



City Pastoral REGION

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

Inner Newcastle Parish: Sacred Heart Cathedral, Newcastle West; St Joseph's Church, The Junction; St Mary, Star of the Sea Church, Newcastle; Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill; St Laurence O'Toole Church, Broadmeadow. **Mayfield Parish:** Christ the King, Mayfield West. **Stockton Parish:** St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

SUNDAY 29 JANUARY 2023

4TH SUNDAY OF THE YEAR, YEAR A

Our Clergy

Fr John Lovell

Fr Paul Chackanikunnel

Regional Office—St Benedict's Centre

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W: www.sacredhearthamilton.org.au

Our Staff

Margaret Cox (*Reception & Administration*)

Monday, Tuesday, Friday

Anne Warren (*Business Manager Finance*)

Tuesday and Thursday

Jade Simonsen (*Business Manager Property*)

Monday

Dr Anne Millard (*Music, Liturgy, Sacraments, Bulletin*)

Other Contacts

Lingard Hospital Team: Contact the Parish Office

Mercy Pastoral Team: Sr Patricia Whitten rsm
0448463679

St Joseph's Pastoral Team: Contact the Parish Office

Parish Bulletin: Prayer requests and items for the Bulletin should be received at the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.



What are the Beatitudes? They are a message of hope, encouragement and reassurance to a people feeling downtrodden and disenfranchised. Jesus didn't come to browbeat us for our imperfections, but rather to help us stay on the path of doing those not too difficult, yet important, things that keep people connected with God and each other and help make our world a better place: acts of kindness, mercy, justice and peace. If we can just keep doing these things, especially in times of hardship, we can be reasonably assured of our place in Heaven.

Our Parishes incorporate suburbs located on the traditional country of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. We acknowledge their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing relationship with the land, pay respect to their Elders past and present, and commit ourselves to work together for reconciliation and justice.

THE PARISH DIARY...(for the week ahead)

Fourth Week of Ordinary Time, Year A

Monday—30th January

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tuesday—31st January

Memorial of St John Bosco

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Wednesday—1st February

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral ** CANCELLED

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral (St Francis Xavier school Mass—all welcome)

Thursday—2nd February

Feast of The Presentation of the Lord

8:15am Mass @ The Cathedral

8:30am Mass @ Stockton

Friday—3rd February

9:50am Rosary for Ukraine @ The Junction

10:15am Mass @ St Joseph's

11:00am Exposition, Adoration & Reconciliation @ The Cathedral (until 12pm)

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Saturday—4th February

9:15am Mass @ The Cathedral, followed by the Novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help (followed by Reconciliation)

5:30pm Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Mass @ The Junction

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West

Sunday—5th February

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

7:30am Mass @ St Mary's

8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral *

11:00am Mass @ The Junction (*Italian*)

11:30am Mass @ The Cathedral (*Polish*)

3:00pm *Divine Mercy Devotion @ Mayfield West*

5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral

5:00pm Taize Service @ Tighes Hill

6:00pm Mass @ Mayfield West (*Vietnamese*)

* *Livestreamed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel—www.youtube.com/c/SacredHeartCathedralHamilton and on the Diocese website*

PRAYER REQUESTS

RECENTLY DECEASED: Barry Thomas McDonnell

ANNIVERSARIES: Domenico Buresti, Rita Rumball, James Royan, Maureen Narvo, Ruby Knee, Jean Perkins, Ellen Griffiths, Tony O'Brien, Jack Power, John Michael Power, Caitlyn Grace Maree Potts, Michael Dunn, Maureen Kauter, Marie Gardiner, Daniel McLean

SICK: Roslyn McGovern, Patricia Quayle, Christine Dowling, Margaret Cox, Helen Tumbers, Phil Bawden, Madge Humphries, Ronnie Jennings, Eileen Howard, Eva Grant, Colin Bryant, Maureen Sunman, Maree Halbert, Carlo Rossi, Kath Murray, Veronica McCann, Peter Skinner, Tiani Bishop, Tom Parker, Sam Broad, Ronald Watt

Names may be placed here by contacting the Parish Office. Please refer to the Policy Document on the Parish website—visit www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/downloads.

PRAYER FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF OUR NEW BISHOP

Shepherding God
you reveal your way of unfailing love
in the image of the Good Shepherd
who seeks the lost,
shows compassion
knows and is known by the sheep
and lays down his life for them.
We your people of Maitland-Newcastle
are without a bishop to shepherd us.
We ask that your Holy Spirit
who moves through this great south land,
inspire the choice of our new Bishop,
empower his 'yes'
and open our hearts in hospitality and love.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord, Amen.
Our Lady of Perpetual Help pray for us
Mary MacKillop of the Cross pray for us

2023 LENTEN REFLECTION

FINDING LIGHT WITHIN THE DARKNESS

Pastoral Ministries has prepared a Lenten resource for our diocese, Finding Light within the Darkness. Every Lent there is a fresh invitation to retreat from the noise and busyness of daily life. To listen with our heart, to contemplate our humanness so we can actively focus on humanity. We are invited to turn to God dwelling within us and consider how we can find light in the darkness and how we can be light to others. This resource provides opportunities for prayer, faith-sharing, and outreach in our local community. Download it from the dio website or:

<https://tinyurl.com/mnlent23>

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:

Is 58:7-10

1 Cor 2:1-5

Mt 5:13-16

WORD OF GOD SUNDAY

February 5, 2023

On September 30, 2019, on the liturgical memorial of St. Jerome, Pope Francis announced that the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time would be celebrated as the Sunday of the Word of God.

Pope Francis instituted the celebration last year when issuing the apostolic letter *Aperuit Illis*.

The Australian bishops, in light of the regular coincidence of the Australia Day holiday or associated long weekend with the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, decided to choose another date to mark the occasion. Consequently, the Church in Australia will celebrate the Sunday of the Word of God on the first Sunday in February each year, which is February 6 in 2022 (next Sunday).

Pope Francis launched an appeal to all the faithful to keep the Sacred Scriptures close at all times and to read them frequently.

Let us pray so that more Catholics would get to read, know, listen, and live the Word of God, so indispensable in our relationship with our Lord, through the guidance of the Sacred Tradition and the Church Magisterium.

GET INVOLVED!

Be involved with the Sunday of the Word of God through an octave of readings:

- Is 40:6-8: "The word of our God stands forever."
- Jer 1:4-6: "The word of the Lord came to me."
- Jn 1:6-9, 14: "And the Word became flesh."
- Jn 17:17-19: "Your word is truth."
- Acts 6:6-7: "The word of God continued to spread." 3
- Col 3:12-16: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you."
- Heb 4:12-13: "The word of God is living and effective."
- Jas 1:19-22: "Be doers of the word."

ROSARY FOR UKRAINE

Pray the Rosary from 9.50am on Fridays at St Joseph's Church, The Junction.



HAMILTON Conference of St Vincent de Paul would like to sincerely thank our parishioners in Hamilton and Tighes Hill for their very generous (as always) donations to our Christmas appeal and to our appeal for groceries for our Christmas hampers. This year we received a total of \$17,720 towards our Christmas Appeal and we were able to provide hampers, gifts and toys to many families which was very much appreciated by all. A special thank you also to parishioners of Tighes Hill who continue to donate grocery items of non perishable food which is distributed to our families in need on an on-going basis.

Thank you

TAIZE SERVICE

Sunday February 5: Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church Tighes Hill 5.00pm – 6pm
followed by a shared supper.



BEQUESTS

To help our Catholic Pastoral Region of Parishes continue its important mission of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus, you might consider including us in your Will. You would just need to specify which parish or parishes you would like to help with your bequest. Thank you!

BOOK CLUB

Sunday, 5 February @ 6:15pm:



Bookclub meets to discuss *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus. If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email the office

VIEW, CHEW, AND CHAT:

Returns 8th February to discuss chapter 1 of Richard Leonard's book "Hatch, Match, Dispatch: A Guide to the Sacraments."

The book is available from Paulist Press

<https://www.paulistpress.com/Products/0650-9/hatch-match-and-dispatch.aspx>

**HATCH
MATCH
&
DISPATCH**

A CATHOLIC GUIDE TO
SACRAMENTS

RICHARD LEONARD, SJ



REFLECTION

by Richard Leonard

In any walk of life there are stories that circulate about an important facet of the job. For priests these stories often focus on sermons.

Like the young priest who was having trouble with his sermons, so he asked the Bishop for help. 'Well,' said the Bishop, 'you might start with something to get the congregation's attention, such as, "Last night I was in the warm embrace of a good woman." I've always found that sparks their interest and then you can go on to talk about how warm and accepting she was and at the end reveal she was your mother. It's great for sermons about family love.'

The young priest decided to take the advice the following Sunday, but he was so nervous, something got lost in the translation. He started, 'Last night I was in the arms of a hot woman.' As the congregation audibly gasped the young priest paused and realised he had forgotten how the Bishop's story ended, so he said, 'I don't remember who she was but the Bishop recommended her.'

We have just listened to one of the greatest sermons ever given. It is universally known as The Sermon on the Mount. What makes it great is not just the beauty of its language or the hope of its theology. It is truly great because Jesus was preaching to the reality in front of him. The Jews listening that day were poor, in grief, meek and hungry for justice. Some were trying to be merciful to their enemies, struggling to find God in the midst of persecution and attempting to make peace while their family and friends were being falsely accused and condemned.

As true as this was for the Jews of Jesus' day, it was even more so for the earliest Christian community for whom this Gospel was written.

Sometimes when we hear a sermon our reaction can be, 'What would he know?' 'If only he knew the complexities of my life, he would soon change his tune!' It's true that some of us have not been sensitive to the human frailties of the congregation in front of us and we have not been able to communicate our own frailties in the words we deliver.

The Sermon on the Mount is a model for all of us in every way. When Jesus says 'Blessed are you' he is not being patronising, glossing over all sorts of tough human realities with, 'Well done, keep it up, be happy and we'll fix it all up in heaven.'

In the Hebrew Scriptures, a blessing is the discovery that God is present and active in one's experience, right here and right now. So the Beatitudes are saying

that you do not need to go past your own daily struggles to find the presence of God. Jesus tells us that if we are poor, compassionate, mournful, campaigning for a just society and suffering because of it, gentle, innocent, a peacemaker or a martyr, we are encountering, in a special way, the presence of God.

The God of the Beatitudes is a companion with us in every experience we go through. God is our best friend, walking beside us as we get out of bed and meet the days we would rather not face.

Sadly, God-as-friend is a rich image not used as much as it should be. We choose our friends, we like to spend time with them, we tell our intimate friends things we tell few others. Sometimes, when we are on top of the world or in a crisis we call our best friends ahead of our family. And we know our friends like us because they seek us out and want to share our life.

Jesus is the best friend we could ever have, interested in every daily event and he's there for us at every moment in life. Yet he doesn't barge in. He waits patiently for an invitation to enter our lives at whatever level we want.

Jesus-as-friend doesn't give us old-fashioned sermons, but rather meets us where we are, embraces us and holds us close when the going gets tough and helps us find the way forward. Jesus-as-friend is the greatest Beatitude of all.

© Richard Leonard SJ

Richard Leonard SJ is the Director of the Australian Catholic Office for Film and Broadcasting, is a member of the Australian Catholic Media Council and a film critic for all the major Australian Catholic newspapers. He completed a PhD in cinema studies at the University of Melbourne. He lectures in cinema and theology at the Jesuit College of Spirituality and has been a visiting lecturer in Australian cinema at the University of Melbourne, a visiting scholar within the School of Theatre, Film and Television at UCLA and is visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. He is an Honorary Fellow of the Australian Catholic University, has lectured widely and is the author of numerous books.

LIVING THE GOSPEL—BE-ATTITUDES

One way to read the Beatitudes is that Jesus was commending and blessing the various people who found themselves in those sorts of conditions. Another, is as a list of qualities that all people should strive to exhibit. It's not just some people who happen to be economically poor who are blessed. Rather, we must all have a poverty of spirit – a humility about our need for God's merciful action in our lives. All are called to hunger and thirst for justice and all are called to be merciful. The Beatitudes are not a menu to select from, but rather an essential list of ingredients.



WE GRIEVE

We all grieve

Experiences of grief are stepping-stones in our human journey

'We Grieve' is an opportunity to explore our understanding of change, loss and grief

We have all experienced so much change and loss these last three years because of COVID and the normal rhythm of life.

Seasonal changes in nature provide us with rich insight into how life is constantly evolving. This eternal cycle of change and loss offers a message of hope.

Using the Seasons for Growth educational program as the foundation for this 3-hour session we invite you to join the conversation – to share and learn together, to gain some new insights or perspectives, and to move towards healing and growth.

All are welcome: family, friends, neighbours ...

FACILITATOR: Benita Tait

DATE – TIME - VENUE

Wednesday 1 March 2023 @ 5.30 – 8.30 PM

OR

Saturday 4 March 2023 @ 2.00 – 5.00 PM

Both held in the Toohey Room @ Cathedral House,
841 Hunter St Hamilton (beside the Sacred Heart
Cathedral)

REGISTER & ENQUIRIES: by 17 February 2023

P: 4979 1101

newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

THE CHUCKLE

Little Freddy came home from the playground with a bloody nose, black eye, and torn clothing. It was obvious he'd been in a bad fight and lost. While his father was patching him up, he asked his son what happened.

"Well, Dad," said Freddy, "I challenged Bob to a duel. And, you know, I gave him his choice of weapons."

"Uh-huh," said the father, "that seems fair."

"I know, but I never thought he'd choose his big sister!"



ENROLMENTS FOR 2023 SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

A child's catholic faith journey began with the Sacrament of Baptism and continues with the reception of the Sacraments of Initiation: Confirmation and First Eucharist.

The preparations for these sacraments in the Inner Newcastle Parish run between February and June of every year and are designed for children going into Year, 4, 5 or 6 in 2023. Preparations are completed as a family with online activities and volunteer work within the community.

Enrolments are now open for the 2023 program. If you are interested in being a part of the program this year please visit the parish website and complete the online enrolment form.

<https://www.newcastlecatholic.org.au/sacramental-enrolment-form/>

For more information please contact the office on 49791101 or newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

If you have already enrolled, expect an email this week with details about the program launch on February 15th!

BECOME AN SRE VOLUNTEER

Did you know that some 50% of Catholic children are in state schools? Have you ever thought of spreading the good news of the gospel and the love of Jesus Christ with children? Have you ever thought about becoming a Special Religious Educator?

This could be an opportunity for you to meet new people, discover new friendships and build quality relationships whilst mastering skills and confidence in Catechetics.

You can make a difference in the schools within your parish! For people of faith, knowing you are participating in Christ's call to share the Good News to all is a great source of joy and meaning.

If you would like to learn more about how you can help, please contact the Pastoral Ministries team on 4979 1200.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

a global ecumenical movement led by Christian women who welcome you to join in prayer and action for peace and justice

The World Day of Prayer for the Inner City region will be held on 3rd March, 2023 @10am in St Augustine's, Merewether.

REFLECTION

Right Relationship with God

Tony Butel

In Matthew's Sermon on the Mount why would Jesus say: *Blessed* are the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who thirst for justice? Is it because Jesus recognized that in some of the world's cultures, the tendency is to place too high of a value on self-reliance? We sometimes, perhaps often, imagine that we can rely only on our own personal strength to face the challenges the world throws at us. Certainly, the U.S. culture seems to promote self-interest and self-reliance, i.e. "pull yourself up by your own bootstraps."

If we buy into this type of thinking, the tendency is to believe that we will only get as far as our own efforts will take us. We lose sight of the fact that we are beloved children of God and that God desires a personal relationship with us. We fail often enough and experience our own sinfulness which may lead us to wonder how God could possibly love us, unworthy as we are. We might feel alone, filled with our own concerns and worries. We could end up only calling upon God when our efforts fail, when life teaches us that we are not in control of all that life presents to us.

A priest friend shared that when visiting with his spiritual director he disclosed some of the struggles of his spiritual life. His director responded that a source of his struggles was his arrogance. The priest thought, "I'm not arrogant." His director told him that the arrogance stemmed from his desire to not have to depend on God for help with his faults.

As my friend shared this conversation I was struck by the awareness: "That's me." I desire to not have to depend on God's help with my faults; instead, I prefer to overcome my inadequacies on my own. However, my memory bank can find multiple examples for each beatitude of where I have failed. *Blessed are the poor in spirit*: How often am I filled with a sense of self-righteousness when I think I've been slighted or treated rudely resulting in a less than Christ-like response? *Blessed are the meek*: How often has pride kept me from helping someone in need because I don't want to get involved or I am in a hurry? *Blessed are they who show mercy*: How often am I incensed about the stories of injustice that are broadcast on a seemingly daily basis, and yet don't take the time to do anything in response? With each example of failure on my part I can lose a sense of hope that I am loveable. It is in these times that humility will allow me to know that I need God's love and forgiveness to be more Christ-like, to become more the person God has created me to be. Is this true for you, too?

In today's first reading Zephaniah instructs us well: "Seek the Lord, all you humble of the earth, who observed his law; seek justice, seek humility ..." It is these faithful servants who Jesus calls blessed.

This is not to deny our giftedness. Each of us has been endowed with gifts to further God's kingdom. We are to develop and use these gifts. When we are in right relationship with God we recognize that credit for these gifts is due to God. In the second reading Paul encourages us that when recognition comes our way we should boast in the Lord, not in ourselves. The Beatitudes remind us of the attitudes we ought to have.

When I fall short in living out the Beatitudes, I turn to the words of St. Anselm. May this prayer enliven your desire to be a disciple of Jesus: "Hope of my heart, strength of my soul, help of my weakness, by your powerful kindness complete what in my powerlessness I attempt ... although I have not yet attained to love you as I ought, still let my desire for you be as great as my love ought to be."

Historical **Context**

Purity

Purity and impurity was a major issue in 1st Century Jewish society. The Priests and Pharisees maintained that only pure adherence to the Law could make a person acceptable in God's eyes. Impurity came to be associated with physical disease and injury. Those with severe disease or disability were regarded as sinful and punished by God. Jesus' statement, 'Happy are the pure of heart', would have scandalised those who maintained that purity came through strict observance of Law. Jesus suggests that purity (and impurity) comes from within a person rather than from the outside – regardless of their observance of the Law.

SENIOR WORDSEARCH

Blessed are the poor in spirit

Zep 2:3, 3:12-13
Ps 146:6d-7ab, 7c-9a (Mt 5:3)
1 Cor 1:26-31
Mt 5:1-12ab

P K E S R V B N I A T N U O M Y S
Y F T K L R G T Z W N H P K B A L
L F T Y G J L X L E P M I Y F E Q
I J Y J H J W X S V E X F E E O Y
T D O B V G L G A B R I N F F B L
Z T A E O P D R P Q P G H V Q F M
W P I V U W F P N B C J O R V Q A
D K I W L K V E I N Y S V A T Y X
M R G K X Z R J X C Q P C C O W R
W Z I V O D Z T O Y M A P Y E F S
K G G N L C R H S P W G Q A G L Z
R C V I K R I E S T R A E H H Q Y
L E H S V O G O U C R H N L R H N
I C T E P W H B O V N R K I J I W
E V K Y W D T W S Y K A A E X N Z
C I T L W D C V P F E T L K K M S
W L D S W K J M W W Q U J J C Z K

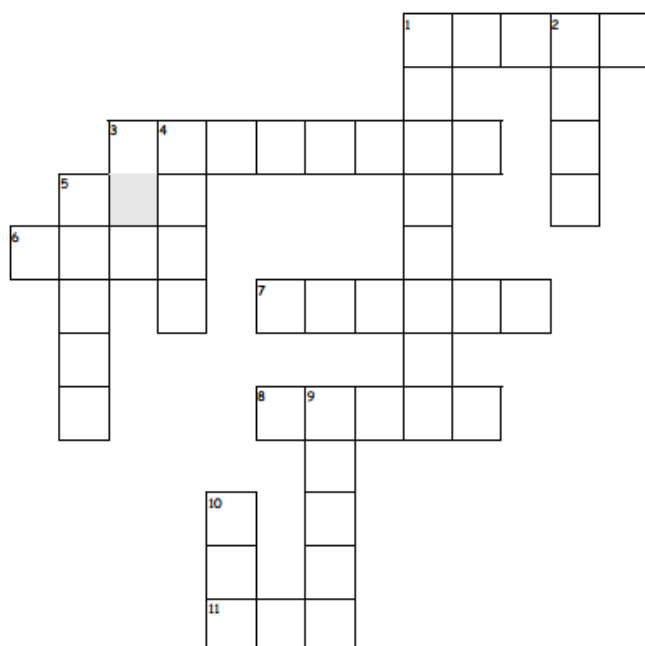
Try to find these words:

children
crowd
drink
eat
happy
hearts
lie
mountain
obey
right
safe
weak

CROSSWORD

Humbly obey the Lord

Zep 2:3, 3:12-13
Ps 146:6d-7ab, 7c-9a (Mt 5:3)
1 Cor 1:26-31
Mt 5:1-12ab



Across

- 1: a large group of people
- 3: a very tall, large land mass
- 6: not in danger
- 7: God blesses people with pure _____
- 8: you do this when you are thirsty
- 11: you do this when you are hungry

Down

- 1: young people
- 2: not strong
- 4: to do as you are told
- 5: glad
- 9: correct
- 10: something said that is not true

TODAY'S LITURGY

Entrance Antiphon: Ps 105:47

Save us, O Lord our God!
And gather us from the nations,
to give thanks to your holy name,
and make it our glory to praise you.

First Reading: Zeph 2:3; 3:12-13

In your midst I will leave a humble and a lowly people.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 145:7-10. R. Mt 5:3

**(R.) Happy the poor in spirit;
the kingdom of heaven is theirs!**

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith forever,
who is just to those who are oppressed.
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,
the Lord, who sets prisoners free. (R.)
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,
who raises up those who are bowed down,
the Lord, who protects the stranger
and upholds the widow and orphan. (R.)
3. It is the Lord who loves the just
but thwarts the path of the wicked.
The Lord will reign for ever,
Zion's God, from age to age. (R.)

Second Reading: 1 Cor 1:26-31

God has chosen what is weak by human reckoning.

Gospel Acclamation: Mt 5:12

Alleluia, alleluia!
Rejoice and be glad;
Your reward will be great in heaven.
Alleluia!

Gospel: Mt 5:1-12

Happy are the poor in spirit.

Communion Antiphon: Mt 5:3-4

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.
Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.

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SAVE THE DATE

TORONTO MEN'S WEEKEND

A MenALIVE Men's Weekend will be held at the St Joseph's Toronto Parish on the weekend of 25 and 26 March 2023. The weekend is suitable for all men from 18 years of age and provides an opportunity for attendees to explore what makes them feel fully alive.

More information including how to register will be provided closer to the date. For more information on MenALIVE, visit: www.menalive.org.au

MEDITATION GROUPS AT LIVING WATERS CENTRE

34 Kenrick Street, The Junction, on Wednesday at 7.30am and Friday at 11.00am. All are welcome, including new meditators.

CHRISTIAN MEDITATION AT TIGHES HILL

This is non-denominational and everyone is very welcome. Please come.

WHEN: Monday afternoon 3.30 for 3.45 start

WHERE: Mercy Offices

20 Union Street

(Next door to Mercy Services)

Off street parking available

The Meditation session begins with short guided relaxation exercises then we have a reading from Fr. John Main which leads into 20 minutes of silent meditation

gospel focus

Covenant

The structure of the Beatitudes can be seen as yet another attempt by God to re-establish a covenant between Godself and the people. Throughout Jewish history, God called the people back into relationship and re-established God's covenant with them. Like all the previous versions of the covenant, the Beatitudes contain both a series of demands and a series of promises. It is a two-way deal. The first part of each Beatitude is a statement of what the people are called to do and the second part is God's promise of how they will be rewarded for their right action.