The Ascension of the Lord—Year A
1st June 2014

First Reading: Acts 1:1-11

Responsorial Psalm

God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

Second Reading: Ephesians 1:17-23

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia!

Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Matthew 28:16-20

Words of Wisdom—Pope Benedict on Friendship

‘If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful and great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life opened wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed.’

Mass Times & Services This Week

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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Church open for quite reflection &amp; prayer</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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- Every first Wednesday of the month Mass will be at Woodend Community Aged Care at 11.00am
- The Friday Cellgroup meets at 3pm—4.30 each week for bible study, prayer and warm fellowship, all are welcome. Where: 247 Central Rd, Tylden.
  Contact: Simone Liebergreen 54248459, David Mercer.

Baptisms

Are arranged by appointment and are held on the first Sunday of the month.

Marriages

(6 months notice)
Arranged by appointment. [Enquiries and information brochure available from Parish Office]

Reconciliation

Celebrated at 5.30pm on Saturday or by appointment with the Priest.
COMMUNION TO THE SICK AND HOUSEBOUND

This service is available to sick, elderly and housebound members of our parish community and there are many special ministers of the Eucharist who would deem it an honour to provide this service to such people. If you know of any parishioners who would like someone to call for this purpose contact the office on 5427 2690 and we will make the necessary arrangements.

WE PRAY FOR...

Please keep in your prayers all the members of this community who are sick and all the sick of the Parish. God bring them peace of mind and a recovery to good health and guide those who care for them. We pray today for all those who have died recently, especially Ron Grant and for all whose anniversaries are at this time and for all those who have gone before us from this world to the fullness of life with God. May God have mercy on them all and help us to be faithful to their memory.

GOSPEL REFLECTION

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared at unexpected moments. He encouraged the disciples, assured them that he was really alive, and then disappeared again. They were still looking for an earthly kingdom, so Jesus tells them to wait and pray. The Holy Spirit will come and give them courage to proclaim all that Jesus has taught them. Through his Holy Spirit Jesus will be with them always.

COLLECTIONS

Presbytery Collection (1st collection) [This collection covers running costs of Presbytery and Priest’s stipend.$411
Church (envelopes) collection [This collection covers the Church capital costs, and ongoing maintenance.$724

ST MARY OF THE CROSS MACKILLOP QUOTES

These quotes explore the spirituality and personality of St Mary of the Cross MacKillop. She had wisdom and insight and her words will help us to live the Gospel in TODAY’S world.

Mary wants us to understand that even in the darkness, Jesus walks with us. “The love of Jesus is too strong for me not to cling to.” 1873 Page 55. The Little brown book too by Sue & Leo Kane

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION

Pray in good times and in bad. Prayer is always the first best option in any situation. Pray for friends and family and for those that may not treat you very well. Pray to give praise, to thank and to ask God for help. Also, pray to see what God wants us to do.

MONDAY AT THE MANOR

There will be no Monday at the Manor for the next two weeks. Returns Monday 16th June.
ST AMBROSE PARISH WOODEND

ROB’S FAREWELL
There will be a Thanksgiving Mass in the church with afternoon tea following in the hall on Sunday 15th June at 2pm to say farewell to Robert Macklin. RSVP to Marg Flett by 1st June ph 0438399880 or marg@sawoodend.catholic.edu.au

ST AMBROSE SCHOOL ENROLMENTS 2015
If you have a child ready to attend St Ambrose School next year (2015) or know of any family wishing to have their child at St Ambrose next year please make contact with the school office ASAP. If you already have the enrolment forms please complete and return to the school.

CATHOLIC MISSION-PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH APPEAL
Twenty years on from the Rwandan genocide, the people still carry deep wounds and are in desperate need of practical, spiritual and emotional support. By supporting the Catholic Mission Church Appeal today or by becoming a ‘Faith in Faith’ partner with a monthly gift, you are helping the broken-hearted of Rwanda to forgive, heal and unite. catholicmission.org.au/Rwanda Freecall 1800257296

STATEMENTS CATHOLICS BISHOPS CONFERENCE & NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PRIESTS ON ASYLUM SEEKERS
Copies of both these statements are available in the church foyer for you to take and read.

BISHOP VINCENT LONG: VIETNAM TO AUSTRALIA AS AN ASYLUM SEEKER-11 June, 7pm (Mass 6pm)
Supported by NazarethCare, Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council and House of Welcome this event will feature Bishop Vincent Long speaking about his journey by boat from Vietnam to Australia as an asylum seeker. Supper provided. Cost: Entry by donation Where: Nazareth House Hall, 218 Mill St, Ballarat Contact: Carmel 5332 2103 or 0401 175 045

RESTORING HOPE: REFUGEE WEEK SOUP AND SANDWICH LUNCHEON- 18 June, 12:30pm
As part of Refugee week in Ballarat join us for a soup and sandwich luncheon with guest Maggie Lynch OAM speaking on welcoming and assisting families who are new to Australia. All funds raised will assist the House of Welcome which provides short term emergency accommodation for refugees and asylum seekers. All welcome including children. Cost: $20 or $10 concession Where: Nazareth House Hall, 218 Mill St, Ballarat Contact: Carmel 5332 2103 or 0401 175 045

WORLD REFUGEE DAY MARCH- 22 June, 1:30pm
Join us for the World Refugee Day March to seek justice for refugees. This event is organised by the Refugee Advocacy Network, a broad coalition of faith based groups, unions and community organisations. Where: City Square Cnr Swanston and Collins St. Contact: 0409 352 673 or 0404 728 104

POPE FRANCIS CONFERENCE ENGAGING THE WORLD: LIVING THE GOSPEL
Tuesday 1 July – Wednesday 2 July
A two day conference to reflect on and respond to the first year of Francis’ pontificate. Keynote Speakers will include: Fr Jerry Rosario SJ, the Indian barefoot priest; Sr Carol Zinn SSJ, President Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR); Geraldine Doogue AO; Fr Frank Brennan SJ AO; and Emeritus Professor Joseph Camilleri OAM
Where: Australian Catholic University Cathedral Hall, 20 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, Melbourne
Registration & more info: www.acu.edu.au/popefrancis Contact: 02 9701 4176 or iace@acu.edu.au
First Reading  Acts 1:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Why are you standing here looking into the sky? Jesus has been taken in to heaven.

In my earlier work, Theophilus, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. ‘It is’ he had said, ‘what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.’

Now having met together, they asked him, ‘Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He replied, ‘It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.’

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, ‘Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.’

The Ascension of the Lord, Year A

3. God is king of all the earth. Sing praise with all your skill. God is king over the nations; God reigns on his holy throne. (R.)

Second Reading  Eph 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

He made Jesus to sit at his right hand in heaven.

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation  Mt 28:19. 20

Alleluia, alleluia! Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. Alleluia!

Gospel  Mt 28:16-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.’

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 46:2-3. 6-9. R. v.6

(R.) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

(R.) Alleluia.

1. All peoples, clap your hands, cry to God with shouts of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, great king over all the earth. (R.)

2. God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. Sing praise for God, sing praise, sing praise to our king, sing praise. (R.)

Reflection

by Greg Sunter

The short gospel passage for today is taken from the final words of the gospel of Matthew. It is known as ‘The Great Commission’ as Jesus is portrayed commissioning his disciples to go out to the world and spread the good news. They are charged to ‘Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations.’ This is the basis of much of the missionary work of the Church that has gone on ever since then.

However, the focus of today’s feast is much more on the first reading than the gospel. The opening verses of the Book of Acts, from the author of Luke-Acts, describe the final instructions of Jesus to his disciples and then his ‘lifting up’. The Luke-Acts writer is the only gospel writer to actually describe the Ascension. The fact that the other gospels don’t discuss the Ascension in any detail at all is a good indication that this description should not be taken literally.

However, the message of the Ascension is a powerful one. It reminds us that Jesus, the human incarnation of God on earth, was limited to a specific time and place in history. Despite the physical limitations of his life on earth, Jesus ensured that his message and ministry would continue through those he had taught. Knowing that the disciples would need time to grieve and come to terms with all that had occurred in a relatively short space of time, Jesus promised that the Spirit would come upon them in the days to come. That visiting of the Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost was the motivation to set about doing what Jesus had charged them to do. Without the Ascension, there is no Pentecost.

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St Boniface was born in c.675 in Devonshire and was educated at a Benedictine monastery. Ordained a priest at the age of thirty, Boniface became a missionary to Germany and in 722 was consecrated Bishop of Hesse. A popular story of his evangelisation tells of his encounter with a pagan tribe that worshipped the Norse god Thor in the form of an oak tree. Boniface walked up to the ancient tree and cut it down with an axe, then stood on the trunk and said, “How stands your mighty god? My God is stronger than he.” This led to widespread conversions and with the timber from the oak, he built a chapel dedicated to St Peter, Prince of the Apostles. He became an Archbishop in 732 and died in 754 after being attacked by a band of pagans while evangelising in Holland.