



ST. MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP PARISH UPPER BLUE MOUNTAINS



29TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

YEAR A

18 OCTOBER 2020

Reflection on the Sunday Readings by Fr. John:

Thanksgiving is central to our Christian Faith!

*We gather every Sunday to give thanks to God for the Life, Death and Resurrection of Christ in our Eucharistic (Thanksgiving) Celebration.

*We are encouraged at all times to give thanks for the gift of family and friends, our sisters and brothers in the Lord: all those who love and care for us

*We strive to give thanks to God for the gift of ourselves: who we are, and even for the life experiences (good and bad) that make us the unique person that God wants us to be

*And we are called to ‘thank God... constantly’ for everything, so that the grace of God may grow within and flow out to others with whom we come into contact.

In the week ahead, let’s ask the Lord to help us give thanks at all times and in all circumstances, trusting in the God of infinite and unconditional love who leads us through the vicissitudes of life to eternal salvation!

FIRST READING

Isaiah 45:1,4-6

Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whom he has taken by his right hand to subdue nations before him and strip the loins of kings, to force gateways before him that their gates be closed no more: ‘It is for the sake of my servant Jacob, of Israel my chosen one, that I have called you by your name, conferring a title though you do not know me. I am the Lord, unrivalled; there is no other God besides me. Though you do not know me, I arm you that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun that, apart from me, all is nothing.’

RESPONSE Give the Lord glory and honour.

SECOND READING

1 Thessalonians 1:1-5

From Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church in Thessalonika which is in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ; wishing you grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We always mention you in our prayers and thank God for you all, and constantly remember before God our Father how you

have shown your faith in action, worked for love and persevered through hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ.

We know, brothers, that God loves you and that you have been chosen, because when we brought the Good News to you, it came to you not only as words, but as power and as the Holy Spirit and as utter conviction.

ACCLAMATION Alleluia, alleluia!
Shine on the world like bright stars; you are offering it the word of life. Alleluia!

THE GOSPEL

Matthew 22:15:21

The Pharisees went away to work out between them how to trap Jesus in what he said. And they sent their disciples to him, together with the Herodians, to say, ‘Master, we know that you are an honest man and teach the way of God in an honest way, and that you are not afraid of anyone, because a man’s rank means nothing to you. Tell us your opinion, then. Is it permissible to pay taxes to Caesar or not?’ But Jesus was aware of their malice and replied, ‘You hypocrites! Why do you set this trap for me? Let me see the money you pay the tax with.’ They handed him a denarius, and he said, ‘Whose head is this? Whose name?’ ‘Caesar’s’ they replied. He then said to them, ‘Very well, give back to Caesar what belongs to Caesar – and to God what belongs to God.’

COMMENT ON THE GOSPEL

Lawrence of Brindisi (1559-1619).

In today’s Gospel we find two questions: one put to Christ by the Pharisees, and the other put by him to them.

The Pharisees’ question concerns this world alone, while Christ’s has an entirely heavenly and other-worldly sense. Their question derived from profound ignorance and perversity; his stemmed from perfect wisdom and goodness.

“Whose likeness and inscription is this? Caesar’s, they reply. Then give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” To each must be given what belongs to him. This, surely, is a judgment full of heavenly wisdom and instruction. For it teaches that authority is twofold, having an earthly and human aspect, and a heavenly and divine aspect. It

teaches that we owe a twofold duty of obedience: to human laws and to the law of God.

The coin bearing Caesar’s likeness and inscription must be given to Caesar, and the one stamped with the divine image and likeness must be given to God. “We bear the imprint of your glorious face, O Lord.”

We are made in the “image and likeness of God.” So you, O Christian, because you are a human being, are God’s tribute money—a little coin bearing the image and likeness of the divine emperor. Therefore with Christ I ask, “whose likeness and inscription is this?” Your answer is, God’s. To which I reply, Then why not give God what belongs to him?

If we really want to be God’s image, we must be like Christ, for his is the image of God’s goodness and “the perfect copy of his nature,” and God “foreordained that those he has chosen should take on a likeness to his son.”

Christ undoubtedly gave Caesar what was Caesar’s and God what was God’s. He fulfilled to perfection the precepts of both tablets of the law, becoming “obedient unto death, even death on a cross,” and he was most highly endowed, both inwardly and outwardly, with every virtue.

In today’s Gospel the reply, most wise and discreet, by which Christ sidestepped his enemies’ trap shows his great prudence. His teaching that each must be given what belongs to him, and also the example he gave by being willing to pay the temple tax and giving a shekel for himself and Peter, shows his justice. His declaring it to be a duty to pay taxes to Caesar, openly teaching the truth without fear of the Jews who would be offended, shows his fortitude. For this is God’s way, of which Christ is the authentic teacher. Those therefore who resemble Christ in their lives, conduct, and practice of the virtues, they are the ones who truly manifest the divine image; for the way to recover this image is by being absolutely just. “Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s”; that is, give each what belongs to him.

Opera omnia 8.

COMMUNION The Son of Man has come to give his life as a ransom for many.

MASS CANCELLED: Wednesday 21st October 8:30am. Mass will be said at Blackheath Church 6:30pm.

NOTES FROM FR JOHN: This coming week Fr Abraham will be on Retreat from Sunday evening until Friday evening. Accordingly the weekday mass timetable will modified: Mon 8:30am Katoomba, Tuesday 5:15pm Leura, Wednesday 6:30pm Blackheath, Thursday 8:30am Leura, Friday 12 midday Katoomba. We return to normal on Saturday morning.

EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS: Meeting this Friday 23rd October 9:30am at 3 Easter St Leura. Those interested in becoming a minister are also welcome to attend.

VINNIES SLEEPOUT: Please support one of our adorers, Simone Smith, who will be sleeping “rough” on October 23rd, 2020, in the Western Sydney Vinnies Community Sleepout. The funds will go towards Vinnies hubs in Western Sydney to help those experiencing or at risk of homelessness due to domestic/family violence; leaving prison; loss of employment; difficulty finding employment. To donate visit: <https://my.fundraise.vinniesnsw.org.au/vinnies-community-sleepout-western-sydney-2020/simone-smith>



CATHOLIC MISSION APPEAL THIS WEEKEND 17/18 October: every year on World Mission Sunday weekend we hold our Catholic Mission Appeal. Envelopes will be available on the pews to contribute towards the leaving collection for this appeal. This year the appeal focus is the Church in Cambodia, which is reaching out to those who have been affected by disability and giving them hope and support to live a fulfilling life. Donations can also be made online www.catholicmission.org.au/cambodia Thank you for your support.

ST MARY MACKILLOP CANONIZATION 10TH ANNIVERSARY: Free commemorative prayer book produced by Mary MacKillop Today. Go to <https://www.marymackilloptoday.org.au/prayer-book/> or call 02 8912 2777

PLANNED GIVING: Would the owner of planned giving envelope #53, kindly contact the parish office.

BOOK A MASS: If you wish to come to a weekend Mass, please click on the link below to book a Mass time. You may book one Mass per weekend. Bookings close 3pm Fridays: <https://forms.gle/LDSNJTP69UjtEJY55>

BOOKING A SUNDAY MASS: Numbers are determined by the 1.5m social distancing requirements. This means: Katoomba: 60 people. Leura: 40 people. Wentworth Falls: 35 people. You MUST book to attend a Sunday Mass. You may do so either on the link above (also on our [Facebook page](#)) or by emailing or calling the parish office. Bookings open until Friday at 3pm. Please book only one weekend Mass and arrive at least 5-10 minutes early as the doors will be locked at the start of the Mass.

FINANCES: If you would like to contribute to the 2nd Collection for the parish: Bank Transfer: BSB 067 950 Account 000 00594 Name: Mary MacKillop Parish Reference: Surname and envelope number or Parish Donation (with or without surname if preferred). If parishioners would like to contribute to the First Collection for the clergy of the diocese: BSB 067 950 Account No 00004265 Account Name Diocesan Clergy Reference either the Parish Name or the parish code 6038

ST. CANICE’S SCHOOL: After 2 weeks of holidays, it is great to see the children back at school. What beautiful weather to start the final term of the year. We are still taking enrolments for next year if there are any families interested. Please ring the St. Canice's office on 4780 6800 and ask for an enrolment pack to be sent out. Alternatively a tour of the school can be organised.

SUNDAY MASS TIMES	WEEKDAY MASS TIMES	CONFESSION TIMES	SAINTS THIS WEEK: Ora pro nobis.
You need to book Sunday Leura 5pm (Saturday) Wentworth Falls 8am Katoomba 10am Leura 5pm *10am on public holidays	MON: 8:30am* Katoomba TUE: 5:15pm Leura WED: 8:30am W-Falls THU: 8:30am Leura FRI: 12pm Katoomba SAT: 9am Katoomba	TUE 4:45-5:00pm Leura SAT: 9:30am Katoomba SAT: 4:30-4:45pm Leura Confessions are always available on request.	MON: Sts. John of Brebeuf and Isaac Jogues, Priests, and their Companions, Martyrs. St. Paul of the Cross. WED: St. John Paul II, Pope. FRI: St. John of Capistrano, Priest. SAT: St. Antony Mary Claret, Bishop. BVM. NEXT SUN: 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time.

MASS OFFERING INTENTIONS: Bruce Jude Gale (RIP). Patrick Leonard Gale (RIP). Forgotten Souls in Purgatory. **DECEASED and ANNIVERSARIES:** JOHN COONAN, MARK NOYCE, GILES AUTY, BARRY MULHOLLAND, ROSLYN MOUNDER, and All the faithful departed especially those for whom you requested prayers and masses AND THE FORGOTTEN SOULS IN PURGATORY. **SICK LIST:** Valerie Small, Marie Thuez, Maria Laznic, Mary Sullivan, Kathleen Hayes-Gilson, Evelyn Maw, Wanda Heffernan, Mary Roberts, Jacqueline Singh, Kath Paine, June Way, Robert Sullivan, Natale Assanti, Susan Keegel, Eugenio Natonton, Emiliana Santiago, Pat Coyne, Inga Morphet, Amanda Peters, Alison Michaels, Aimee De la Motte, Lorraine Russelle, Margaret Murphy, Joan Nolan, Pat Wolthers, Tricia Hogan, Shiela Page, Sr Jeanie Heininger, Michelle Scully, Julie Wals, Edwin Wulff.

PARISH OFFICE: 158 Katoomba Street, Katoomba 2780
Postal Address: P.O. Box 526, Katoomba NSW 2780
Phone: (02) 4782 2804 Hours: 10am-3pm Tuesday-Friday.
Parish Email address: bluemountains@parracatholic.org
After Hours Emergency Number: 0428 878 810 Calls only; no

Weddings: Please call Parish Office for details. **Baptisms:** upon request.
Parish Website at: www.marymackillopupperbluemountains.org.au
Parish Facebook: www.facebook.com/bluemountainscatholic
Parish School: St Canice's Primary School, Katoomba **Principal:** Ms. Miriam Meaney
Phone: (02) 4780 6800 **Email:** stcanices@parra.catholic.edu.au

SIMON SAYS...

Pope John Paul II on the Eucharist, continued:

CHAPTER TWO

THE EUCHARIST BUILDS THE CHURCH

21. The Second Vatican Council teaches that the celebration of the Eucharist is at the centre of the process of the Church's growth. After stating that “the Church, as the Kingdom of Christ already present in mystery, grows visibly in the world through the power of God”, then, as if in answer to the question: “How does the Church grow?”, the Council adds: “as often as the sacrifice of the Cross by which ‘Christ our pasch is sacrificed’ (1 Cor 5:7) is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out. At the same time in the sacrament of the Eucharistic bread, the unity of the faithful, who form one body in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 10:17), is both expressed and brought about”.36

A causal influence of the Eucharist is present at the Church's very origins. The Evangelists specify that it was the Twelve, the Apostles, who gathered with Jesus at the Last Supper (cf. Mt 26:20; Mk 14:17; Lk 22:14). This is a detail of notable importance, for the Apostles “were both the seeds of the new Israel and the beginning of the sacred hierarchy”. By offering them his body and his blood as food, Christ mysteriously involved them in the sacrifice which would be completed later on Calvary. By analogy with the Covenant of Mount Sinai, sealed by sacrifice and the sprinkling of blood, the actions and words of Jesus at the Last Supper laid the foundations of the new messianic community, the People of the New Covenant.

The Apostles, by accepting in the Upper Room Jesus' invitation: “Take, eat”, “Drink of it, all of you” (Mt 26:26-27), entered for the first time into sacramental communion with him. From that time forward, until the end of the age, the Church is built up through sacramental communion with the Son of God who was sacrificed for our sake: “Do this in remembrance of me... Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me” (1 Cor 11:24-25; cf. Lk 22:19).

ECCLESIA DE EUCHARISTIA, 2003.



St Vincent de Paul Society

good works

ST. MARY MACKILLOP - KATOOMBA CONFERENCE

The Katoomba Conference of the Society welcomes Fr. John McSweeney as Parish Priest to our community.

Our Katoomba Conference has been very much impacted by the current virus restrictions and as a result we have been unable to meet clients in a face to face environment. All contact since mid-March has been by way of telephone. We have recognised that this situation has not always been helpful for many who rely upon support from ourselves and other organisations assisting in meeting the needs of the less advantaged in our community.

We are taking steps to endeavour to obtain alternative premises which will overcome the problems of face to face contact but also give us space sufficient for the Society to provide additional services to clients when we are less constrained by virus and financial difficulties.

To this end, Fr. John has suggested that we nominate October towards a recruitment drive. He will speak of our Conference needs at Masses in all three Parish churches during the month. Members will be in the congregation (they will wear their Society badges) for contact and information on membership.

Membership detail and any additional information will be available on the following phone numbers 0422 451 634 and 4782 3243.

Thank you for your generous support of the Society. If you are able to assist in this call for membership we would be most happy to speak with you.



It is TEN YEARS since Pope Benedict canonised our Parish Patroness, St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop on 17th October 2010.

TAKE FRESH COURAGE

In 1902, at the age of 60, Mary MacKillop suffered a stroke. Her mind was unaffected and her speech intelligible, but, with her right side paralysed, she had to make major adaptations to her life. She now walked with a stick and, towards the end of her life, was eventually confined to a wheelchair. She dictated letters, but also learnt to write with her left hand and took up typing – the typewriter being at the time quite a new invention. She continued to govern the Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph as Mother General and, over the next seven years, visited Sisters all over the country, opening up new works and responding to needs wherever she found them.

Certainly, we notice deterioration in significant aspects of Mary's life as a result of the stroke. But we also notice enrichment. Having to depend more on others, she seems to speak and write words of encouragement more often. Her letters repeat what is at the core of faith and spirituality. She was in constant pain – she described it as being like a giant toothache all through her body – but she found deeper meaning in suffering as displaying in her own body the cross of Christ for our time (cf. Colossians 1: 24).

In this, the tenth year after Mary's canonisation in Rome on 17 October 2010, many people around the world have experienced the COVID-19 virus as a kind of communal stroke. We have been paralysed in some ways and have had to adapt to deprivations of all kinds. It is an unfamiliar world in which we carve out our future. There is a background fear in society. We are challenged to find new approaches to life.

As in the case of any trauma, our first challenge is to come to grips with reality. Ignoring the situation won't make it go away. In the process, we must, of course, take whatever steps are needed to safeguard our emotional and mental health. Accepting help if needed is part of this. When we are helpless, maintaining pride won't help. I think of Mary MacKillop, a strong and independent woman, now having to have someone bathe, dress and feed her in the weeks following her stroke. People who have lost their livelihoods and have to depend on the charity of others can feel incompetent and resentful. We grieve with them as they adjust to their new situation.

An old adage says, 'Failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts.' We admire those who show courage. We give them bravery awards and recognise the qualities they display as they battle against the odds. 'Character is formed in adversity', they tell us. While all of this is true, those going through hard times often feel less than courageous. They just keep putting one foot in front of the other. It is only in looking back that we can acknowledge that something greater than ourselves kept us going despite the anguish we felt at the time. For Mary MacKillop, her trust was in a God whose love sees us through every evil, she wrote:

"Let us pray for the ever dear Will of our good God to be done, and in the end we shall see what peace and happiness will result from all our sorrows."