



**St John
Vianney**
Parish Morisset



THIRTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A 19 NOVEMBER 2023

As we approach the end of the church year, it is an opportunity for us to do some deep reflection, and look back over the past year, and do an evaluation. With the approaching holiday season this may be a good time to take a breath, step back, and think about what really matters.

We hear again today, the parable that urges us to evaluate our attachment to Christ's enterprise, our investment of God's gifts. We cannot be the disciple of Jesus and stay put, or play it safe like the third servant.

It is by living that we discover our talents, and it is in using them that they grow. If used well, these talents will enrich our own lives and the lives of others. It is about using the gifts we have been entrusted with, for the common good.

If we bury our lives in idle pursuits, and our heads in the sand, we will wind up like the third servant in today's parable: trapped in the darkness outside.



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

PRIEST SUPERVISOR: Fr Joseph Figuardo
SACRAMENTAL PRIEST: Fr John Purnell

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL: Juliet Hutchins
Mal Melvey
Pam Melvey
Kerry Lendon
Rod Hay

PARISH SECRETARY: Rosanna Suckling

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Morisset Parish Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/stjvparish>
Morisset Parish Instagram : https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish_morisset/
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	18th November 5pm Family Mass—Morisset
Sunday	19th November 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	21st November 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Wednesday	22nd November 7pm Memorial Service Morisset
Saturday	25th November 5pm Mass—Cooranbong
Sunday	26th November 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	28th November 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Saturday	2nd December 5pm Family Mass—Morisset
Sunday	3rd December 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	5th December 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Saturday	9th December 5pm Mass—Cooranbong
Sunday	10th December 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	12th December 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset

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Reflection for The Thirty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A — 19th November 2023

This week's gospel is a very familiar parable and one that is often used with students and young people. It is generally used as an encouragement to make the most of the gifts and skills that the listeners possess. It is rarely, however, placed in its context as part of the full Chapter 25 lesson about the time of waiting and preparation for the coming of the Lord and the Christian life.

Again, the story is presented as a parable of the Kingdom – a glimpse into the right order of things in the realised Kingdom. A very wealthy master entrusts his considerable assets to his servants to manage in his absence. The three servants were allocated money, 'each in proportion to his ability'. The emphasis of the parable is on what each servant did with the funds they were allotted. They were charged with managing the money in the place of their master; acting in their master's place to further develop his wealth.

Like all of Jesus' parables, this one has a sting in the tail. Although the third servant has done nothing illegal or corrupt, he is very harshly dealt with. His crime is laziness! He was given a great opportunity to demonstrate his abilities and yet he shied away and returned to his master exactly what had been entrusted to him, unimproved. The author of Matthew's gospel uses this parable to shock the audience out of complacency. They cannot rely solely on the promised return of the Lord, they must continue to act on Jesus' message and work to bring about the Kingdom in their own lives. Those who fail to act, leaving everything to the work of God, are as bad as the lazy servant who failed to grasp an extraordinary opportunity.

Gospel Focus – Such a talent!

In its original usage, a 'talent' was a measure of weight. It came to designate a weight measure of silver. One talent was roughly equivalent to a labourer's wages for 10 years. It was a huge amount of money! Due largely to the reference in this gospel parable the word eventually came to its more common meaning of a special natural ability. Although in its original use in the gospel, 'talent' meant nothing more than a large sum of money, it is a happy development of language that makes this scripture passage such a favourite of teachers and retreat providers!

Living the Gospel – Bring forth the Kingdom.

Like the original audience of Matthew's gospel, we can sometimes rely too much on God to bring about the Kingdom in our world. Like the lazy servant in the gospel, we can fall into the trap of handing the world back to God in exactly the same condition that we received it. We have to make a difference in the world! We are called to change the world and bring it closer to the realisation of the Kingdom. The only way that we can do that it is to live our lives as if the Kingdom is already here.

Different View – 'To everyone who has will be given more.'

The parable of the talents is sometimes misused to validate an overemphasis on material wealth in many Western societies. There can be an attitude that says 'more is better'; that possessions are a sign of success. Such advocates point to the favour bestowed on the servants who doubled their money and the punishment dealt to the lazy servant who simply returned to his master what he was given. Proponents of the increasingly popular 'gospel of prosperity' hold that God wants Christians to be materially and financially rich and that their wealth is proof of God's love. This stands in stark contrast to Jesus' vision of the Kingdom.

Questions for Us Today:

Q. In what ways do you relate to a character in the parable?

Q. What talent do you have that you could use to make a difference in other people's lives?

Q. In what ways do you restrict others from opportunities to use their talents?

Q. When have you ever allowed an opportunity to use your talents pass you by?

(Adapted from Greg Sunter) Dan Joyce

World Day of the Poor.

Today is the seventh annual World Day of the Poor, with the theme taken from the Book of Tobit, namely, "Do not turn your face away from anyone who is poor".

Aware of the many unjust situations around the world, the Pope calls the Church to be a place of respite, healing, and hope. It is our calling to be a counter-witness to self-centred and fear-induced behaviour. He writes: "The silent cry of so many poor men, women and children should find the people of God at the forefront, always and everywhere, in efforts to give them a voice, to protect and support them in the face of hypocrisy and so many unfulfilled promises, and to invite them to share in the life of the community".

Thus, sharing God's blessings for us with the poor is at the heart of Catholic identity. It is not simply a matter of acting with mercy and compassion to those in need with our position of power and privilege intact. Rather, it is a radical discipleship of vulnerability and powerlessness in the footsteps of the humble Servant of God. It is an existential stance in favour of the weak and the vulnerable. It is an expression of our commitment to embrace the self-emptying pattern of Christ.

Memorial Service 22nd November 2023

We began the month of November with the feasts of All saints and All Souls Day, calling to mind all those who have gone before us, some recognised Saints and others very much Saints on earth to each one of us, through their good works, faith lives, acts of mercy, kindness and love to many. The feast of All Souls waited for some centuries to be part of the Church calendar, but the practice of remembering and praying for departed relatives and friends has been longstanding.

To help us to remember our departed relatives and friends, a Memorial Service will be held on Wednesday 22nd November at 7pm in the Morisset Church. All welcome.

Please RSVP at www.vianneymorisset.org.au or the link: [Memorial Service RSVP](#) or P 02 4973 6859

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?

Boxing day—The 26th December came to be known as Boxing Day because money was collected in alms-boxes placed in churches during the festive season –and then distributed to the poor and needy after Christmas.

Christmas Truce—At Midnight on Christmas Eve 1914 firing from the German trenches suddenly stopped. A German brass band began playing. Early morning, the German soldiers came out of their trenches, approaching the allied lines, calling "Merry Christmas". The truce lasted a few days.

Anointing Mass

This Sunday 19th November during 9.30am Mass. Fr John Purnell will administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. Anybody with an illness, serious or otherwise, who needs healing, may receive the sacrament. After Mass, a 'cuppa and biscuits' will be held in the Callinan Centre – All welcome

St Vincent DePaul Christmas Appeal

The Annual St Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal will be held on this weekend of the 18th and 19th of November at Morisset, and next weekend on 25th November at Cooranbong.

Neighborhood Companion Program

During the week our Parish Leaders, together with the SJV School Principal Freda Pascoe, attended a meeting at the Diocesan Offices. This meeting was held to inform and explain what it means to be a neighborhood companion.

There are many vulnerable and isolated older people living across our communities, yearning for a greater connection and a sense of belonging. It is hoped that in 2024 that this initiative can be launched as a joint Parish/School project. More about this in 2024.

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.

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for November 2023

That the Holy Father, Pope Francis, as he fulfills his mission, may continue to accompany the flock entrusted to him, with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Advent 2023: With Anticipation and Joy

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 is a Diocesan resource that invites all members of the community to gather a circle of people – family, friends, colleagues, ministry teams to reflect mystagogically on the Advent Gospels and associated artworks. This is an opportunity to encounter Christ where we are, to pay attention to what Christ reveals in the scripture and the living tradition of our faith, to share this, to connect it to our life now, and to be changed by it.

To access the resource, go to:

<https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/liturgy/liturgical-year/>

Vintage Doll Sale

The Calvary Mater Auxiliary Cancer Carers are running a Vintage Doll Sale from Monday 20 November to Friday 24 November from 9am to 2pm on the third floor of the Calvary Mater Hospital. This is a great opportunity to support a good cause – you might even find a Christmas gift.

Novena event

The Novena to our Lady of Perpetual Help will celebrate its 75th Anniversary on Saturday 2 December 2023 at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. The morning will start with 9:15 am Mass, followed by the Novena and then a big morning tea afterward.

St Joseph's Men Newcastle

Join the St Joseph's Men's Group on Saturday 16 December, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm at Mackillop Parish (17 Milson Street, Charlestown) for a fun evening of free pizza, drinks, and games! Connect with fellow men in the community and enjoy a great time together. Contact Curtis on 0477 106 108.

Praise and Worship Gathering

Everyone is invited to the last Praise and Worship Gathering at Holy Cross Church for 2023 on Friday 1 December 2023 before returning in 2024. It'll be an opportunity to listen to a life-changing talk by Tina Tohi titled "KEEPING FAITH THROUGH HARD TIMES: How I coped with losing my teenage son." The evening will start at 6:30pm with Praise and worship, Tina's talk will be at 7pm. A final Thanksgiving Mass for 2023 will also be offered after the talk with refreshments and fellowship afterward for those who would like to stay on. Call Wayne Caruana on 0466631394 for more information.

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 how to apply go to:

www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/pastoral-placement-program/

St Joseph's Church East Maitland hosts its second pet blessing

What do you call it when an assortment of dogs and one chicken meet up at a church? A pet blessing of course.

Article originally published in the Maitland Mercury.

DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 10, 2023

More than 20 dogs and a chicken named Hope gathered outside St Joseph's Church, East Maitland last month to be blessed by Father George Anthicad.

It's the second time the church has run the pet blessing, and there were plenty of wagging tails and smiling faces as pets and people alike greeted each other.

Attendee Pauline Martin brought along her 13-month-old pup Lloyd, and said pets bring people so much joy, so it's only right they be blessed.

"It's very unusual but very meaningful," she said.

"It helps us realise how precious they are."

Parish priest Father George Anthicad read from the Book of Blessings at the gathering, and then blessed each pet with water, alongside assistant priest Father John Vo Vien.

While some animals were taken by surprise at the water blessing, others didn't even notice as there was too much excitement going on.

Fr George said the pet blessing was held in October as it's the month of the Feast of St Francis, who is associated with patronage of animals.

"He loved all creatures, he called them brothers and sisters, so in memory of the saint we also celebrate the feast and bless all the animals," he said.

"And especially [it's] for the children to bring them and get them all blessed.

"They [the kids] all love to come together and that is what really makes it happy, and parents also, we have some elderly parishioners here, they also love to come and be with the children."

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 L Hutchinson	H White D Peterson
<u>PSALMIST:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	R Hay R Hay	U France P Robertson
<u>GIFTS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	H White F Pascoe L McRae L McRae	G Hutchinson L Hutchinson D Whitten J Vipan
<u>SERVERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Melvey F Dyson V Paulo C Lawandos	M Melvey F Dyson J Lawandos R Lawandos
<u>Av</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Vipan J France	J France T Alexander
<u>WELCOMERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	A Walker G Walker J France P Herbert	P Herbert A Walker G Walker
<u>CHURCH CLEANING</u>	COOR MOR	XXXX C Lawandos	XXXX C Lawandos

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 SOLEMNITIES

PRESENTATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (M) - 21ST NOV
SAINT CECILIA (M) - 22ND NOV
SAINTS ANDREW DUNG LAC AND COMPANIONS (M) - 24TH NOV
SAINT ANDREW (F) - 30TH NOV
SAINT AMBROSE (M) - 7TH DEC
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (S) - 8TH DEC
SAINT LUCY (M) - 13TH DEC
SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS (M) - 14TH DEC

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

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.

Recently Deceased: Margo Cluff, Gai Morris, Diane Bennett.
Remembrance: Carmel Brereton, Emily Jane Williams, Cornelius Lyons, Grace Lyons, Leslie Fowler.



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
Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year A
Sunday 19 Nov 2023
World Day of the Poor

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, blessed are those who walk in your ways: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you call us to be children of the light: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are faithful to the end of time: 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.

Almighty God
into our hands
you have placed many blessings and gifts.
Help us to use them wisely
so that we may become your faithful servants.
with the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

All:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Proverbs 31:10-13. 19-20. 30-31

A reading from the book of Proverbs

Give her a share in what she has worked for.

A perfect wife – who can find her?
She is far beyond the price of pearls.
Her husband's heart has confidence in her,
from her he will derive no little profit.
Advantage and not hurt she brings him
all the days of her life.
She is always busy with wool and with flax,
she does her work with eager hands.
She sets her hands to the distaff,
her fingers grasp the spindle.
She holds out her hand to the poor,
she opens her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceitful, and beauty empty;
the woman who is wise is the one to praise.
Give her a share in what her hands have worked for,
and let her works tell her praises at the city gates.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 127:1-5. R. v.1

(R.) Happy are those who fear the Lord.

1. O blessed are those who fear the Lord
and walk in his ways!
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.
You will be happy and prosper. (R.)
2. Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive,
around your table. (R.)
3. Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the Lord.
May the Lord bless you from Zion
in a happy Jerusalem
all the days of your life. (R.)

Second Reading

1 Thessalonians 5:1-6

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

The day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night.

You will not be expecting us to write anything to you, brothers, about 'times and seasons', since you know very well that the Day of the Lord is going to come like a thief in the night. It is when people are saying, 'How quiet and peaceful it is' that the worst suddenly happens, as suddenly as labour pains come on a pregnant woman; and there will be no way for anybody to evade it.

But it is not as if you live in the dark, my brothers, for that Day to overtake you like a thief. No, you are all sons of light and sons of the day: we do not belong to the night or to darkness, so we should not go on sleeping, as everyone else does, but stay wide awake and sober.

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 25:14-30

Because you have been faithful over a few things, enter into the joy of the Lord.

Jesus spoke this parable to his disciples: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man on his way abroad who summoned his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to a third one; each in proportion to his ability. Then he set out. The man who had received the five talents promptly went and traded with them and made five more. The man who had received two made two more in the same way. But the man who had received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Now a long time after, the master of those servants came back and went through his accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents came forward bringing five more. "Sir", he said "you entrusted me with five talents; here are five more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Next the man with the two talents came forward. "Sir," he said "you entrusted me with two talents; here are two more that I have made." His master said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have shown you can be faithful in small things, I will trust you with greater; come and join in your master's happiness." Last came forward the man who had the one talent. "Sir," said he "I had heard you were a hard man, reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered; so I was afraid, and I went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here it is; it was yours, you have it back." But his master answered him, "You wicked and lazy servant! So you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered? Well then, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have recovered my capital with interest. So now, take the talent from him and give it to the man who has the five talents. For to everyone who has will be given more, and he will have more than enough; but from the man who has not, even what he has will be taken away. As for this good-for-nothing servant, throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth."

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All are seated.

Reflection on the Word

Q. Why did the servant who received one talent hide it in a hole instead of investing it?

Q. Why was the master so angry with the servant who received one talent?

Q. How is a measure of money like a special natural ability?

Q. Why do people hide their natural talents?

Q. What talent do you have that you could use to make a difference in other people's lives?

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: Dear friends, with faith in our hearts, let us bring our prayers before God.

Reader: That by expressing Christ's love for all, the Holy Church will be faithful to God's teaching.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That local organisations who work with the disadvantaged will be supported by generous volunteers.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That the fruits of the recent Synod will bring renewed energy to the Church as it works to bring about the Kingdom of God.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That, on this World Day of the Poor, we will not turn away from anyone who is poor, and see in them the face of Jesus.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That there will be immediate and lasting ceasefires in Gaza, in Ukraine, in Sudan, and all areas of conflict.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our parish community will watch for the coming of Christ by staying awake and ready.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all who are sick and housebound will be blessed and find comfort and healing through Christ, especially those who we know and love.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all who have died will be embraced by the love of God in his heavenly kingdom, especially those who were members of our community and families.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, as our creator you entrust us with gifts. Hear our prayers and help us to be faithful in sharing our gifts with others as we wait to enter the joy of your kingdom. 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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LITURGY MATTERS: Christian Initiation and The Gift of Storytelling

Stories can have a way of grabbing our attention and giving us inspiration; people connect to stories. When we do connect to a story, we are more likely to remember them, and the more the story impacts us, the more likely we are to share it. What story are you currently telling? Is it a story of faith? Is it a story that could inspire others?

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Who doesn't love a good story? We surround our lives with them. From the ones we get from books, television, social media, at social gatherings, a coffee catch-up with a friend, time with a grandparent or a small child full of wonder. It is through story that we can connect with others and share something of ourselves. And it is through listening to others that we learn more about them. This sharing of stories and, without question, the sharing of your time is a valuable commodity in our modern society. Being present for, and with, others is one of the most precious gifts that we can give.

Jesus is the ultimate storyteller. His stories are told and retold every day and everywhere. It was an effective way of evangelizing and communicating the message of the Kingdom of God. It can be ours too. Such words like 'prodigal', for example, have become very much a part of everyday language. 1 Peter 3:15-16a (NRSVCE) sums it up when he says:

...but in your hearts sanctify Christ as Lord. Always be ready to make your defense to anyone who demands from you an accounting for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and reverence.

So, who might these people be who want to know the hope that is within you? They are the seekers who come looking to discover more about what it is to be Catholic, the members of the faithful who have been disconnected from the Church for some time, the people who are struggling and need reassurance.

The document "[Come and See](#)", albeit designed as "an invitation to the whole Catholic community to engage in pastoral re-imagining of the ministry of Christian Initiation of adults and children", has key principles that are at the forefront of the mission heart of all people. Two of these key principles are:

- The parish exists for mission. Mission is an essential dimension in the life of individual disciples AND the parish community as a whole.

The Ministry of Christian Initiation stands on the effectiveness of the mission to evangelise by proclaiming the love of God where we are...

- The ministry of hospitality and welcome is vital to every gathering of an initiating community, especially when it gathers for liturgy" (p. 9)

Many of Jesus' stories were told whilst sharing a meal. Times such as these help create community, connection and a shared experience. Just as Jesus shared his message at these times so too can we use these opportunities to share the good news of Jesus and mission with others.

The whole parish, not just a specified team, is charged with the missionary responsibility of evangelisation and initiation. This responsibility is to proclaim Christ's message of love in word and deed in the everyday circumstances of life. [cf RCIA a. 9.1, 75].

A companion document to 'Come and See, [Ministry Descriptions](#) has suggestions that individuals and parishes can do to 'tell the story'. What does it look like to be a storyteller? To begin with we need to grow communities that are welcoming, invitational, non-judgmental, hospitable, interested, and willing to share. Willing to share personal experiences of living as disciples and members of the church community.

How?

The following is from the 'Storyteller' section found in the *Ministry Descriptions* document (link above).

As the precatechumen shares their story and the call they are hearing to live in relationship with God and seek baptism in the Catholic church, so too is the community of faith called to share their stories with them.

Storytelling focuses on reflecting on our experiences of God with us, builds up the community of faith at a personal and meaningful level.

Some parishioners will be gifted storytellers who feel comfortable talking about their relationship with God. You will know who they are. All members of the community can grow their capacity for storytelling and faith sharing by:

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- thinking about the people who have been significant in your faith journey.
- reflecting on how God, Jesus or the Catholic faith have impacted on you.
- reflecting on moments of joy, recognising God in those times.
- identifying moments of grace when you were aware of the God's presence.
- identifying significant events or milestones that they are grateful to God for.

Storytelling can focus on and include:

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- keeping the faith life of the community part of everyday conversations. It might open the door to further conversations.
- inviting seekers to come along to parish events and sharing the story of why these events are an important part of church/parish life.
- Christian sign and symbols

Storytelling focused on faith sharing helps catechumens discover the many ways God is present with us. By hearing these stories seekers, catechumens and candidates can build on their understanding of what it means to be a member of the Church and begin to reimagine their lives with God at the centre, with them always and everywhere.

Parishes may have many gifted people who use other means of storytelling. These people could include:

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- *photographers*(who can capture those moments where the Spirit is at work within the community)
- *videographers*(capturing the People of God being people of action)
- *writers* (that share written stories of faith of the community)
- *designers and graphic artists/illustrators*who review and update the parish bulletin, and all means of communication by ensuring it is:
 - attractive, easy to read and inviting.
 - references all the groups, activities, and ministries in the parish and
 - mission focussed.
 - reaching as many people as possible.

Jesus's last instructions to his followers were to 'go' and 'tell' people.

What are you being invited to learn – unlearn – relearn?

To what change are you/we being invited, for all people?

What is your story to tell?

Diocesan Liturgy Council Update

To keep abreast of the work of the [Diocesan Liturgy Council](#) you can review the Report published on the website after each meeting. (Click on Council News). The November report will be available soon. The October meeting was cancelled due to the National Liturgy Conference.

Acknowledgements

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