

### **First Reading Acts 6:1-7**

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles  
About this time, when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenists made a complaint against the Hebrews: in the daily distribution their own widows were being overlooked. So the Twelve called a full meeting of the disciples and addressed them, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food; you, brothers, must select from among yourselves seven men of good reputation, filled with the Spirit and with wisdom; we will hand over this duty to them, and continue to devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word.' The whole assembly approved of this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. The word of the Lord continued to spread: the number of disciples in Jerusalem was greatly increased, and a large group of priests made their submission to the faith.

### **Responsorial Psalm Ps 32:1-2. 4-5. 18-19. R. v.22**

**(R.)** Lord, let your mercy be on us,  
as we place our trust in you.

### **Second Reading 1 Pt 2:4-9**

A reading from the first letter of St Peter  
The Lord is the living stone, rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him; set yourselves close to him so that you too, the holy priesthood that offers the spiritual sacrifices which Jesus Christ has made acceptable to God, may be living stones making a spiritual house. As scripture says: See how I lay in Zion a precious cornerstone that I have chosen and the man who rests his trust on it will not be disappointed. That means that for you who are believers, it is precious; but for unbelievers, the stone rejected by the builders has proved to be the keystone, a stone to stumble over, a rock to bring men down. They stumble over it because they do not believe in the word; it was the fate in store for them. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a consecrated nation, a people set apart to sing the praises of God who called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.

### **Gospel Acclamation Jn 14:6**

Alleluia, alleluia!

I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord;  
no one comes to the Father, except through me.

Alleluia!

### **PARISH DIRECTORY**

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### **ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PARISH**

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St. John the Baptist

The Parish has been entrusted to the Salesians of Don Bosco since 2000



St. Monica

### **FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – YEAR A - 9 & 10 MAY, 2020**

#### **Gospel Jn 14:1-12**

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am now going to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.' Philip said, 'Lord, let us see the Father and then we shall be satisfied.' 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip,' said Jesus to him 'and you still do not know me? 'To have seen me is to have seen the Father, so how can you say, "Let us see the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak as from myself: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing this work. You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; believe it on the evidence of this work, if for no other reason. 'I tell you most solemnly, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will

perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.'

#### **Dear Friends,**

In the Gospel today, taken from His long farewell speech to His apostles, at the Last Supper, just before His passion and death on the Cross, Jesus says to Philip:

"To have seen me is to have seen the Father... It is the Father living in me, who is doing this work... I am in the Father and the Father is in me... I am going to the Father."

Before leaving them, Jesus reveals Himself to His apostles to strengthen their faith and trust in Him. Christians should not lose hope or despair, whatever happens to them in this world. Jesus reminds us today that He and the Father are always with them through Their unconditional love for each person. Therefore, Christians are called to place all their trust in Jesus, Lord and Saviour of all people of good will. May the Virgin Mary Mother of God pray to Jesus for all people of good will. (Fr. Guy)



**PARISH DIARY**  
**MAY 2020**

**9 Saturday of the 4<sup>th</sup> week of Easter**

• 9.00am private Mass at St John's—Intention: all parishioners

•Reconciliation: by appointment

• 6.00pm private Mass at St. John's—Intention: all parishioners

**10 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

•8.30am private Mass at St. Monica's—Intention: all parishioners

• 10.00am private Mass at St. John's—Intention: all parishioners

**11 Monday of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of Easter**

•9.00am private Mass at St John's —Intention: all parishioners

**12 Tuesday, Sts Nereus & Achilleus, martyrs**

•9.00am private Mass at St John's —Intention: all parishioners

**13 Wednesday, Our Lady of Fatima**

•9.00am private Mass at St. John's—Intention: all parishioners

**14 Thursday, St Matthias, apostle**

•12.00pm private Mass at St John's—Intention: all parishioners

**15 Friday of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of Easter**

• 9.00am private Mass at St John's - Intention: all parishioners

**16 Saturday of the 5<sup>th</sup> week of Easter**

• 9.00am private Mass at St John's —Intention: all parishioners

•Reconciliation: by appointment

• 6.00pm private Mass at St. John's—Intention: all parishioners

**17 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER**

•8.30am private Mass at St. Monica's—Intention: all parishioners

• 10.00am private Mass at St. John's—Intention: all parishioners

You may contact Fr. Guy directly via email [guy.riolo@aohtas.org.au](mailto:guy.riolo@aohtas.org.au) or on mobile phone 0408 953 094 between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm daily.

**May—Month of Mary**

All are encouraged to pray the Rosary during the month of May. Pray as a family if possible for the eradication of Coronavirus, family life and for vocations to the priesthood and religious life. Pope Francis encourages families to pray the Rosary together during the month of May. He also suggests to say two prayers at the end of the Rosary. Please find them in the newsletter.

**HAPPY MOTHERS DAY**

On behalf of the Salesian Community, Sr Pam and Threesa I would like to wish all Mothers in the parish a joyful & peaceful Mother's Day. It may not be as before the Corona Virus Pandemic but know that you are especially remembered in our thoughts and prayers. May the Good Lord bless you and your loved ones and the Virgin Mary Mother of God continue to protect you always.



**Mother's Day Prayer**

Grant that by the strength of Your Spirit, we may with patience and love overcome every trial and share even now in the victory of Christ your Son. (from the Opening Prayer of the Solemnity of Mary Help of Christians)

**Ministers of the Word and Communion**

In the hope that we will soon be able to gather together again new rosters will be drawn up. If you know you will be unavailable between 1 June and 30 August could you please let Threesa or Jo (0419 510 014) know before 24 May.

**Young Adult Online Groups (16-35 Years of age)**

All young people are encouraged to be part of two online groups open for all youth in Archdiocese. The first group "Illuminate": Sunday Gospel Readings in Lection Divina Style. The second group "The Meet Up": talks from guest speakers, time for fellowship, discussion & prayer. Further information, please contact Tomasz Juszcak on [Tomasz.juszcak@aohtas.org.au](mailto:Tomasz.juszcak@aohtas.org.au).

**A 7 week Kapaun's Men Virtue Programme**

Contact Ben Smith on [ben.smith@aohtas.org.au](mailto:ben.smith@aohtas.org.au) to register or for more information. Also check Kapaun's Men website: <http://www.kapaunsmen.com>.

**Catholic Standards—May**

If you would like to receive a copy, please contact the parish office on 6272 6363. Thank you!

**Parish Volunteers who visit Nursing Homes—Flu Vaccination required**

Parish volunteers coming to visit nursing homes in the St. John's Parish area are required to have had a flu vaccination in the past few months. (Sr. Pam)

**WEEKLY COLLECTION**

Parishioners are requested to donate \$10 or \$15 per family each month if they can afford it. The money may be placed in an envelope marked "Parish Upkeep" and placed in the letterbox at the Parish Office. It would be appreciated if this could be done by the 10th of each month. This arrangement will only continue as long as the Churches are closed. Or you may wish to pay your weekly offering via Electronic Funds Transfer or Direct Debit (contact the Parish Office on 6272 6363 for details.) Thank you for your ongoing financial support in these challenging times for all. (Fr Guy)

**Weekly Collection (2 / 3 May)**

Envelopes: \$794.80 | Direct Deposit: \$ 693.00  
TOTAL: \$1487.80 | Weekly Budget: \$2500.00 | Difference: -\$1012.20  
We thank you for your ongoing support!

**OUR SICK - Please remember in your prayers:**

Maila Beekmeijer, Lani Baron, Alida Beric, Nell Smith, Eileen Sherrin, Don Ambler, Doreen Street, Fr Bob Curmi, Frances Direen, Anne Hansch, Tom Carty, Judy Pigden, Ian Irvine, Robert Campbell, Mary Dowd, Monique Matzner, Amy Matzner and Patricia Leamey.

**Prayers for the Deceased**

Please remember in your prayers our deceased parishioners, family and friends especially Patrick Dowd, Silvana Paternoster, Peter Drake, Raelene Di Martino, Ken Young and Frank Hesman. Eternal rest grant unto their souls O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them, may they rest in peace. Amen.

**Prayers written by Pope Francis  
to be offered at the conclusion of the Rosary  
by households and individuals each day during May**

First Prayer



O Mary,  
You shine continuously on our journey  
as a sign of salvation and hope.  
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,  
who, at the foot of the cross,  
were united with Jesus' suffering,  
and persevered in your faith.  
"Protectress of the Roman people",  
you know our needs,  
and we know that you will provide,  
so that, as at Cana in Galilee,  
joy and celebration may return  
after this time of trial.  
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,  
to conform ourselves to the will of the Father  
and to do what Jesus tells us.  
For he took upon himself our suffering,  
and burdened himself with our sorrows  
to bring us, through the cross,  
to the joy of the Resurrection.  
Amen.

*We fly to your protection,  
O Holy Mother of God;  
Do not despise our petitions  
in our necessities,  
but deliver us always  
from every danger,  
O Glorious and Blessed Virgin*

***Mosaic, Mother of the Church, overlooking St Peter's Square, Vatican City***

Second Prayer



"We fly to your protection, O Holy Mother of God".  
In the present tragic situation, when the whole world is prey to suffering and anxiety, we fly to you, Mother of God and our Mother, and seek refuge under your protection. Virgin Mary, turn your merciful eyes towards us amid this coronavirus pandemic. Comfort those who are distraught and mourn their loved ones who have died, and at times are buried in a way that grieves them deeply. Be close to those who are concerned for their loved ones who are sick and who, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, cannot be close to them. Fill with hope those who are troubled by the uncertainty of the future and the consequences for the economy and employment. Mother of God and our Mother, pray for us to God, the Father of mercies, that this great suffering may end and that hope and peace may dawn anew. Plead with your divine Son, as you did at Cana, so that the families of the sick and the victims be comforted, and their hearts be opened to confidence and trust. Protect those doctors, nurses, health workers and volunteers who are on the frontline of this emergency, and are risking their lives to save others. Support their heroic effort and grant them strength, generosity and continued health. Be close to those who assist the sick night and day, and to priests who, in their pastoral concern and fidelity to the Gospel, are trying to help and support everyone. Blessed Virgin, illumine the minds of men and women engaged in scientific research, that they may find effective solutions to overcome this virus. Support national leaders, that with wisdom, solicitude and generosity they may come to the aid of those lacking the basic necessities of life and may devise social and economic solutions inspired by farsightedness and solidarity. Mary Most Holy, stir our consciences, so that the enormous funds invested in developing and stockpiling arms will instead be spent on promoting effective research on how to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future. Beloved Mother, help us realize that we are all members of one great family and to recognize the bond that unites us, so that, in a spirit of fraternity and solidarity, we can help to alleviate countless situations of poverty and need. Make us strong in faith, persevering in service, constant in prayer. Mary, Consolation of the afflicted, embrace all your children in distress and pray that God will stretch out his all-powerful hand and free us from this terrible pandemic, so that life can serenely resume its normal course. To you, who shine on our journey as a sign of salvation and hope, do we entrust ourselves, O Clement, O Loving, O Sweet Virgin Mary. Amen.

***Mosaic, Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Jerusalem***

## **The Church after Coronavirus**

New understandings of social mission

***Stephen Schneck is the executive director of the Franciscan Action Network and a former long-time professor of politics at The Catholic University of America.***

The experience of COVID-19 has heightened the consciousness and reawakened the conscience of the church to the fragile, incarnate reality of human life. The church, like the whole world, has also been reminded by our experience of social distancing that human life can only be fully human when lived in solidarity and community with others. What that means for Franciscan Action Network is somewhat unclear as yet, but something is occurring. There is an intensity to be noticed in support for both our social justice advocacy work and our faith outreach. Moreover, our sister faith-based social justice organisations are reporting a similar intensity among their supporters. Concern for the needs of others, especially for those unable to fend well for themselves in this time of crisis, is rising everywhere. So, too, are both calls for practical action and calls for spiritual nourishment. Perhaps the newfound appreciation of solidarity and community is partly to be credited. There is now a realisation not only of community but also of how important community is for our formation as human persons and a realisation that social action is how communities themselves are formed and reformed. Organisations like Franciscan Action Network mobilise for that. But equally part of this rising support for organisations like mine is

the heightened spiritual hunger of this moment. In times of plague, the hunger for understanding the meaning of life is sharp. I believe social action is revealed to be part of that meaning, but so too — and very profoundly — is faith. It may be that our church's mission for our times is evident in this, too. Unmistakably, that's been Pope Francis' vision for the church.

***Jesuit Fr. James Keenan is the vice provost for global engagement at Boston College, a theologian and the founder of Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church.***

At the end of Albert Camus' *The Plague*, the remarkable Dr. Rieux realises that as the plague recedes, the survivors will honour their dead and return to normal life as if nothing happened, even though the virus could come back anytime. Today we face the fragility of life so immediately that at times, like the virus itself, we are left breathless. And we face the mortifying frustration of being unprotected: lacking the tests, masks and ventilators; these life-savers were not in our reach. When it recedes, what can the church do to help us to learn from these experiences? Consider this. Many of us are experiencing a pandemic for the first time, yet others have known the ravages of malaria, tuberculosis, maternal and infant mortality, AIDS, Ebola — the lists goes on. Likewise, they know that treatments are there, but not within reach. We have kept those illnesses from our doorsteps for years, but not from theirs. Unaffected, we could live with news of their struggles. Can we now?

Now that we know the terror of a pandemic and the tangible alienation of lacking available resources, can we return to our old ways of living with news of their struggles? Could our churches make us more mindful of health for all? In Latin, health is *salus*, the same root as salvation. Could the bishops make us realise that when it comes to health or salvation, it's not for the "many," but for all?

***Sean Callahan is president and CEO of Catholic Relief Services, the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States.***

In January, I rode with Yayah Kamara from Kabala, in northern Sierra Leone, to the capitol, Freetown. Kamara is the operations manager for Catholic Relief Service programs in this area. He is an unassuming, quiet man, but if you watch him closely you know he is analysing everything and is always ready to respond.

In 2014, Kamara was a first responder when the Ebola outbreak wracked Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. He would leave his family each day, knowing that he was putting their lives at risk. He and his team put on their personal protective equipment and "collected" the sick and/or dead. Instead of being attacked by locals, as some responders were in other communities, Kamara's team was welcomed into their homes. They advised family members of the proper Ebola protocols; they treated Ebola victims with dignity and respect; and they performed safe and dignified burials to allow families to say goodbye without risking

infection. I wanted to spend time with Kamara because I saw him as someone who exemplified the church's social mission by putting his community, his country and even me (far away from Sierra Leone in the United States) over himself and his family. The church's social mission becomes more evident and more dramatic during times of crisis. We see those who continue to provide food, healthcare and homes; and those who call for justice; and those who call for peace, as the prophets of our time. These crises unite us as we get a glimpse of some of the challenges and uncertainties millions of people face every day. We are called to act in solidarity. The common good requires us to constrain our desires and our freedoms when they poignantly and directly hurt others. The blessing of COVID-19 may be that it allows us to see beyond our own wants and needs to those of others less fortunate. It may allow us to foster a "one health" approach and heal our Mother Earth, and it may allow us to look at our sisters and brothers from other countries and cultures as a source of inspiration and leadership. It is time we open ourselves to a world beyond our own shores and egos.

These testimonies were extracted from two separate articles published by the National Catholic Reporter. The full articles are available by clicking on the links below.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/people/church-after-coronavirus-new-understandings-social-mission>  
<https://www.ncronline.org/news/parish/church-after-coronavirus-crisis-exposes-what-essential>