



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 10 May 2026

6th Sunday of Easter

Dear Parish Family,

To all our mums, Happy Mothers' Day! May it be a blessed and really joy filled day. What a wonderful moment in time to remind all mums just how much their work, care and love is appreciated. Hopefully mums as you gather with us, you have received the greatest gift you could receive from your families, the presence of your loved ones with you, helping you pray, worship, celebrate this day. What a gift to be surrounded by family, and your faith family as well.

I know that there will be mums with us who will celebrate this Mothers' Day alone, some due to estrangement from their families, some because their families live in other parts of the country or world, some through grief, loss or sadness and some because family members are simply working.

I know that we have some mums with us who have sadly lost a child, their child returning to God's care and to His mother's love. This day is not an easy day for you. Please know we pray for you today and, like Mary, stand beside you. A mum never stops grieving the life of a child, getting through each day is a testament to that. Our Lady knows your pain. Her presence at the foot of the cross is a sign of solidarity and prayer with you.

I know we have mums who have adopted or fostered their children and made a home for them. With open hearts you have shared your life and love with them. What a precious gift. And some mums made sacrifices as they offered up their child to the care of another family, or have had their child entrusted to the care of another. Gratefully today let's acknowledge the many foster carers in our community.

I know we have mums who are worried about and for their children. Children who are away, are facing challenges or difficulties, suffering illnesses, transitioning jobs, friends, and towns, and others who are in prison or are making poor choices in life. Your prayer, your hanging in there, or your tough love will eventually make a difference. You have to say no sometimes.

I know we have mums who have made mistakes themselves in life and have sadness and remorse. Your hearts have breaks and chips as a result. Forgiveness is hard to find often and seeking it and feeling worthy of it even harder. Be brave.

I know that Our Lady gets motherhood and its challenges. Relationships are hard sometimes. God's plan is not easy, nor is it easy to see or negotiate. We place a lot of trust in our faith. Our Lady gives great example of trust, relationship, concern, care, and love for a child, and she shows us how to let go when we need to. We can only imagine what she must have been like as a child of Joachim and Anne. Her witness as mum is clear.

And of course there are many of us whose mums have died. Today we pray for the repose of their souls: may their peace be resultful, may their good deeds go before them, may we always pray for them.

On this day we pray for mums everywhere. Best wishes to all the mums from all of us.

Greg, Parish Priest



Parish Priest

Fr Greg Barker

Assisting Clergy

Fr Niel Olano

Fr Ramille Bigcas

Fr Stany Mathew

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)

6th week of Easter

Mon 11 May

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

Tues 12 May

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:15am Mass @ Stockton (with 2 school classes)

Wed 13 May

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Mayfield West (anointing)

Thurs 14 May

St Matthias, apostle

7:30am Mass @ The Cathedral

9:00am Mass @ Stockton

10:15am St Columban's School Class Mass

1:30pm Mass at Charles O'Neill, Mayfield

6:00pm Toohey Room: EPIC film event: "Fr Stu"

Fri 15 May

10:15am Mass @ The Junction

11:00am Catholic Schools Week Mass @ The Cathedral*

Sat 16 May

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

The Ascension of the Lord

Sat 16 May

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Cathedral

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ The Junction

5:30pm Vigil Mass @ Mayfield West

Sun 17 May

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

*The Catholic Schools Week Mass will be on Friday, 15 May, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral at 11am. The regular Friday Reconciliation, Adoration and Mass are cancelled for that day.

There will be no Novena Mass and Reconciliation on Saturday 23 May 2026. On that day there will be a 10am Mass, during which Christopher Voigt will be ordained to the Diaconate.

Prayer Requests



RECENTLY DECEASED: Robyn Curran

ANNIVERSARIES: Bill Cook, Tony Peart, Rachele De Santos, June Brotherson, Sr Florence Tobin, Clarrie Holland, Carmel Webber

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK: Wally McLellan, 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.



The Most Reverend Michael Kennedy
and the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle
cordially invite

The People of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle
to the Ordination to the Permanent Diaconate of

Mr Christopher Voigt

by

Most Reverend Michael Kennedy

on Saturday, 23 May 2026 at 10am

in Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West

All are Welcome

Our Columbaria

Those in our Columbaria with May anniversaries:

At The Cathedral:

Margaret Winsome

Azzopardi

Joyce Callaghan

Michael Clement Daley

Marjorie Hardy

Ian King

Mario Malaspina

Gerard McCosker

Cyril O'Neill

Barry Pritchard

Lorna Pearl Roberts

Barbara Smith

Beryl Smith

At St Joseph's:

Edith Isabel Fahey

Violet Ernst

Mollie Buckland

Anne Marie Gilroy

John Hogg

Margaret Kelly

Maureen Maher

Paul-Elizabeth McNamara

John Joseph Skehan

Francis Smith

Eunice Smyth

Meryl Ryan

Jack Robinson

Charles Tynan

Frederick Wilson

Geoff Young

Zilda Burgess

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

Parish Assembly Save the date:



Session three will be on 13 June.

Following the 13 June session, you will be invited to one further gathering on 12 September to tweak our Parishes' strategic and pastoral plan.

Parish Survey

As part of our work for the Parish Assembly process, the Regional Pastoral Council is collecting data from our Churches. The survey you are asked to complete is part of our fact-finding and will be included in our discernment for a Pastoral Strategic Plan.

Please complete the survey just *once*. It is anonymous and will be collected by the Parish Office to be given to our Regional Pastoral Council, our Assembly Planning Committee, and the Assembly gathered in June. This is an opportunity to continue our synodal process as we listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit through your voice.



Understanding synodality

The 2021-2024 Synod on Synodality engaged the church around the world in exploring how we can be more welcoming, respectful, curious, participatory, prayerful and missionary. A discussion group at Tighes Hill church after 8am Sunday Mass will explain the [Synod's Final Document](#) using a resource called: [A Feast for All Peoples](#) (52 page book).

24 May - Synodality as a spiritual practice

28 June - Synodality for mission

26 July - Synodality as ecclesial discernment

23 Aug - The Church as prophetic in today's world

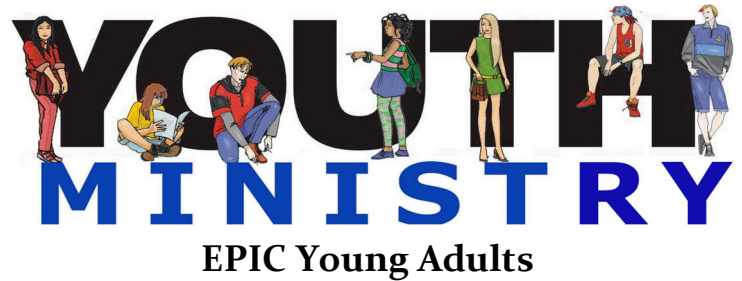
Each meeting should take 45 minutes and include:

prayer, scripture reflection, a passage from the Synod's Final Document, discernment and discussion.

A free copy of the book [A Feast for All Peoples](#) will be provided to participants.

For the Love of Creation

We are looking for volunteers to help with collection and transport to "return and earn" stations. Please leave your name and phone number with the parish office. This is a way to **care for the earth** by recycling. It's also a way to **care for others**, as the funds raised will be distributed in this instance to Caritas Australia, Catholic Mission, St Vincent de Paul, and to the Good Friday appeal.



Members of the EPIC Young Adults group are excited to announce a finalised vision and mission and a renewed schedule of events for the group. EPIC is a space for 18-35 year olds in our pastoral region, wherever you are on your faith journey. You can read our new guiding statements below:

Vision Statement

Young adults engaging, encouraging, and empowering one another to share the joy of Christ.

Mission Statement

- Engaging and growing a vibrant Catholic community of young adults.
- Encouraging a living relationship with Jesus through prayer and worship.
- Empowering spirit-filled leaders to witness faith and evangelise others.

- **Thursday 14th May – Movie Night** – Drop into the Toohey Room at 6pm to watch Fr Stu, starring Mark Wahlberg, the story of a self-destructive boxer, transformed from an atheist to a Catholic priest. Pizza provided!

A full schedule of events for the next three months is available on our Instagram, WhatsApp group, and on flyers in the back of each of our Mass centres! Stay in touch by joining our WhatsApp with this QR code or following us on Insta at @epicnewcastle.



St Joseph's Convent The Junction

The community which gathers for Mass each Friday at St Joseph's The Junction has become aware that St Joseph's Convent in Farquhar Street, at present unused, was built 100 years ago. Its foundation stone was laid on 23rd May 1926.



We wish to honour the centenary of the building, which was very grand for its day, and the dedicated lives of the Sisters who lived there in times past. To recognise their contribution to education and to parish life, we invite all Sisters, parishioners and friends to a **special Mass at St Joseph's Church on Friday 22nd May at 10.15am**. Morning tea will follow.

Rosary During the Month of May

- During the month of May, we will pray the rosary after each weekday Mass **In the Cathedral** – 7.30am Mon to Thurs, 12.05pm Friday.
- **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

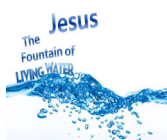


Regular Opportunities for Prayer

- **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

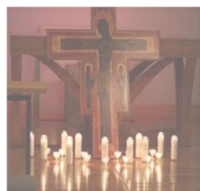


- **The Rosary** - each Wednesday after 7.30am Mass at The Cathedral, First Saturday of the month after Mass and Novena at The Cathedral.



- **Divine Mercy Devotion** - first Sunday of the month 3.00-4.00pm at Christ the King, Mayfield West.

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



Parish Group Meetings

Book Club next meeting is Sunday, June 7th, to discuss *The Nightingale* by Kristin Hannah. 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! On May 13th and 20th we meet for Lectio. No meeting on May 27th. To participate, please email the parish office: newcparish@mn.catholic.org.au

St Joseph's Prayer/Discussion

Group meets on the last Thursday of each month: Next meeting: Thursday 28 May at 9.30am, in the Junction Meeting Room.



Celebration of the Church's environmental teaching.

The 8:00am Sunday Mass at Tighes Hill on 17 May 2026 will include a focus on *Laudato si'*, the Church's teaching on care for people and planet, and on the parish community garden's [Plant Hope project](#) that has led to the planting of 638 Australian red cedar trees over the past year.

Morning tea to follow Mass.

Laudato si' Week: 17-24 May 2026

One week. One concrete action. One global response.

Laudato si' Week is a global Catholic celebration. Inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato si'*, it joins Catholics around the world in renewing our commitment to care for creation. This year the theme is Hope to Action and encourages each of us to take one action during Laudato si' Week to care for our common home. Catholic Earthcare, in partnership with the Australian Catholic Social Justice Council, is pleased to share resources to support your parish to participate.

Download resource: <https://tinyurl.com/CDMNLaudatoSi>



Called & Gifted - Registrations Closing Soon

What if God has placed gifts within you that are still waiting to be discovered? Over the past year, people across our Diocese stepped into the Called & Gifted Discernment Process and discovered something powerful, a deeper awareness of their charisms, a renewed sense of purpose, and new confidence in how they live and share their faith.

"It was a life-giving experience that helped me see my faith and my gifts in a completely new way ... Called & Gifted opened my eyes to possibilities I hadn't considered before ... This journey is too valuable to keep to a small group, I hope many more people will have the opportunity to experience it."

This is not simply a program. It is a process of prayer, reflection and discernment that helps you recognise how the Holy Spirit is already working through your life, often in ways you may not yet fully see or name. Learn More: <https://tinyurl.com/cdmnCALLEDAND-GIFTED>

Marian Consecration Retreat

Saturdays: 2 – 30 May



You are invited to attend a self-directed online Marian Consecration Retreat, facilitated by members of the Newcastle Charismatic Renewal Group, during the **Saturdays of the month of May**.

The sessions will be held at 11am in the Toohey Room (Catholic Diocese of Newcastle Precinct, Newcastle West) for the first week and then the Diocesan Resource Centre, adjacent to the Cathedral, for the remaining weeks.

The retreat is free to attend although you will need to purchase the book to read the daily reflections throughout the 33 days. Please contact **Wayne Caruana on 046 6631 394** or register via the QR Code.



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.

Christian Life Program

Consecrated in the truth - Be Christ to others

Couples For Christ invite you to an orientation day:

17 May 2026, 11am to 2pm

Toohey Room, Sacred Heart Cathedral Hamilton, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West.

Join us to learn more about the Christian Life Program.

Light meals will be provided, and child-minding is available.

RSVP:

0411 409 329 (Bong); 0431 133 583 (Rose);

0477 741 502 (Alex); 0411 081 374 (Cynthia)



2026 Magdalene Award

Nominations open: Celebrate the women who have shaped, and continue to shape, our Church. Inspired by Mary Magdalene - courageous disciple and first witness to the Risen Christ - the Award honours a woman in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle whose life reflects Gospel values through leadership, service and faith. Open to women aged 18+ actively contributing in a voluntary capacity. Scan the QR Code or email Kate for a Nomination Pack:

mission@mn.catholic.org.au



ALPHA Come and See

A place to explore life, faith and meaning

10 Consecutive Thursdays & Saturday Retreat Day

Start Date: Thursday, May 28

End Date: Thursday, August 6

Time: 6:30pm-8:30pm

Location: Toohey Room

Duration: 10 Weeks

Alpha Retreat

Date: Saturday July 18

Time: 10:30am- 4:30pm

What is Alpha?

A series of sessions in a relaxed environment where we share a meal, watch a short talk, and discuss our ideas in a friendly and open space.

Who Is it for?

- Anyone curious about faith
- Those returning to the Church
- Those seeking community
- Anyone interested in faith leadership

Want to Get Involved?

We are looking for Alpha leaders, helpers and hospitality stars to be part of this amazing initiative. For more information please speak with Fr Greg or contact Mary-Anne de Luca on **0409 077 373**.

Please register via the QR CODE

All sessions will take place in the Toohey Room, next door to the Sacred Heart Cathedral, 841 Hunter St, Newcastle West.



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

Diocesan Events

<https://tinyurl.com/cdmnevents>

Called to Know More: Year of St Francis

Tuesday 19 May | 12pm | Diocesan Resource Centre
Special Guest Speaker: **Mark Toohey**

Pope Leo XIV has named 2026 a special year to commemorate the 800th anniversary of St Francis of Assisi's death. Who was St Francis? Why are so many people within and beyond the Church, moved and inspired by him? This event will explore what his life story can teach us about our relationship to each other, the church and the world. Through story and conversation, we will discover the person beneath the plaster saint.

All Welcome. <https://tinyurl.com/CDMNStFrancis>



Vocations Come and See Retreat Day

Saturday 16 May 2026

9am - 3.30pm

Hunter Wetlands Centre

Explore God's call in your life through reflections on Scripture, personal vocation story, and panel discussions.

Learn practical tools for discernment from a nationally recognized presenter.

Pray and reflect in a peaceful natural setting, including celebrating Mass with Bishop Michael Kennedy.

Connect with a range of speakers from different vocational backgrounds.



RSVP to <https://tinyurl.com/CDMNcomeandsee>

Prayer cards are also available today.

ALIVE Catholic Youth Launch

24 May, Trinity College Adamstown

Witness how the Holy Spirit is moving in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle as we launch ALIVE - a dynamic and exciting event that will showcase a new diocesan identity for young people that seeks to draw them into a personal relationship with Christ they feel confident to share with others. Music will be led by a nationally acclaimed worship team and a number of exciting plans will be announced alongside some good news stories of where ALIVE is already taking shape in schools and parishes. Visit the Diocesan events page to secure your free seat. All ages are welcome.

<https://tinyurl.com/ALIVECDMN>



Pentecost – Our ‘Gifting Sunday’

As we approach the celebration of Pentecost, we recall the Holy Spirit filling the Church with courage and gifts for mission. In that same spirit, we invite parishioners to consider sharing their gifts in two key children's ministries:

- **Special Religious Education (SRE)**
- **Children's Liturgy of the Word**

These ministries help young people grow in faith. Training and support are provided; only a willing heart is needed. Contact the **Mission & Evangelisation Team**: mission@mn.catholic.org.au to learn more.

Diocesan Library

The DoMN Library will not be permanently staffed for the period 9 May to 9 June. For access to the library on Mondays or Fridays in this period, call 0409 033449 to make an appointment. One of the Mission and Evangelisation team will assist you with basic library services in the appointment time slot. Items currently on loan are extended to a due date of 30 June 2026.

Diocesan Cursillo 3-day Course

Do you wonder how to be more fully alive? If so, then you may like to consider attending our Cursillo 3-day course. The annual Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle 2026 Cursillo 3 days will be held from 11-14th June at Rathmines with the theme "Joy of the Lord is my strength". Cursillo is a short course which will enrich your faith for the rest of your life. It is Christ-centred, based on gospel values and will be asking each participant "How can I BE Christian in my many everyday environments?" Learn More: <https://tinyurl.com/cdmncursillo>

Marian Talks - Mackillop Parish

Behold Your Mother:

Explaining and Defending the 4 Marian Dogmas

Nationally known speaker Simon Carrington, from Fire Up Ministries, will lead us in looking at:

- Mary, Mother Of God
- Mary's Immaculate Conception
- Mary's Perpetual Virginity
- Mary's Bodily Assumption

Sessions will be on **Fridays** at 7 Milson St Charlestown, commencing with **Holy Rosary at 6:30pm** and the **Talk at 7:00pm:**

8 May, 15 May, 22 May, 29 May

Each session is self-contained, so you can attend any number of sessions.

While not compulsory, a **donation of \$20 per talk** would be appreciated to help cover the donation to the presenter and refreshments.

Sr Jan Tranter Book Launch

Sister Jan Tranter is well known throughout Australian Catholic, History and Scientific circles for her scholarly writings on Fr Julian Tenison Woods, who has played such a pivotal role in the story of the Australian Josephite Sisters and our wider Australian Story. Recently Jan was invited to publish her many articles in a book entitled, *Julian Tenison Woods, the Human Story: Priest, Founder, Friend*.

The Sisters of St Joseph, Lochinvar are delighted to announce the book will be launched by Bishop Michael Kennedy, in the Diocesan Resource Centre on Sunday 31 May at 2.00pm. All are welcome. RSVP: office@ssjl.org.au or phone 4948-4063

Safeguarding Mothers' Day

The post-Royal Commission findings on protecting the young and vulnerable adults have led to the widespread use of the term 'safeguarding' in our society; however, it was a 1924 'safeguarding' initiative which led to our current celebration of Mothers' Day in Australia. It was initiated by Sydney woman, Janet Heyden, to bring gift-giving cheer to lonely, elderly mothers at Newington State Hospital who had lost sons or husbands in WWI. This tradition of gifting has become a widespread annual celebration on the second Sunday in May. It is a significant cultural day focusing on family gatherings, gifts, and giving mothers a break from chores.

Mothers' Day is a reminder of the need to safeguard mothers (and all women) by protecting them from harm, including domestic abuse, and supporting their role in ensuring child well-being. It reminds us of the need to empower women, preventing violence (physical, emotional, financial).

Key Aspects of Safeguarding Mothers

- Recognising Abuse: Identifying coercive control, stalking, physical harm, and isolation.
- Safety Planning: Creating safer environments, including financial independence.
- Social & Physical Protection: Addressing threats to a mother's safety in her home, community, and in relationships where she is protecting her children.
- Perpetrator Accountability: Highlighting the abusive partner's criminal choices.

St Vincent de Paul Winter Appeal

Coming soon - to a church near you!



Stella Maris / Mission to Seafarers

THANK-YOU: for your continued prayers for Seafarers and their families.



MASS: The next Mass to be celebrated is at 5:30pm on Thursday 28 May. All are welcome.

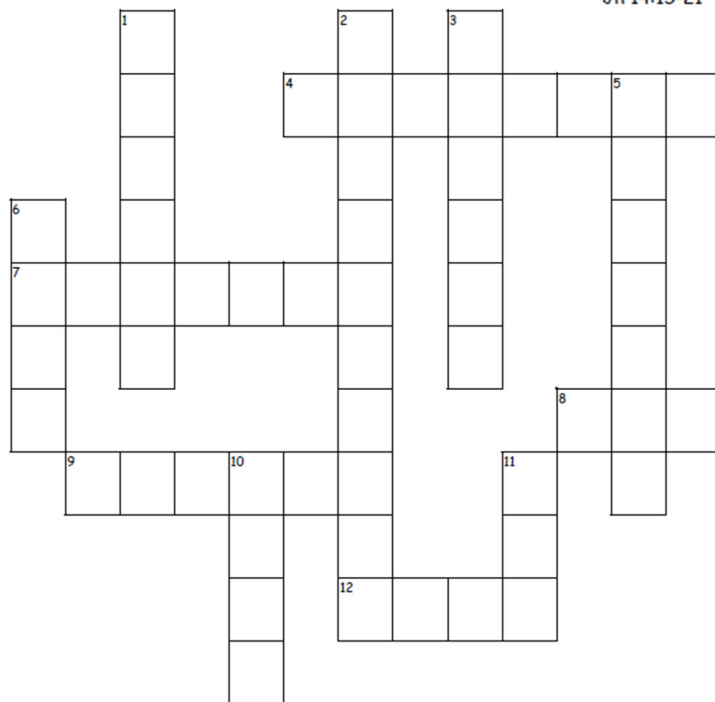
DONATIONS: The mission is calling on the following donations for their care packs for vessels entering our port: Beanies, Candy Bags, Card Games/jigsaw puzzles, Combs, Magazines, Razors, Socks, Toothpaste & Brushes. Donations can be delivered to the Centre at 96 Hannell Street Wickham.



CROSSWORD

The Spirit will keep on living in you

Jn 14:15-21



Across

- 4: Jesus said that he would c___ b___ to his disciples (two words)
 7: children without living parents
 8: it comes before two
 9: the first person of the Trinity
 12: not false

Down

- 1: the people of this world cannot _____ the Spirit
 2: those who had faith were given the _____ (two words)
 3: humans
 5: an order to do something
 6: the opposite of hate
 10: assist
 11: you do this with your eyes

Today's Liturgy of the Word

First Reading: Acts 6:1-7

They elected seven men filled with the Spirit and wisdom.



Responsorial Psalm: Ps 32:1-2, 4-5, 18-19, R. v.22

(R.) Lord, let your mercy be on us,
as we place our trust in you.

Ring out your joy to the Lord, O you just;
for praise is fitting for loyal hearts.
Give thanks to the Lord upon the harp,
with a ten-stringed lute sing him songs. (R.)

For the word of the Lord is faithful
and all his works to be trusted.
The Lord loves justice and right
and fills the earth with his love. (R.)

The Lord looks on those who revere him,
on those who hope in his love,
to rescue their souls from death,
to keep them alive in famine. (R.)

Second Reading: 1 Pt 2:4-9

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood.

Gospel Acclamation: Jn 14:6

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord;
no one comes to the Father, except through me.
Alleluia!

Gospel: Jn 14:1-12

I am the way, the truth, and the life.



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Next Week's Readings

Ascension of the Lord, Year A

Acts 1:1-11

Eph 1:17-23

Mt 28: 16-20



Scripture Commentary

Today we hear how **Philip**, one of the seven men appointed to attend to the needs of the widows of the Hellenists, travels north to Samaria. The animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans can be traced back to the period after the death of Solomon when the northern Israelite tribes withdrew their allegiance from the southern Judean monarchy. This breach was re-enforced when those who returned from exile in Babylon rejected the Samaritans' offer to help in the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. Still, the Samaritans shared Jewish messianic hopes. This explains their openness to Philip's preaching. The wonders that he performed convinced them of the trustworthiness of his words.

Today's **psalm** response begins with a summons to praise God. It is universal in scope, all the earth is called to praise the God of Israel. Second, the name of God is the object of the praise. Third, the praise given to God is glorious, not to be dismissed casually. The works of God to which the psalmist refers are the wonders that God has accomplished in the history of Israel. Since subduing chaotic waters was at the basis of all activity in the ancient Near Eastern creation tradition, historical water crossings always contained a dimension of creation in them. In the creation story, after the forces of evil are vanquished, the victorious warrior is acclaimed king over all creation.

Christian suffering is the subject of the teaching from **1 Peter**. Believers are told to use their suffering to enhance the spread of the gospel. The sufferings of Christ are offered as an example to follow and in which they can place their trust. The sufferings of Christians is then placed within the context of the holiness of Christ, a holiness that gives Christians both strength to endure patiently and courage to give witness to their faith. The Christians are also told to keep their consciences clear, to give no one justification for finding fault with them that they might then be regarded as innocent sufferers. Christ is the example of one who suffers innocently.

This **gospel** emphasises the link between love and obedience. Jesus calls for a love that is as self-sacrificing as his own. Obedience is not a requirement for love, it is the consequence of it. Jesus knows that his departure will leave the disciples feeling abandoned and so he assures them of his return. This passage also argues that this world seems open only to what is tangible. It cannot see the Spirit. The disciples, on the other hand, are motivated by love and so they respond to Jesus in obedience. 'On that day' refers to the time of eschatological fulfilment. Used here it implies that the day of Jesus' return will in fact be the dawning of the eschatological age.

© 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.