



**St John  
Vianney**  
Parish Morisset



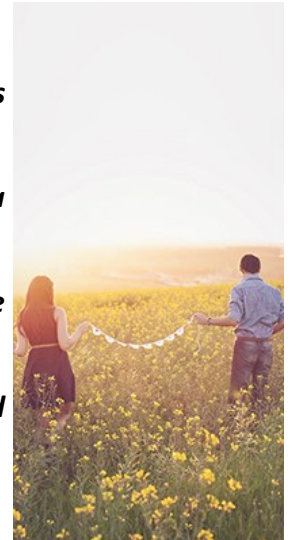
**TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B 06 OCTOBER 2024**

*The Pharisees in today's Gospel tried to trip Jesus up with their laws. Even as Jesus sparred with their legalism, he modeled a different way of being in relationship.*

*Pope Francis has consistently said that the Church is not a museum for saints but a hospital which heals the wounded, strengthens the weak and lifts up the lowly.*

*Our very credibility is at stake when we lack merciful and compassionate love for those who are struggling or are removed and disengaged with the lived reality.*

*Let us endeavour to be the Church where everyone can feel welcomed, forgiven, loved and encouraged to live according to the Gospel.*



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of this land, the Awabakal People who, long before us lived, loved, educated and raised their children on this Country. We pay our respects to Elders past and present and we recognise the young people who are our future. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families in our communities. We respect their deep physical and spiritual connections to Country through their stories, traditions and living cultures.

**PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM:** Uta France  
John France

**PRIEST SUPERVISOR:** Fr Joseph Figuardo

**SACRAMENTAL PRIESTS:** Fr Greg Barker VG  
Fr Darryl Mackie  
Fr Raphael Madukwe  
Fr John Purnell

**PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL:** Juliet Hutchins  
Mal Melvey  
Pam Melvey  
Kerry Lendon  
Rod Hay

**PARISH SECRETARY:** Rosanna Suckling

**PARISH OFFICE:** 60 Yambo Street, Morisset, PO Box 87, Ph: 02 4973.6859  
**Office Hours:** 9.00 am to 2.00pm—Monday to Friday (except public holidays)  
(We ask that you make an appointment to come to the office)  
**Morisset Parish Office email:** [morparish@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:morparish@mn.catholic.org.au)  
**Morisset Parish Web site:** [www.vianneymorisset.org](http://www.vianneymorisset.org)  
**Morisset Parish Facebook :** <https://www.facebook.com/stjvparish>

**UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :**

Saturday	5th October 5pm Family Mass—Morisset
Sunday	6th October 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Saturday	12th October 5pm Mass—Cooranbong
Sunday	13th October 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	15th October 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Friday	18th October 10.30am Mass—Morisset
Saturday	19th October 5pm Family Mass—Morisset
Sunday	20th October 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	22nd October 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Friday	25th October 10.30am Mass—Morisset
Saturday	26th October 5pm Mass—Cooranbong
Sunday	27th October 9.30am Mass—Morisset
Tuesday	29th October 9.30am Liturgy—Morisset
Friday	1st November 10.30am Mass—Morisset

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## Welcome

Welcome to all our visitors to our Parish of St John Vianney on this 'Long Weekend,' and those new to our Parish. St John Vianney Parish Morisset, was officially formed in 1947, however our Mass center of St Patrick and St Brigid at Cooranbong, dates to the 1860's. The present Cooranbong Church celebrated its centenary in August 2006, and 150 years of Catholic presence in the area was celebrated in 2011.

It is documented that Saint Mary McKillop visited Cooranbong where she had a convent school. Up until 1966 St John Vianney Parish was part of the Diocese of Sydney, but now it is part of the Diocese of Maitland / Newcastle, with Bishop Michael Kennedy as Bishop.

The 9.30am Mass at Morisset is recorded each Sunday and uploaded to the Parish Website and Facebook later in the day, internet allowing.

## Parish Cemetery & Columbarium

St John Vianney Parish has its own Cemetery & Columbarium situated in the beautiful grounds of St Patrick & St Brigid Cooranbong. This parish operated cemetery, which commenced in 1861, is maintained by parish volunteers, and is for Catholics in our area. The cemetery is classified as a Category 3 operation and is compliant with the Cemeteries and Crematoria Act 2013.

Any help in volunteering to maintain the church and the cemetery is appreciated.

For more information contact Rosanna at the Parish Office. Ph:49736859.

## GOSPEL

### Mark 10:2-16

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark

*What God has joined together, no one must divide.*

Some Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, 'Is it against the law for a man to divorce his wife?' They were testing him. He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' 'Moses allowed us' they said 'to draw up a writ of dismissal and so to divorce.' Then Jesus said to them, 'It was because you were so unteachable that he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.' Back in the house the disciples questioned him again about this, and he said to them, 'The man who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another she is guilty of adultery too.' People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

## TWENTY-SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Year B — Reflection 6th October 2024

The Gospel this Sunday is made up of two parts. The first part of the Gospel is about marriage.

I would have to say that sometimes in the past, the law about marriage was harshly and insensitively preached.

How to interpret and apply Jesus' teaching in our time, is challenging. The failure of marriages is a pastoral challenge of

enormous importance for the Church. It is not ours to judge or take sides or cast blame. Pope Francis has tried in many ways to reach out to people who need care, protection and healing.

Like Jesus, we are to be yokemates who listen, pray, console and befriend the broken, the lonely and the alienated. We are always called to treat each other,

with respect and loving care. We are simply companions on the journey, offering support, encouragement and hope.

The second part of the Gospel concludes with the account of Jesus and the children, whom he reaches out to embrace, despite the objections of his disciples.

Jesus says that 'Unless you become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven'.

First, we must distinguish between being childlike and childish. To be Childish implies immaturity, throwing tantrums, etc. But Childlike qualities we should try to hold onto. The child is the one who after falling, gets up and tries again.

Similarly, this story of Jesus and the children must not be limited to one meaning of literal children.

In the Gospels, children are also to be taken as "the little ones".

There are many of them, as life teaches us

So, let us pray today that we may hear and watch for God's ways, learning how to live lives worthy of the Gospel

As Christians we are called to make Christ present in our own lives and in the lives of others. – John France

## 2025 Year C Liturgical Book Orders

If you would to order for the new liturgical year "Break Open the Word" or an "Ordo" or "God's Word 2025" or a copy of "The New Community Bible" please complete an order form at : <https://forms.office.com/r/DbUYaABUEC> or pick up a form at the back of the church or call the parish office.

## Melbourne Cup

It is planned that on Tuesday 5th November 2024 there will be a Melbourne Cup function held in the Callinan Centre. More information as it comes to hand.

## Weekday Mass/Liturgy

There will be NO Mass or Liturgy in the Morisset Church this coming week.

## Christmas Mass Ministries.

Christmas is fast approaching! Please review your calendars. Soon we will be seeking help with Christmas Mass ministries, and general assistance for 'Set up' and 'Pack up'

## DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME.

Daylight Saving begins this Sunday, 6th October at 2am. (Clocks forward 1 Hour). The Saturday Vigil will remain at 5pm. 1st & 3rd weekend at Morisset, 2nd & 4th Cooranbong.

If there happens to be a 5th Saturday, the Vigil is at Cooranbong.

## Parish Office

The Parish Office will be closed from 2pm on Thursday 3rd October and will re-open at 9am on Monday 14th October. You can still contact a member of the Parish Leadership Team by calling the Parish Office Phone Number 4973 6859





The readings for this weekend highlight the bond between man and woman and how, as part of God's plan, two individuals can become "one body". We can look to the symbolism of this

union for a lesson in how two distinct bodies – the local school, the local church – can come together in unity and a shared commitment towards Mission. This year, Catholic Mission is inviting you, as parishioners, to support its fundraising efforts by supporting the students, as they fundraise through Socktober. This year, when the Catholic Mission appeal is conducted in your parish, you can 'give' either through sponsoring the school, on the [Socktober website](#) (thereby showing your support for the school and the efforts of the students) or give through the usual appeal envelope on the weekend of World Mission Sunday (October 19/20). Thank you, in advance, for accepting the call for "two to become one", and unite with, your local school, to support children in need, as well as the homeless and the hungry, in Mongolia.

To follow up Catholic Mission, about any aspect of its work or your support and contact details, please call the Diocesan Director in Maitland/Newcastle, David McGovern on 0431 481 731 or email him at [dmcgovern@catholicmission.org.au](mailto:dmcgovern@catholicmission.org.au)

### With A Light Heart

Nearing the end of a long job interview, the Human Resources Officer asks a young engineer fresh out of university, "And what starting salary are you looking for?"

The engineer replies, "What about \$250,000 a year, depending on the benefits package."

The interviewer replies, "Well, what would you say to a package of five weeks annual leave, 14 paid holidays, full medical and dental, company matching retirement fund to 50% of salary, and a company car leased every two years, say, a Mercedes?"

Delighted, the engineer sits up straight and says, "Wow! Are you kidding?"

The interviewer replies, "Yeah, but you started it."

### Diocesan Resource Centre Events

Address: Diocesan Resource Centre, Corner of Tudor & Parry Streets, Newcastle West

**Story Time:** Stories, songs, rhymes & craft for children from birth to 6 years.

1 November 10.15am - Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge -

REGISTER AT: <https://forms.office.com/r/MSCAZL8ejN>

### Formation Friday:

1 November 1pm to 2pm - Communion of Saints - REGISTER AT:

<https://forms.office.com/r/1jBEVh2ctj>

**Book Club:** Come along and discuss your current read!

19 October 11am at REGISTER AT: <https://forms.office.com/r/3mqnJJuBBs>

[r/3mqnJJuBBs](https://forms.office.com/r/3mqnJJuBBs)

### Human Library:

Insights into Catholic Mission - 25 October at 10:15am REGISTER

AT: <https://forms.office.com/r/X1f5xM55Eu>

**BBI Short Course:** Catholics Faith & Science

28 October & 4 November 4pm to 5.30pm REGISTER AT: <https://forms.office.com/r/8wYqgDUbcm>

[forms.office.com/r/8wYqgDUbcm](https://forms.office.com/r/8wYqgDUbcm)

### Formation Films:

The Miracle Club (Lourdes & St Bernadette) 2 November 11am

REGISTER AT: <https://forms.office.com/r/1jyjLH5GsB>

### Baptism Preparation Program

Baptism is a happy event and a time to ponder God's loving gifts in our lives. For those seeking baptism for their children our baptism preparation programs will usually run in the evenings on the second Tuesday of the Month starting at 7pm, bookings are essential. Our next Program will be held on **Tuesday 8th October 2024**. Bookings can be made online at the link at: <https://forms.office.com/r/wZtatkt01V> or by contacting our Parish Office.

### Hunter Men's Rosary Crusade

On the first Saturday of every month, you are welcome to join the Hunter Men's Rosary Crusade at 10.30am at Sacred Heart Cathedral. The group meets after the 9.15am Mass and Novena, and Reconciliation is offered too.

### 2024 Rosary Rally – The Public Rosary

Join us as we pray for our nation. The Public Rosary is an international campaign to pray the rosary together in commemoration of the last apparition of Our Lady (13 October 1917) at Fatima. It is a great opportunity for prayer groups and communities to join together in public prayer. In 2023, there were 180 groups registered to pray the Rosary throughout Australia. Everyone is invited. <https://fatima.org.au/public-rosary/>

When 11:30AM start on Saturday 12 October 2024

Where: Ken Lambkin Reserve Pacific Highway Belmont South

Enquiries: Joan 0476 636 750 BYO picnic afterwards. (BBQ facility available)

### Public Rosary – Greta and Branxton

St Catherine's Church Greta on Saturday 12 October from 10.00am. As this is an outdoor event, please bring along a chair should you need to be seated during the Rosary.

St Brigid's Branxton on Saturday 12 October from 5.30pm around the statue of Mary in the grounds of the old St Brigid's School.

### Errors with 1st Collection Electronic Payments

We are still receiving electronic payments for the 1st Collection / Clergy account into the church account. Please make sure you are using the following details Account Name: Morisset Parish Presbytery BSB: 066739 No: 100004062 Ref: 1st Collection, or SURNAME for 1st Collection / Clergy support payments.

Phishing is a way scammers try to trick you online



**SUPPORTING THE CLERGY / 1st Collection**

If you would like to make contributions to support the Clergy / 1st Collection please do so at Mass in the BLUE bucket or electronically using the Online Payments button on the Parish Website Home page, Diocese App, Electronic Funds Transfer Only Bank Account Name: Morisset Parish Presbytery BSB: 066739 No: 100004062 Ref: 1st Collection, or SURNAME or contact the parish office to set up a direct debit.

**SUPPORTING OUR PARISH / 2nd Collection**

If you would like to make contributions to support our Parish please do so at Mass via the RED bucket or our Parish Electronic Funds Transfer Only Account the details are: Account Name: Morisset Parish Church BSB:066739 Account Number: 100004064 please use one of the following Payment References PG + your giver number or PG + SURNAME or SURNAME you can also use the Online Payments or Planned Giving button on the Parish Website Home page or the Diocese App. If you are considering taking up **planned giving** you may like to know that **a percentage of the contributions are tax deductible**. If you would like to know more or set up planned giving please contact the Parish Office.

<b>WEEKEND ROSTERS</b>			
		<u>THIS WEEK</u>	<u>NEXT WEEK</u>
<u>PRESIDERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	Mass Mass	Mass Mass
<u>PROCLAIMERS:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	P Melvey L Hutchinson	J France R Hay
<u>PSALMIST:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	M Melvey J Hutchins	H White L McRae
<u>GIFTS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	TBA H White TBA	B Cox TBA P Melvey M Melvey
<u>SERVERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	C Lawandos V Paulo	M Melvey R Lawandos
<u>AV</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Vipan M Fowler	M Foo D Peterson
<u>WELCOMERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	P Melvey H White	P Melvey M Melvey
<u>CHURCH CLEANING</u>	COOR MOR	XXXX C Lawandos K Lendon	TBA R Hat C Hay

*The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and vulnerable adults.*

*Our Parish supports The Diocese in its zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Every one of us must each day commit ourselves individually and collectively to safeguard each child and every vulnerable person to whom we interact with.*

**Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.**

*If you have any concerns for a child or vulnerable person please contact the Office of Safeguarding Phone: 02 4979 1390*

*Email: [childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au),*

*or visit their website for further information:*

*[www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au](http://www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au)*

**UPCOMING FEAST DAYS MEMORIALS AND SOLEMINITIES**

- OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY (M) - 7TH OCT
- SAINT TERESA OF JESUS (M) -15TH OCT
- SAINT IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH (M) -17TH OCT
- SAINT LUKE (F) - 18TH OCT
- SAINTS SIMON AND JUDE (F) - 28TH OCT
- ALL SAINTS (S) - 1ST NOV
- THE COMMEMORATION OF ALL THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED –2ND NOV
- SAINT CHARLES BORROMEIO (M) - 4TH NOV
- THE DEDICATION OF THE LATERAN BASILICA (F) - 9TH NOV
- SAINT MARTIN OF TOURS (M) - 11TH NOV

**Please pray for all those who are sick: in hospital or at home, especially those living with a life threatening disease:**

Frank Simons, Anna Dussin, Mary Carapiet, Koby Smith, Annette Boyd, Mary Monaghan, Clare Wallington, Donna Hazzard, Pam Mullaly, Tintumol Thomas, Peter Martyn, Bernadette Martin, Bruce Gillett.

**Please pray for those who have been called to eternal life may they always be in our prayers.**

Recently Deceased: Monica Gray



**Prayer Requests for the Bulletin**

If you would like the parish to pray for a family member who is sick, recently deceased or you would like remembered please call or email the parish office or complete a prayer card for each person and place in the mail box near the parish office door. Cards are available at the back of the church and at the Parish Office.

All prayer requests require permission from a family member or the person. Due to Australian privacy laws.

**An Act of Spiritual Communion**

My Jesus,  
I believe that You  
are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.  
I love You above all things,  
and I desire to receive You into my soul.  
Since I cannot at this moment  
receive You sacramentally,  
come at least spiritually into my heart.  
I embrace You as if You were already there and unite  
myself wholly to You.  
Never permit me to be separated from You.  
Amen.



*Live stream Mass every Sunday at 9.30am at [www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream](http://www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/live-stream)*



We are committed to the  
**NATIONAL CATHOLIC  
SAFEGUARDING STANDARDS**



**SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE**  
**Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary**  
**Time Year B**  
**Sunday 06 Oct 2024**

**The Introductory Rites**  
**Acknowledgement of Country**

We Acknowledge the Awabakal and Darkinjung nations as the Traditional Custodians who have walked upon and cared for this land our parish encompasses for thousands of years, and honour and pay respect to, Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of reconciliation.

**Gathering**

The Lectionary/Roman Missal or a Bible may be placed on a table together with a candle and a cross.

**Sign of the Cross**

Leader:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

All:

**Amen.**

**Greeting**

Leader:

Blessed be Jesus who makes us one,  
and strengthens us by the power of his Spirit.

All:

**Blessed be God forever.**

**Introductory Remarks**

Leader (in these or similar words):

Friends in Christ,  
although we cannot celebrate the Eucharist this day,  
we gather in God's name  
for when two or more come together  
God is always with us.  
We worship in union with the whole Church  
keeping this day of the Lord holy.

**Opening Rite**  
**LITANY OF PRAISE**

Leader:

Before listening to the Word of God let us praise the Lord Jesus  
Christ who has raised us to new life.

A brief period of silence follows.

Leader:

Lord Jesus, you are our strength and our help: Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you have given us your commandments of love:  
Christ, have mercy.

**All: Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you intercede for us at the right hand of the Father:  
Lord, have mercy.

**All: Lord have mercy.**

Leader:

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life.

All:

**Amen.**

**Opening Prayer**

Leader:

Let us pray.

All pause for silent prayer.

O God

Jesus redeemed the world  
and became the cornerstone of the Church.  
Help us to listen to what Jesus asks of us.  
May our words and deeds bear fruit  
and build your holy Church on earth.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
for ever and ever.

All:

**Amen.**

**The Liturgy of the Word**

**First Reading**

**Genesis 2:18-24**

A reading from the book of Genesis

*They were two in one flesh.*

The Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him a helpmate.' So from the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These he brought to the man to see what he would call them, each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild beasts. But no helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, he took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man. The man exclaimed:

'This at last is bone from my bones,  
and flesh from my flesh!

This is to be called woman,  
for this was taken from man.'

This is why a man leaves his father and mother and joins himself to his wife, and they become one body.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

**Thanks be to God.**

**Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 127. R. v.5**

**(R.) May the Lord bless us  
all the days of our lives.**

1. O blessed are those who fear the Lord  
and walk in his ways!  
By the labour of your hands you shall eat.  
You will be happy and prosper. **(R.)**
2. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine  
in the heart of your house;  
your children like shoots of the olive,  
around your table. **(R.)**
3. Indeed thus shall be blessed  
the man who fears the Lord.  
May the Lord bless you from Zion  
in a happy Jerusalem  
all the days of your life!  
May you see your children's children.  
On Israel, peace! **(R.)**

## Second Reading

### Hebrews 2:9-11

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews

*He who sanctifies, and those who are sanctified have one origin.*

We see in Jesus one who was for a short while made lower than the angels and is now crowned with glory and splendour because he submitted to death; by God's grace he had to experience death for all mankind.

As it was his purpose to bring a great many of his sons into glory, it was appropriate that God, for whom everything exists and through whom everything exists, should make perfect, through suffering, the leader who would take them to their salvation. For the one who sanctifies, and the ones who are sanctified, are of the same stock; that is why he openly calls them brothers.

To indicate the end of the reading, the reader acclaims:

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

**Thanks be to God.**

## Gospel

Reader:

From the holy Gospel according to **Mark**

All:

Glory to you, O Lord.

### Mark 10:2-16

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark

*What God has joined together, no one must divide.*

Some Pharisees approached Jesus and asked, 'Is it against the law for a man to divorce his wife?' They were testing him. He answered them, 'What did Moses command you?' 'Moses allowed us' they said 'to draw up a writ of dismissal and so to divorce.' Then Jesus said to them, 'It was because you were so unteachable that he wrote this commandment for you. But from the beginning of creation God made them male and female. This is why a man must leave father and mother, and the two become one body. They are no longer two, therefore, but one body. So then, what God has united, man must not divide.' Back in the house the disciples questioned him again about this, and he said to them, 'The man who divorces his wife and marries another is guilty of adultery against her. And if a woman divorces her husband and marries another she is guilty of adultery too.'

People were bringing little children to him, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

Reader:

The Gospel of the Lord.

All:

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

All are seated.

## Reflection on the Word

*A short period of reflection may be observed.*

QQ. How does this passage help explain the Church's position on divorce?

Q. Is the clash between the church's position on divorce and society standards helpful or harmful?

Q. Why does the gospel writer include this passage in a section about what it means to be a disciple?

Q. In what ways does the teaching about children challenge us today?

## Profession of Faith

Leader:

In union with the whole Church  
let us profess our faith.

All:

**I believe in God,  
the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**

*At the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.*

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell;  
on the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and life everlasting. Amen.**

## Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Dear friends, let us bring our prayers before the Lord, who, through love, always lives with us.

Reader: That by expressing Christ's love for all, the Holy Church will bring salvation to the world.

In your goodness:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That local organisations who work with the homeless and disadvantaged will be supported as they bring the love of God to those in need.

In your goodness:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That all married people will remain in love and faithfulness to each other.

In your goodness:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That we will all be blessed with the courage to use our gifts to support and grow this parish community.

In your goodness:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That all the sick and housebound will be blessed and find comfort and healing through Christ.

In your goodness:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Reader: That all who have died will be embraced by the love of God in his heavenly kingdom.

In your goodness:

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

Leader: Loving God, you bring kindness and compassion to the world. Hear our prayers and help us to share your Word with all people. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All: Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Leader:

At the Saviour's command  
and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say:

All:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,  
now and forever.  
Amen.**

## The Concluding Rite

### Blessing

Leader:

May the Lord be with us and protect us  
now and for ever.

All make the sign of the cross during the blessing.

All:

Amen.

### Dismissal

Leader:

Let us go in the peace to love and serve the Lord.

All:

**Thanks be to God.**

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## **FAITH MATTERS: If Pope Francis sent you a letter, would you respond?**

As we come to the end of the 2024 Season of Creation, marked by the Feast Day of St Francis of Assisi, I am drawn again to explore his writings.

Mary O'Connor PUBLISHED October 01, 2024

Beside my bed for many years, gifted to me by a child whom I sponsored for Confirmation, was a framed copy of the Prayer of St Francis of Assisi, also known as the Prayer for Peace. The first line is a daily reminder to me of my mission, my reason for being "Lord, make me an instrument of your peace". I have always believed that when we have peace, within our soul, within our family, within our community, within our land, then we can work towards the betterment of all peoples, so I have tried to do this, albeit not always successfully, but I try. I try to spread love, I try to spread joy, I try to spread light.

I have always been drawn to St Francis and St Clare of Assisi and one of my favourite travel experiences was in Assisi, where I spotted a small twig and straw bird's nest in the palm of the statue of St Francis, way down in the catacombs. As I marvelled at its location and wondered if the nest was real or a tourist attraction, the head of a very small baby bird popped over the

edge and looked at me. There was no fear in the little eye, just the tilted head of curiosity. I spent a moment in mutual curiosity and admiration, then a large group of people came through and the little head disappeared below the nest line. That evening, over wine and bread and cheese, I questioned others I was travelling with as to whether they had seen the nest, no one except me had noticed it. I'll admit to being that person when travelling that often stops; to gaze with awe and wonder, to absorb the beauty of nature or the mastery of architecture. To think of those who have walked, lived, worked and died on that land, who created, who cared for, who loved. I felt so privileged to have had that wonder filled experience and twenty-one years later it is still a memory I treasure. In that trip to Assisi, I was able to truly understand St Francis's Canticle of the Sun, especially the third stanza "Praised be You, my Lord, with all your creatures; especially Brother Sun, who is the day, and through whom You give us light."

Ten years after my trip to Assisi I was excited to note that our new Pope had taken the name Francis, after St Francis of Assisi. Peace and love for all God's creation was what I envisioned for his Papacy. "Laudato Si', On care for our common home," Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical, has a section titled "My appeal" which says "The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us. Humanity still has the ability to work together in building our common home."<sup>1</sup>

It has taken time, but in the last few years we have seen the seeds that Pope Francis scattered with "Laudato Si'" start to blossom. In 2022 a film, titled "The Letter" was released. It is a documentary that follows people who received a letter from Pope Francis, inviting them to join him in conversation. This letter, this invitation, gives a voice in the global conversations around the environmental crisis to representatives of the poor, the indigenous, the youth and the wildlife workers. The film asks us to think about how our spiritual values call us to take action on the planetary emergency. The film reminds us that we are called to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

You Are Invited to join us for Formation Friday to watch "The Letter". We will meet on 4 October 2024 at 1pm. Together we will watch and discuss the film to consider how we, in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, can listen more deeply and take further action.

For more information, please email Mary O'Connor, Diocesan Librarian at [domnlibrary@mn.catholic.org.au](mailto:domnlibrary@mn.catholic.org.au) or call 024923 0682 Register here: <https://forms.office.com/r/yqm1Z2tJAH>

[1] Francis, Pope, "Laudato si': On care for our common home", section 13 [Laudato si' \(24 May 2015\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)



## **Mission: Transform Lives - theirs...and yours**

Care you ready to embark on a life-changing journey that combines your professional experience with meaningful community impact and living our faith in practice?

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## **The story of a fisherman's son**

It's August 1973.

In a small village, Pallimunai, Mannar in the Northern Province of Mannar in Sri Lanka, a young fisherman and his wife are devastated to find that their firstborn child had been born with fluid in his skull, ears and nose. This condition almost guaranteed he wouldn't survive.

Madie Leeming PUBLISHED September 07, 2024

When a Holy Family Sister entered the room and asked the parents why they were crying, the distraught parents said their baby was going to die.

"Why are you crying?" she asked them. "Don't you have faith?"

Sister Clement joined the parents to pray the rosary, reassuring them during this worship, something would happen.

While they were praying, a doctor who had just returned from his graduate studies in America came to the hospital.

By a stroke of luck, a miracle or God's will, this doctor had learnt about the newborn's condition while in America and knew the exact two injections the baby would require to save his life.

He rushed to the room and administered one injection.

Twenty minutes later, he administered the second injection.

The baby immediately started responding.

Sister Clement told the parents, "God has given this child back to you. Now you must make a decision to hand him over to God."

And so, the child's destiny was born.

The couple named their son Joseph and life went on. More children were born, the fisherman continued fishing, the children climbed coconut trees and learnt to swim in the ocean.

Joseph made his first Holy Communion at age nine along with all the village boys and girls. While all of the children wore traditional Sri Lankan attire, Joseph's Grandmother insisted he wear a button-up shirt, suit jacket and tie.

An odd direction at the time, hindsight would prove this moment was once again preparing Joseph for his destiny.

In 1983 the Sri Lankan Civil War intensified. As the war continued to escalate, Joseph's father had a gut feeling they were no longer safe, so he packed his family's valuables and fled with his wife and five sons.

They were the first family to leave their village and were ridiculed for their caution. Once they reached their safe place that afternoon, Joseph's father told him, "Son, go and prepare a fire and put on a big pot of water as we will be receiving all the fellows. We will need to give them a cup of coffee when they arrive."

Within hours, the rest of the village found themselves gathered around the family's campfire, the urgency of their evacuation leaving them with nothing.

Soon after, the family moved into a Refugee Camp in the Shrine of Our Lady of Madhu, the National Marian Shrine at the heart of the Diocese of Mannar.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) Human Rights signage was the first English letters Joseph would ever see and learn.

While the camp was a peace zone, it lay between the army's area and the rebel's area. The camp was safe; but many people were killed by exchanging gunfire when they would go and fetch firewood from the jungle.

They learnt to time their trips after 11pm, during a full moon at night, to minimise their noise and to lie low under a tree in the jungle to avoid artillery.

Thankfully, life went on.

As Joseph became a teen, he knew he would likely follow the path to becoming a fisherman, like his father.

His mother noticed that he showed great potential in his exams and told him he must study further.

It wasn't until 1991 when Joseph was in his final years of school that he felt a calling to become a priest.

The calling was becoming more prominent, and Joseph went to his mother and told her he thought this was the path he must take.

Joseph was accepted into the seminary however this new dream came to an abrupt halt when he was given instruction on what he must bring to his studies.

Among the list was three white shirts, three coloured shirts and three trousers. Still living below the poverty line within the refugee camp, Joseph knew this was no longer an option, until one day he awoke and came to find his uncles and aunts within the camp had put their money together to purchase everything for him.

They told him, "Things are ready. You go ahead."

Joseph went on to study at the seminary and completed his formation from 1991 to 2006.

During that time, he saw many different phases of the war, he was the Deacon during the Sri Lankan tsunami in 2004, he suffered more loss and more learning than most people do in a lifetime.

He was ordained in 2006 and lived as a monk until 2017. It took him seven years to make the decision to come to Australia as a missionary priest and leave his monastery life.

He landed in Sydney on 18 October 2017.

Joseph is now Father Joseph Figurado of All Saints' Blackbutt South Parish.

He is a steadfast member of our own community, who has committed his life to "humble service with a smile."

This personal motto is at the very heart of how Fr Joseph lives his life.

"I made the decision not to pass my hardships, wounds, and the death I have seen, on to others. I will keep showing up with a smile and laughter because that's what drives me to make others happy," Fr Joseph said.

Asked if he always knew he was going to be a priest, he reflects before answering.

"I'm sitting back after telling these stories, and I'm connecting the dots.

"There was the voice inside my head telling me to become a priest.

"There was my grandmother making me wear a shirt, suit and tie to my first Holy Communion. I'm dressing like that every day now. She never had any clue that I would end up here.

"Then there was the Sister who told my parents they must hand me over to God after my life was saved.

"I did like my fishing, but being a priest is my destiny."

Through countless hurdles, tears, hardships, starvation, lack of electricity, lack of housing, war and loss, Fr Joseph has found purpose for it all.

"Each and every difficulty you encounter in your life will shape you. Form you. And make you stronger," he said.

"I've learnt that you can take the good out of terrible circumstances and make an effort every day to use what has happened to help others.

"Having personal pain in doing good for others, especially in my ministry to sick and dying, gave me the greatest push in my life.

"Whether that is the nature of God, everything comes to your life with purpose. You are born in this world with purpose."

### **Pope Francis's Prayer Intention for October**

We pray that the Church continue to sustain in all ways a Synodal lifestyle, as a sign of co-responsibility, promoting the participation, the communion and the mission shared among priests, religious and lay people.