



St Michael's Parish

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

PARISH PRIEST:**Fr. Minh Tran****OFFICE:**

147 Separation St Bell Park 3215

Phone: 5278 1343 Email: bellpark@cam.org.au**OFFICE HOURS:**

Mon -Fri 9am-1pm

PARISH SECRETARY:

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Holy Family

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Web Page Address:www.stmichaelsbellpark.org.au**Facebook Address:**www.facebook.com/michaelparish.st**RECENT DEATHS:**

Masie Beggs, Valentyna Hau, Peter Kelly

ANNIVERSARIES:Peter Bordonaro, Marianna Macarol, Andrew Stocks and
1 year anniversary of Nicola De Leo**SICK:**Veronica Werzek, Angela Reed, Josica Markov, Giuseppa
Forestieri, Julita Aquino**PRAYER FROM POPE FRANCIS:***I am vaccinated by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ. No virus can touch me.***ACT OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNION:***My Jesus,**I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.**I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.**Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually
into my heart.**I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You.**Never permit me to be separated from You.**Amen.*

St Michael's News:

- **THANKSGIVING ENVELOPES:** Can be dropped in at the Parish Office at a time that is suitable to you or, if you prefer to make a one off payment, please contact the Parish Office on 5278 1343.

**6th Sunday of Easter
(Year A - May 17, 2020)**

Acts 8:5-8, 14-17

1 Peter 3:15-18

John 14: 15-21

- **PARISH OFFICE HOURS:** Until further notice, the parish office will be opened daily from 9am-1pm.
- **LIVESTREAMING OF MASS:** This Sunday at 10am.
- **CHANNEL 10:** Mass at 6am & CHANNEL 31 or 44 Mass at 11am every Sunday. Mass is also available on You Tube daily, from St Simon's Parish, Rowville.
- **UPDATE ON RELIGIOUS GATHERINGS:** Although restrictions for religious gatherings now allow a maximum of 10 people to attend, the numbers are not workable to open our churches for Masses. We will readdress this after May 31st. Live-streaming of Mass will continue until then. Thank you for your understanding.
- **Catholic Club at Deakin:** For more information on our newly formed friendship & faith formation group, please contact Len Monk, Chaplain at lenjmonk@gmail.com or 0402 082 937.

Sunday 17 May 2020

Reflection by Richard Leonard 2

There are two strong images in today's gospel: the law and love. In a few verses Jesus keeps moving between the two ideas because he knows how closely related they are.

This can seem curious to modern ears because we have been duped into thinking that the law is the enemy of love, and that only freedom and joy are love's fruits. But think for a moment of people or projects we love, ones to which we are committed. We don't need a rulebook to call us to the most generous and sacrificial behaviour in their regard. We respond 'above and beyond the call of duty' not because of the law, but because of love. Jesus teaches us today that obedience to his commandments is a sub-set of our loving relationship with him.

The word 'obedience' comes from the Latin word *oboedire*, meaning, 'to listen carefully'. That's a gentler way of understanding Jesus' call. The more obedient we are to Christ's commandments, the more we are listening to his Spirit's call in our lives. And what are these commandments to which we have to listen? Jesus said the whole law and the prophets could be summarised as 'loving God and our neighbour, as we love ourselves'. If this seems too general a statement, then St Paul helps us fill out the details. Like Jesus, St Paul tells us the law of love is not primarily revealed in what we say, or how we feel, but in what we do. Christian love is an intensely practical affair. When we are patient, kind and gentle with each other we are obeying the law of love. So too when we forgive each other, tell the truth and remain faithful, we are listening most carefully to Christ's commandments.

St Paul also tells us that another of the fruits of Christian love is self-control. Sacrifice and self-control are really where the law of love comes into its own. The secular world keeps peddling the myth that self-expression is the only way to happiness. Most of us can see how irrational this position is and how unliveable the world would be if everyone expressed all their feelings and desires as they wished. Sometimes the most loving thing is to do nothing. If we are very angry with friends, for example, abusing them physically or verbally won't help. If we are sexually attracted to our best friend's spouse, having an affair will end in tears. On a more positive note, if we are alert to the poverty in which others live in our world, making sacrifices so that they might have something will not take away from us at all. Self-control is the ally of love and it helps us sort out the appropriate time to undertake the appropriate action.

The path to true happiness is found in being self-controlled. The problem is that self-control doesn't come easily. We need to train ourselves in its art and practise it regularly and consistently so that we can enjoy seeing the benefits of winning smaller battles before we venture out on larger campaigns. If we cultivate an attitude of self-control, we can be sure that when we most need to exercise it, we are in charge of our emotional life rather than it being in charge of us.

May this Eucharist effect a change of heart in us. May we embrace sacrifice and self-control as the doors to an even greater practical experience of the Risen Christ's law of love.

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