



**St John
Vianney**
Parish Morisset



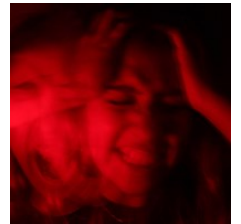
TWENTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR A 20 AUGUST 2023

We often hear the phrase "to think outside the box." It describes the freedom to expand our concepts beyond familiar and comfortable patterns that define our reality. Easy to say, but hard to do.

In the Gospel, Jesus challenges such a mentality, and shows that God is often found in the unlikely. A narrow definition of the chosen is replaced by a more inclusive vision. The notion that God cares just as much about outsiders as the law-abiding faithful insiders, is an assault on religious identity.

In the light of the Scripture, may we pledge to create an environment where fear of differences is replaced by encouraging all people to share their gifts.

The world often pushes us to compete or conform, but God calls us to a different way. We need to be alert and open to God's saving grace even in the most unlikely places and people.



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:

Foundation	Leader	In Office
1. Identity and Community		
2. Worship and Prayer.	Uta France	Mon
3. Formation and Education		
4. Mission and Outreach.		
5. Leadership and Structure.	John France	Sat & Sun

If you have any concerns or questions you can also talk to any member of the **Parish Pastoral Council** who are: Juliet Hutchins, Mal and Pam Melvey, Kerry Lendon, and Rod Hay.

PRIEST SUPERVISOR: Fr Joseph Figuardo
SACRAMENTAL PRIEST: Fr John Purnell
Parish Secretary: Mrs Rosanna Suckling

OFFICE: 60 Yambo Street, Morisset, PO Box 87, Ph: 02 4973.6859
 Office Hours: 9.00 am to 2.00pm—Monday to Friday (except public holidays)
 (We ask that you make an appointment to come to the office)
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 Morisset Parish Web site: www.vianneymorisset.org
 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

UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :

Saturday	19th August 5pm Family Mass— Morisset
Sunday	20th August 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Tuesday	22nd August 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Saturday	26th August 5pm Mass— Cooranbong
Sunday	27th August 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Tuesday	29th August 9.30am Liturgy— Morisset
Saturday	2nd September 5pm Family Mass— Morisset
Sunday	3rd September 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Tuesday	5th September 9.30am Liturgy Morisset
Saturday	9th September 5pm Mass— Cooranbong
Sunday	10th September 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Saturday	16th September 5pm Family Mass— Morisset
Sunday	17th September 9.30am Mass— Morisset
Tuesday	19th September 9.30am Liturgy— Morisset

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Reflection for The Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A — 20th August 2023

This week's gospel provides a fascinating illustration of Jesus' response to those in need. Jesus has travelled to the area of Tyre and Sidon — part of modern-day Lebanon. He was physically removing himself from the place of his very active ministry and taking a break. When the Canaanite woman approaches Jesus and his disciples, she is an interruption; a nuisance. Jesus is very abrupt with her. He tells her simply that his ministry is to the house of Israel — the Jews — and is not for her. But the woman is persistent and again asks Jesus to help her. Jesus is even more abrupt and tells her that it is not right to take the food of the children and throw it to the dogs. Through this use of metaphor, Jesus refers to the children of Israel (the Jews) and to the gentiles and pagans — sometimes referred to as 'dogs' to reflect their lowly status in the eyes of the Jewish tradition. Still the woman persists and turns Jesus' metaphor back on him, saying that even the dogs get to eat the scraps that fall from the table.

The woman's persistence and faith pay off. Jesus is moved by her faith and through that faith heals the woman's daughter. Despite his initial abruptness and reluctance, Jesus responds with compassion to the woman's request. It is as though she needed to demonstrate that she was really serious and that she did in fact believe that Jesus could make a difference in her life and the life of her daughter. This is an important story in Matthew's gospel. This gospel was written predominantly for Jewish Christians but this story reveals that the ministry of Jesus and the reign of God is open to anyone who believes.

From the perspective of ... A disciple.

As we passed through a little village near Sidon this Canaanite woman suddenly started calling on the master to help her daughter. We all expected the master to help her out as usual but he really put her in her place! He told her that his ministry was not for pagans like her. That should have stopped her, but she kept on and on, even turning the master's words back on him! She was so rude. We were about to push her out of the way so that the master could move on when he suddenly told her that her faith was great and that her daughter was better. Great faith? A Canaanite? He never ceases to surprise us!

Historical Context ... Who were the Canaanites?

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, the 'Promised Land' they sought was the land of Canaan (approximately the area of modern Israel, Transjordan, Syria and Lebanon). Here they were commanded to utterly destroy the Canaanites and to subdue the land. (Exodus 23:23-24) The Israelites never successfully removed all the Canaanites from the Palestine region. By the time of Jesus, the Israelites had established themselves in the region between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north, while the original inhabitants of the area had been 'squeezed out' — predominantly to the north. The Canaanites were dispossessed of their land by the Israelites and it is easy to see why there was tension between them.

Scriptural Context

This passage sits in the middle of a group of three stories that make up Chapter 15 of Matthew's Gospel. The first story deals with Jesus challenging traditional views of cleanliness and uncleanness — one of the great separators between Jews and Gentiles. The story of this week's gospel follows with its account of the Canaanite woman's great faith being recognised. Finally, Matthew's gospel relates the story of the feeding of the four thousand — a dramatic sign by Jesus of the open invitation to receive his message and ministry. The three stories, taken together, form a powerful chapter that makes clear that the message of Jesus is not exclusively for the Jews.

Questions for US Today: (Adapted from Greg Sunter's)

- Q1. By inference, Jesus describes the Canaanites as 'dogs'. Who are the 'dogs' (the unworthy) in today's society?
- Q2. What motivated this Canaanite woman to approach Jesus, a Jew?
- Q3. In what ways have you ever turned to an unlikely source for help?
- Q4. Would you think of turning to Jesus for help?

Dan Joyce

Confirmation

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be conferred in our St John Vianney Church Morisset by Bishop Michael Kennedy on Friday evening 8th September. We ask that you keep our children and their families, who are preparing for this sacrament in your prayers.

Anointing Mass

The next Anointing Mass will be held during 9.30am this Sunday Mass 20th August, 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.

Finance Council

Parish Finance Council met during the week and items of interest raised :

1. Thank you to the parishioners who responded positively to the appeal to review contributions. As a result, the parish is now in a stable position to operate.
2. The parish rental cottage at 111 Dora St Morisset, which needs a 'makeover' was discussed, and all options are being considered for its future use.
3. It has become apparent that after the last few years of wet weather, the porous bricks at Cooranbong church require a reseal. This will be undertaken when the weather improves, and the bricks dry out.
4. Lake Macquarie Council is to be approached to construct another entry point to the Sporting Complex behind the Cooranbong Church Cemetery to eliminate people walking and riding through the cemetery.

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?

Believing and assembling go together. It is unheard of in the recorded history of religion that believer's worship only privately as individuals. It was natural from the beginning, for Christians to join one another in a group ritual. Christians felt a need to meet with one another as a group on a regular basis. Followers of Jesus took it for granted that all the baptised would participate in the Sunday Eucharistic assembly.

This Month—Prayers for the Sick

This month we pray especially for those diagnosed with life threatening illnesses be they Cancer, Heart or Other life altering diseases. We pray for the patients their medical practitioners and their families and friends.

ACBC Social Justice Statement

The new ACBC Social Justice Statement, Listen, Learn, Love: A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples was launched on Thursday 17 August.

Australia's Catholic bishops have called on the nation to seek "a new engagement" with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in their annual Social Justice Statement being launched today.

Since the 1940s, the bishops have published annual statements that urge the Catholic community to reflect and act on social, economic and ecological issues. The statements are published as a focal point for Social Justice Sunday, which will be marked on August 27 this year.

This year's statement, Listen, Learn, Love: A New Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, will be launched in Western Sydney on Thursday morning by Bishop Vincent Long OFM Conv, chair of the Bishops Commission for Social Justice, Mission and Service.

"One of the objectives of this statement is that we want Catholics to understand that Catholic social teaching and Catholic social action are not simply theoretical and academic exercises," he will say.

"We hear what God is saying to us about justice by being with our sisters and brothers on the peripheries of society."

While the Social Justice Statement is a teaching document of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, a large part of this year's statement was written by members of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council. It is part of the message's exhortation to "listen".

"Listening is hard. Hearing about young people taking their lives, about so many people ending up in jail, of children still being taken away from their parents and grandparents and about the ongoing racism is tough," Bishop Long will say.

"It must be so much more difficult for these people to tell us about their painful experiences. We are deeply grateful to those who shared their stories of pain with us."

The theme for this year's statement was chosen in May 2022, well before the Voice to Parliament referendum was mooted and before the timing of a vote was proposed. While the bishops don't suggest how people should vote, Bishop Long says "whatever the outcome of this year's referendum, we ask the Church in Australia to make efforts to lead the way for our fellow Australians" in pursuing reconciliation.

"Our attitudes and actions towards First Nations Peoples need to be grounded in justice, love and humility," he will say.

"We need to listen with deep respect and learn from them about what needs to be done to improve their situations. We need to walk with them, day by day, and work with them to bring about change for the better – for their people and for all of us."

"Strengthening our relationship with our First Peoples is integral and indeed critical to the strengthening of the whole nation."

The launch was livestreamed here: https://www.youtube.com/live/jz_5pam7nBs?si=XV-ox6EyCatkD98

Let Justice and Peace Flow

Is the theme of this year's ecumenical Season of Creation. It starts on September 1, the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation and ends on the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, 4 October.

Pope Francis' message for September 1 offers us so much on which to contemplate during the Season of Creation. One way you can make the Season of Creation a special time to enrich your spiritual life is to devote regular time over the five weeks of the Season to reading and reflecting on the Pope's message. You can read it in full at: <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2023/documents/20230513-messaggio-giornata-curacreato.html>



Group connects at local World Youth Day Pilgrimage

As they walked, they shared stories, laughter and moments of reflection along the way.

DANIEL LEE CHUN WEI PUBLISHED AUGUST 15, 2023

In 1984, Pope John Paul II, called for a gathering of youths and to everyone's surprise, 250 thousand young people from countries across the world attended the gathering. The very next year, the Holy Father announced the institution of World Youth Day (WYD) and since then, 16 WYDs have taken place, including one in Australia in 2008. This year, WYD 2023 took place in Lisbon, Portugal and in communion with our overseas pilgrims, a group of young adults joined together to journey on a local WYD pilgrimage.

The local pilgrimage began early in the morning on 6 August and took the pilgrims through Morpeth, Largs, Bolwarra, Maitland, and East Maitland. This region has deep historical significance to the early church in our Diocese as it was where the first few notable priests assigned to the Hunter Region began their ministry of building churches, schools, and parishes.

One of the biggest highlights of the pilgrimage was the camaraderie that was fostered among the pilgrims. As they walked, they shared stories, laughter, and moments of reflection along the way. One pilgrim shared how hearing the life of others has helped make sense of their own life's journey and experiences. Another pilgrim said "I loved every minute of this pilgrimage. God was with us on this journey like He was with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Our backs ached and legs burned from the day long walk, but our hearts were set alight from the day's activities which centered around our Lord." The pilgrimage concluded at a youth mass in St. Joseph, East Maitland.

Last week's local WYD pilgrimage provided an amazing opportunity for an encounter with Christ through faith, prayer and community. As the pilgrims return to their daily lives, the memories and lessons from the pilgrimage will undoubtedly continue to nurture them on their life-long faith journey. References <https://www.lisboa2023.org/en/history> <https://www.mn.catholic.org.au/about/history/>

Can you support CatholicCare during August?

CatholicCare's Community Kitchens offer more than just a meal. With the assistance of volunteers, CatholicCare has created a space where people can feel safe and enjoy the company of others and access other services if needed.

We ask you to give a gift to our Make a Difference Appeal to help us to continue to feed and connect people through our Community Kitchens and other non-funded programs.

At CatholicCare our programs really do make a difference in our local community. We can't do this work without the generosity of our community and people like you.

Your tax-deductible donation will go a long way. Donating is simple and only takes a few steps. Visit: www.mycase.com.au/page/318856/make-a-difference

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 France D Whitten	TBA R Hay
<u>PSALMIST:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	L McRae H White	P Melvey D Whitten
<u>GIFTS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	G Hutchinson L Hutchinson M Fowler K Lendon	B Cox J Vipan G Hutchinson L Hutchinson
<u>SERVERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Melvey C Atkins V Paulo	M Melvey F Dyson V Paulo C Lawandos
<u>Av</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J France D Peterson	U France M Fowler
<u>SOUND / VIDEO</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J France J France	J France J France
<u>WELCOMERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	A Walker G Walker P Stewart TBA	P Melvey K Lendon H White
<u>CHURCH CLEANING</u>	COOR MOR	XXXX R Hay	P Stewart K Lendon

Our Parish supports The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle in its enduring and abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding Phone: 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

SAINT PIUS X (M) - 21ST AUGUST
QUEENSHIP OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (M) - 22ND AUGUST
SAINT BARTHOLOMEW (F) - 24TH AUGUST
SAINT AUGUSTINE (M) - 28TH AUGUST
THE PASSION OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST (M) - 29TH AUGUST
THE NATIVITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY (F) - 8TH SEPT
SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM (M) - 13TH SEPT

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

Pam Mullaly, Mary Johnson, Tintumol Thomas, Christopher Maloney, 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





SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Sunday 20 Aug 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 show mercy to all: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you reward those who come to you in faith: Christ,
have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, in you we are reconciled: 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.

God, our helper and friend
you welcome all people with one embrace
and include strangers and refugees.
Help us to offer the hand of Christian friendship,
especially to those who come from other places.
We ask this through Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
for ever and ever.

All:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Isaiah 56:1.6-7

A reading from the prophet Isaiah

I will lead the foreigners to my holy mountain.

Thus says the Lord: Have a care for justice, act with integrity, for soon my salvation will come and my integrity be manifest. Foreigners who have attached themselves to the Lord to serve him and to love his name and be his servants – all who observe the sabbath, not profaning it, and cling to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain. I will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their holocausts and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.

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

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 66:2-3 5-6. 8. R. v.4

(R.) O God, let all the nations praise you!

1. O God, be gracious and bless us
and let your face shed its light upon us.
So will your ways be known upon earth
and all nations learn your saving help. (R.)
2. Let the nations be glad and exult
for you rule the world with justice.
With fairness you rule the peoples,
you guide the nations on earth. (R.)
3. Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you.
May God still give us his blessing
till the ends of the earth revere him. (R.)

Second Reading

Romans 11:13-15. 29-32

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

The gifts and call of God are irrevocable.

Let me tell you pagans this: I have been sent to the pagans as their apostle, and I am proud of being sent, but the purpose of it is to make my own people envious of you, and in this way save some of them. Since their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, do you know what their admission will mean? Nothing less than a resurrection from the dead! God never takes back his gifts or revokes his choice.

Just as you changed from being disobedient to God, and now enjoy mercy because of their disobedience, so those who are disobedient now – and only because of the mercy shown to you – will also enjoy mercy eventually. God has imprisoned all men in their own disobedience only to show mercy to all mankind.

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 15:21-28

Woman, you have great faith.

Jesus left Gennesaret and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Then out came a Canaanite woman from that district and started shouting, 'Sir, Son of David, take pity on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil.' But he answered her not a word. And his disciples went and pleaded with him. 'Give her what she wants,' they said 'because she is shouting after us.' He said in reply, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' But the woman had come up and was kneeling at his feet. 'Lord,' she said 'help me.' He replied, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the house-dogs.' She retorted, 'Ah yes, sir; but even house-dogs can eat the scraps that fall from their master's table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.' And from that moment her daughter was well again.

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

All are seated.

Reflection on the Word

Q. Why do you think Jesus first responded to the woman in the way he did?

Q. What turned Jesus' attitude around?

Q. What do you think the woman was thinking/feeling as she approached Jesus?

Q. What message would the followers of Jesus have taken from this event?

Q. What is the message of this Gospel passage for us today?

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 great faith in our hearts, we bring our intentions before the Lord.

Reader: That the holy Church will be united in one universal mission for all people.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That discrimination based on religion or race will be eradicated.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That people suffering burdens and mental turmoil will find rest in God.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That there will be an end to the bloodshed in Ukraine and all areas of conflict.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That nations and organisations will work together to help alleviate the worsening food crisis, particularly in the Horn of Africa.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our parish will welcome migrants and refugees to our community of faith.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all the sick will be healed through Christ, especially those who are close to us.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all those who have died will be blessed with a place in Heaven, especially those who were members of our community and family.

In your mercy:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: Loving God, your son preached the Good News of your kingdom. Hear our prayers and help us to deepen our faith as we live in praise of your name. 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: If You Seek Him You Will Find Him

All my worries are lifted from me when I praise God our Creator.

GUEST CONTRIBUTION PUBLISHED AUGUST 15, 2023

When I was 6 weeks old, my parents travelled from Gateshead to St Anthony's Home in Croydon to adopt me. They brought their Parish Priest with them, and I am forever grateful to have been taken into a family who cared for me as one of their own. I knew at age 6 I was adopted, and it made no difference to me at all. My parents loved me, and I knew it.

Mum was a beautiful homemaker, and we were very close when I was growing up. Dad was a gentleman never smacked any of us kids, even when we probably deserved it. I was a shy, quiet person, both as a child and adult. Even now, I can only speak my mind if I am riled up about something. I met my birthmother two years ago, and we are now good friends. I am proud that I am 18% Aboriginal.

Something else my parents gave me, apart from a good home and a place in their hearts, was faith. I grew up believing in God, and that belief has never really left me. I did the usual catholic things - going to St Paul's for primary schooling, then to St Mary's High at Gateshead; making my First Communion and Confirmation. As a child I used to love reading the Psalms out loud. I called them the P-salms, as I didn't know how the word was pronounced.

In my teenage years, I had bad acne and experienced rejection by some of my peers. I became really jealous of one friend even though she was so nice to me. She was very pretty and got all the attention while I was ignored. When we were on

a camp together, this jealousy overcame me. I walked away and pulled out a Gideon's Bible from my haversack. Finding a Scripture on jealousy, I read it and the jealousy just dropped away. I was filled with an unbelievable peace and learnt the value and power of the Word of God.

I experienced a crisis of faith when I was 17 and stopped going to Mass. I felt uncomfortable with the Church. 'Why do we need the Sacraments,' I would argue, 'if God is everywhere, and we can already have a one-on-one relationship with God?'

Unfortunately, by the time I was 18 I discovered alcohol and was drinking heavily. It gave me false courage to mix with others. But as my social difficulties increased so did my doubts. I became almost driven looking for deeper answers around the mystery of God. In my search I was drawn to the rising popularity of the New Age movement. Over the years I became deeply involved but for me, it proved to be an addictive, downward spiral. I met some lovely people but the movement left me feeling empty.

I left home at 20 with a girlfriend and we backpacked around Australia. I was a regular hippie by then - I dressed like one and acted like one. I got into some mischief along the way, but always sensed that God was there. I studied the Bible at times, still wanting to know the truth about God. I wanted answers.

In my travels I met my future husband. We had two children but eventually divorced. Our marriage was such a difficult time for me. I could not live up to some very high and unrealistic expectations of what a mother and wife should be; and he did not reflect in his words or actions the kind gentleness I had experienced from my father. I couldn't seem to do anything right no matter how hard I tried.

Normally I am a quiet, reserved person but if people harass me, I can defend myself. In this marriage however, I felt totally overcome. I was alone, afraid, and helpless. I decided my only option was to leave, which took great courage. My youngest was only one year old, but I have never regretted the decision to go.

I moved back home, living with my brother for a while. He was wonderful to me and the kids. But following my divorce I fell into depression, and it was a hard time. I was trying to be happy like the New Age movement urged, but felt I had fallen into a hole and couldn't get out. One day I cried out to God 'You've got to help me. I am in this deep dark pit.' In my distress it seemed that He walked in, picked me up by the hand and covered that hole solid as a rock. I haven't been depressed since. God helps, and I know God helps.

I was smoking a lot too, addicted really but just couldn't give up. Again, I called out to God to help me stop. The next cigarette I smoked tasted disgusting. I threw it away and lit up another - it was disgusting too. That was the end of my smoking.

It was good for the kids to be back home. They saw my parents all the time and they grew up with their cousins. I sent them to catholic schools at the insistence of my brother, and when my son wanted to be an altar server I started going back to Mass.

When I was 38, I read in the church bulletin that a new prayer meeting was starting at Belmont. I was interested as I knew and admired many of the people involved from the Church. At these prayer meetings I seemed to grow rapidly in faith again, and soon realised that anyone who joins the charismatic renewal movement, shouldn't be doing new age stuff as well. I made a decision to put it behind me. The

Catholic Charismatic Renewal was a new experience for me. The first time I heard people praying in tongues freaked me out - but I got used to it because it is a gift from God after all.

By this time, I knew God communicates with His people; and then I knew that God heals. I never heard in the catholic church itself that you can receive healing, but there was this catholic movement telling me God wishes to heal us. Even more, coming into relationship with God through the charismatic renewal led me in time to want greater intimacy with the Church. I began to value the continual Presence of God through the Eucharist. I learnt the value of going to confession and had healing there also.

I find it hard now to watch TV or movies which involve murder or violence against another person, or indeed, any type of sin. I live in the real world, which for me it is a world of constant prayer. Through prayer I have learnt what the power of communion is. I go to daily mass, and it brings me such peace. I go to retreats sometimes to renew and strengthen my faith. Life doesn't seem so hard anymore. God doesn't heal every pain I have though, and there are some things I suffer which I give to God, to help relieve the suffering of others.

I used to work at reading electricity meters, but after one dog-bite too many I switched to cleaning. This is a job I love because I clean six Churches and go to work feeling excited. The main attraction for me is that the Blessed Eucharist is in each Church and I feel so privileged. As I clean, I often pray for people I know, talking to God about their problems. Or, if I am angry at some situation where a person is suffering, I vacuum furiously telling God "Give me a scripture to help me deal with the situation."

So, I know God is real. I know God listens to us and wants to heal us. Prayer arises in me when I express gratitude to God wherever I am, and I am always grateful. All my worries are lifted from me when I praise God our Creator. And I know who I truly am, and where my true home is.

The faith journey of Kathy Ellis (as spoken to a guest contributor)



Hamilton South says goodbye to area's biggest advocate

"She's been the lifeblood of the Hamilton South community for so long and has really brought some life to the place."

ELIZABETH SYMINGTON PUBLISHED AUGUST 08, 2023

For the last five years, Jan Chamberlain has been on a mission.

When she retired at 67, she moved into a social housing unit in an over 55s area at Hamilton South – a community in Newcastle with a troubling but misunderstood identity.

After a couple of months, Jan decided she wanted to do something about it.

So, she took charge of a group called Hamilton South Community Solutions – a team of people who are dedicated to

improving the area, reducing the stigma around social housing and supporting residents through information and activities.

Jan was responsible for coordinating meetings, running a Facebook group writing a newsletter, keeping police updated with a neighbourhood watch group and more.

She also participated in a regular meetings with CatholiCare Social Services Hunter-Manning, Mission Australia, Land and Housing, and Awabakal LTD.

Fast forward to now and CatholicCare runs a weekly food service on Wednesday to support the community. It's something that Jan believes has helped transform the area.

"What we've done here is big - we've turned it into a really nice community," the Newcastle Senior Citizen of the Year said.

"Too many people talk about negatives, but we have some good stories to tell here.

"The residents are wonderful I wish everyone would cut us some slack.

"There are little kids here and if you put a stigma on an area, you're putting a stigma on babies and little children and that should never happen."

In sad news for Hamilton South, Jan moved to Sydney this month to be closer to her family and friends.

While she'll miss the area and her connections, Jan says she is excited to see what comes next. She plans on being an active part of her new home in Strathfield.

CatholicCare Director Gary Christensen commended Jan for her incredible work.

"She's been the lifeblood of the Hamilton South community for so long and has really brought some life to the place," he said.

"She's very proud of this community and I think she's going to be sorely missed."

He adds that CatholicCare wouldn't be able to support the area without the generosity of the community and people like Jan.

Our Food Programs receive no government funding and rely on donations and volunteers to operate.

During August, we're asking people to contribute to the Make a Difference Appeal to ensure that no one goes without.

Your tax-deductible donation will go a long way.

Donating is simple and only takes a few steps. [Click here to find out more.](#)



Family Mass

Sat 19th August 2023



Starting @ 5pm
In St John Vianney Catholic Church
60 Yambo St Morisset

www.vianneymorisset.org

Join us for our Mass suited for Families and Youth, followed by a catch for our Sacramental Program families.