

## Glancing Thoughts

### Not Far From the Kingdom of Heaven

In the Gospel Reading, a scribe asks Jesus, "Which is the first of all the commandments?"

Maybe the point of asking this question is like the point of asking, "what are the most important requirements for this course?" A student who wants that information is trying to figure out what is crucial for passing the course. In his view, if he does the most important thing, maybe he doesn't have to do everything else.

In response to the scribe's question, Jesus tells him not only the commandment that is the first of all but also the one that is second. Taken together the two commandments cover the ground. "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.... [And] you shall love your neighbour as yourself."

So if the scribe does just the most important things, he will have done pretty close to everything, won't he? If he was hoping for a way to get through without doing everything required for the kingdom of heaven, these two commandments will show him that he hasn't got a chance. If he doesn't do everything, he will have done virtually nothing, because he will have failed at the most important stuff.

There is something that the scribe likes about the answer of Jesus: it privileges morality above ritual. And so the scribe thinks that he has found something that isn't crucial for getting into heaven. Yes, the scribe says to Jesus affirmingly, *obeying these two commandments is better than sacrifice.*

Jesus doesn't disagree. But what he says to the scribe is, "you are not far from the kingdom of God."

Not far?! How can the scribe be distant in any way if he understands these commandments and accepts them as most important for the kingdom of heaven?

But here is the thing to see. What person among us loves God with all his heart? Who loves his neighbour as himself? If obeying these commandments is the most important thing for getting into heaven, what hope is there for anybody?



The answer is—Jesus. He is the Saviour, who came to rescue people from their failures to obey the most important commandments.

All true hope of the kingdom of heaven lies in him.

And so the scribe, who is next to Jesus, is not far from the kingdom of heaven in more than one sense.

*Eleonore Stump*

*Eleonore Stump is Professor of Philosophy, Saint Louis University*

### Rosary Devotion at St Thomas Aquinas Church:

You are welcome to join other Parishioners for Rosary Devotion every Monday - Friday at 9.00am.



## 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](mailto:springwood@parracatholic.org)  
**Parish Website:** [www.stachurchspringwood.org.au](http://www.stachurchspringwood.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 Devotion:** Tuesday - Friday 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

*Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone!*  
(Dt 6:4)

#### Bluegrass

This earth has an age like me

and when our energy is spent

we shall leave behind

what helped us come to see

#### Love

clothed with the universe.

*J. Janda*

### THE GOSPEL

*Mark 12:28b-34*

*Jesus replied, ... you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.*

Christ, so we never forget,

write on our hearts that you want us to love you with our whole soul, our whole mind, and our whole understanding, and with every ounce of our strength.

And let our love for you spill over to our neighbour.

And let all of our love of neighbour come back to you.

So that all things work together when we love God.

*Anne Osdieck*

**Today's Readings:** Deut 6:2-6; Heb 7:23-28; Mk 12:28-34

**Entrance Antiphon:** Forsake me not, O Lord, my God; be not far from me! Make haste and come to my help, O Lord, my strong salvation!

**Responsorial Psalm:** Psalm 17:2-4, 47, 51

R. I love you, Lord, my strength.

**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!

**Communion Antiphon:** You will show me the path of life, the fullness of joy in your presence, O Lord.



**Recently Deceased: David Bartush, Colleen Lusty**

**Sick:** Gerry Thistleton, Roshan Rupesinghe, 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**

**POSITIONS VACANT:** Human Resources Partner – Catholic Diocese of Parramatta Services Limited, Diocese of Parramatta. More details at: [parracatholic.org/employment](http://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](mailto:tribunal@parracatholic.org).

**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](http://www.massforyou.com.au).

**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/>

**SYNOD OF BISHOPS:** Catholics across Australia are invited to participate in a period of local consultation for the next international Synod of Bishops, which has the theme: "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation and Mission". The People of God are invited to use a guided, prayerful reflection method to consider a series of questions and make submissions via an online portal. Those submissions will help the Bishops develop a national report to support the global process leading to an international gathering in 2023. Find out more at: <http://www.catholic.org.au/synodalchurch>

**Penrith Regional Gallery, Home of the Lewers Bequest**

As part of the Archibald Prize 2020 coming to Penrith Regional Gallery, Home of the Lewers Bequest, they will be hosting the **Young Archie Penrith Regional Gallery** - an exhibition of portraits by young people from our local community, aged 5 - 18 years.

**Young artists are invited to submit a portrait** of someone who is special to them and plays a significant role in their life. Drop off your artworks by Sunday, 7th November at the Gallery reception or post it to Penrith Regional Gallery.

For further information, head to <https://www.penrithregionalgallery.com.au/young-archie-prg/>

**Image: Finalist 5-8 yr olds / Lily Jackson, Age 8 / My Dad, Credit: Art Gallery of NSW**



**November – Month of the Holy Souls**

*November is the month that we remember family and friends that have gone before us in faith.*

**On the 1st November we celebrate All Saints Day.**

**The 2nd November is the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day).**

*Respect for people who have gone before us encourages us to see our world as a gift that is entrusted to us to nurture, and not something simply to be used, exploited and altered as we please. The memory of the dead leads us to gratitude for the way in which they have shaped our lives and possibilities. It also encourages gratitude for the world in which we are part of. This gives depth to the way in which we live.*

**NOVEMBER MASS FOR DEPARTED SOULS**

**Wednesday, 24th November, 7.00pm**  
**St Thomas Aquinas Church**

*ALL Parishioners are invited to attend Mass which will be celebrated for the **Rest** of the Souls of family members.*

*A candle ceremony will be part of the celebration of the Mass, so if you would like your loved one remembered by lighting a candle, which your family member will place on the Sanctuary, please contact the Parish Office no later than Tuesday, 23rd November.*

*A framed photo of you loved one can be placed on the Sanctuary **before** the commencement of Mass.*



**HSC Students 2021**



*We wish all of the students in our Parish community sitting their HSC exams the very, very best. Be kind to yourselves and do the very best you can do on the day. To all the mums, dads, siblings and other family members which make up the village of supporting your HSC students, thank you and good luck.*

*You are invited to a short, live streamed broadcast on the CYP Facebook page for students and your families on Sunday, 7th November at 8:00pm.*

*The broadcast will include a blessing by Bishop Vincent.*

*Here is the link: <https://www.facebook.com/catholicyouthparra>.*