

Food Drive

Another generous contribution for the Food Drive for Refugees has been donated by Our Lady of Nativity parishioners and plans have been made to arrange another delivery to the **House of Welcome**. This concludes our food drive at this time. However, the need is still great and it is possible to donate money or supermarket food vouchers. These donations can be made to either the Jesuit Refugee service, jrs.org.au/donate-now or the House of Welcome stfrancis.org.au/house-of-welcome/make-donation-house-welcome. Food vouchers can be posted to The House of Welcome 197 The Trongate South Granville 2142.

Many thanks to everyone who has responded with such great enthusiasm and generosity. □

Maureen and Carol

Blue Mountains Deanery Pastoral Council.

KINDER ENROLMENT 2021

We are currently taking names of children who will be commencing Kindergarten in 2021.

If your child will commence Kinder in 2021 please ring the Our Lady of the Nativity School Office on 47532200 and ask for an Enrolment pack to be sent out.

Office for Worship Liturgical Ministry Formation Course .

The Office For Worship's Liturgical Ministry Formation course will recommence in August at both the Institute for Mission, Blacktown and St Nicholas of Myra Parish, Penrith. Two workshops on Liturgical Ministry will also be provided in October at St Finbar's Parish, Glenbrook. Note: due to restrictions there are limited places available. For more information, contact the Office for Worship on anne.alimangohan@parracatholic.org

Life, Marriage and Family Office Pre-Marriage Weekends.

The Life, Marriage and Family Office will recommence their pre-marriage education courses from the weekend of 24th and 26th July 2020. Social distancing and hygiene measures will be in place, with other arrangements to be made if government requirements change. To view course dates for the remainder of 2020 and to book and pay for your preferred pre-marriage course, visit www.parracatholic.org/pmp or call (02) 8838 3460.

Share your Good News Stories!

Thank you for all that you continue to do to share the love and peace of God. Our Pastoral Planning Office welcomes your good news stories of hope and encouragement during COVID-19 to share with parishes and communities across our Diocese. If you have a good news story to offer, please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/goodnewsstory>

***Our Lady of Nativity Parish Bulletin .***

254 Great Western Highway, Lawson, NSW 2783. **PO BOX 44, Lawson, 2783.**

Phone: 4759 1034.

Email: olon3@bigpond.com / lawson@parracatholic.org

Parish Website: www.lawsoncatholicchurch.org.au

Parish Priest: Fr Paul Slyney - 4754 1052. **Emergency:** 0418 461 316

Assistant Priest: Fr Michael Gathuku - 4754 1052. **Emergency:** 0474 272 605

Parish Office Hours:

Thursdays & Fridays 9.30 am - 3.30 pm.

The Church will be open for private prayer during these hours.

Weekend Masses:

Saturday 5:00 PM. Sunday 8:00 AM & 9:00 AM.

Weekday Mass:

5:00PM Tuesday and Wednesday and 9:00 AM Thursday. **30 people only at each Mass. Call the parish office to confirm your attendance at the Mass of your choice.**

Covid-19 and social distancing restrictions apply to all Masses.

Baptisms:

By appointment. Call the parish office.

Reconciliation:

By appointment - Call the parish office.

Weddings:

By appointment six months notice. Call the parish office.

Funerals:

By appointment. Call the parish office.

As we might remember, **King Solomon** was noted far and wide for his wise decisions (**First Reading**). It is said that the Queen of Sheba travelled to him to get advice. How did he get so wise? Did he just inherit it from his father, David? No, he prayed touchingly to God for a certain kind of wisdom. He did not ask how to increase his fortune or to be well-known or to have power. He asked God for an understanding heart. He would use it to rule God's people well. God was moved by this request and gave Solomon great practical wisdom so he could be on the side of the regular folks. How many leaders today even listen to the people, let alone listen with understanding?

Perhaps the deepest wisdom this Sunday is in the **Second Reading**. You or I have undoubtedly quoted its words, not remembering where they came from: "All things work for the good for those who love God." The older I get, the more true this seems. Even when darkness and loss become our daily bread, still the love of God labours incessantly to bring out larger love, larger forgiveness, more acceptance of life, and love even within pain. This is food we all need every day.

Sunday, if we find a way of attending Mass, or even if not, we can pay attention to such a variety of wisdom. The important thing is not to just sit there and gape. Do what every other human being in the world would do if they were given a glimpse into the kingdom.

What is it?

"Whistle, you fool"?

Not really. Maybe just listen with an understanding heart.

John Foley SJ.

**Recently Deceased:**

Anniversaries: Sr. Helen Micallef sgs & Anne Riley.

Sick: Fr Theo Arrivoli, Rob Nickl, Tochillo Brown, Maurice Rooney, Lan Franco Matteucci, John Newman, Raymond Plumridge, Theresa Stockton, Shane O'Neill 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 permission of the immediate family. Thank you..*

Meditation is also a contemplative practice into gentleness. To help us understand this, we can use a story from the Gospel of Luke (Luke 4:16-30). The story is about Jesus going back to his hometown of Nazareth and the local synagogue (probably the one he attended with his family growing up). While there he effectively announces his mission statement, using the words of the prophet Isaiah:

The spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring his good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord. (Luke 4:18-19, NJB) In the story Jesus speaks well, and all are impressed – and surprised. They have a certain idea about Jesus: he is Joseph's son. What they are hearing now, and what they are seeing, does not sit with the image they have. The people who think they know Jesus do not really know him. Assumptions and judgements already long made do not change. Jesus stands in his own authority before them and still they fall back on what they think they know: 'This is Joseph's son, surely?' In response to this Jesus dares to compare himself with the prophets Elijah and Elisha; he also compares his fellow Nazarenes to those in the time of Elijah and Elisha, people who also could not see what was in front of them: another prophet of God who cannot do much with people of closed mind and fixed attitude. This puts people in a rage. How dare Jesus compare them to those who rejected Elijah and Elisha, and who does think is anyway! They take hold of Jesus, drag him out of town and are all set to throw him off a cliff, presumably to his death.

Let's pause the story here for a moment and look at the crowd in a different way; let's look at the crowd allegorically rather than literally. The locals of Nazareth, those who cannot change their minds, let's associate them with our own deep-seated attitudes and judgements. We all have, to some degree, attitudes and judgements that can hold us back from change, from seeing people and things as they really are. And, of course, we also have thinking and emotion that operate more at the surface of the mind; those daily concerns about things, as well as our own everyday worries and anxiety. Let's say that all these levels of mind, from the more surface distractions to those deeply held attitudes and judgements, all of these are like a crowd in the mind distracting us and pushing attention away from the now of present moment. How can we move past this crowd of the mind and into the heart, where we are in and with God?

Should we start pushing back at the crowd in our minds, pushing and yelling at them to leave us alone? Or perhaps we could let the crowded mind have its way with us, resign ourselves to it? This part of the gospel story of Luke chapter 4 is instructive for us. Jesus does not push back nor does he resign himself to the crowd. What does he do? The story says '... he passed straight through the crowd and walked away.' He did not respond to them, he simply passed through them. Remember the crowd here is the crowd in our minds. Could it be possible that we can do what Jesus did with his crowd and simply pass through this crowd of the mind and walk away? Yes, it is possible. How then, can this be done? This passing through is the way of the mantra. In the practice of attending and re-attending to the mantra we learn the art of not looking at or responding to the crowd within and simply passing through them. This happens as we practice, a practice that is faithful, one that is not done with results in mind, but done growing in the Fruit of the Spirit. This is the shape of our perseverance. Simply say your word while both this word and the attention we give it are rooting in, and fading into, a silent and loving heart.

OUR LADY OF THE NATIVITY SCHOOL

7 Somers Street, Lawson.

Phone: 4753 2200

Email: oln@parra.catholic.edu.au

Principal: Mrs Lisa Samojlowicz

SANTA MARIA CONFERENCE CENTRE

Available for meetings, functions and conferences



As we practice, the divine life within us moves, changing the crowd from boisterous and rigid to quiet and open. We can now say a little more here about the way we say this word: we must say our word gently. John Main said, ...we must approach our task and follow our way [of saying the word] with simplicity, with humility and with gentleness. We must learn to be very gentle with ourselves as we learn to root the mantra in the heart. Only the smallest effort is required.

The Way of Unknowing (Wipf and Stock, 1990), 129.

The way of saying the word requires only the smallest effort. It is not a way of force. The mantra is not a sledgehammer busting up the rock of our thinking; this is yelling and pushing at the crowd. Over time, and we are talking perhaps many years, practicing this smallest effort of attention on the mantra will have attention passing through all in the mind that seeks our attention. Attending with the smallest, most gentle effort, is all that is needed to keep the mantra moving into the heart. To say the mantra, perhaps most importantly, is a practice of gentleness. To practice gently is to become still.

This 'smallest effort' is like the faintest breath on a feather, the smallest breeze on a leaf. This is all that is required. Grace does the rest.

As we practice this gentle art of the mantra we silently and imperceptibly grow in the very gentleness we are practicing. Like Jesus, in this gentleness, we pass through the crowd. This is how we walk our way into the heart and grow in all the fruit of the Spirit.

Adrian van Kaam, a Christian spiritual and psychological teacher from the second half of last century wrote:

Gentleness transformed by divine grace is the royal road to Divine Presence

Spirituality and the Gentle Life (Dimension, 1974), 11.

This is what happens as we meditate. The fruit of gentleness grows in us becoming the gentleness we live in as who we are. Gentleness then becomes the 'royal road', the way in which we 'pass through' the crowded mind and into the divine presence at the heart of consciousness.

Andrew McAlister online Blog "Lines from Inbetween."