



# St Michael's Parish

Incorporating the Churches of Holy Family Bell Park, Ss Peter & Paul's Geelong West & Holy Spirit Manifold Hts.

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**Reflection by Richard Leonard SJ**

The American political drama *West Wing* has been a huge hit on television. Well-scripted, cleverly cast and finely acted, it dramatises events around the most powerful office in the world. This is one drama series that does not need to invent stories. With former White House insiders hired as consultants, *West Wing* explores important issues and demonstrates the process by which a public position is adopted. The best aspect of this drama, however, is that it portrays the power of the backroom players involved in the process. Every democracy, every institution, including the Church, has people who are not the public face of the organisation but are very powerful in shaping what the group stands for and where it goes. A politician friend of mine says, 'Parliament is theatre sports writ large; real power and the important decisions are worked out in the

backrooms, small offices and corridors.' Yes Minister's Sir Humphrey Appleby would drink to that!

John the Baptist is the greatest of the backroom boys in the Christian story. When the gospels were written, the significance of John's role as a herald and mentor came to the fore. In first century Palestine there may not have been parliamentary corridors for John the Baptist to strut, but his words and actions on the banks of the Jordan were powerful in recognising who was to follow, what the Christian faith would stand for and where it would head.

Is it any wonder, then, that the Birth of John the Baptist is one of the most ancient feasts commemorated in the earliest Christian Church? Its position in relation to Christmas is important too. By 354 the Christians had taken over the Roman celebration of the winter solstice as Christmas Day. John's birthday is on

the summer solstice. After the summer solstice, the northern hemisphere's sun declines in length and warmth. It is reborn at the winter solstice. Hence, John comes to prepare the way for the eternal light we celebrate in Jesus at Christmas. In Luke's Gospel, John embodies the old covenant, made to Israel. Jesus, the new and everlasting covenant, made, not just to Israel, but also to all people everywhere, sees the power and warmth of God's love for us burst forth for eternity.

Many biblical scholars now think that, for a period of time, Jesus was most probably a disciple of John the Baptist. John may have helped Jesus discern his special calling and to recognise his destiny. Whatever of that, we know that Jesus made a break with John in many ways and called his own disciples.

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## - Nativity of St John the Baptist -

(Year B/2 - June 24, 2018)

**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON:**

He will be great in the sight of the Lord and will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb; and many will rejoice at his birth.

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM:**

Since my mother's womb,  
you have been my strength.

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

He came to bear witness to the light,  
to prepare an upright people for the Lord. **Alleluia!**

**NEXT WEEK'S READINGS:****13th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

1st Reading: Wis 1:13-15, 2:23-24

2nd Reading: Cor 8:7, 9, 13-15

Gospel: Mk 5:21-43

**PARISH PRAYER:**

God our Father, bless this parish so that we may love you more. Help the parents to be a good example to the children and our youth to grow in strength as good Christians.

Encircle our families with your loving care. To the sick grant health, to the aged bring serenity and to those in sorrow, joy. May we grow stronger in faith and may our love for one another become deeper in our daily living. Amen.

**PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS:**

Heavenly Father, help us to respond to and live out our mission in the Church, and in the world.

Help all your people to know their vocation in life and assist them to live it well.

For your greater glory and for the service of your people, call many to be priests and religious.

Give those whom you call the grace to respond generously and to persevere faithfully.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# ST MICHAEL'S PARISH AT PRAYER



## WEEKEND MASSES:

### Holy Family, Bell Park:

English... 8am and 9.30am Sunday

Croatian... 11am Sunday

Slovenian... 12.15pm every 2nd Sunday of the month

### Holy Spirit, Manifold Hts:

11am Sunday

### Ss Peter & Paul's, Geelong West:

5.00pm Saturday

## WEEKDAY MASSES:

### Holy Family:

9.15am Tues (followed by Novena to St Anthony), 9.15am Thurs

### Holy Spirit:

9.00am Wed, 11am Fri and 9am 1st Sat. **Reconciliation after Saturday Mass**

### McKellar Centre:

10.15am - 1st Tuesday (3rd & 5th Communion Service)

### Multicultural Centre:

1.30pm - 1st Friday;

**Elstoft House (formerly Vincentian Village):** 3.00pm 1st & 3rd Tuesday, (2nd & 4th Communion Service)

**St John of God Hospital:** 11.30am every Thursday in SJOG Chapel

## BAPTISMS:

1st & 3rd Sundays 12noon at Holy Spirit, 2nd & 4th Sundays 12.30pm at Ss P&P, 3rd Sunday 2pm at Holy Family

## COMMUNAL PRAYER:

**Mon...** Holy Family Women's Prayer Group

10.00am

Holy Family Community Centre

**Tues...** Meditation Group

5.30pm

Holy Family Community Centre

**Wed...** Prayer of the Church

Before 9am Mass

Holy Spirit Church

**Wed...** Holy Family Women's Prayer Group

10.00am

Holy Family Community Centre

**Thurs...** Italian Prayer Group

10.00am

St Patrick's Chapel

**Fri...** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

After 11am Mass

Holy Spirit Church

**Fri...** Divine Mercy

3.00pm

Holy Spirit Church

**Sat...** Rosary

After 9am Mass

Holy Spirit Church

## OUR LADY'S STATUE:

**June 11 to July 2:** Bourke family, 36 Pleasant St

If anyone would like to have Our Lady's Statue or if you could spare an hour a month to help, ph Tina Montalto on 5278 9314.

## AS A COMMUNITY WE PRAY FOR:

### RECENT DEATHS:

Margaret (Peggy) Warburton

### ANNIVERSARIES:

Fr Mick Fitzpatrick, Alki DaCosta, Vjekoslav (Stan) Pogacic, Zlatko Lehpamer, Angela Zulich, Margaret McFarlane, Rajko Jovic, Stefano Mileto, Rocco, Francesca & Salvatore Daniele, Matthew Barr, Breda Gajic, Carmelo Coppolini, Vito Emanuele, Josip Dubrovic and 1 year anniv of Ernesta Virt

### BAPTISMS:

Arvia Dahl and Archie Harding

### PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Aaron Lyall, Anita Capicchiano, Sandra Klinge, Cheryl Lambert, Ana Siketa, Antonio Resciniti

**Please note:** After approx five weeks names will be deleted from the sick list. Please phone the office on 5278 1343.



## STEWARDSHIP CORNER - The Nativity of St John the Baptist

*"Behold, one is coming after me; I am not worthy to unfasten the sandals of his feet." (Acts 13:25)*

Stewardship is a lifestyle, it's not a program or a process. It's how we are called to live our lives 24 hours a day, 7 days a week!

It challenges us to live "God-centered" lives, not "self-centered" lives.

Reflect on your daily activities - do you do them for the glory of God or for the glory of your own name?

## Roster for Next Sunday

(1st Sunday of the Month)

### Ss PETER & PAUL'S - 5.00PM

Commentators C O'Brien

Lectors Sr J McGonigal

Special Ministers N Neeld, P McGlinchey

Welcomers

Projectionist D Whelan

Co-Ordinator M Gifford, 5229 1656

### HOLY FAMILY

#### 8.00AM

Commentators R Allum

Lectors V Pavlovic

Special Ministers J Bartolo, I Baulch, Peter McBride

Welcomers K McArthur, L. Allum

Projectionist R Allum

Co-Ordinator L Kelly, 0409 291 138

### HOLY SPIRIT - 11AM

C Nielson

B Middleton

G Wright

I Cleary, L Fossey

L Coles

#### 9.30AM

J Siketa

C Taylor, M Bird

P Carmody, B Kline, Horoba

M&E Hoffman

C Resciniti

J Mann, 0488 784 802

## RECURRING ACTIVITIES IN ST MICHAEL'S:

St Michael's Luncheon...	First Sunday of each month at the Holy Spirit Hall from 12noon. BYO food and drink to share.
Holy Family Luncheon..	Third Sunday of each month at the Community Centre from 12noon. <b>BYO casserole &amp; drink to share.</b>
Holy Family Women's Group...	First Monday evening of each month at the Community Centre 6.30pm (Winter), 7.00pm (D'light savings)
St Vincent de Paul...	Holy Family meet 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at the Community Centre 7pm. Holy Spirit meets 1st and 3rd Tuesdays 5.00pm in Holy Spirit Hall
Legion of Mary...	Every Friday 9.30am in the Holy Family Community Centre
Baptism Preps	4th Mondays 7.30pm in the Community Centre
Holy Family Choir Practice...	Every Wednesday night at Holy Family Church 7pm
Manifold CWL...	Holy Spirit Hall, 1st Wednesdays in the month
Italian Mass...	First Thursday of the month in St Patrick's Chapel
Catholic Diners' Club...	2nd Tues of each month, 6.15pm at Capri Receptions. Dinner/Guest Speaker - ph 0431 959 584

*If you wish to know more about these groups, as well as about our Sacramental Program for children in non-Catholic schools, our Baptism and Wedding procedures, our Partnership with the Columbans in the Philippines and so on, please visit our webpage:*

**[www.pastoralclustergeelong.org](http://www.pastoralclustergeelong.org)**

## **Jesus the great debt eliminator**

Those who are committed to the most extreme ideology of free market capitalism are very angry that Western governments bailed out the banks during the Global Financial Crisis. They believe the banks should have been allowed to fail to teach them (and us) a hard lesson. It's the only way to give institutions and society the reality check they need to make sure it doesn't happen again. (At least for a while). By cushioning the toxic consequences of a debt binge, governments around the world have allowed their societies to persist with economic behaviour that is guaranteed to produce another crisis. No one seems to have learnt a lesson.

Many would agree with that assessment. But it takes a couple of economists to draw our attention to the fact that Jesus was equally as soft on addressing debt issues as our lily-livered governments.

Ross Gittins, economics editor of The Age, says:

"In New Testament Greek, sin and debt were the same word."

"People who were unable to pay their debts became debt slaves. Once you fell into slavery, the only escape was for someone to ransom you, to pay your bail. Jesus' role was to redeem us, purchase us at a price, buying us out of our debt of sins. The price was the shedding of his blood on the cross, just as the sacrificial lamb's blood was shed at Passover."

"In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace," St Paul wrote.

"Western civilisation has been shaped by Christianity and Christian values, which means Christianity has also shaped economics. The prayer 'forgive us our sins', meaning 'cancel our debts', could be heard from the West's leading banks in the global financial crisis."

"Our modern economy cannot function without institutions that deliver the unfair forgiveness of debt. Bankrupts, for instance, are discharged even though they've paid back only a fraction of what they owe.....It would be hard to imagine the financial Armageddon that would have followed if the government actually did not pay the ransom and redeem banks and some large companies during the GFC. This goes against all principles of sound reason and of basic fairness. Governments breached many rules of competition on which capitalism is built. Why did the most indebted banks and companies, which did not compete very well, receive the largest forgiveness?"

Why? It had to be done, in order to redeem not only these particular troubled and highly indebted companies, but also others that would fail if these few were not saved.

You've heard of positive discrimination, but Christian thought emphasises the concept of 'positive unfairness': the more you've sinned, the bigger dollop of forgiveness you get.

"It doesn't matter how hard you try – everyone gets the same reward provided they seek God's mercy (something the prodigal son's brother had trouble accepting)."

"Christianity thus largely abolishes the accounting of good and evil. God forgives, which is positively unfair."

**Who would have thought it would take two economists to remind us of one of the hardest lessons of Christianity?**

Ross Gittins, economics editor of The Age, drew on the work of Tomas Sedlacek (economist), author of *The Economics of Good and Evil*.

(Kevin Fell)



# St Michael's News:



## WELCOME TO SISTER ANNE LOUREY:

I would like to take this opportunity to warmly welcome Sr Anne Lourey to the Parish Team at St Michael's. Her expertise and assistance in the areas of Liturgy and Outreach as Pastoral Worker, will be invaluable to myself and the community as a whole. We hope she enjoys her time with us.

- ♦ **EUCCHARIST:** Starting in June and continuing through the colder months, a decision has been made to offer Eucharist of one type only at our Masses. This will be re-addressed in September.
- ♦ **ST VINCENT DE PAUL - HOLY SPIRIT CONFERENCE, MANIFOLD HTS** will hold their 2018 Winter Appeal at the 11am Mass today, June 24 with a special collection. The funds raised are used to directly assist those experiencing hardship and disadvantage in our community.
- ♦ **ST ANTHONY'S FEAST DAY CELEBRATION:** There will be Mass in Italian to be held at Holy Family Church on **Sunday June 24 at 2pm**. There will be merchandise to purchase at this Mass. All are welcome!
- ♦ **ROSARY - FR MICK FITZPATRICK:** There will be a Rosary at Fr Mick's graveside, Eastern Cemetery (MacKillop St entrance) on **Thursday June 28** beginning at 11am. All most welcome!
- ♦ **CWL:** The next meeting of the Manifold Branch of the CWL will be held on **Wednesday July 4**, 1.30pm in Holy Spirit Hall. We will be having a Dutch Auction and members are asked to bring a wrapped item for the auction. All St Michael's Parish ladies are most welcome. For transport please contact Bernadette 0417 514 598 or Tricia 0431 512 354.
- ♦ **ST MICHAEL'S CONVERSATION, FRIENDSHIP CRAFT GROUP:** You are all welcome to attend the craft conversation friendship group. Contact Debbie on 0409 416 945 for further details. Dates are June 29; further dates will be added based on attendance. Fortnightly on Fridays 2-4pm (excluding public holidays and school holiday periods) at St Michael's Parish Community Centre.

## Community News:

- June 28... VINNIES CEO SLEEPOUT:** The Vinnies CEO Sleepout is one of the highest profile corporate fundraisers for addressing homelessness and poverty. For the first time in regional Victoria, Geelong is having its own CEO Sleepout at the GMHBA Stadium thanks to the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust. Further information or to register please visit [ceosleepout.org.au](http://ceosleepout.org.au) or contact our CEO Sleepout Manager at [Melbourne@ceosleepout.org.au](mailto:Melbourne@ceosleepout.org.au)
- ♦ **SAMARITAN HOUSE GEELONG:** An overnight crisis home for homeless men which rely on your generosity. Please consider making a donation to our Winter Appeal so we can continue to provide a place of warmth, sanctuary and hope. Donations are fully tax deductible and can be made directly through [samaritanhousegeelong.com.au](http://samaritanhousegeelong.com.au)
  - ♦ **MUSIC AT THE BASILICA INC:** Three Choirs Special Save \$15 - three wonderful concerts at St Mary's Basilica - **Australian National Youth Choir** Thursday July 5 7.30pm \$30/25; **Melbourne Chamber Choir** Sunday 19 August 3pm \$30/25; **Australian Chamber Choir** Sunday 26 August 3pm \$40/35. Tickets available at the door and also as a Three Choirs Special. [www.Trybooking.com/WEAS](http://www.Trybooking.com/WEAS). Package prices are \$85 full/senior or \$70 conc, a saving of \$15. To buy a package by phone call Jan Lavelle on 0407 095 498.

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Jesus does not wait for followers to come to him, he heads to the towns and villages where the people are and he speaks to them in ways they can understand. Jesus preaches to Israel first, but then to the Gentiles. Jesus rejects the harsh, ascetical life of the desert for spirituality of the everyday and, unlike John, Jesus does not just preach repentance for sins, but preaches conversion through forgiveness and compassion. As Louise

Pambrun puts it, John's ministry was 'like the fast before the feast'.

Like John, however, Jesus never wavered from the price that must be paid for faith in our just and merciful God. So this feast flags that we have six months to Christmas, not for shopping or any of the other excessive elements that have hijacked that day, but to recommit ourselves to living out a spirituality that values the everyday and the ordinary, that knows the power of compassion and mercy and is ready to pay

the price for living it.

Today is the feast of backroom players. May all of them exercise their power with integrity. And who knows, maybe the real-life counterparts of Sam Seaborne in *West Wing* or Sir Humphrey in *Yes Minister* may, one day, have their birthday declared a public holy-day. I bet they're quietly working on it even as I speak!