



**This Week's Readings**

Jeremiah 17:5-8  
 1 Corinthians 15:12,16-20  
 Luke 6:17,20-26

**Next Week's Readings**

1 Samuel 26:2,7-9,12-13,22-23  
 1 Corinthians 15:45-49  
 Luke 6:27-38



**Send O Lord, Holy Apostles into Your Church!**

# St. Mel's Parish

## BULLETIN

### Looking at the Readings

From the Third Sunday in Ordinary Time this year we hear that Jesus comes to bring good news. It is Luke's agenda that the Gospel of Jesus is life changing and life-giving. The Beatitudes in the Gospel today presents a reversal of worldly values to deeper human values giving life to the oppressed, poor, neglected and hurt people. These four Beatitudes which offer more practical outcomes differ from Matthew's eight beatitudes which bring more spiritual-like benefits. We are fortunate to hear both accounts. Luke's account immediately adds four maledictions or "Alas" clauses identifying human situations that sharpen the dichotomy between the heavenly and worldly ways of life.

The words of Jeremiah in the first reading prepares the Christian for the Gospel message. Though it is not God who curses or blesses the different persons. It is their intentions and actions that bring about their wretched state or fruitful welling. But in Christ Jesus we receive both blessing and guidance in our very human circumstances, our decision making and resulting wellbeing. Blessed be God! blessed be all God's people!

### Lectionary Translations

Almost 60 years the Scripture readings in our Liturgies at Mass and the Sacraments have been sourced from the Jerusalem Bible (JB) translation. The Australian Catholic Bishops, after much consultation have decided to adopt the Revised New Jerusalem Bible translation (RNJB) that combines scholarship, readability and current inclusive vocabulary. One consequence is translating the Greek word Μακάριος from Happy (JB) to Blessed (RNJB, NRSV) in the Beatitudes and in many other texts.

### Prayer for the Day

God, who alone can satisfy our deepest hungers, protect us from the lure of wealth and power; move our hearts to seek first your kingdom, that ours may be the security and joy of those who place their trust in you. Amen.

### Quote of the Day

Jesus didn't say, 'Blessed are those who care for the poor.' He said, 'Blessed are we where we are poor, where we are broken.' It is there that God loves us deeply and pulls us into deeper communion with himself. Henri Nouwen

### On the Lighter Side

Blessed are those who give without remembering. And blessed are those who take without forgetting. Bernard Meltzer



### Liturgical Jottings Holy Year Doors

The Holy Door takes on special significance and is a powerful sign of the Jubilee, since the ultimate aim of the pilgrim is to pass through it. The opening of the door by the Pope constitutes the official beginning of the Holy Year. In crossing the threshold of the Holy Door, the pilgrim is reminded by John 10:9 "I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture." Passing through the Holy Door expresses the decision to follow and be guided by Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd. The door is a passageway that ushers the pilgrim into the interior of a church. For the Christian community, a church is not only a sacred space, but also a symbol of the communion that binds every believer to Christ: it is a place of encounter and dialogue, of reconciliation and peace which awaits every pilgrim, the Church is essentially the place of the community of the faithful.

St Mel's Parish would like to acknowledge the elders past and present of the Yorta Yorta Nation, and pay our respects to the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our parish and church is situated.



## Weekly Reflection

THE SERMON ON THE PLAIN Luke 7:17,20-26

Let's reflect and learn.

Jesus *"came down with them and stood on a level place"* to deliver his sermon (v. 17a). The words, "with them," refer back to 6:12-16, where Jesus chose twelve apostles. who come down from the mountain with him and are present with him on the level place.

*"With a crowd of his disciples, and a great number of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon"*—Jerusalem, located in Judea, is the home of the temple and the most orthodox Jewish leaders. It represents the religious status quo—Jesus' opposition. Tyre and Sidon are Gentile cities. Together, these four places emphasize the breadth of Jesus' ministry—from far north to far south—from orthodox Jews to Gentiles.

*"Who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; as well as those who were troubled by unclean spirits, and they were being healed"*—They came to Jesus because they had heard that he could help them—and help them he did! Jesus responded to each person's need individually.

*"All the multitude sought to touch (Jesus), for power came out from him and healed them all"*—The crowd expects too much of Jesus, because he has come to teach but they have come to be healed. But then Jesus heals all of them (v. 19)—and teaches them as well.

*"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven"*—Who are the poor? They would include those whose worldly circumstances are constrained—but who look to God for blessings. While they include the financially impoverished, Jesus likely intends them also to include other disadvantaged people—powerless people—marginalized people. Why would God bless the poor? Isn't wealth a mark of God's approval? Doesn't God reward faithful people with material prosperity as well as spiritual blessings (Deut. 28:1-14)? Sometimes! However, our spiritual sensitivity tends to be inversely proportional to our financial prosperity. Our awareness of our need for God tends to rise in lean years and fall in fat years. Our compassion for the needy tends to wax when we ourselves are needy and wane when we are not. Luke does not idealize poverty but instead tells of disciples who pool their resources—owning everything in common—selling possessions and distributing the proceeds to take care of everyone's needs (Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35). The emphasis is on generosity rather than poverty—on not being possessed by possessions.

We wonder why Jesus should bless the poor and pronounce woes on the rich. Perhaps the rich are tempted to trust in their wealth, while the poor are more likely to trust in God. Perhaps the rich used improper methods to attain their wealth. Perhaps they are inclined to take advantage of more vulnerable people. However, we know well-to-do people who lead lives of faith and less-well-to-do people who do not. We know well-to-do people who are generous and less-well-to-do people who are not. There is an enigmatic quality to Luke's Beatitudes, which may explain Matthew's spiritualizing them. It is much easier to accept *"Blessed are the poor in spirit"* (Matt 5:3) than *"Blessed are you who are poor"* (Luke 6:20). However, Luke's version points out the special place that God has in his heart for the poor and vulnerable. There is no reason why *"Blessed are the poor in spirit"* and *"Blessed are you who are poor"* cannot both be true. Jesus' blessing of the poor is good news for the first disciples, who had "left everything and followed him" (5:11).

*"Woe, when men speak well of you, for their fathers did the same thing to the false prophets"* (v. 26). This woe corresponds to the beatitude, *"Blessed are you when men shall hate you"* (v. 22). Humans are prone to speak well of those who agree with them or those who might give favors in return for flattery. God, however, judges by a different standard. He will reward those who speak the truth rather than the false prophets who speak what people want to hear.

## Prayer of the Heart

Almighty and Loving Father, defender of the poor and the needy, give us hearts like that of Jesus which is filled with love for those who are unjustly treated in this life.

May we become channels of your blessings and believers in your provident care.

This we ask through Jesus Christ your Son who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.

Amen. – (FRM)

## "God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Cor 9:7)

Last Sunday, 9th February, we all joyfully participated in the Thanksgiving Mass of Most Rev. Rene Ramirez, RCJ, D.D. here at St. Mel's.

Bishop Rene's episcopal ordination and appointment as one of the Auxiliary Bishops of the Archdiocese of Melbourne is truly a gift for us all, for the Archdiocese of Melbourne, for the Congregation of the Rogationists, and for our parish community. Bishop Rene himself is a gift that is now given for the entire Church. As we rejoice in this beautiful gift given to us by God, we wish as well to acknowledge and thank all of you who have shared your own gifts to make last Sunday's event worth remembering.

To the organizing committee who have prepared all the necessary things for the liturgical celebrations; to those who have shared their time and talent to be part of the working bee so as to assure that the church and its surroundings are clean and orderly; to those who generously shared their treasures so that expenses incurred be defrayed; and to all those who never hesitated to offer gifts for Bishop Rene; and to all other individuals who silently but joyfully became part of our parish preparations for Bishop Rene's Thanksgiving Mass: and to all the priests who concelebrated during the mass, particularly our very own Bishop Shane Mckinlay, **A VERY BIG THANK YOU!**

Indeed, "God loves a cheerful giver."



## St Anne's College Whole School Opening Mass

Our opening school mass is a very significant way the St Anne's College community, students, family and friends celebrate the opening of our new school year. Last Tuesday we were blessed to have Fr Ruel celebrate our opening school Mass with us. Fr Ruel reminded us of the importance of love in our lives and our love towards each other as we live our lives as pilgrims of hope.

As a Catholic school, we value the opportunity to gather together and pray as a community and encourage family and friends of all faith backgrounds to join us at our future Mass and Liturgies.

Source: St Anne's College Newsletter



## Live Your Best Life in Love

A Marriage Encounter weekend for you...

Every married couple deserves this very special weekend.

Time-out to nurture your most precious relationship away from daily distractions. The two of you will come away from your weekend feeling more deeply connected and with tools to help keep the passion alive. No group sharing required. The weekend is based around Catholic values. Couples of all faiths are welcome.

Please check our website for more details and to book your special weekend: Our next weekend is: 25-27 April 2025 at St Paul's Retreat Centre, Wantirna South. Starts Friday evening at 7pm and finishes Sunday afternoon around 4:30pm

Information/Bookings: Please phone Mercy & James 0409 183 676 or Email: [vicbookings@wwme.org.au](mailto:vicbookings@wwme.org.au) Website: [wwme.org.au](http://wwme.org.au)

## International Asperger's Day

International Asperger's day is celebrated on 18 February every year. This syndrome has been included in the autism spectrum since 2013, a disorder related to brain development. This impacts how a person perceives and socialises with others.

What distinguishes Asperger's Disorder (AD) from classic autism are its less severe signs and the absence of language delays. Individuals with AD are interested in social interaction, but have problems in communication, taking people literally and unable to interpret body language. AD is more common in males, with 8 times more males than females diagnosed. [www.asperger.asn.au/](http://www.asperger.asn.au/)

Mary Pianta. Disability Contact Coordinator.



Subscribe to Flocknote, to receive parish news & updates about upcoming events: Subscribe by using the QR Code.



## Shepparton & Nagambie Mass Schedule

### St Mel's

#### SUNDAY

St. Mel's 9:30 am  
St. Mel's 5:00 pm

#### TUESDAY to SATURDAY

St. Mel's 9:15 am

### St Malachy's

#### SUNDAY (1st & 3rd)\*

St. Malachy's 09:00 am  
\*2nd, 4th and 5th Sundays  
Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion

#### CONFESSIONS

St. Mel's: Every Thurs at 8:10 - 9:10 am

#### BAPTISMS (St Mel's)

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month

#### MARRIAGE

2 months-notice required

## Parish Staff

**Fr. Joe Taylor**  
Parish Administrator

**Fr. Ruel Desamparado RCJ**  
Assistant Priest

**Sr Pam Barlow**  
Religious Sister of Mercy

**Carmel Zito**  
Bookkeeper

**Mel Shiels**  
Secretary  
Sacramental Program Coordinator

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18 Hamilton Street  
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[www.smps.org.au](http://www.smps.org.au)  
(03) 5831 2194

**Office Hours**  
Tuesday to Thursday: 9:30am- 2:30pm  
Friday: 9:30am -12:30 pm

## Debutante Presentation & Blessing

Today at our Sunday 5pm Mass we welcome the St. Mel's Parish debutantes and their escorts. They will be presented to the parish community and receive a special blessing ahead of the balls scheduled in March.

This is a significant milestone for these young people. Traditionally, a debutante is a young woman making her formal entrance into society. We extend our best wishes to the debutantes as they embark on this meaningful chapter of their lives.

We, the parishioners, are blessed to celebrate with them and support them during this special occasion!



Can you support your parish?  
Do you have a talent for writing?

We are looking for volunteers to write articles about parish events for our website, And bulletin, helping to keep our community informed and connected.

If you have a passion for storytelling and would like to contribute, we'd love to hear from you!  
Contact our secretary, Mel, at 0400 150 188 if you're interested. Thank you for your support!

*We ask for your prayers for the Eternal Repose of*

**Anniversaries:** Jo Chilcott (one year)

Joseph Knez, Maria DeGrazia, Faustina Baquial,  
Ron Laffy, Giovanni Cari, Rosina Roccisano,

## Commentators/Lectors/ Special Ministers

Sunday 23rd  
February

Commentators  
9:30am Maureen Munro  
5pm Filipino Community

Lectors  
9:30am Sev Cortese (L1) Elizabeth Holligan (L2)  
5pm Filipino Community (L1) (L2)

Special Ministers  
9:30am Trish Mathisen & Anthony Butts  
5pm Lin Waite & Sr Pam Barlow

## Support your Parish!

Help fund our initiatives  
to move from  
maintenance to mission!

*"Together we do more"*

Use the QR Code to  
access our Donations  
Page.



\$13,463  
February Target

\$  
Week Four

\$  
Week Three

\$5,719  
Week Two \$3,089

\$2,630  
Week One \$2,630

**TOGETHER  
WE CAN MAKE A  
DIFFERENCE**

JOIN US IN REACHING OUR  
MONTHLY GOAL

**DONATE  
TODAY!**

ST. MEL'S PARISH



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We are a Safe Church Community.  
We promote the safety, wellbeing  
and inclusion of all and a zero  
tolerance to abuse.

St Mel's Parish Safeguarding officer  
is Trish Mathisen. Ph: 0428 213 757

To find out more ways on how you can help improve our Parochial  
Community please contact Mel at **(03) 5831 2194**  
Tuesdays to Thursdays, between 9:30am to 2:30 pm  
email: [sheppartonsouth@sandhurst.catholic.org.au](mailto:sheppartonsouth@sandhurst.catholic.org.au)  
or visit our website at [www.smps.org.au](http://www.smps.org.au)