



THE BEATITUDES.. A CALL TO ACTION

In the tradition of Moses on Mt Sinai, Jesus goes up a mountain, a traditional Jewish sacred site. As we might expect, we receive a revelation as to how God intends that human beings should live together.

Jesus doesn't start in a fantasy dream world of perfection. Jesus looks at the world as it often is for many people, perhaps for most people around the world.

First, 'the poor in spirit': those suffering grinding poverty, a destitution which can crush their spirits, a lacking of the necessities of life such that their whole personality, bodymindspirit, is impoverished.

Then 'those who mourn': perhaps especially those whose grieving comes from the too early death of those crushed by the society in which they live.

Then 'those who are gentle': so often denied a fair share of the earth's resources which are taken by the strong and belligerent.

Then 'those who hunger and thirst for justice,' for individuals and even for whole societies.

Jesus astonishes the crowd by saying that such people are 'Blessed'. How can this be? It sounds callous, nonsensical or sarcastic. Is this the 'opium of the masses' about which Karl Marx had spoken? Certainly, it is paradoxical.

The answer lies in our Lord's emphasis on the community, the new society, the new people he is establishing under the reign of God: what he calls 'the Kingdom of God'.

Those in such wretched circumstances *will* have things set right, *will* experience a great reversal of their situation, but only if *other* people in this new group of the followers of Jesus do everything possible to lift the poor out of the poverty which crushes their spirit, do everything possible to comfort those who mourn, do everything possible to make sure the gentle share the

earth's resources, do everything possible to satisfy the craving for justice.

Our Lord describes the personality traits of those who will help bring about this reversal.

'The merciful.' The Hebrew word for mercy is closely allied to the word for womb and even beyond the womb. To be merciful is to be as caring as a mother would be towards the child of her womb. Our Lord is attempting to build up a community of followers as maternal as that. *How do we measure up?*

'The pure in heart.' This does not refer to ritual or sexual purity. It refers to people in whom there is no duplicity or hypocrisy. They are people of integrity. Our Lord is attempting to build up a community of followers as whole-some as that. *How do we measure up?*

'The peace-makers.' Here, Jesus is not so much interested in the noun: 'peace'. He is interested in the verb: 'peace makers'. *How do we measure up?*

So, when we read the Beatitudes, we should not think that this is contradictory nonsense, still less a message advocating a passive 'suffer your lot because there is pie in the sky'.

The Beatitudes are a call to action, a call to the followers of Jesus to be maternal, to be comforters, to be whole-hearted, to be active in overcoming those divisions which are unjust and destroy people, whether individuals or societies. *How do we measure up?*

The authentic measure of humanity is Jesus Christ. Our Lord measured up superlatively. We know He was finally measured out on the Cross.

We ask him to measure us mercifully, for we will fall short of his full stature.

But every time we say the 'Our Father' we *do* pledge ourselves to help construct this new society where the Beatitudes can come true:

'Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done *on earth* as it is in heaven.'

© Fr Michael Tate Liturgy Help

OUR VISION

"Everything is to be oriented towards the praise and glory of God".

OUR MISSION

The St Agnes' Parish Community strives to make our Vision a reality by a commitment to:

- holiness in the image of Christ
- proclaim the good news of salvation
- minister within the faith community
- the service of all, particularly those in need



Parish Retreat



Will be held on Saturday, 11 February at the Francis Retreat Centre, Bonny Hills. The facilitator for the retreat will be Fr Elio Capra SDB. It's a one day retreat with the focus 'The Fullness of Mercy in our Lives'. Fr Elio has been described as a 'modern, straight talking theologian'. He is a lecturer at the Catholic Theological College, Melbourne. All parishioners, teachers and parents are invited. To register, forms are available at the Presbytery Office or, register on line via the St Agnes' website using the following steps, or call the Presbytery Office.

- Website: www.stagnesparish.org.au.
- Click on Parish Education link.
- On the RHS click on Parish Registrations.
- This will take you to School Interviews, enter Event code for Parish Retreat - 422eh - then click green 'Go' button. This will take you to Retreat Registrations. You will be given an option to select if you require transport.

Episcopal Ordination of Bishop-elect Gregory Homeming

In anticipation of the forthcoming ordination of Bishop-elect, Gregory Homeming OCD, on 22 February in St Carthage's Cathedral, Lismore, we are asked to offer this prayer :

'For Gregory, our Bishop-elect, as he prepares to take up the sacred office of Bishop of the Church of Lismore. As our Chief Shepherd in the line of the Apostles, may he govern your people in love, and inspire and strengthen them in the faith, and in their lives of Christian witness.'

World Day of Prayer

Friday 3 March at 9.30am
In St Agnes' Church.



World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of women of many faith traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday in March. Throughout the entire day, we collectively pray all over the world, beginning with the first sunrise and ending at the last sunset. Our prayers follow the sun's path around the globe. Co-ordinated services of Christian worship and prayer are held in over 170 countries. The program for the service is prepared by women from one focus country of the world. This year the service is prepared by women from the Philippines. The theme is 'Am I being unfair to you?'

Please see below back to school dates.

- Tuesday, 31 January: Years 7 & 11.
 Wednesday, 1 February: Years 8,9,10 & 12.
 Friday, 3 February: Years 1-6.
 Monday, 6 February: Kindergarten

Lenten Programme 2017

It is time to begin preparing for our Lenten Groups. If you are interested in being a group leader contact the Presbytery Office on 65831024 and advise them of the following:

- 1 Your name.
- 2 Location for Lenten group.
- 3 Day and time for group meeting.
- 4 Number of people you can handle. (usually no more than 10).

If you are thinking of joining a Lenten Group, please also contact the Presbytery leaving your

- 1 Name.
- 2 Contact details.
- 3 Preferred location.

2017 Hospitality and Welcoming "cuppa tea" after Masses

After a lot of discussion throughout 2016, it was decided that parishioners attending certain Masses were missing out on the opportunity to gather and talk. So the Hospitality and Welcoming programme has been extended across all Masses. Over the course of a month, there will be a morning, or afternoon, tea after each Mass. Dates for February are as follows:

- Saturday, 4 February at the Vigil Mass hosted by St Joseph's Family Services.
- Sunday, 12 February at 7.30am hosted by Centacare.
- Sunday 19 February at 9.00am hosted by the Pastoral Council.
- Sunday 26 February, 5.00pm hosted by Youth United.

These are not meant to be huge affairs, simply a cuppa, with simple slices/cakes/biscuits, or whatever, and a chance for parishioners to meet and greet in that old time tradition of our Catholic Faith. At the end of each month, the bulletin will publish the next month's hosts.

In anticipation, I thank each of the parish Community groups who have taken on these roles throughout 2017.

With thanks.
Peter O'Driscoll.

MacKillop Gift Shop

The gift shop has for sale a wide range of gifts, religious items and cards. It is open Monday to Friday 10.00am to 2.00pm and is located on Hayward Street, behind KFC. The phone number is 6584 9779.



St Agnes' Parish State School Sacramental Program

If you are interested in your child participating in this program and require a Registration Form, or you have any questions please contact Stacey or Donna. The sacramental timeline is below. More detailed information will be available closer to the dates. The Registrations will be held in St Agnes Church.

- **PENANCE:** students in Year 4 or over. Registration: 20 February.
- **CONFIRMATION:** students in Year 2 or over. Registration: 15 May.
- **COMMUNION:** students in Year 3 or over. Narrated Masses will be held on 20, 21, 22 August.

Email: sacramentalprogram@gmail.com
Phone Stacey on 0438 287 898 or call Donna at St Agnes' Primary School on 6583 7433.

Gift Bearers Roster

If you are currently a volunteer on our gift bearer's roster can you please advise the Presbytery Office by Monday, 6 February, if you wish to be taken off that roster, or change to another Mass time.

Rome Pilgrimages

The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney is organising two special pilgrimages to Rome, departing on 13 April or 20 April 2017 for Catechists, their families and friends. If you would like more information there are brochures available from the Presbytery, or phone 1800 753 959 or visit the website www.romepilgrimages.com.

Holy Hour

Will be held on Saturday, 4 February following 8.00am Mass. All are invited.

Pope Francis Tweet

'Be not afraid, for I am with you.
Let us communicate hope and
trust in our time!'

Remember in Prayer



Recently Deceased: Rosemary Merhi, Clive Twemlow, Peter Hill, Jeffrey Condon.
Anniversaries: Robert German, Jack Dutton, Malcolm Campbell, Gerard O'Brien, Frank McNamara, Fr Leonard Gleeson ofm, Fr Leon Dowden sm, Dr Vispi Davar, Michael John Heagney, Jewel Cannen, Fr Henry van Riel.
Other Mass Intentions: Relatives of Dulcie Oldfield, Pauline Radley, Noel Clarke, Marija Miller, Hilton Dodds, Minnie Downes, Nora Downes Roberts, Ern O'Reilly, Beryl Thomas, Molly & Robert Friggens, Stan Condon, donor intentions and Masses of thanksgiving.

St Agnes' Rugrats

Community Youth Group

Rugrats is an open youth group centred around social activities held at the Port Macquarie Youth Hub in Horton Street. It is held on Friday from 3.30pm to 7.00pm. The cost is \$3.00 per person or \$6.00 per family, with two or more children and includes afternoon tea and dinner. It is fully supervised. For further information please contact Peter on mobile number 0429 658 404.

Encounter

Parish Youth Group

Encounter 'New Year party' will kick off the year with excitement and craziness on 5 February. All high school aged youth are welcome to join us for 5pm Mass and then gather at the Youth Hub (on Horton Street) until 8pm. Bring a \$3.00 donation to help cover the cost of dinner. We look forward to meeting you or catching up!! For more info contact Ellen Hales on 0437 533 303.

Parish Directory of Services

There are copies of the 2017 Parish Directory of Ministries and Services available from the Presbytery Office. The updated Directory details the many initiatives our Parish is involved in and provides the relevant contact details.

Need help with your
parish giving?

Call Trudi
(02) 6588 7444



Parish Giving Programme

Parish Priest

Father Leo Donnelly

Assistant Priest

Father Peter Wood

Assistant Priest

Father Roland Agrisola

Pastoral Assistant

Peter O'Driscoll

T (02) 6584 9970

Presbytery Office

47 Hay Street Port Macquarie

PO Box 23

T (02) 6583 1024

E pastoraloffice@stagnesparish.org.au

www.stagnesparish.org.au

Office Hours:

8.30am - 4.30pm

PARISH MASSES

ST AGNES' CHURCH | Hay Street, Port Macquarie

Monday to Thursday: 5.15pm

Friday: 12.05pm

Saturday: 8.00am, 6.00pm Vigil

Sunday: 7.30am, 9.00am, 5.00pm

Please note: Weekday Masses at 9.00am on Public Holidays

Reconciliation: Friday 11.30am -12 noon, Saturday 11.30am - 12.30pm

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

1st Saturday of the month 8.30am - 9.30am.

ST FRANCIS CHAPEL /Lochinvar Place, Port Macquarie

Contact: Sr Anne Hannigan

Ph 6589 9814 or 0419 243 259.

Communion Service or Mass: 9.30am Monday - Thursday

Sunday Mass: 9.30am

CHRIST THE KING CHAPEL | Boronia St, Port Macquarie

Contact: Sr Anne Hannigan

Ph: 6589 9814 or 0419 243 259

Weekday Mass: See Notice On Chapel Door

Mass: Saturday Vigil - 4.30pm

Rosary: 1st Saturday of the month 4.00pm.

ST BERNARD'S, TELEGRAPH POINT | Rollands Plain Rd, Telegraph Point

Thursday: 6.00pm.

STAR OF THE SEA, LAKE CATHIE | Ocean Drive, Lake Cathie

Sunday: 8.00am.

FEAST DAYS

St John Bosco

Tuesday 31 January



**The Presentation
of the Lord**

Thursday 2 February



St Blaise & St Ansgar

Friday 3 February

ROSTERS

4 & 5 February 2017

READERS AND COMMENTATORS

6pm Vigil: George Searson

Wayne Evans

Vanessa Denham

7.30am: Damien Bennie

Sandra Wilson

Brian Tierney

9.00am: Adelle Groeneveld

Matthew Field

Judy Brady

5.00pm: Christa Morrow

Daniel Underhill

Ellen Hales

9.00am: Michelle Baird

Anne Thurgate

Cathy Hawtin

Mike Hawtin

5.00pm: Fran Liddy

Thomas Inatey

Lisa Sleeman

Jim Dempsey

GIFT BEARERS ROSTER

6pm Vigil: W VanKerckhof &

B Kenny

7.30am: B & W Arthur-Pfeil

9.00am: F & B Pankiewicz

MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

6pm Vigil: Kym Condon

Rudolf Szybrowski

Jan O'Sullivan

Maureen Dick

7.30am: Geoff Leary

Jennifer Crossing

Greg Grace

THE STATUE OF OUR LADY

Genevieve Postlewait

Phone: 0439 671 539

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

5th Sunday of Year A

Isaiah 58:7-10;

Psalms 111;

1 Corinthians 2:1-5;

Matthew 5:13-16.

DIOCESAN INVESTMENT FUND PAYS 2.15% AT CALL!

There are no fees or charges on your account. AGENTS: Mrs Veronica Rinkin & Mrs Mary O'Brien
DIF Office, Parish Administration Centre, Phone: (02) 6583 7439 9am – 1pm Monday - Friday