



Before I said my first Mass an old priest gave me two great pieces of advice.

'You know when the congregation is filled with optimists. After a long series of announcements at the end of Mass and then you say, "and finally..." people take out their car keys!'

The second was, 'Never underestimate the burdens people bring with them into the church. Often we have little idea of the difficulties and pain our parishioners will be carrying.'

I have no idea what you have brought with you to Mass today. I can only imagine the anxiety and burden some of you are carrying. Whatever it is, Jesus invites you to let go of it, if only for a while, and be at peace.

Now all this 'come and rest a while' talk can be very pious and not sound all that in touch with reality.

Today's Gospel, however, came from the community of the Apostle Matthew and was written in Jerusalem about 45 years after Jesus' death. We know that this community experienced intense suffering and heavy burdens.

They had been expelled from the Synagogue and were being martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ.

No wonder they held so strongly to the words, 'Come to me all you who are weary and heavy burdened and I will give you rest.' And they found consolation in Jesus' example, 'take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart.'

Since the first century, however, Christianity has been guilty of trying to spiritually wallpaper over some tough realities rather than preaching that God is our companion in facing up to whatever our reality is and dealing with it.

Our faith is not about praying away our problems or fears and wishing it were otherwise. Our faith means we have experienced the love of God in Jesus Christ so that we never carry our burdens alone. God is our companion and guide and this parish Community, as with every Christian community, is called to be the sort of place where we carry each other's burdens and rest with each other awhile.

What we celebrate here each Sunday is that God will have the last word, a just, joyous, loving and peaceful word, in this world and when we enter our final rest. Jesus didn't come to us as a divine magician, waving a wand over our problems to wipe away all our tears. Rather, he accompanies us so he can show us that the gift of peace and a release from our life's burdens is often found in having the perspective for exercising the gift of right judgment. Making the best possible choices leads to the alleviation of our pain and difficulties.

This type of spiritual sanity reminds me of the story of the nun who was teaching the communion class, and drew an analogy about how food is essential to life. She asked the class,

'What's small and furry and eats nuts?'

To which there was bemused silence.

So Sister tried again.

'What's small and furry and eats nuts?'

There was now stony silence. Sister then picked out Billy and asked him for the answer. After several awkward moments, Billy tentatively replied,

'Sister, I know the answer is supposed to be Jesus, because the answer to all your questions is always Jesus but, I have to tell you, it sounds like a bloody squirrel to me.'



Sometimes the answer is not simply 'Jesus'. As we all know, for some of our difficulties, there is no spiritual quick fix. There is no cheap grace. The answer is not simply Jesus.

In confronting issues, however, it is necessary for spiritual and mental health to take time out, to be as gentle with ourselves as possible, to know that the burden of life is shared so that we can make the decisions that will ease the situation.

I don't underestimate the burdens some of you have walked into this church with today. Whatever burden you may have brought with you, may you know a moment's rest, the companionship of fellow travellers and the gift of Christ's peace.

© Fr Richard Leonard SJ
Extract of Homily.
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.



Nourished by
FAITH

Gospel Application

Coming to Christ and knowing his loving care is an amazing experience. We have perhaps all heard stories about people being down and out and then meeting Jesus in the midst of their desperation. We do not have to look far for such witnesses. There are many accounts of people who have encountered the tender mercy and kind compassion of God.

It is one thing to talk about how Jesus has been so generous with us, offering us shelter in the midst of our crises. It is another thing to become that which we have received. Are we prepared to become like Christ by seeking to be a safe haven ourselves? In our baptism we are called to be Christ-like. So being people who can embrace and hold safe those who are struggling will hopefully be high on our list of priorities. This may appear difficult, even dangerous, but being a place of refuge for those who need comfort need not be as risky as it sounds. It does not necessarily call for us to open up our homes—though some may be called to do that. But it asks us to open our hearts. Even though our hearts may feel inadequate and conflicted, we can trust that Christ, dwelling deep within, can communicate his tenderness through us. All we have to do is to trust him and allow some of our natural gifts of hospitality to be built upon by grace.

For many of us who live busy lives, we meet people every day who need a listening ear, or a shoulder to cry on, or some gentle encouragement. Let us not

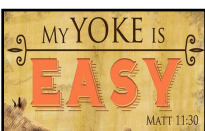


be afraid to reflect the love of the Father by reaching out to them. The Holy Spirit will guide us and Jesus will touch their hearts. Then we will show we are truly his disciples as we embrace others in the way that he did.

The Living Word

Shoulder My Yoke

Jesus invites us to shoulder his yoke and learn from him for he is gentle and humble in heart. The yoke he invites us to shoulder is the deceptively simple teaching: love God and love your neighbour. To love God is to consciously make a place in our lives for God. The busy spin that tends to be characteristic of so many people's lives today does not allow room for prayer and quiet; does not allow



room for compassionate response to others. To love God and love our neighbour we must first make room for them. **Liturgy Help**

Introducing the new MacKillop Centre!

The MacKillop Giftshop has relocated to new premises at 106 Horton Street (the old Hastings Family Day Care office) and is open for business. The MacKillop Centre will continue to sell religious gifts including bibles, rosary beads, cards and statues, whilst also incorporating a new welfare assistance service. The proceeds of sales of donated second-hand books within the Centre will go directly towards assisting those within the community in need. Clients are able to meet with Peter O'Driscoll to discuss their needs. The MacKillop Centre will continue to be managed by Marie Arnold and staffed by volunteers with opening hours of 10am – 2pm Monday to Friday. For further information on the new MacKillop Centre, please contact :

- Peter O'Driscoll on 6584 9970.
- The phone number for the Centre is 6584 9779.



Gift Bearers' Roster

It is time to update this roster. If you would like to be part of this Ministry, or would like to be taken off the roster please contact the Presbytery Office on 6583 1024 by 6 August.

Franciscan Prayer Group

A one hour spiritual reflection and prayer centred around the Gospels and based on Franciscan Spirituality will be held on Sunday, 16 July in the Tenison Wood Centre, Lochinvar Place from 10.30am to 11.30am. For more information contact Charlie on 0413 848 476 or Joan on 6583 6549. All are welcome.

Franciscan Retreat

A retreat that will be conducted over the weekend of 23 - 24 September by the Franciscan Order at the Francis Retreat, Bonny Hills. Overnight accommodation is available at the venue. Fr John Cooper will be the spiritual leader. For more information contact Joan on 6583 6549.

Pope Francis - Official Tweet

'How beautiful it is to see when young people are "street preachers", joyfully bringing Jesus to every street and every corner of the earth!'

MAX17

National Catholic Event for Men

14 - 16 July

menALIVE for Christ (MAX) is an annual gathering of men from across Australia and New Zealand. MAX invites men to come together and explore issues that impact their lives through talks, multimedia, workshops, small groups, fellowships and rituals. The experience of men gathering at a MAX weekend can be dynamic and powerful. It will be held at St Leo's Catholic College, University of Queensland. For more information visit the menALIVE website: www.menalive.org.au; phone Peter Carrigan on 0404 496 405 or Mike Hardy on 0459 992 228.



Christian Meditation at

St Francis' Chapel - 12 July

Will be focussing on Centring Prayer as taught by Fr Thomas Keating and Cynthia Bourgeault. Information time will start at 5:45pm for those wanting to expand their understanding of this form of prayer. Meditation/Centring Time will begin at 6.00pm (music, a short reflection and time of silence). Concluding between 6:30pm and 6:45pm. We meet every Wednesday except the last of the month when Taize services are held in the Chapel. Any questions contact Simon Mervyn-Jones on 0412 236 977.

Parish Planned Giving

If you have not received your 2017/2018 parish planned giving envelopes please contact the Parish Administration Centre on 6588 7444. Or if you are interested in contributing please call Trudi on the same number.

A very sincere thank you to Bill Skane who took the time to deliver the envelopes that had not been collected.

Catholic Leader

Is available for sale from the Presbytery Office on a Friday afternoon and after the weekend Masses. The cost is \$2.50.



Need help with your parish giving?
Call Trudi
(02) 6588 7444



Parish Giving Programme

Remember in Prayer



Recently Deceased: Eileen Lynch, Kathy Graham, John Ginman, Margaret Hawes, Kathleen Gehle, Ron McBride, Alan Kuhn and Ronald Jaffa.

Anniversaries: Madge Lindsay, Bernard Cavanagh, Margaret Heagney, Peter Gandy, Grace Sutton, Fred Williams, Norma Williams, Maxwell Byrnes, Les Oldfield, Rene Ansell, John & Tina Connolly, Dorothea Carney, Richard Gander, Jock McCarthy, Andrew Turnham, John McCarthy, Fr Adrian Curran and Fr Thomas Mahon.

Other Mass Intentions: Shirley Billington, Bernadette Stapley, Marie Mooney, Hilton Dodds, Daphne Gabrielle DeZilva, Jack Lindsay, Beryl Thomas, Molly & Robert Friggens, John Cain, Marija Miller, donor intentions and masses of thanksgiving.



Australian Catholic Youth Festival

Sydney 7 - 9 December

This is the final week to sign up for this special event. Completed application forms and payment must be returned to school offices, the parish office or the Youth Hub by Monday July 17. For enquiries or assistance please contact: Vanessa Denham on 0447 992 986 or email: vdenham@pac.stagnesparish.org.au



Marriage Encounter Weekend

Is a *Marriage Enrichment* experience for married couples – set in peaceful surroundings, away from the distractions of everyday life. Couples have a unique opportunity to reconnect, rekindle and refresh their relationship. Take time out of your busy schedule, to invest in your most precious asset . . . your Marriage!
Date & Location: 18 - 20 August.
Mt Carmel Retreat Centre,
Varroville, NSW.

Bookings: www.wwme.org.au or phone Adrian and Janet Sullivan on 0490 774 419, email address adrian.janet1@bigpond.com.



Liturgy of the Word for Children

If you would like to volunteer to be a part of this roster please contact Amanda Howle at ahowle@lism.catholic.edu.au.



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 pas-
toraloffice@stagnesparish.org.au
www.stagnesparish.org.au

Office Hours:
8.30am - 4.30pm

FEAST DAYS

St Benedict
Tuesday 11 July

St Henry
Thursday 13 July

St Camillus de Lellis
Friday 14 July

St Bonaventure
Saturday 15 July

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY OF
THE WORD ROSTER**

**Will recommence on Sunday
23 July 2017.**

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.

ROSTERS

15-16 July 2017

READERS AND COMMENTATORS

6pm Vigil: Alan Wheatfield
Margaret Donnelly
Kym Condon
7.30am: David Hogan
Joanne Hogan
Pat McLoughlin
9.00am: Richard O'Brien
Peta Rourke
Judy Brady
5.00pm: Ellen Hales
Andrea Gutierrez-Valverde
Ellen Hales
Lani Gobius

9.00am: Anne Thurgate
Cathy Stevenson
Phoebe Morris
Peter O'Driscoll
5.00pm: Natalie Jennings
Thomas Inatey
Fran Liddy
Lisa Sleeman

GIFT BEARERS ROSTER

6pm Vigil: Clifton Family
7.30am: B & W Arthur-Pfeil
9.00am: L Fuller & J Howle

THE STATUE OF OUR LADY

Bill & Marse Coghlan
Villa 1, 10 Braemar Drive
Port Macquarie
Phone: 6584 2470

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

15th Sunday in OT - Yr A
Isaiah 55:10-11; Psalm 64;
Romans 8:18-23;
Matthew 13:1-23

MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

6pm Vigil: Lisa Toomey
Bill Skane
Sue Skane
Paul Jones
7.30am: Kevin Lewis
Kay Farrowell
Jennifer Crossing
Greg Grace

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