



**St John
Vianney**
Parish Morisset



ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B 16 JUNE 2024

This Sunday we have two parables about the steady growth of the Kingdom of God from insignificant beginnings. Jesus was telling the disciples to be patient, to trust, and not expect instant results.

In Jesus' story of the farmer he did his part, and he sowed the seed. Things were now beyond his control.

The one thing he wanted to see happen, namely, for the seed to grow, he couldn't do anything about. All he could do was wait in patience, humility and hope.

We live in the age of the push button. All we have to do is turn a switch, or push a button and things happen. Unfortunately the push button age often encourages minimum effort, and the shortcut approach to everything. It can lure us into always seeking the easy option.

These virtues of patience and humility are not always easy. We are called to be people of hope.



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
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(We ask that you make an appointment to come to the office)
Morisset Parish Office email: morparish@mn.catholic.org.au
Morisset Parish Web site: www.vianneymorisset.org
Morisset Parish Facebook : <https://www.facebook.com/stjvparish>
Morisset Parish Instagram : https://www.instagram.com/stjvparish_morisset/
(Please submit all Bulletin Notice requests to the parish office by 2pm Wednesdays)

UPCOMING WORSHIP TIMES :

- | | |
|----------|---------------------------------------|
| Saturday | 15th June 5pm
Family Mass—Morisset |
| Sunday | 16th June 9.30am
Mass—Morisset |
| Tuesday | 18th June 9.30am
Liturgy—Morisset |
| Friday | 21st June 10.30am
Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 22nd June 5pm
Mass—Cooranbong |
| Sunday | 23rd June 9.30am
Mass—Morisset |
| Tuesday | 25th June 9.30am
Liturgy—Morisset |
| Friday | 28th June 10.30am
Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 29th June 5pm
Mass—Cooranbong |
| Sunday | 30th June 9.30am
Mass Morisset |
| Tuesday | 2nd July 9.30am
Liturgy—Morisset |
| Friday | 5th July 10.30am
Mass—Morisset |
| Saturday | 6th July 5pm
Family Mass—Morisset |
| Sunday | 7th July 9.30am
Mass—Morisset |

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ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME Year B — Reflection 16th June 2024

'From Little Things Big Things Grow'. -You probably know the words from one of Australia's inspirational songs, composed by Paul Kelly and performed by Archie Roach and Sara Storer. The phrase was originally intended for the indigenous struggle for land rights and reconciliation. In later years it was used in the advertising campaign for Super Funds.

Today's Gospel contains two parables: the scattered seed growing of itself, and the mustard seed. What is common between the two? Both parables speak of small and insignificant seeds. But when they sprout and grow, these smallest of seeds become the largest of plants

How many seeds are cast to the wind? Some seeds have grown and taken root., producing fruits that mobilise people.

Let us recognise the humble beginnings of the work of God. Good-willed people meeting together to solve a community problem, or a word of kindness, in an unfriendly environment. The seed grows and the person who has welcomed the Word walks more confidently on the path where God leads.

Big things often come from small beginnings. The insignificant can become important, the ordinary can become special. Whatever we have, no matter how ordinary, can contribute a lot. Whatever we are, unskilled or average we can make a difference.

Today's scripture reinforces the notion that there is something fundamentally counter-cultural about Jesus and what he stood for. The kingdom, for instance, does not manifest itself in size, in success or in power. Instead, it is found in the smallness of the mustard seed in the insignificance of the yeast. Much of our culture stresses the importance of self-reliance and imposes upon us the idea that the more independent we are the more secure we are. The lesson Jesus is teaching can be very hard to receive.

We are living in a time of diminishment as far as the church's influence is concerned. But if the kingdom is like a mustard seed, then the size of our institutional church is not as important as the quality of our witness. As Pope Francis maintains we must be a church where everyone can feel welcomed, loved, forgiven, and encouraged to live according to the Gospel. If we can embody that vision of church in our practice, we can become a lighthouse for the world. John France

Points to Ponder

Traditions have always been an important dimension of celebrating faith. Each age is a time of special grace, including our age of high technology.

Did You Know?

What is the difference? Mission and Ministry

To help us establish our identity and our call to service within the Church it might help if we recognise the distinction between the two terms which are often used interchangeably: ministry and mission. Certainly, the two do often overlap, but they are complimentary.

The Church is by its very nature is a missionary community, but if the Church is to be equipped in the best way possible to carry out effectively its missionary mandate, it needs that strength and vitality which can come only from our mutual ministry to one another. So, ministry and mission go together: one demands the other.

"Extreme unction," which is more fittingly called "anointing of the sick," is not a sacrament for those only who are at the point of death. Hence, as soon as any one of the faithful begins to be in danger of death from sickness or old age, the fitting time for them to receive this sacrament has certainly already arrived.



Coffee and Chat Sunday

After Mass this Sunday-16th June, a 'cuppa, chat and biscuits' will be held in the Callinan Centre – All welcome

Men's Group

A number of men have expressed a desire to learn more about the Catholic Church, and the faith they profess. If there are any other men in the parish who would also like to learn more, a meeting will be held in the Callinan Centre Thursday 20th June 7pm- Contact Uta, for information

The aMeN caMiNo

The aMeN caMiNo takes place over five consecutive days. Pilgrims walk an average of 20km per day through the beautiful landscape of bush, beach and beyond which we are blessed to have in our backyard.

The next group of pilgrims look forward to their upcoming walk. A highlight being their visit to Cooranbong Monday 5th August 3pm.

Cooranbong Cemetery

Most people are aware that our parish has a Catholic Cemetery and Columbarium, located in the beautiful Catholic Church grounds, of St Patrick and St Brigid Cooranbong.

Recently, the NSW Government introduced an Interment Industry Scheme, as part of the Cemeteries and Crematoria regulation 2022, -a licensing system for cemetery and crematorium operators.

To be compliant and to understand this new legislation, over the last few weeks, the Parish Leadership Team, together with Rosanna our Parish Secretary, have been attending information meetings, coordinated by CCNSW.

As a licenced cemetery operator, the parish must comply with key licence conditions.

Some key licence conditions relate to:

- consumer contracts – standard terms and conditions explained clearly so customers can understand what they are paying for.
- cemetery maintenance – to make sure there are clear minimum standards for every cemetery.
- pricing transparency – so customers know what they are purchasing and can easily compare prices.
- customer service – to ensure operators are consistently providing quality service.
- religious, cultural, and spiritual principles– to ensure respect

With A Light Heart.

A priest bought a used lawnmower from a parishioner but discovered it wouldn't start. He called the parishioner and asked, "Why can't I get the lawnmower to work?" The parishioner said, "To start it, first you have to curse at it." The priest replied, "I gave up cursing 20 years ago. I wouldn't know what to say." The parishioner said, "In that case, just keep trying to start it. It'll soon come back to you!



Vinnies Winter Cash Appeal

The Morisset Conference of the St Vincent de Paul Society, will hold their Winter Cash Appeal at the Masses on the weekend of 22nd and 23rd June 2024.

Question Box

Recently it was brought to the attention of the PPC, that often parishioners have matters of faith questions, and are not sure where to go with them for answers.

In an effort to help people with their questions, please place your question in the stainless steel mailbox outside the parish secretaries office, in the Callinan Centre, and the questions will be answered.

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 9th July 2024**. Bookings can be made online at the link at: <https://forms.office.com/r/wZtatkt01V> or by contacting our Parish Office.



Planned Giving Tax Receipts

We greatly appreciate those who support our parish through planned giving. A percentage of those contributions are **Tax Deductible for those who complete a TAX RETURN only.**

If you require a **TAX RECEIPT** for your planned giving contributions we ask that you complete the online form at: <https://forms.office.com/r/qfepK7wa0V> or call the Parish between 9am and 2pm Weekdays.

As the number of people who request a **TAX RECEIPT** is used to **calculate the percentage claimable as a deduction** you will need to lodge your request no later than 2pm on **Friday 28th June 2024**.

We also ask that if you are **NOT completing a TAX RETURN** that you do not request a tax receipt. We can provide general receipts at your request.

Stay up-to-date with Diocesan Resource Centre events

The Diocesan Resource Centre and Library were officially opened and blessed by Bishop Michael Kennedy at the end of May. The library is open three days a week and offers several events each month. Find out what is on offer by regularly checking the Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle website: www.mn.catholic.org.au/places/library

The opening hours are as follows: Mondays and Tuesdays – 10am to 6pm Saturday – 10am to 2pm

CatholicCare Refugee Hub seeks food donations

The Refugee Hub is seeking food donations to boost their OzHarvest program. The weekly OzHarvest deliveries have not been enough to support all the vulnerable families in the program so we need your help!

Refugee Hub is seeking donations of the following items:

- Rice and pasta
- Canned beans
- Vegetable oil or olive oil
- Milk powder and long life milk
- Sugar
- Plain flour
- Shower gel and/or liquid soap
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrushes

There will be a box at CatholicCare's office at 50 Crebert St, Mayfield labelled "Food Donation for Refugee Hub" where donations can be dropped off anytime Mon-Fri 9-5.



Caritas Australia – Papua New Guinea Landslide Appeal

Remote communities in Papua New Guinea have been devastated by a catastrophic landslide that struck the Enga province at 3am on Friday 24 May. Hundreds are feared dead with the UN estimating the total dead at 670 and the total affected at 4,000 which could rise due to an increased number of displaced people living in the area recently.

Caritas' international partners are on the ground, you can support their work by donating to the Landslide Appeal at: www.caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/papua-new-guinea-landslide



Pope Francis' prayer intention for June 2024

We pray that migrants fleeing from war or hunger, forced to undertake journeys full of danger and violence, find welcome and new opportunities in the countries that receive them.

Christian Formation Course

Expressions of Interest for 2024/2025 Christian Formation Course are now open.

Are you wanting to know more about Christianity and develop a deeper understanding of the Catholic Church? The Christian Formation Course (CFC) is a learning experience that allows participants to explore the foundational elements of the Catholic Faith Tradition. This one-year course introduces participants to scripture, theology, church history, sacramental life and liturgy.

- The Course runs across twelve (12) months and comprises eight (8) units
- All who complete the Course are awarded a diocesan Certificate in Christian Formation

By engaging in the course, it is hoped participants will:

- become more confident in understanding the Catholic faith
- grow in their capacity to reflect on their life's journey
- realise that Christian faith is nurtured in community
- be affirmed in their gifts for participating in the life of the faith community
- grow in awareness of what it means to be a responsive member of the faith community

Commencing on Tuesday 23 July, no prerequisite formation or qualification is required to enrol. To find out more, go to www.mn.catholic.org.au/church-mission/catholic-life/faith-formation/christian-formation-course

Can you help CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning make a difference?

A single mum, three couples from Afghanistan, a university student, and dozens of school students – these are just a few of the people CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning has supported in the last couple of months.

As a not-for-profit organisation, we can't do this work without the generosity of our community. Can you help us to support more?

Donate to our 2024 Make a Difference appeal now: www.mycause.com.au/page/345965/make-a-difference



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, SURNAME or Donation 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.

WEEKEND ROSTERS			
		<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 Robertson S Matthew	J France D Peterson
<u>PSALMIST:</u>	5PM 9.30AM	U France H White	U France H White
<u>GIFTS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	F Pascoe G Hutchinson L Hutchinson	G Hutchinson L Hutchinson K Tonkin
<u>SERVERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	J Lawandos V Paulo	M Melvey C Lawandos
<u>AV</u>	5PM 9.30AM	E Lawandos T Alexander	J Vipan M Foo
<u>WELCOMERS</u>	5PM 9.30AM	K Lendon M Melvey	K Lendon P Melvey
<u>CHURCH CLEANING</u>	COOR MOR	XXXX C Lawandos K Lendon	F Dunn R Hay 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 adult please contact the Office of Safeguarding by Phone: 02 4979 1390 or Email: childprotection@mn.catholic.org.au, or visit their website for further information: www.officeofsafeguarding.org.au

UPCOMING FEAST DAYS MEMORIALS AND SOLEMINITIES

- SAINT ALOYSIUS GONZAGA (M) - 21ST JUNE
- SAINTS JOHN FISHER AND THOMAS MORE (M) - 22ND JUNE
- THE NATIVITY OF JOHN THE BAPTIST (S) - 24TH JUNE
- SAINT IRENAEUS (M) - 28TH JUNE
- SAINTS PETER AND PAUL VIGIL (S) - 28TH JUNE
- SAINTS PETER AND PAUL (S) - 29TH JUNE
- SAINT THOMAS (F) - 3RD JULY
- SAINT BENEDICT (M) - 11TH JULY
- SAINT BONAVENTURE (M) - 15TH JULY
- SAINT MARY MAGDALENE (F) - 22ND JULY
- SAINT JAMES (F) - 25TH JULY

Please pray for all those who are sick: in hospital or at home, especially those living with a life threatening disease:
 Anna Dussin, Mary Carapiet, Monica Gray, Koby Smith, Annette Boyd, Mary Monaghan, Clare Wallington, Donna Hazzard, Pam Mullaly, Tintumol Thomas, Peter Martyn, Bernadette Martin, Joan Gillett, Bruce Gillett.

Please pray for those who have been called to eternal life may they always be in our prayers.
 Recently Deceased: Joyce Fren



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





SUNDAY PRAYER SERVICE
Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B
Sunday 16 Jun 2024

The Introductory Rites
Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as Australia's First Peoples and the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which we work, live and learn. Especially the Awabakal and Darkinjung nations who are the traditional owners of the land our Parish encompasses. We honour and pay respect to, Elders past, present and emerging, we acknowledge the spiritual culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Australia, 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 gather all nations in peace: Lord, have mercy.

All: Lord, have mercy.

Christ Jesus, you come in word and sacrament: Christ, have mercy.

All: Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you show us the way to God's kingdom: 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, strength of those who hope in you,
graciously hear our pleas,
and, since without you mortal frailty can do nothing,
grant us always the help of your grace,
that in following your commands
we may please you by our resolve and our deeds.
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.

All:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Ezekiel 17:22-24

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

I have made the small tree great.

The Lord says this:

'From the top of the cedar,
from the highest branch I will take a shoot
and plant it myself on a very high mountain.
I will plant it on the high mountain of Israel.
It will sprout branches and bear fruit,
and become a noble cedar.
Every kind of bird will live beneath it,
every winged creature rest in the shade of its branches.
And every tree of the field will learn that I, the Lord, am the
one
who stunts tall trees and makes the low ones grow,
who withers green trees and makes the withered green.
I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it.'

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

The word of the Lord.

All reply:

Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 91:2-3. 13-16. R. see v.2

(R.) Lord, it is good to give thanks to you.

1. It is good to give thanks to the Lord
to make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your love in the morning
and your truth in the watches of the night. (R.)
2. The just will flourish like the palm-tree
and grow like a Lebanon cedar. (R.)
3. Planted in the house of the Lord
they will flourish in the courts of our God,
still bearing fruit when they are old,
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim that the Lord is just.
In him, my rock, there is no wrong. (R.)

Second Reading

2 Corinthians 5:6-10

A reading from the second letter of St Paul to the Corinthians
Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing the Lord.

We are always full of confidence when we remember that to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord, going as we do by faith and not by sight – we are full of confidence, I say, and actually want to be exiled from the body and make our home with the Lord. Whether we are living in the body or exiled from it, we are intent on pleasing him. For all the truth about us will be brought out in the law court of Christ, and each of us will get what he deserves for the things he did in the body, good or bad.

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 4:26-34

The mustard seed, the smallest of all the seeds, grows into the biggest shrub of all.

Jesus said to the crowds, 'This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man throws seed on the land. Night and day, while he sleeps, when he is awake, the seed is sprouting and growing; how, he does not know. Of its own accord the land produces first the shoot, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. And when the crop is ready, he loses no time; he starts to reap because the harvest has come.'

He also said, 'What can we say the kingdom of God is like? What parable can we find for it? It is like a mustard seed which at the time of its sowing in the soil is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade.'

Using many parables like these, he spoke the word to them, so far as they were capable of understanding it. He would not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything to his disciples when they were alone.

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.

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: Sisters and brothers, let us bring our prayers before God, the source of all grace and goodness.

Reader: That our Holy Father Pope Francis will cultivate the Church on earth through the redemption of all creation. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That world leaders focus on environmental and climate challenges in order to care for the world's resources and foster harmony in God's kingdom. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That those who work on the land will remember the Lord's environment in their tending, and be blessed with flourishing growth and produce. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That peace and justice will reign among the nations of the earth. In your goodness.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That parents and teachers will be guided by the Holy Spirit as they teach and nurture the children in their care. In your goodness.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That our parish community will live in obedience and reverence to the Church as the source of all goodness and grace. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all the sick will be raised in health and spirit, especially those who are members of our families, and community. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader: That all who have died will find eternal love in heaven, especially those who were members of our families, and community. In your goodness:

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: God our Father, we live to increase your kingdom. Hear our prayers and help us to grow our faith community through flourishing branches and welcoming spirits. 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: An Invitation to Pray

Wednesday 29 May started out as a chilly morning in the parish grounds of Morpeth's Mary Immaculate Conception Church, however, hearts were warmed, and voices lifted in praise of Special Religious Education teachers who came together from across the diocese. The invitation to gather, share stories and pray 'A Year of Prayer' was celebrated with Bishop Michael Kennedy.
NICKI GRAHAM PUBLISHED JUNE 11, 2024

The day began in worship at Mass with Bishop Michael presiding and lovely music accompanied by some of the scripture teachers.

The theme for the gathering was 'A Year of Prayer.' Some forty participants gathered for mystagogical reflection, to listen to and recall the scripture of the Lord's Prayer, reflect upon its meaning in our lives and to consider what God is calling us to do. The hall was soon filled with honest, open and robust conversations.

In breaking open the Lord's Prayer, we contemplated its meaning in our lives. When we fervently look at how Jesus taught his disciples to pray, we are drawn to the mystery behind His words for the disciples, spoken centuries ago, and the Christ speaking to us in our lives today.

"Teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples"

The disciples recognised, as Jesus himself did, that John the Baptist was the one to prepare people for the coming of Christ. In doing so, John and Jesus share the pattern of prayer within community.

"Say this when you pray: Father, may your name be holy."

How many times do we hear people say 'God' or 'Oh my God' in a way not intended? Jesus reminds his followers that when they mention God it is to be done so in a most holy way.

"Your kingdom come"

When we pray this, we are yearning for the continuation of God's reign here on earth. God is with us and with our continued prayers we hope to convert the hearts of those who do not believe.

"Give us each day our daily bread"

We are humbled before God, knowing that as much as we are loved by Him, we need Him. Bread, which sustains our hunger, and the bread of life, which nourishes us spiritually, are what we are asking for.

"Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who trespass against us."

We may be able to forgive someone if they have done wrong and are truly sorry and we may be able to say sorry ourselves if we know we have made errors. The difficulty lies in the times when we don't want to say sorry, or we don't want to forgive. Jesus is telling us to pray through these times, so that we might be given the grace to engage in humbly loving our neighbours, no matter what.

Praying the Lord's prayer not only teaches us how to pray like Jesus, it leads us to model from his very teachings. His prayer is one of praise, of petition, of requests and of promise.

So, whilst warm conversations, stories and prayers filled the heart, hot soup, chicken and vegies filled stomachs and afterwards, participants made their way to the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The Atrium is a place where young children go to be faith formed in a very holistic way, with handmade 'pieces' to work with using a Montessori approach to teaching about scripture and sacramentality.

The day was a lovely connection with fellow teachers of Special Religious Education who dedicate and volunteer their time to bring the joy of the Gospel to children in state schools.

Pope Francis invites us all to pray throughout 2024 in preparation for the Jubilee 2025 with the theme "Pilgrims of Hope." Jubilee years, or Holy Years, which occur every 25 years, are opportunities for transformation, where we are invited to enter deeply into the theme through prayer and reflection. May we say a prayer of thanks for the work of Special Religious Educators and pray that this ministry continues as the teachers share Jesus' message of love to all the world.

40 years of memories at St Paul's Catholic College

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FOUR decades of fond memories has seen six principals steer the ship of St Paul's Catholic College in Booragul.

As the school celebrates its 40th year in 2024, the Newcastle Herald sat down with its past and current leaders to get an insight to memories and milestones.

Born in Sydney, raised in Narrabri, David Moore was the founding principal at St Paul's from February 1984 to 1988, following a three-year stint as assistant principal at St Joseph's Aberdeen.

The high school opened with just 240 pupils and 16 lay teachers, coinciding with the restructuring of the Catholic Secondary Schools in the Newcastle area.

"I had a major impact in fast student and staff growing, we had approximately 700 people by the end of '88," Mr Moore said.

In his time as principal he said there were challenges of establishing a new culture for years 7 to 10 students and he was always making yearly policy adjustments.

"Working with those 7 to 10 students in those dramatic formative teenage years was mostly extremely satisfying. I still fondly remember playing trumpet in the put band for the school's first stage performance," he said.

Mr Moore said being principal at St Paul's had been "extremely impactful" and he was "truly grateful".

As a young and relatively inexperienced principal there were many formative learning experiences, some hard but most truly valuable in life since St Paul's," he said.

Mayfield's Father Kevin Kiem was the next principal of St Paul's from 1989 to 1994.

During his time he saw year 10 students receive credit on their school certificate for Religious studies, the replacement of the library from a demountables building and the introduction of house names; Polding, Mackillop, Chisolm and Therry.

Looking back, the now 80-year-old felt gratitude for making a difference.

"I'm grateful for the privilege of continuing and supporting the good work of others and hopefully making a difference," he said.

He said some of his fondest memories were seeing painting of murals on school building walls by the art teacher and students and being part of a school community, making memories..

"I have happy memories and I'm grateful to the current principal for making an effort through celebrations to recall and reflect and continue to build the St Paul's community."

Gerard Mowbray from Warners Bay was next in the leadership seat from 1995 to 2005. He was part of the transition in 2000 that saw years 11 and 12 added to the school.

"It was only a junior secondary school from 1984 to 1999. The extension was a critical development of an academic culture and dimension with the addition of senior students," he said.

Mr Mowbray said he always enjoyed the camaraderie of staff, their commitment and the support of parents and carers in the school.

"The spirit of family in the school... the privilege of sharing the joys and sorrows of staff and families," he said.

"Being principal of St Paul's was an immense privilege, to lead a team to support the lives of young people was a profound joy."

"It was the most fulfilling period of my school leadership."

Anthony Stevens was the next to be appointed principal in 2006 and worked until he retired in 2013.

He helped to establish a cafe for staff and senior students, increase enrolments and worked to implement a new library, administration office and student toilet amenities.

"Following suggestions from my assistant principal and senior students we also introduced the concept of school leaders in place of school captains and vice captains," he said.

Mr Stevens said having visits from a Japanese sister school was one of his fondest memories as principal along with working with dedicated staff and students.

"Japanese sister school visits were a highlight of my years at St Paul's culminating with an opportunity for me to visit Japan in my last year as principal," he said.

He said while he loved his role it came with many long and lonely hours.

"Having said that, my pride and joy in being the principal of the 'Jewel on the Lake' outweighed any personal sacrifices made along the way," he said.

Graeme Selmes was the next appointed principal before current principal Nicholas Wickham took over the reins in 2022.

Now in 2024 with less portables, new buildings and technology in the classroom, things have changed over the past 40 years and Mr Wickham is proud of how far the school has come.

"The way the college comes together as a community to celebrate St Paul's Feast Day in June each year, it is a wonderful example of what it means to be a member of a Catholic school," he said.

Should we turn off the news for the sake of our mental health?

In today's interconnected world, staying informed is more accessible than ever before. Whether it's an official channel or via social media, the 24-hour media cycle amplifies exposure to news content, making it challenging to escape a bombardment of negative and frightening information.

KELLY PAVAN PUBLISHED JUNE 01, 2024

So, should we turn off the news for the sake of our mental health?

Consuming news can help us stay informed about current events, enhance our understanding of the world and promote mental stimulation. Positive news stories can inspire hope, gratitude, empathy and foster a sense of community and optimism. Additionally, being knowledgeable about local and global issues can help us to engage in meaningful conversations, connect with others and participate in collective efforts towards positive change.

However a relentless stream of negative news can have an adverse effect on our wellbeing. Consuming depressing media stories can lead to feelings of anxiety, helplessness and even depression. Constant exposure to tragic events can overwhelm our senses and leave us feeling emotionally drained. Random knife attacks, domestic violence, the cost-of-living crisis, climate change and international conflict, are just a few examples of recent headlines that are cumulatively causing people distress.

Research published in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology found that exposure to negative news leads to increased anxiety, sadness, and general negative mood; and similarly, a study in the Journal of Media Psychology revealed that frequent consumption of negative news is associated with higher levels of stress and lower psychological well-being (Utz & Breuer, 2017; Davey et al., 2019).

To find a balance between staying informed and safeguarding our mental health, it's essential to adopt mindful media consumption habits. Here are some strategies to support this balance:

Limit exposure: Set boundaries on time spent consuming news each day. Make specific times to check the news rather than constantly refreshing feeds throughout the day. This could include adjusting notification settings on your device.

Diversify your sources: Avoid relying solely on sensationalist or fear-inducing media outlets.

Practice media literacy: Use your critical thinking skills - be sceptical of clickbait headlines and verify information from multiple sources. The lack of gatekeeping and fact-checking mechanisms on social media allows misinformation and falsehoods to flourish on an international scale.

Manage your social media content: Social media algorithms target your newsfeed by analysing your past behaviour; including likes, comments, and shares, to tailor content that aligns with your interests, preferences and what you're most likely to click on. If social media is bombarding your feed with distressing headlines, you can hit snooze on or unfollow those pages to give yourself a break and by doing so, reshape the type of content that shows up for you over time.

Look for exceptions: Seek out stories that showcase positive developments in society. It's important to acknowledge hope and optimism amongst adversity.

Engage in self-care: Know your triggers and recognise your signs of burn out. Use self-care measures to get back on track – connecting with others, mindfulness, therapy, physical activity - you need to know what works for you and when to make time for self-care.

**Working with
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