

Spirituality of the Readings - Keep On Asking

One summer night a thicket of ducks quacked its way across the lake and dropped into a tree or two near the screened-in porch where I, on retreat, sat. Their loud, non-stop, ever-increasing racket shocked me. Each and every citizen, it seemed, felt a duty to squawk in full voice and all at once! I suppose they were having a rollicking good time, but what did they achieve with their babble?

I had assumed that they came for an evening’s rest. But could anyone rest with this earsplitting quack-talk?

There began a subtle change in the clatter, very gradual, as when applause reaches a peak and then, almost unnoticeably, crests and trails off. Each bird gave a bit of quiet to the next until everyone was comfortable and calm.

Except one.

This individual went on and on cawing, absurdly, all by itself.

Imagine it.

Then at last a duck-mate nudged it and said, “Hey, buddy we’re all around you and we’re safe. Zip up your beak.” And it did. There ensued the sleepy silence that I had thought they wanted all along.

I saw that this was teamwork.

I have always loved to be included in a team. Nobody perfect, yet everyone having a special place, keeping the rules, moving along together, and someone comforting the one who can’t take a hint. Today I suppose we would call it community. Or family.

God confirms this in the First Reading.

I will gather the blind and the lame, ... the mothers and those with child; they shall return as an immense throng. They departed in tears, but I will console them and guide them; I will lead them to brooks of water, on a level road, so that none shall stumble.

My duck friends seemed to be symbols of these readings. Their alarms, and finally their trusting slumber maybe weren’t so different from what we ourselves do. Our loud-longing is heard by God, who is saying, “Hush, the whole flock is here. Settle down.”

Like the last duck, Blind Bartimaeus in Sunday’s Gospel couldn’t stop calling out to Jesus. “Son of David have pity on me!” The rest of the flock tried to shush him, but he kept right on. Over and over, “Son of David have pity on me!”

He waded through the crowd to Jesus, who asked him the same question the squawking ducks should have: “What do you want?” In this case it was obvious. A blind man would want his sight back.

Did Jesus miss this?

“Master, I want to see.”

Just getting his sight back would not have done it, any more than just landing in the trees did the ducks. He already had the incarnate God standing before him, and maybe this was the fullness of what he wanted to “see.”

“Your faith has saved you,” Jesus said. And the man saw. And followed.

If Jesus asked you or me, “what do you want,” how would we answer? Is the faith that saves us hiding deep inside? Are we able to call for help? Such a call can be fulfilled this very day, you know, if we let it.

“What do you want?”

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

St Thomas Aquinas Parish Bulletin



168 Hawkesbury Road, Springwood, NSW, 2777
PO Box 4410, Winmalee, NSW 2777
Parish Office: 02 4754 1052

Parish Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday 8.30 am - 3.30 pm
Parish Email: springwood@parracatholic.org
Parish Website: www.stchurchspringwood.org.au
Parish Facebook Page: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood
Parish Priest: Fr Paul Slyney - 4754 1052 *Emergency ONLY:* 0418 461 316
Assistant Priest: Fr Shinto Francis - 4754 1052 *Emergency ONLY:* 0415 077 969

Weekend Masses: Saturday Vigil Mass 5.00 pm, Sunday 8.00 am and 9.30 am
Weekday Mass: Tuesday - Saturday 9.30 am

Rosary & Devotions: Tuesday - Saturday 9.00 am
Adoration, Rosary & Chaplet: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of every month, 7.30 - 8.30 pm
Intercession & Adoration: None until further notice

Baptisms: 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month - 10.30am and by appointment
Reconciliation: By request
Weddings: By appointment - restricted numbers
Funerals: By appointment - restricted numbers

100 person limit at each Mass.
QR Sign on required

A Poem to Sit With

They departed in tears, but I will console them and guide them; I will lead them to brooks of water, on a level road, so that none shall stumble. (Jer 31:9)

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

At the hospital
of the dying
she knows that although
they have lived as animals
they must die as angels
Her living hope
to do something beautiful
for God.

J. Janda

THE GOSPEL

Mark 10:46-52

But he kept calling out all the more.

Jesus,
We are begging
for sight.
We want to “see” our way
to the end of the virus,
to see how
to end the climate crisis;
to end racial injustice;
human trafficking
and poverty.
Son of David, have
pity on us.
Give us Bartimaeus’ faith
and his sight.

Anne Osdieck

Today’s Readings: Jer 31:7-9; Heb 5:1-6; Mk 10:46-52

Entrance Antiphon: Let the hearts that seek the Lord rejoice; turn to the Lord and his strength; constantly seek his face.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 125

R. The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Our Saviour Jesus Christ has done away with death, and brought us life through his gospel. Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon: We will ring out our joy at your saving help and exult in the name of our God.



Recently Deceased: David Bartush

Sick: Evelyn Robinson, 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

SPRINGWOOD EAST TIMOR SUPPORT GROUP: CAKE STALL - THE SETSG will again be conducting a CAKES STALL in the Town Square on Saturday, 20th November from 10:00am. Your support is appreciated. Funds will support the Educational and Health projects in Timor Leste. Anyone wishing to supply cakes, slices, jams etc please contact Dennis Farrar 47517096.

POSITIONS VACANT: Human Resources Partner – Catholic Diocese of Parramatta Services Limited, Diocese of Parramatta. More details at: parracatholic.org/employment

DIOCESE OF PARRAMATTA TRIBUNAL IS OPEN: The Tribunal of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Parramatta remains open and committed to assisting anyone with enquiries regarding marriage annulments. Interviews are being conducted via telephone and Zoom in response to COVID-19. Please contact the Tribunal office on (02) 8838 3480 or email tribunal@parracatholic.org.

ST THOMAS AQUINAS RECORDED MASS: *Fr Paul would be honoured if you could join him each week* - Every week *since March 2020*, Fr Paul has recorded Mass at Lawson and it is uploaded onto our Website and Facebook pages every Saturday morning. You are able to view at any time. Web: www.stchurchspringwood.org.au or Facebook: St Thomas Aquinas Catholic Community Springwood.

2022 JOSEPHITE CALENDARS: Inspiration for daily life from the writings of St Mary MacKillop and Fr Julian Tenison Woods with attractive coloured photos taken by the Sisters and Associates Dates to Remember... + Key events in the life of Mary MacKillop and Julian Tenison Woods + Significant dates in Josephite history + Liturgical Calendar and Feasts of the Catholic Church + Public Holidays + School term dates for Australia + Phases of the Moon + Pull out Yearly Planner 2022, which may also be suitable for recording rainfall. \$8.00 along with a contribution to postage. Sisters of St Joseph NSW Locked Bag 3031 BURWOOD NSW 1805, Phone (b/h) 02 8741 2333, josephitecalendar@sosj.org.au

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.

Our stories are our heritage, and our heritage is who we are. The new [Blue Plaques program](#) announced by the NSW Government aims to capture the key personalities, events and places that are important to those stories, and make them available for everyone to read and enjoy.

The essence of the [Blue Plaques program](#) is the storytelling and the NSW Government are looking for stories that are interesting, fun and quirky, as well as those serious and sombre stories that should be never be forgotten as part of our history. They're looking for stories that connect us with places and events involving for example (but not limited to):

- ◆ Aboriginal people, heritage, culture
- ◆ early European settlement
- ◆ migrant heritage
- ◆ social movements and change
- ◆ wartime history
- ◆ industrial advancements
- ◆ arts and culture
- ◆ sport
- ◆ historic events that have shaped the story of your area and NSW
- ◆ and stories of ordinary people who have done extraordinary things (your local heroes)

WANT TO NOMINATE A BLUE PLAQUE? Read the information and download the nomination form online. This first round of nominations closes on Sunday 31 October:

<https://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/celebrate/love-your-local-heritage/blue-plaques-nsw/>



Pope Francis: A healthy environment is right of every human being

In a message to the Council of Europe, Pope Francis reiterates his call for immediate action to protect our common home. The message was sent on the occasion of a panel of discussion on environment and human rights organised by the Council's Assembly in preparation for the COP26 on climate change.

Ahead of the COP26 in Glasgow, the Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has convened a high-level panel and interactive debate on the theme: "The environment and human rights". The "right to a safe, healthy and sustainable environment" was the focus of its Autumn Session which took place from 27 to 30 September 2021.

In a video message to the participants, Pope Francis commended the initiative and the Council of Europe's efforts on this fundamental issue, reiterating his call for immediate action for the care of our common home.

He said that the Holy See, although an Observer nation, follows with particular attention all the Organisation's activity in this regard, "in the conviction that every concrete initiative and decision which can improve the dramatic situation facing our planet's health must be supported and valued."

Earth is greatest resource God has given us

He recalled his previous address to the PACE of 25 November 2014, in which he reminded that the earth "is the greatest resource which God has given to us and is at our disposal not to be disfigured, exploited, and degraded, but so that (...) we can live in this world with dignity."

He also referred to his Encyclical Letter *Laudato si'* highlighting the importance of caring for our common home, as "a universal principle that involves not only the Christians, but every person of good will who has the protection of the environment at heart."

While commending the convening of the debate as a "valid contribution" to the COP26, Pope Francis pointed out that any initiative of the Council of Europe should not be limited to the European continent, but **"reach out to the whole world"**.

This is why, he said, the Council's determination to create of a new legal framework linking the care of environment to the respect of fundamental human rights is particularly appreciated by the Holy See.

Change of course urgently needed

The message further noted that "when the human being considers himself the master of the universe and not its responsible steward, he or she justifies any kind of waste and treats the other people and nature as mere objects," denying "the fundamental right of every person to live with dignity and to develop integrally."

The Holy Father, therefore, warned against modern consumerism, which has caused so much damage, reiterating his call for a "change of course".

"Everything is connected, and as a family of nations, we must have a common concern: to see that the environment is cleaner, purer and preserved. And take care of nature, so that it takes care of us," he said.

A collective responsibility

He, therefore, insisted on the "individual and collective responsibilities" to ensure everybody's right to a "safe, healthy and sustainable environment," especially for the future generations.

Finally, Pope Francis expressed his hope that the Parliamentary Assembly and the Council of Europe will be able "to identify, promote and implement, with determination, all the initiatives necessary to build a healthier, fairer and more sustainable world."

With thanks to Vatican News and Lisa Zengarini, where this article originally appeared.

Be awesome,
Be amazing,
Be you.

On Monday, 18th October all Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 12 students returned to school. Next Monday, 25th October Years 2 to 6 and Years 7 to 11 return to school.

We pray that each day is filled with happiness, health, peace, learning and fun.