



City Pastoral REGION
CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MAITLAND-NEWCASTLE

The Parish Vine

St Benedict's 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.

Mayfield Parish: Christ the King, Mayfield West.

Stockton Parish: St Peter-in-Chains, Stockton.

Sunday 12 April 2026

2nd Sunday of Easter



Dear Parish Family,

Pilgrimages are amazing journeys to reconnect with faith, the history of our shared faith, and the stories of the holy men and women that have gone before us. The war across the Middle East saddens me - my feet having stood on the soil of those countries affected today. I've seen the people and heard their stories, the challenges and real time hardships. ANZAC day in 2004 I celebrated in Qatar and Iraq. My life changed in Jesus' tomb in the Holy Sepulchre in 2021. One of my very favourite moments is celebrating Mass in His tomb, another standing barefoot in what could have been the Garden of Gethsemane. Hearing the readings across Lent and into the Easter Triduum is more 'alive' as a result. The war more real. I can close my eyes and feel the soil of the Holy Land between my toes.

Thank you to all of you and our visitors for your generosity on Good Friday. I think the Good Friday collection is the largest I have ever seen in my 33 years as a priest, considering inflation and the value of the Australian dollar across those years. You are a generous people and always respond to the needs of others. I am grateful. The generosity of our community, you, joined with the generosity of Catholic communities across the world will have an impact for our Holy sites.

You might already know the story of St Helena and her finding of the true cross in 324. Helena was a convert to the faith. Emperor Constantine was her son, and, when he came to power, by 'royal' edict made Christianity legal. The historian Eusebius wrote of her conversion and her travels to the Middle East and the sacred sites. We have a relic of a Saint Eusebius in the Cathedral. She built churches, at the place of the Nativity, the site of the Ascension and the Holy Sepulchre over Jesus' crucifixion and burial site. She demolished the pagan temples that had been built over the top of Calvary and the tomb of Christ. Helena's son, Constantine, ordered the bishop of Jerusalem and Helena to excavate the site to try and find the cross on which Christ died.

Longish story short: in a rock cistern Helena found three crosses, a board with Pilate's inscription and the nails. There was one, however, that stood out according to tradition. You may have read that generally criminals were crucified on this shaped cross 'T', while Christ was crucified on a cross more this shape 't'. His cross needed to accommodate the inscription 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews'. To confirm which cross was the 'True Cross', Helena brought a sick woman and the body of a dead man to the cross - one cross cured them, the True Cross. And for those of you who may be thinking that at 'my age, I'm past it', Helena was 63 when she converted and 80 when she built churches and found the Cross.

Pope Leo this Saturday 11 April, will celebrate a Prayer Vigil for Peace, in St Peter's Basilica starting at 6.00pm Rome time, 2.00am Sunday morning our time. We are invited to take part. The Vigil will be livestreamed. However, we can still join in by watching later, spending our own time for prayer by visiting a church, remembering in our grace a time of silence, an overt prayer for peace. So many ways for us to be peace bearers.

Greg, Parish Priest

Parish Priest

Fr Greg Barker

Assisting Clergy

Fr Niel Olano

Fr Ramille Bigcas

Deacon Kevin Gadd

Parish Administration

McAuley Building, 242 Parry St,
Newcastle West, 2302

PO Box 6, The Junction 2291

Phone: (02) 4979 1101

Email:

newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

Website:

www.newcastlecatholic.org.au

Note: Our *NEW* website is looking great. Check it out. Feedback welcome!

Anne Warren (*Business Manager*)

Jenny Pascua (*Parish Secretary*)

Peter Davies (*Administration*)

Mary-Anne de Luca (*Sacraments*)

Dr Anne Millard (*Music & Liturgy*)

We acknowledge the Awabakal and Worimi peoples - the traditional custodians of these lands.

The Parish Diary...(for the week ahead)

2nd week of Easter

Mon 13 Apr

7:30am* Mass @ The Cathedral

Tues 14 Apr

7:30am* Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

11:00am Mass at Moran Aged Care, Stockton

Wed 15 Apr

7:30am* Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West

Thurs 16 Apr

7:30am* Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

Fri 17 Apr

10:15am Mass @ The Junction

11:00am Exposition, Adoration and Reconciliation
@ The Cathedral

12:05pm Mass @ The Cathedral

Sat 18 Apr

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

3rd Sunday of Easter

Sat 18 Apr

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Junction

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ Mayfield West

Sun 19 Apr

7:30am Mass @ St Mary's

8:00am Mass @ Tighes Hill

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

9:30am Mass @ The Cathedral**

11:00am Italian Mass @ The Junction

12noon Polish Mass @ The Cathedral

5:00pm Mass @ The Cathedral

** Livestreamed on the Cathedral's YouTube channel - search
Sacred Heart Cathedral Hamilton

* After consultation about difficulties with parking,
morning Mass at The Cathedral from Monday to
Thursday will be at 7.30am for the foreseeable
future.

Pray for Peace



Pope Leo is leading a prayer vigil for peace in St Peter's Basilica this Saturday at 6pm Rome time. That will be 2am AEST. We are encouraged to set aside some time to pray for peace over this weekend.

Prayer Requests



RECENTLY DECEASED: David Corcoran

ANNIVERSARIES: Brian Francis Smith, Ruby Houlahan, Dennis Harvey, Maurice Kerr, Charles Hart, Eric Schmitzer, Clare Martin, Faye Martin, Molly Walker, John Drain, Kath Drain, Donna Smith

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: John Hayes, Gary Valaire, Jeremy Eden, Braxton Rayner, Patricia Gillett, Tui Innes, Raymond Morley, Louise Hall, Phil Riordan, Twon Nguyen, Eileen Jennings, Gwen Haggerty, Nick Fazzini, Rose Gathercole, Alexander Klein, Leonetta Papichio, John Woods, Hoagy VanEwyk, Pat Fitzpatrick, Martyn Docherty

Please send prayer requests and items for the Bulletin to the Parish Office by 5pm on Wednesdays.



HE IS RISEN

Our Columbaria

Those in our Columbaria with April anniversaries:

At Sacred Heart Cathedral:

Leo Burke
Beryl Coferos
Lorraine Driscoll
Mary Duggan
Kathleen Gibson
Monica Hayes
Joy Patricia Jarrett
Mary Noreen Long
Alice Martin

Redento Quaggiotto
Patricia Mather
Krystyna Mazalo
Ian Edward McDonald
Cary McNabb
Laurel May Murray
Nola Margaret Phillips
Frank Keith Pilgrim
Sandra Rufo
Henrietta Vujeva
Elaine Iris Wilson

At St Joseph's:

Michael Johns
John Joseph Willcock
John Barber
Bruce Buckland
Joseph Callen
Mark John Chappell
Elsie Craig
Norma Patricia De Lore
Harry Fleming
Peter Groombridge
Kathleen Hiscox

Warren Kelly
Milheim Lettoof
Joan Nelson
Jeremiah O'Doherty
Frank O'Sullivan
Ellen Palmer
Mossie Smith
Edna Sowerby
Lorna Wakely
Leo Wallace
Jim Heaney
Clare Martin

Eternal rest grant unto them and may perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace, Amen.

Dear Parish family,

With Mr James Camden, Diocesan Director of Mission and Evangelisation, it's my pleasure to announce the appointment of **Dr Anne Millard** to the position of *Mission & Evangelisation Partner - Worship &* the position of *Parish Musical Director*, for the Parishes of St Benedict's Inner Newcastle, Mayfield & Stockton. It will be a three-day, two-day split basically and will begin on Monday 20th April.

During a recent review of staffing here in the parishes of St Benedict's Inner Newcastle, Mayfield & Stockton, there became an opportunity for James, Anne Millard and I, to reimagine the two roles - Parish Music Director and Diocese M&E partner - and the relationship between parish and diocese to better serve the church and to best utilise Anne's many gifts.

I personally congratulate and thank Anne for her amazing contribution to the life of the Parish over many years of faithful service, and her support often as a volunteer for the broader needs of the Diocese. As a parish we have benefitted beyond measure through Anne's generosity and musical ability. On your behalf I also wish Anne every success in this broadening of her role and an increase in the challenges, opportunities and benefits that will come with it. We are not losing Anne from her work in our Parish as she will continue to guide our liturgies, participate in the music of the funerals and weddings and support our choirs across all our Masses as usual.

Kind regards, Greg

Return and Earn

We are looking for volunteers to help with our "Return and Earn" initiative regarding bottles and cans. Please feel welcome to call or email the parish office this week, and leave your contact details. Fr Niel will be in touch regarding an initial planning meeting the following week.



As Fr Greg wrote in the bulletin on Palm Sunday: "Fr Niel has agreed to coordinate a project for our parish where you could bring your recyclable bottles, the ones that attract cash back, to the parish so that we might do two things; recycle them and collect the cash back. The money could be equally distributed in this instance to **Caritas Australia, Catholic Mission, St Vincent de Paul**, and to the **Good Friday appeal**."

Is this a worthy way of honouring the intent and message of *Laudato Si*, care of the earth and care of those in need on the earth? Fr Niel will need a couple of assistants to help him with the practicalities of the project. *Do you have a passion for caring for our common home? You are the person we are looking for!!!*"

Good Friday Appeal

The Good Friday appeal in support of the Church in the Holy Land has raised \$4,646.65 to date. Thank you for your generous response.



Liz Doyle
F A R E W E L L

You are warmly invited to celebrate the retirement of Elizabeth (Liz) Doyle. In celebration of Liz's extraordinary 33 years of faithful service to the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, supporting four bishops and the life of our Diocesan community with dedication, professionalism and grace.

Friday 1 May 2026 - 9:30am Mass

Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter Street, Newcastle West.

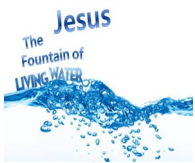
Mass will be followed by a celebration in the Southern Cross Hall and Morning Tea.

RSVP by 24 April at: mn.shor.tn/lizdoyle or use the QR code.



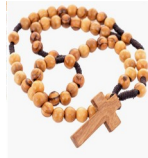
Regular Opportunities for Prayer and Meditation

- **Tighes Hill Christian Meditation** (non-denominational) - each Monday 3.30pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Tighes Hill



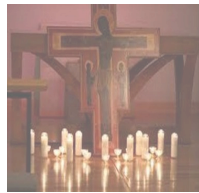
- **Living Waters Meditation Centre** - each Wednesday 7.30am and Friday 11.00am at 34 Kenrick St The Junction

- **The Rosary** - each Wednesday after 7.30am Mass at The Cathedral, First Saturday of the month after Mass and Novena at The Cathedral.



- **Divine Mercy Devotion** - first Sunday of the month 3.00-4.00pm at Christ the King, Mayfield West. On April 12th, 3-4pm, Divine Mercy Chaplet, Stations of the Cross, Readings from St. Faustina's Diary and Prayers

- **Taize Service** - first Sunday of the month 5.00 - 6.00pm at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, Tighes Hill, followed by a shared supper.



Rosary During the Month of May

Catholic Mission is providing the opportunity to pray the rosary during the month of May:



Dates: Monday to Friday, 1 May – 31 May

Time: 2:00pm – 3:00pm

Location: Online via Teams

Teams link: tinyurl.com/RosaryPrayer26

Welcome to Our Newly Baptised!

We joyfully welcome those receiving the Sacrament of Baptism this weekend:

At The Cathedral: Jermaine Badham, Nixon Smith, Kohen Giepmans, Andrej Domonkos, Leonard Lovero-Matula, Elliana Lovero-Matula and Josephine Lowe

At Mayfield West: Amelia and Zoey Bates

At Stockton: Hudson and Frankie Hughes



Parish Luncheon

Parish Luncheon at Souths Leagues Club, Llewellyn St, Merewether @ 12.30pm on Monday 20th April. All parishioners of St Benedict's Inner Newcastle, Mayfield and Stockton are very welcome. Inquiries to Maureen (Tighes Hill) on 0412 673 151.



Parish Group Meetings

Book Club next meeting is Sunday, April 12th, to discuss *Legacy* by Chris Hammer. If you would like to participate in book club meetings, please email: newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au



View, Chew, and Chat: You are very welcome to join us on Wednesdays! To participate, please email the parish office: newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

St Joseph's Prayer/Discussion Group will resume on Thursday 30 April at 9.30am. Venue yet to be determined. For inquiries phone Janet on 0435 518 671.



Community Kitchens



The Community Kitchens run by CatholicCare can be accessed by anyone who needs a warm meal or support. Local locations are:

Adamstown: Every Wednesday, 11am to 1pm at 486 Glebe Road, Adamstown

Newcastle: Every Saturday, 5.30pm to 6.30pm (6.30pm to 7.30pm during Daylight Savings) at Civic Park, King Street, Newcastle.

Phone: 4979 1120

Email: foodprograms@catholiccare.org.au

Food Baskets for the Needy

Blue bins located in our churches are available for your donations: Items of dry goods or tin food can be placed in the blue bins located at our churches. When donating please check expiry dates. We ask that you do not donate peanut butter. Any of the following non-perishable items are welcome: UHT milk, cereal, spreads, tinned goods, pasta, rice, pasta sauces, tea, coffee, biscuits, custard, jelly, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant.





On **Holy Saturday**, many families brought together baskets filled with bread, eggs, meats, and other festive foods, for the Polish tradition of **Święconka**, the Blessing of the Easter Baskets, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. We thank Fr Bogdan for leading this special celebration and for all who participated in keeping this rich tradition alive.

Our Catholic Schools

St Joseph's Primary School: Karen McGinlay (*Principal*)
 Union Street, The Junction NSW 2291
 (02) 4961 2827
www.merewether.catholic.edu.au

Holy Family Primary School: Shannon McGregor (*Principal*)
 Pell Street, Merewether NSW 2291
 (02) 4963 3009
www.merewetherbeach.catholic.edu.au

St Columban's Primary School: Penny Banister (*Principal*)
 Church Street, Mayfield NSW 2304
 (02) 4968 3315
www.mayfieldsc.catholic.edu.au

St Peter's Primary School: Dennis Nolan (*Principal*)
 Dunbar St, Stockton NSW 2295
 (02) 4928 1861
www.stockton.catholic.edu.au

St Francis Xavier's College: Greg Ptolemy (*Principal*)
 Parkway Avenue, Hamilton NSW 2303
 (02) 4961 2863
www.hamilton.catholic.edu.au

San Clemente High School: Emma South (*Principal*)
 78 Havelock St, Mayfield NSW 2304
 (02) 4014 7300
www.mayfieldsanc.catholic.edu.au

St Dominic's Catholic College: Rachel Jones (*Principal*)
 76 Havelock St, Mayfield NSW 2304
 (02) 4968 1295
www.mayfieldsd.catholic.edu.au

Parish Teams

Promoters of Safeguarding: Louise Outram, Cynthia Tamonan, Alex Tamonan, Sr Kath Williams rsm, Annie Evans.

Bereavement Team: Margaret Cox, Gail Lovell, Christopher Gregory, Margaret Beard, Margaret Newton, Anne Millard.

St Joseph's Pastoral Team: Contact the Parish Office.

RCIA: Contact Mary-Anne at the parish office. Visit our website to fill out the form.

Sacramental Program: Contact Mary-Anne at the Parish Office.

Baptism team: Meets on the first Tuesday of the month, with parents who are preparing for their children's baptism.

Safeguarding

In 2026, **key Australian safeguarding concerns for vulnerable adults** include:

- **Aged Care Safety:** There are ongoing concerns regarding the use of "chemical restraints" (sedation drugs without consent) to manage elderly residents with dementia.
- **Disability Support Risks:** High rates of abuse and neglect of people with disabilities, particularly those in institutional care - calls for stricter safeguarding in NDIS-funded services.
- **Financial Abuse and Exploitation:** A significant rise in financial exploitation, including misuse of Power of Attorney and fraud, often perpetrated by family members.
- **Coercive Control and Domestic Violence:** Growing focus on non-physical abuse, such as isolation, emotional abuse, and controlling financial resources.
- **Abuse in Residential and Community Care:** Ongoing risks of neglect, physical abuse, and restrictive practices in both residential aged care and home care settings.
- **Digital and Online Exploitation:** Increased vulnerability to scams, identity theft, and online financial fraud.
- **Intersectionality in Vulnerability:** Specific attention is needed for older people, adults with disabilities, and individuals from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) or First Nations backgrounds.

The **National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People 2026–2036** is a primary 2026 policy response aimed at strengthening legal, community, and service responses to these issues.

Diocesan Events

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

- **Stella Maris – Mission to Seafarers Mass:** 5:30pm, 30 April, 96 Hannell Street Wickham
- **ALIVE Catholic Youth Launch:** 24 May, Trinity College, Adamstown
- **Magdalene Awards:** 26 July, 9:30am - Sacred Heart Cathedral
- **ALIVE Young Adults Retreat:** 17 -19 July, Forster
- **Travelling Exhibition of the Saint Carlo Acutis Pilgrim Relic:** 8-14 September
- **ALIVE Youth Retreat:** 25-27 September, Lake Macquarie
- **Renewed & Sent Parish Renewal Summit:** 1-3 October, St Gregory's Campbelltown

Diocesan Resource Centre

Location: Corner Tudor and Parry Sts, Newcastle West.

Opening Hours: Mondays and Fridays, 10am to 4pm. Open 1st & 3rd Saturday of each month, 10am to 2pm. All resources are available to borrow; and are searchable on the library catalogue, which can be accessed through this link:

<https://tinyurl.com/DOMNLibrary>

OR use the QR code.



Prayer Scripture Group Meeting Every Saturday, 2:30pm

The Praying Scripture group will continue to meet after Easter with a particular focus on the Gospel of John this year. You can contact Wayne Caruana for more information on 0466 631394.

Formation Film

Jesus Revolution – A film based on the true story of a 1960's teenager, a pastor and a Christian hippie.

Saturday 02 May 2026, 11:00am – 1:00pm, Diocesan Resource Centre – Cnr Parry & Tudor St Newcastle

Join us as we watch the film and share morning tea, lunch, and robust discussion. All are welcome!

Registration (Essential): <https://forms.office.com/r/KYdg9Q3DTq> or call Mary on 0409033449

Listen to the Heart: Moving Forward Team

Saturday 02 May 2026, 8:30am – 12:30pm, Therry Centre - East Maitland

Join Fr Darryl Mackie and Auntie Wanda Smith in an informative morning to increase our knowledge and understanding of the deep spirituality of First Nations people, connection to Country and relationships with Faith. Register on the Diocesan website:

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

Called to Know More - Stories of a Catholic Military Chaplain

Friday 24 April 2026, 10:30am, Diocesan Resource Centre, NEWCASTLE WEST



In preparation for ANZAC Day, hear from Fr Greg Barker, who will share his personal experience serving as a Military Chaplain on the realities of service, faith, and accompaniment among those affected by war. Following the talk and morning tea, all are invited to join in midday Mass at the Cathedral. Register on the Diocesan website:

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

Worldviews and Ways of Life in Australia - Research

Australian National University (ANU) researchers are exploring how perceptions and ways of thinking (worldviews) relate to experiences and ways of living (participation and inclusion) in Australia. They're seeking respondents from any and all adult Australian citizens and residents living in Australia, including Australia's broad Christian community, to be well represented for their anonymous 15-20 min survey.

You can be represented in this meaningful research by completing the survey and also forwarding it to any others who may be interested, with \$100 vouchers to be won if you complete it.

Access the survey here:

<https://tinyurl.com/ANUSurvey2026>

Any questions can be emailed to the researchers (u7870746@anu.edu.au).



Business Owners / Employers

If you have job openings available in your shops or businesses and would like to offer fellow parishioners the opportunity to apply, please contact the Parish Office. We are opening this initiative to help connect employers with individuals seeking work, strengthening our community by supporting one another.

The Chuckle

I was out with my young daughter and ran into a friend I'd not seen in years.

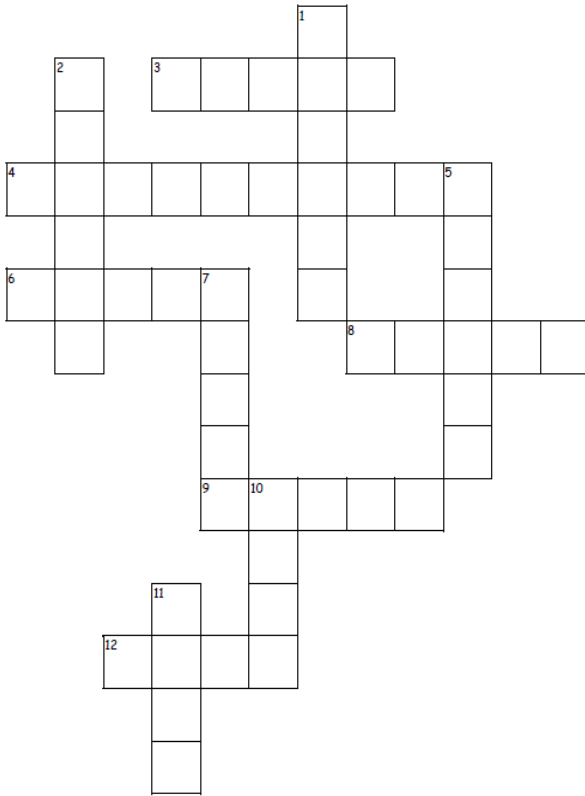
"This is Beth," I said, introducing my kid.

"And what's Beth short for?" he asked.

"Because she's only three," I answered.



God's love is everlasting



Across

- 3: the disciples shared this food
- 4: Jesus breathed on the disciples and said "Receive the _____"
- 6: belief
- 8: glad
- 9: to let other people use your belongings
- 12: the opposite of death

Down

- 1: parents, grand parents, brothers and sisters
- 2: the man who doubted that Jesus had risen
- 5: a place of worship
- 7 & 11: Jesus appeared and showed the disciples his _____ (clue 7) and his _____ (clue 11)
- 10: a belief that things will improve

SENIOR WORDSEARCH

God's love is everlasting

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

Try to find these words:

- bread
- faith
- family
- hands
- happy
- Holy Spirit
- hope
- life
- share
- side
- temple
- Thomas

Safeguarding

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding: 02 4979 1390, or email

childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au or visit www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au

Today's Liturgy of the Word



First Reading: Acts 2:42-47

The faithful lived together and owned everything in common.

Responsorial Psalm: Ps 117:2-4. 13-15. 22-24. R. v.1

(R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

1. Let the sons of Israel say:
'His love has no end.'
Let the sons of Aaron say:
'His love has no end.'
Let those who fear the Lord say:
'His love has no end.' (R.)
2. I was thrust, thrust down and falling
but the Lord was my helper.
The Lord is my strength and my song;
he was my saviour.
There are shouts of joy and victory
in the tents of the just. (R.)
3. The stone which the builders rejected
has become the corner stone.
This is the work of the Lord,
a marvel in our eyes.
This day was made by the Lord;
we rejoice and are glad. (R.)

Second Reading: 1 Pt 1:3-9

He has given us a new birth as his children, by raising Jesus Christ from the dead.

Gospel Acclamation Jn 20:29

Alleluia, alleluia!
You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me;
happy those who have not seen me, but still believe!
Alleluia!

Gospel: Jn 20:19-31

After eight days Jesus came in and stood among them.

© The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright 1966, 1967 and 1968 by Darton Longman and Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Co Inc, and used by permission of the publishers. The English translation of the Psalm Responses, the Alleluia and Gospel Verses, and the Lenten Gospel Acclamations, and the Titles, Summaries, and Conclusion of the Readings, from the Lectionary for Mass © 1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.

Scripture Commentary

The second Sunday of Easter shows us **the Christian community after the Pentecost experience**. This is an idealised picture of the primitive church. There we see: the authoritative apostolic teaching, which formed the basis of what ultimately became the New Testament; the early church's life of communal sharing; the celebration of the Eucharist, which probably took place in the homes of Christians (house-church). Finally, it is clear from this passage that the earliest Christians did not consider themselves separate from the larger Jewish community, for they regularly participated in temple prayer. The signs and wonders that were performed were primarily cures.

The psalm response begins with a call to give testimony to the goodness of God. This is followed by a description of the duress once endured by the psalmist at the hands of others. In the face of such oppression, God stepped in and saved the psalmist from ultimate defeat. The acknowledgment of deliverance is followed by a song of praise often associated with deliverance from Egyptian bondage. The reference to tents could be an allusion to the sojourn in the wilderness. In the third section of the psalm, the one rejected has been saved and exalted by God. Finally, the psalm brings us to our day. *Today* is the day that the Lord has made, *today* is the day that we rejoice in God's saving work.

This short reading from **1 Peter** is a hymn of praise. It directs our attention to what God has done in the lives of believers. The passage then indicates that Christians will have to suffer while still in this life. However, hope is the basis of the strength required of them when this happens. The entire passage is remarkable for the variety of themes that it weaves together. They include: praise of God, which is patterned after the Jewish hymn of praise; Christology and soteriology, which perceive Jesus as the mediator of the salvation that comes from God; eschatology, which looks to the future for the fulfilment of God's promises.

The gospel consists of two resurrection appearances. Thomas was absent for the first event, but he is the central character of the second. Both events occurred on the first day of the week, the day that will eventually be chosen to commemorate the resurrection. The closed doors not only secure the disciples from danger, but they demonstrate the mysterious character of Jesus' risen body which is not impeded by physical barriers. Jesus' wish of peace was a prayer for eschatological blessings of health, prosperity and all good things. By calling attention to his wounds, Jesus showed that he was really the crucified one now risen. Thomas represents the second generation of Christians. He is not remembered because he doubted, but because, like us, he must believe on the word of others.

© Dianne Bergant CSA

Dianne Bergant CSA was a Professor of Biblical Studies at Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, where she taught from 1978 to 2014. She holds a BS in Elementary Education from Marian College, Fond du Lac, WI; an MA and PhD in Biblical Languages and Literature from St Louis University.

Next Week's Readings

3rd Sunday of Easter, Year A

Acts 2:14, 22-33

1 Peter 1:17-21

Luke 24:13-35

