

**SUNDAY 23rd AUGUST 2020**

EXODUS 1.8 - 2.10 PSALM 124 ROMANS 12 1-8, MATTHEW 16.13-20

**PENTECOST 12**

### SENTENCE AND PRAYER OF THE DAY



***Sentence: Jesus said to them, "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the son of the living God."***



***Prayer of the Day: O God, fount of all wisdom, in the humble witness of the apostle Peter you have shown the foundation of our faith: give us the light of your Spirit, that, recognizing in Jesus of Nazareth the Son of the living God, we may be living God, we may be living stones for the building up of your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.***

### PARISH PRAYER POINTS

***Leading Our Church Into Growth:*** God of Mission who alone brings growth to your church, come Holy Spirit and give vision to our planning; wisdom to our actions, and power to our witness. Help our church to grow in numbers, in spiritual commitment to you, and in service to our local community, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

***Pray Daily for the Church, Local and International:***

- **Pray for the Church of the Province of South East Asia: Lay and Ordained**
- **The Diocese of Sydney: Lay and Ordained**
- **The Parish of Strathpine: Lay and Ordained**
- **St John's Home for Aged Men - Toowong**
- **St Francis Theological College, Milton: Principal -, staff, students and faculty**



***Pray for the Sick Garry, Vi, Kirsty, Steven, Eli, Courtney, Theo, Diana, Rosslyn, Ben, Neil, Thomas, Donna J, Robyn***

***Long Term Prayer List:***

***Norma, Dulcie, Ruth, C, Sophie, Andrew, Margaret B, Ron and Bronwyn, Nancy, Sharon C, Maurice, Neil and June, Janette, George, Tony F, Oriel, Nan, Nev, Carmel, Joanne P, Sally, Alice, Edna, John, Joyce, Lyne, Joan, Barry and Jane.***

***Please give thanks for the lives of the departed: Athol Flynn, Mark Chalk, Col Clarkson, Arthur Nicolson*** whose anniversaries occur at this time.

(+) May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.



***MANLY Pray for the Sick and those who need our prayers: Chris & Barb, Ellen, Helen, David, Nancy, Michael C, Gloria, Margaret, Anise, Graham, David & Rhonda, Andrew, Michael N, Ron, Gerald, Annie, Marie, Jack O, Barry, Eddie, Joan, Shirley G, Glen, Shirley & Gordon G, Ellen K, Shirley A.***

***Please give thanks for the lives of the departed: Valerie MacDonald and Gordon Goward*** whose anniversaries occur at this time. (+) May they rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.

## THE VICAR'S PRATTLE

### **Daniel's Message...**

It was the last time I spoke with my grandmother. I had taken her back to hospital and was putting her into bed after an outing. Cancer had set in and she didn't have long. We'd shared worship together at the local Anglican Church where, as a seminarian, I had been invited to preach. As I helped her get comfortable, she reached for my cheeks, squeezed as only an Italian Nonna can, and said, "I didn't know you were so good at that boy. Just a pity it's in the wrong church". She smiled. I smiled. I knew that was as close to "approval" as I was ever going to get. She died a year before my ordination.

Having left the Roman Catholic Church several years prior, Nonna had not approved of my decision. She wouldn't speak to me for over a year. Being "Roman" Catholic for her was as much her identity as being Italian. They were one and the same. Leaving to be received into the Anglican Communion was tantamount to rejecting my Italian heritage as much as my Catholic lineage. At the time we were pretty grumpy with each other, like stereotypical Italians, but we reconciled before she fell ill. At her funeral, as I read Psalm 23, I realised my decision had broken her heart. Hopefully now, in heaven transcending such human fabrications as denomination, she too had come to realise there are many, equally valid ways to imitate Christ.

For generations, Australians of all creeds, colours and cultures defined themselves by the associations they shared with particular institutions. As Nonna would have recognised in her lifetime, a "Mic" (Catholic) should never marry a "Proddy" (Protestant). If you belonged to a family that had always voted for a particular party, choosing to vote for the alternative would result in "Dad rolling over in his grave". If you drove a Toyota, then always drove a Toyota. If you had a good job, you would stay in that good job until retirement. If your father was a Rotarian then you became a Rotarian (and never dreamed of joining Lions). Each of these "institutions" shaped your identity, shaped how you defined yourself and understood your place in the world.

Individuals defined themselves by the institutions with which they shared associations. Traditional institutions, like churches, political parties, trade unions, government, media and service clubs formed the foundation of Australian society, politics, culture and economy. And from these traditional institutions, individuals drew their identity, their values, their community.

Not any more.

The solidarity of the post-War years was replaced by the free spirited culture of the 1960s and 1970s. In 2020, this free spirited culture has reached a climax. Advanced by globalisation, technology, multiculturalism and prosperous consumerism, Australian society is no longer shaped by traditional institutions but rather by the individual choices made by each individual. "As long as I don't hurt anyone else, I can do what I want."

So instead of an entire nation being shaped by 8 or 10 historically traditional institutions, as in the 19th and 20th centuries, Australia is now shaped by the personal preferences of 24 million individuals. This is one of the key reasons the universal story of God holds no water with Australians under 40, because almost nothing in their world is universal. Everything is personal. As far as they are concerned, they don't belong to anything or anyone and are only accountable to themselves for the choices they make. It's why membership of churches, trade unions, political parties and service clubs is lower now than ever before. This is not a criticism, but rather a cultural observation. An observation I make here because it directly affects faith communities and how we might seek to "do" church in the years to come.

Throughout its 2000 year history, the people of God have adapted to the culture of their time. The world has changed dramatically - in every conceivable way - since the time of Jesus and yet, here we are as church gathering, worshipping, seeking to share divine love as so many have done before us. Who among you had even heard of Zoom or YouTube Live-streaming before March this year?

COVID-19 has brought this huge cultural shift into stark focus. This shift is the motivating premise of St Paul's new ministry, Pace Community. Humanity will forever seek meaning, purpose, direction, communion, love and spiritual nourishment. All the characteristics that defined the life and teachings of Jesus. Pace is intentionally created to align with the fluid nature of modern Australian society. As someone said recently, "church is a fixed menu, but Pace is a smorgasbord". If culture creates an environment of individualism, then people don't belong to institutions (meaning they don't come to a building every Sunday at a set time for a set activity). If people don't belong to institutions, but rather live lives that are fluid and constantly changing, then how we gather as community and communicate divine love needs to change too (e.g. accessible language, online, diverse content, multiple platforms).

Christ will always have a place in the story of humanity, but organised religion is buckling under the weight of cultural change because we are wedded to our "institution" as the way forward. It's not. While seeking to hold dear those things for which we are most grateful in our tradition, Pace charts a path toward the experiential rather than the institutional, drawing individuals into an experience of the divine rather than an institution.

I'm sure this is challenging for many of you, just as it was for my Nonna. There are many clergy too who feel your pain and trepidation. The church we have been called to serve and create is not the church of our childhood nor the church we were trained to lead. It's pretty overwhelming. But, just as millions of Christians before us adapted to war, famine, technology, disease, politics and power, we too shall emerge from this weight renewed and reconciled. The Holy Trinity calls us into divine relationship and it is to such a relationship we hold dear and seek courage.

I pray this reflection has offered some insights. As a person under 40 (just) and a priest with a background in social policy, community development and strategic communication, I feel a sense of responsibility to reveal something of the experience of young people and encourage discussion about the future of the church. The love of God, the cross of Christ, the story of sacred scripture is simply too transformative, too valuable to human experience, to let wither on the vine. Even if that means I pursue this mission as a "Protty" :-)

You all remain in my prayers and on my heart.

Pace e bene,  
Daniel.

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE**

**Due to Coronavirus and COVID 19 outbreaks and community transmission and on the advice of the premier Anastasia Palaszczuk and the chief medical officer Dr Jeanette Young, we are suspending church services at St Peter's on Sunday for the foreseeable future or until further notice. If you were registered sorry. If not then there will no further registration for the time being. At this stage Wednesday morning prayer will still go ahead albeit limited to 10 people or less. You absolutely must register for this ahead of time.**



## SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

SU Qld, a Christian inter-denominational youth and children's agency, invites applications for the position of Chaplain at the following schools. Candidates may have the option of working across more than one school.

- Eight Mile Plains State School
- Mackenzie State School
- Capalaba State College (P-12)
- Wellington Point State Highschool
- Ormiston State School

Applicants need to demonstrate their suitability to provide support and care to young people. Successful applicants may have the opportunity to work in more than one school.

Training and experience in youth work, pastoral care and/or teaching desirable. Minimum qualifications required as well as a Working with Children Check (Blue Card).

**For more information, please contact:**  
**Brisbane South Field Development Manager**  
**Alison Kingdom**  
0450 493 966 or [alisonk@suqld.org.au](mailto:alisonk@suqld.org.au).

**Apply online at:**  
<http://www.suqld.org.au/morehands>

### **Notice:**

The Reverend Donna Petersen is unavailable from Monday 24th till Friday the 28th August. For emergencies please contact the parish wardens.

Ross Hodson: 0409 414 747

Wayne Elliot: 0412 996 434

Cryssi Flynn: 0436 444 873