

St Francis Xavier

Catholic Parish of Ballina

Respecting a traditional people of this land, the Bundjalung people



**St Francis Xavier Church,
Cnr Cherry & Crane Streets,
Ballina**

welcome

**Holy Family Church,
94 Ballina Street,
Lennox Head.**

**6th Sunday of Easter
(A)**

17th May, 2020

Alleluia

**FROM FATHER PETER
AND
FATHER ANSELM**

**Parishioners please be
assured of our prayers as we
comply with the
government's
restrictions with social
distancing.**

**Every day in our private
Masses we pray that the
parish community will be
safe from the COVID-19 virus,
and that our way of life and
the freedom to attend our
Parish Masses will resume in
the very near future.**

**God Bless and keep each of
you. Father Peter
Father Anselm**



Feasts

**St John I, pope
Monday**

**St Bernardine of Siena,
Wednesday**

**St Christopher Magallanes
& companions
Thursday**

**St Rita of Cascia
Friday**

God reigns through the Spirit

As we near the end of the Easter Season and approach Ascension and Pentecost, the liturgy contains a gospel reading that refers to the Holy Spirit. There is a promise of the coming of the Advocate, the Spirit of truth. There is a promise of the divine dwelling among us, the promise that the Spirit will be both *with* us, and *in* us.

The Advocate or the Paraclete is reflected in the various English translations of the noun *parakletos* for "comforter" or "counsellor". This noun derives from the Greek verb *parakaleo* which has many meanings including "to encourage", "to comfort and console" "to call upon for help" and "to appeal." The Paraclete is not simply another name for the Spirit but is a way of describing the functions of the Spirit. What the Paraclete does is not new but is a continuation of the work of Jesus. God is present among the community of the faithful through the Spirit.

The coming of the Holy Spirit, therefore, crowns the promise of the divine presence. It is as though Jesus says, "Through the Holy Spirit I will be with you always. You will not be abandoned; you will not be orphans". The coming of the Paraclete ensures that the revelation of God in the incarnation does not end with Jesus' death and return to God. This Holy Spirit will continue Jesus' presence on earth.

In the face of their fear, anxieties, and des-

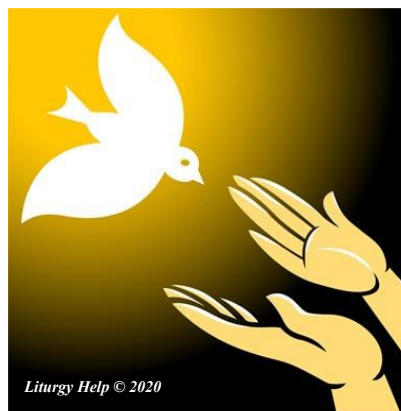
pair, these promises are made directly to the disciples. Jesus assures them of new life and hope through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Jesus offers his disciples the good news of the love of God and of the abiding presence of God with them, even when the circumstances of their lives seem most unpromising. Jesus speaks words of hope with the assurance of God's presence, so that the disciples can live a life shaped not by Jesus' absence, but by his unending presence.

God is always with us, and his presence will continue and grow despite our fears and distress. What Jesus promises provides endless resources for the life and faith of the church.

His promises give the church renewed strength and hope even when, we, as God's people, face the many difficulties and challenges of our day. Therefore, we shall not fear because we are in God's care, we are in the community of love and God is present in our midst.

The promises of divine presence are promises made, not to the individual, but to the community who lives in love. Those who live in love will experience God's presence in their midst. A relationship with God does not depend on physical presence, but on the presence of the love of God in the life of the community.

Anthony Tran CSsR
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**Catholics from the Diocese of Lismore are from
20th March 2020 dispensed from their Sunday Mass
obligation until further notice.**

PRESBYTERY: Phone: 6686 204

PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:

PARISH ADMINISTRATION CENTRE:

PARISH LIBRARY:

SCHOOLS:

AGED CARE:

Administrator of Ballina Parish: Father Peter Padsungay

Assistant Priest: Father Anselm Okeke

Pastoral Associate: Sr Kathryn Sweeney rsj, Email: kathryn@sfxballina.org.au

Email: parishcouncil@sfxballina.org.au

Phone: 6681 1048; Fax: 6686 8774; **Email:** admin@sfxballina.org.au

Mon to Fri 8:30 am - 4:00 pm - 53-57 Cherry Street - **Postal Address: PO Box 46 Ballina 2478**

www.sfxballina.org.au

Library available to parishioners Mon to Fri 9 am - 4 pm;

St Francis Xavier Primary: 6686 3370 - Swift St, Ballina

Holy Family Primary: 6687 5311 - 40 Isabella Drive, Skennars Head

Xavier Catholic College: 6687 6484 - 2 Redford Drive, Skennars Head

St Anne's Long Day Care Centre: 6687 5961 - 42 Isabella Drive, Skennars Head

Crowley Care Services: 1300 139 099 - 154 Cherry St, Ballina

PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR RECENTLY DECEASED: Ted Murphy, Bernie Scanlon, Sr Martha Casserley pbvm, Barry Schneider,

THOSE WHOSE ANNIVERSARIES OCCUR AT THIS TIME: Cecilia Condon, Brian Tarlinton, Aub Sainsbury
AND ALSO FOR: *Armando Bordin, James & Mary Rogers, Cath Waddell, C & S Hosie, Mick & Gwynne Waugh, Rina, Charlie & James Volpatti, Thama Walker, Kathleen Kelly, Bill & Jean Shay, Cecilia & Bill Condon Snr, Stan & Mary McKeough, Members of the SVdP Conference & Auxiliary & for all faithful departed.*

AND FOR THOSE WHO ARE ILL: Barbara Perry, Michael Patch, Gloria Greguric, Pauline McLachlan, Bill Colenso, Michael & Marie Daley, Chanice Wills, Julie Benton, Arthur Potter, Shokat Forghani & family, Margaret Murphy, Robert Sullivan, Terry Moore, Margaret Pyne, Kathleen Campbell, Kaia Randall, Darcy Martin, Charlie Clements, Charlie Scotcher, (*Aunty*) Julia Paden, Rev Ray Fishwick, Glenn Campbell, Jan Kelly, Kay Harth, Maria Gorton, Peter & Reba Smidt, Asha Ousby (2 yrs), Jeanie Marie Curry, Fay Kerslake, Darryl Simpkins, Betty Albertini, Hilda Carter, Rosemary Russell, John Moreland, Dymphna Sheehy, Greg Shore, John McNamara, Yvonne & Peter Thurtell, Mal Gillies, Cecelia Waldron, Louise Wilson, Michael O'Connor, Moore, Smith, McCowan-Dann, Webber Families, Layton family, Fitch family, Maria Hosking, Kaley Nobbs, Mick O'Brien, Graham Robertson, Gregory Thomas, Gloria Greguric, Joy Hepworth, Leo Lane, Mary Topham, Bob Grant, Leisa Wotton, Michael Everson, Pat Evans, Virginia, Sarah and Peter Kolhbach, Samantha Anderson, Tony Lannan, Kim del-Signore, *Crowley Village, St Andrew's Nursing Home, RSL Life Care, Bupa Aged Care. (Due to privacy laws, names are only placed on this list when requested, for six weeks)*

HOMILY by Richard Leonard

There are two strong images in today's gospel: the law and love. In a few verses Jesus keeps moving between the two ideas because he knows how closely related they are.

This can seem curious to modern ears because we have been duped into thinking that the law is the enemy of love, and that only freedom and joy are love's fruits. But think for a moment of people or projects we love, ones to which we are committed. We don't need a rulebook to call us to the most generous and sacrificial behaviour in their regard. We respond 'above and beyond the call of duty' not because of the law, but because of love. Jesus teaches us today that obedience to his commandments is a sub-set of our loving relationship with him.

The word 'obedience' comes from the Latin word *oboedire*, meaning, 'to listen carefully'. That's a gentler way of understanding Jesus' call. The more obedient we are to Christ's commandments, the more we are listening to his Spirit's call in our lives. And what are these commandments to which we have to listen? Jesus said the whole law and the prophets could be summarised as 'loving God and our neighbour, as we love ourselves'. If this seems too general a statement, then St Paul helps us fill out the details. Like Jesus, St Paul tells us the law of love is not primarily revealed in what we say, or how we feel, but in what we do. Christian love is an intensely practical affair. When we are patient, kind and gentle with each other we are obeying the law of love. So too when we forgive each other, tell the truth and remain faithful, we are listening most carefully to Christ's commandments.

St Paul also tells us that another of the fruits of Christian love is self-control. Sacrifice and self-control are really where the law of love comes into its own. The secular world keeps peddling the myth that self-expression is the only way to happiness. Most of us can see how irrational this position is and how unliveable the world would be if everyone expressed all their feelings and desires as they wished. Sometimes the most loving thing is to do nothing. If we are very angry with friends, for example, abusing them physically or verbally won't help. If we are sexually attracted to our best friend's spouse, having an affair will end in tears. On a more positive note, if we are alert to the poverty in which others live in our world, making sacrifices so that they might have something will not take away from us at all. Self-control is the ally of love and it helps us sort out the appropriate time to undertake the appropriate action.

The path to true happiness is found in being self-controlled. The problem is that self-control doesn't come easily. We need to train ourselves in its art and practise it regularly and consistently so that we can enjoy seeing the benefits of winning smaller battles before we venture out on larger campaigns. If we cultivate an attitude of self-control, we can be sure that when we most need to exercise it, we are in charge of our emotional life rather than it being in charge of us.

May this Eucharist effect a change of heart in us. May we embrace sacrifice and self-control as the doors to an even greater practical experience of the Risen Christ's law of love.

© 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.

DIF PAYS 1.10% PER ANNUM

BALLINA AGENTS: Michael Shay, **L J Hooker** 87-89 River St Ballina 6686 2711 -
Crowley Admin Office Cherry St Ballina 1300 139 099

SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH BALLINA - PLANNED GIVING PROGRAM: If you are a new parishioner to Ballina or an existing one and you would like to participate in the Planned Giving Program, cards are available for completion at the Parish Administration Office. Your details will be processed and a tracking number provided. Contact SFX Parish Admin office on 6681 1048 Monday to Friday 8.30 am to 4.00 pm.

For your convenience we have the option of Direct Debit and/or Envelope contribution.

Parish Notices



SINCERE SYMPATHY

Our parish extends sincere sympathy to the family of **Ted Murphy** who has passed away. A private funeral was held on Friday 15th May.

A Mystic for Our Times ~ Julian of Norwich

Recently I have again been reading Lady Julian of Norwich (1342-1416), one of my all-time favorite mystics. Each time I return to her writings, I always find something new.

Julian experienced her sixteen visions, or "showings" as she called them, all on one May night in 1373 when she was very sick and near death. As a priest held a crucifix in front of her, Julian saw Jesus suffering on the cross and heard him speaking to her for several hours. Like all mystics, she realized that what Jesus was saying about himself, he was simultaneously saying about all of reality. That is what unitive consciousness allows you to see.

Afterwards, Julian felt the need to go apart and reflect on her profound experience. She asked the bishop to enclose her in an anchor-hold, built against the side of St. Julian's Church in Norwich, England. Julian was later named after that church. We do not know her real name, since she never signed her writing. (Talk about loss of ego!) The anchor-hold had a window into the church that allowed Julian to attend Mass and another window so she could counsel and pray over people who came to visit her. Such anchor-holds were found all over 13th- and 14th-century Europe.

Julian first wrote a short text about the showings, but then she patiently spent twenty years in contemplation and prayer, trusting God to help her discern the deeper meanings to be found in the visions. Finally, she wrote a longer text, titled *Revelations of Divine Love*. Julian's interpretation of her God-experience is unlike the religious views common for most of history up to her time. It is not based in sin, shame, guilt, fear of God or hell. Instead, it is full of delight, freedom, intimacy, and cosmic hope. How did she retain such freedom, we ask? Maybe and precisely because she was *not* a priest, ordained to speak the party line?

As I read her words this time, what strikes me is the similarity between Julian's time and our own. Here is how author, scholar, and Episcopal priest Mary Earle describes Julian's fourteenth-century context:

Julian lived at a time of vast social, [religious,] and political upheaval, incessant wars, and sweeping epidemics. Norwich, with a population of around 25,000 by 1330 . . . was struck viciously by the plague known as the Black Death. At its peak in the late 1340s in England, it killed approximately three-fourths of the population of Norwich. A young girl at this time, Julian was certainly affected in untold ways by this devastation. When the plague returned, she was about nineteen. . . .

In her anchor-hold, Julian may have recognised the potential spiritual benefits of "social distancing" during a time of crisis, such as the awakened ability through solitude to be personally present to divine love. Yet we must remember that she also let God's love flow right through her to those on the street requesting her counsel, and to us through her writings. © Richard Rohr *Meditation: A Mystic for Our Times* Centre for Action and Contemplation <Meditations@cac.org>



BISHOP GREG'S SUNDAY MASS ON YOUTUBE LIVE

You are invited to view the Sunday Mass live and on demand from your devices. You can access the livestream by following the link from lismorediocese.org, or by going straight to the 'Lismore Diocese' channel on YouTube, or by pointing the camera on your smart device to this



digital code:

Time of Live Streaming:

Sunday ~ 8.00 am

MASSES AVAILABLE ONLINE

CATH NEWS

www.cathnews.com

Google Catholic Masses and click your choice

AVAILABLE FREE TO AIR ON TV

Channel 10 ~ every Sunday ~ Mass 6.00 am

REFLECTION: We live in hope because we have been blessed with the opportunity of participating in the exaltation of Jesus. This hope is based on promises: the promise that we will not be left orphaned when Jesus returns to his Father; the promise that we will be comforted by the Spirit whom Jesus will send. It is trust in God that enables us to live in this world as if the promises have already been fulfilled, for in fact, it is precisely such living that fulfils them.

We have not celebrated the Ascension, and yet all three readings speak of the Spirit. The same Spirit, who quickened the resurrected life of Jesus, enlivens us. This Spirit strengthens, comforts, guides and inspires us. Life in the Spirit requires that we conform our lives to the commandments of God, not in a legalistic or constraining way but out of love. The love that comes to us through the Spirit will then overflow into the lives of others, and we will be agents of God's love in the world.

The Spirit given by Christ is mediated through the laying on of hands. This still happens in our day in the gentle touch of friends, in the loving touch of parents, in the healing touch of those who cure both the body and the spirit. The liturgical year is preparing us for the Ascension of Jesus into heaven, and Jesus is preparing us for life in the Spirit here on earth. This is the reason for our hope.

© Dianne Bergant CSA *Liturgy Help*



Story of Community

Grief creates a strange disorientation to time. It suspends you from the world around. Hours stretch on while minutes fly by. Reality becomes permeable. Life zooms in on the most essential functions—eating, breathing, sleeping. The most crucial elements of existence become crystal clear, situated on the point of a pin—love, time, substance. We are all here, suspended in time together. We grieve a collective grief.

D. Ainsworth

Centre for Action and Contemplation <Meditations@cac.org>

EASTER DUES ARE BEING RECEIVED AT THIS TIME

The Easter offering is an offering to the Bishop and clergy of the diocese. In the same way as all in receipt of an income have an obligation to support the works of the Church through the Planned Giving Program, it is a responsibility of all of us to support the clergy, keeping in mind that they need to eat too. We offer this support by giving to the 1st collection on Sundays and through the Christmas and 'Easter Dues'. Those with Planned Giving envelopes will find a special envelope in the box, and others could place an offering in an envelope and write 'Easter Dues' on the outside. Thanks for your support. The offering does not go to individual priests, but is added to the overall Clergy Fund collections for the whole year for the whole diocese.

First Reading: Acts 8:5-8, 14-17;*A reading from the Acts of the Apostles*

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm**(R.) Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.**

1. Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of his name.

O render him glorious praise.

Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds! **(R.)**

2. 'Before you all the earth shall bow;
shall sing to you, sing to your name!'
Come and see the works of God,
tremendous his deeds among men. **(R.)**

3. He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the river dry-shod.
Let our joy then be in him;
he rules for ever by his might. **(R.)**

4. Come and hear, all who fear God.
I will tell what he did for my soul:
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer
nor withhold his love from me. **(R.)**

Second Reading: 1 Peter 3:15-18;*A reading from the first letter of St Peter*

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for

the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

The Word of the Lord

Gospel Acclamation:**Alleluia, alleluia!**

All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them and we will come to them.

Alleluia!**Gospel: John 14:15-21***A reading from the holy Gospel according to John*

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep my commandments.

I shall ask the Father, and he will give you another

Advocate to be with you for ever, that Spirit of truth

whom the world can never receive since it neither

sees nor knows him; but you know him, because he

is with you, he is in you.

I will not leave you orphans; I will come back to you.

In a short time the world will no longer see me;

but you will see me, because I live and you will live.

On that day you will understand that I am in my Father

and you in me and I in you.

Anybody who receives my commandments and

keeps them will be one who loves me;

and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father,

and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

The Gospel of the Lord.



An Act of Spiritual Communion : My Jesus, I believe that You are in the Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things, and I long for You in my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though You have already come, I embrace You and unite myself entirely to You; never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.

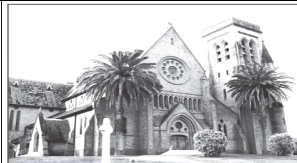
melbournecatholic.org.au

**SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH ~ 1st & 2nd COLLECTIONS**

Due to not being able to attend weekend Masses, parishioners with envelopes wishing to continue their contribution to the parish collection can use alternative methods.

- **By completing a form available from the Parish Office to have a credit card deduction each month for your Planned Giving Donation ONLY**
- **By making an EFTPOS donation—**
1st Collection to Ballina Presbyterium
BSB: 082 522 A/c 50960 2127 ref: your name
2nd Collection to St Francis Xavier Parish
BSB 082 522 A/c 50960 3218 Please ensure you use your Planed Giving number as reference
- **By completing a form that allows your bank to deduct your gift from your account into the account of the Parish, available from the Parish Office or, continue with your envelopes and drop them to the office, perhaps once a month.**

Thank you



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