

Spirituality of the Readings - The Call

If today has been “one of those days” for any of us, meaning stressful and tiring, maybe we could let the readings for Sunday bring us home for a while. We could look especially at the Second Reading, taken from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

- **It calls us to “live with humility.”**

Humility call us to accept all that we are and all we are not. We do not have to be perfect in order to be beloved. Lives that have to be huge and greatly respected and listened to and in control are based on fear, not humility. Gradually we could try to accept the love God has for us, the love that makes us safe.

- **It calls us to “live with gentleness.”**

This can be a little more difficult. Commercials say that women have to be beautiful at all times or be rejected. They must take care of others, be happy with their detergent, be as strong as men seem, keep up the social calendar, and have a full time job as well. These are some of the pressures advertising puts on women. But relax. God is the gentlest receiver of all, milder than any product, milder than the air we breathe. **Relax. We are enough.** We are loved by God, who is infinitely gentle.

And culture tells males that gentleness is just for women and children. Men have to be tough, all tough, and only tough. This is false. Both men’s and women’s bodies and minds have the capacity to be strong, but peace comes from balancing toughness with tenderness toward our mates, our families, our religious brothers and sisters, our elders, our friends.

- **It calls us to “live with patience.”**

Patience is often defined as “bearing pains or trials calmly or without complaint.” This is a good enough definition, but did you know that the Latin origin of the word patience (*patior*) means “to allow”? We are to allow the gift of real life in all its forms, not push it away simply because there is too much else to do. God gives us ourselves one minute at a time, one hour at a time, not sooner.

If we want “to have it all and have it now” we are going against our nature. Each moment, each flower, each step is precious if we let it be. We are to accept the gifts of the compassionate giver and let be.

- **It calls us “to bear with one another through love.”**

Think how wonderful it would be if someone were to bear with you, even when you mess up. You would not have to be anything but your own adequate self, loved by God, able to bear up under the surprisingly light burden of loving others.

- **Finally, it calls us “to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace.”**

One Lord,
one faith,
one Baptism,
one God and Father of all,
who is over all and through all and in all.

We are all to keep this Lord before our eyes. The God who gives lasting peace.

It is our hope and our call. It is the “barley loaf,” the “one bread” we will receive in our own hands on Sunday (First Reading and Gospel).

One bread, one body, one Lord of all.

John Foley, SJ

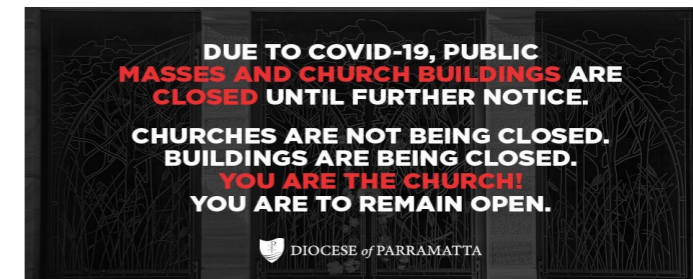
Fr. John Foley, SJ, is a composer and scholar at Saint Louis University

St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin



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THE GOSPEL

John 6:1-15

Jesus went up on the mountain, and there he sat down with his disciples. The Jewish feast of Passover was near.

The large crowd was coming to him.
They were hungry for his words
and to get some food.

There was a boy with
five loaves and two fish.

The mysterious and
plentiful power of God,
who uses what we have.

They ate more than their fill,
and so much was left over.

Lord,

Please take the gifts of our lives,
bless them, grow them,
make them holy.

Let us use them
to care for this needy world.

Anne Osdieck

THE SECOND READING

Ephesians 4:1-6

One body, one Spirit.

On
the mountain,
with loaves and fishes,

you made
all the people
who came to you
one

in the sharing of
the food.

Now, through our bread and wine,
which are your body and blood,
come into us, please.

Make us one in
in the sharing
of your
life.

Anne Osdieck

Today's Readings: 2 Kg 4:42-44; Eph 4:1-6; Jn 6:1-15

Entrance Antiphon: God is in his holy place, God who unites those who dwell in his house; he himself gives might and strength to his people.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 144:10-11, 15-18

R. The hand of the Lord feeds us; he answers all our needs.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all his benefits.

Next Week: Ex 16:2-4, 12-15; Eph 4:17, 20-24; Jn 6:24-35



Sick: Lisa Vaughan, Susie Ziino, James Wallace, Mischa Damaguc and family, Margaret Day, Adam McCully, Christopher Coombs, Kate Moore, Luca Hurley **and all Private Intentions.**
Due to the strict privacy laws, names of the deceased and sick can only be included in the Bulletin with the express permission of the immediate family. Thank you.

Parish and Local Community News

NSW COVID SAFE CHECK-IN: St Thomas Aquinas Parish has registered with the NSW Government for our Check-in QR Code and will be implanting this when our Masses resume. Further information will be imparted as soon as available.

SPRINGWOOD COMMUNITY GARDEN: The Community Garden needs small round 10cm pots. If anyone has some spare, please call Elizabeth Farrar on 0409 849 186. Thank you. Apologies that 10mm pots were advertised. The typist got trigger happy :)

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL LIVESTREAMED MASS: Mass will be livestreamed daily from St Patrick's Cathedral via their Facebook page and YouTube channel. Copy the link to join on YouTube. <https://tinyurl.com/stpatsyoutube>. Livestreamed Mass Times: Monday to Friday 6.30am and 12.30pm, Saturday 6.00pm and Sunday 11.00am.

THE WELL: 'The Well' offers spiritual nourishment during lockdown. If you need some inspiration and spiritual encouragement check out The Well. The Diocese's 'on demand' streaming site has a tonne of video and prayer resources for you to explore and engage with during this difficult time. Check it out on www.thewell.org.au.

VINNIES METROPOLITAN SCHOOLS & YOUTH NEWSLETTER: Vinnies is proud to announce that over \$3 million was raised at the 2021 CEO sleepout for NSW to help those who need it most. Please click on the attached link to read the Term 3 newsletter from Vinnies:

PASTORAL COUNCIL FORMATION AND TRAINING SESSION: The next Parish, Deanery and Diocesan pastoral council formation and training session will be held on Wednesday, 28th July from 7.30pm to 9.00pm via Zoom. This session will be on 'Listening to the Heart of our Faith' and presented by Donnie Velasco from the Diocese Formation for Mission Team. Register at <https://tinyurl.com/326esvk6>. For any further information, please contact Tanya Quinn on tanya.quinn@parracatholic.org or phone 0459 133 665.

MASS FOR YOU AT HOME: Many people who are isolated, in hospital or do not have the internet, rely on Mass For You at Home. The Catholic Mass is broadcast free-to-air each Sunday morning on Channel 10 and WIN at 6.00am. Find some familiar faces from the Diocese of Parramatta celebrating Mass over the coming weeks. Find out more at www.massforyou.com.au.

In the middle of difficulty, lies opportunity

CONFIRMATION 2021

First and only meeting: Tuesday, 17th August, 7pm in the Church.

If you can not make this meeting, then you will have to undertake this Sacrament next year.

You are to bring along a COPY your Child's Baptism Certificate to this night along with the **Confirmation Enrolment form.** (Either completed prior or on the evening – see website for enrolment form).

Groups will be formed on the evening and group leaders will be required for each group for this Sacrament to proceed.

Commitment of the Candidates will take place at any of the Parish Masses on Saturday 21st August or Sunday 22nd August.

Weekly meetings will commence the week thereafter, a maximum of 45-60 minutes duration and undertaken via zoom. These meetings will run for a period of 4 weeks.

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be on the evening of Wednesday, 22nd September.

There will be number restrictions per family. These numbers will be confirmed once candidate numbers are established.

A Prayer in Lockdown

Every present God,

be with us in our isolation,
 be close to us in our distancing,
 be healing in our sickness,
 be joy in our sadness,
 be light in our darkness,
 be wisdom in our confusion,
 be all that is familiar when all is unfamiliar,
 that when the doors reopen
 we may be with the zeal of Pentecost
 inhabit our communities
 and speak of your goodness
 to an emerging world.
 For Jesus' sake.

Amen.



World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

Pope Francis has proclaimed the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly this Sunday, 25th July. It is marked near the feast of Sts. Joachim and Anne, the grandparents of Jesus.

PRAYER FOR THE FIRST WORLD DAY FOR GRANDPARENTS AND THE ELDERLY

I thank You, Lord,
 for the comfort of Your presence:
 even in times of loneliness,
 You are my hope and my confidence,
 You have been my rock and my fortress since my youth!

I thank You for having given me a family
 and for having blessed me with a long life.
 I thank You for moments of joy and difficulty,
 for the dreams that have already come true in my life
 and for those that are still ahead of me.
 I thank You for this time of renewed fruitfulness
 to which You call me.

Increase, O Lord, my faith,
 make me a channel of your peace,
 teach me to embrace those who suffer more than me,
 to never stop dreaming
 and to tell of your wonders to new generations.

Protect and guide Pope Francis and the Church,
 that the light of the Gospel might reach the ends of the earth.
 Send Your Spirit, O Lord, to renew the world,
 that the storm of the pandemic might be calmed,
 the poor consoled and wars ended.

Sustain me in weakness
 and help me to live life to the full
 in each moment that You give me,
 in the certainty that you are with me every day,
 even until the end of the age.

Amen.

