reader: That the Church will guide all people in the great commandments of love for God and for our neighbour.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That nations and governments will act with the word of God in their heart.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That neglected or abused children will be rescued by caring adults and raised in love.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That those responsible for armed conflict in Gaza, Ukraine and other places, may be persuaded to turn from violence to sincere dialogue and peaceful outcomes.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That we will give our prayerful, practical, and financial support to those agencies that work with the poor and the marginalized.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all Australians will work with our First Nations people towards finding solutions to the historical injustices and ongoing complexities faced by First Nations people.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our parish community will keep the word of God through love and compassion to our neighbours.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all who are sick will find strength in the Lord, especially those who are dear to us.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all who have died will live with Christ forever, especially those who were members of our community and families.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, you are our mighty strength. Hear our prayers and help us to remain steadfast in our love for you and others. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Leader:

At the Saviour's command
and formed by divine teaching,
we dare to say:

All:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

The Concluding Rite Blessing

Leader:

May the Lord be with us, and protect us now and for ever.

All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.

All:

Amen.

Dismissal

Leader:

Let us go in the peace to love and serve the Lord.

All:

Thanks be to God.

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FAITH MATTERS: Fresh eyes to see a new

After a couple of years of cautious participation in everyday living, it seems 2023 has moved at a rapid pace, and the common reflection of, 'what pandemic?' is shared as society has returned to planning for new events, holidays and gatherings that see people come together to learn, celebrate, and grow.

ROSEMARY MCALLISTER PUBLISHED OCTOBER 24, 2023

It is hard to believe that 2024 is only around the corner and it is during this period before the new year we wait with anticipation and joy. Advent, which will begin in four weeks, is a time for us to understand that God is always doing something new for us. Unlike the commencement of the new year, the Universal Church begins its new liturgical year on the first Sunday of Advent which will lead us to Year B and the Gospel of Mark. With this newness comes the revelation of seeing the world with fresh eyes so we can view the future and God's divine plan for us more clearly. This year we welcome Dr Debra Snoddy, a lecturer in biblical studies at the Catholic Institute of Sydney a partner of the University of Notre Dame Australia to our diocese to explore the gospel of the new liturgical year.

Debra promises to inform us, nourish us, and challenge us to hear Mark's words in ways old and new. The Gospel of Mark is a treasure trove for the nurturing and nourishing of our faith. Mark brings us face-to-face with the One who came to serve and not to be served, to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). But what does Jesus' service look like according to this Gospel? What can we learn? And is any of it still relevant for the world we live in today? The day will include an overview of the Gospel and a detailed treatment of some of the most illuminating texts from the Gospel of Mark. This is a wonderful formation opportunity for us to prepare for the new year. In preparation for the end of the year and Christmas, we are called during this holy time to wait with anticipation knowing the joys of what is to come with the arrival of Christ.

With Anticipation and Joy, the 2023 Advent reflection is an invitation to encounter the mystery of Christ present in the Advent Gospels and artwork.

Having recently enjoyed reading, *How Catholic Art Saved the Faith: The Triumph of Beauty and Truth in Counter-Reformation Art* by Elizabeth Lev, I was delighted by her account of the impact the visual arts had on this period in the Church's history. She believes that this discipline was a major contributor to the Catholic Restoration, a term which she adopts and uses throughout the publication.

Lev believes, *"The challenges and circumstances that the Church faced five hundred years ago bear a striking similarity to the ones the faithful face today, while the truths of the Church that artists so deftly displayed half a millennium ago have remained the same. Even today, art can assist the Church with several of her needs. Art is useful in evangelization, the mission of the Church and her faithful to telling the great story of our salvation. Just as Jesus told stories, Christians recount their personal witness. Artists can make stories, old and new, come alive in paint, marble, or, in this age, film. Art can bring clarity. In a world of*

ambiguity and confusion, art allows for the serene discussion of different interpretations of events but can also provide guidance—the tradition of belief and the tradition of beauty go hand in hand, ultimately meeting in transcendentals: truth, beauty, and goodness. Art is uplifting. The language of art affirmed Church teaching but also delighted the faithful and enjoyed a universality, thanks to the attraction of the beautiful.”

Our task during the Advent season is to imitate Mary by pondering the Word of God and allowing it to resonate within our hearts and pour into our lives, we can also ponder God’s creations through the arts. We are invited to gather, encounter, recall, reflect, share, connect and consider how we will live differently as a result of what we have experienced through words, images and each other.

By being together with our stories, our questions, our open hearts and minds, we can form a community that lifts, honours and learns from each other as we are sent out with anticipation and joy this Advent season.

Some spaces still exist for the Gospel of Mark with Dr Debra Snoddy on 15 November, to register go to: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/gospel-of-mark-tickets-699335259587>

To access the Advent Reflection: With Anticipation and Joy, go to: <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/liturgical-year/>



Caritas Australia launches Gaza Appeal to support displaced families

Following a series of surprise attacks against Israel by Hamas on October 7, hundreds of military air strikes have been launched across the Gaza Strip as a form of retaliation by the Israeli government.

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The UN reports that Gaza’s entire population is being deprived of electricity, water, fuel supplies, food, and medicine. Ongoing bombardments and shelling have destroyed homes, hospitals and essential water and sanitation infrastructure with growing fears that Gaza will soon run out of drinkable water. Hospitals are

packed with injured people and running desperately low on fuel and basic supplies.

An estimated 1 million people have been displaced in Gaza with immediate food, shelter, health, and psychosocial needs. Even before these attacks, 8 out of 10 people were reliant on international aid.

The Patriarchs and Head of the Churches in Jerusalem said of the conflict, “we call upon all parties to de-escalate this war in order to save innocent lives while still serving the cause of justice.”

Humanitarian aid access has been blocked to date, but as of today - October 16 - it is expected pathways will open imminently. Once this happens humanitarian aid agencies will be challenged to support tens of thousands of people who have been in dire need for days.

Sally Thomas, Humanitarian Emergencies Lead, Caritas Australia said, “The escalation of violence has only exacerbated needs for the people in Gaza and West Bank, who already live in dire conditions. We are working with our partners on the ground to provide comprehensive and critical support to those affected by this devastating conflict.”

Caritas Australia is supporting partner agencies on the ground to provide emergency cash, shelter, and psychosocial support. The efforts of these partner agencies are expected to support 17,000 displaced families, representing around 100,000 of the 1 million people displaced.

To support Caritas Australia’s Gaza Appeal, visit www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/gaza-crisis/ or call 1800 024 413 toll free.



"Our history is full of injustice. Our lands and seas are full of our blood."

Nothing but a radical change in attitudes will overcome this world of pain."

Listen, Learn, Love

SOCIAL JUSTICE STATEMENT 2023-24

A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE OFFICE FOR JUSTICE, ECOLOGY AND PEACE