

## 12th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A) 21 June 2020

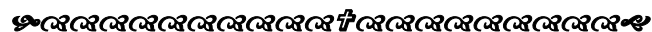
**‘Do Not Be Afraid.’** In the face of many attacks Jesus courageously proclaimed the Good News of the kingdom. His courage stemmed from his firm belief in the Father’s love for him. Likewise, the prophet Jeremiah was not destroyed by intense opposition because he knew that his cause was with God. May we also be courageous witnesses to the values of the Gospel knowing that God’s love for us far outweighs any opposition we may encounter.

### **Responsorial Psalm:**

**Lord, in your great love, answer me.**

### **Gospel Acclamation:**

**Alleluia, alleluia! The Spirit of Truth will bear witness to me, says the Lord, and you also will be my witness. Alleluia!**



### **‘Open Our Churches’ national petition**

While it is pleasing to see progress made on the easing of restrictions on churches in NSW, our fellow Catholics in some other states and territories are still struggling to practice their faith under unfair restrictions at this time. You can voice your concerns directly with all the premiers and chief ministers by signing the Open Our Churches petition at this address:

[www.openourchurches.com.au](http://www.openourchurches.com.au)

### **A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney**

Abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with a crime are the police. If you – or anyone you know – have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org) or call (02) 9390 5810 or You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance.

The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police.



Fr. Brian Egan, Parish Priest  
Fr Chaminda Wanigasena, Assistant Priest  
2 Burke St, Concord West NSW 2138  
[admin@stambrose.org.au](mailto:admin@stambrose.org.au)  
[sacraments@stambrose.org.au](mailto:sacraments@stambrose.org.au)  
[parishcouncil@stambrose.org.au](mailto:parishcouncil@stambrose.org.au)  
[www.stambrose.org.au](http://www.stambrose.org.au)  
Phone: 02 9743 1023  
VASA: 9736 3686, 8765 1295  
St Ambrose Primary School  
Stuart St, Concord West  
Principal: Ms Linda McFadden  
Ph: 9743 5605  
[info@stambconcord.catholic.edu.au](mailto:info@stambconcord.catholic.edu.au)

**Sunday Masses: Sat Vigil 5pm, Sunday 9.30am & 5pm**  
**Live-streamed Mass: Sat Vigil 5pm. You can participate from your home online & receive the Spiritual Communion.**

**Weekday Masses: 9am Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri (or Fri 9.15am school Masses)**  
**Tuesday evening 7.30pm**

**Saturday 8.30am Devotions to Our Lady of Lourdes**

**Saturday 9am Mass**

**Reconciliation: Sat 3.30 – 4.30pm**

**Adoration: Mon & Fri 6-9pm, Tues 5.45pm – 7.15pm,**

**Sat 3.30 - 4.30pm, Italian Cenacle: Mon 9.30am**

**Holy Hour & Cenacle: Wed after 9am Mass, Fri 9.30am**

**Baptisms: 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 11am by appointment.**

**Weddings: by appointment. Contact Parish Office.**

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### **2020 Sacraments Program**

We are very pleased to announce that our First Reconciliation Sacrament will go ahead as planned – however there will be restrictions to ensure the health of our children and their families.

**First Reconciliation- Saturday 8, 15 and 22 August at 2pm**

**First Holy Communion- Sunday 1, 8 and 15 November at 11am**

Please contact the Sacramental Coordinator for further information  
[sacraments@stambrose.org.au](mailto:sacraments@stambrose.org.au)



**Please remember in your prayers the following  
for whom Masses will be offered.**



**Recently Deceased:** Maria (Mary) Brancatisano, Frances Good, Leena D’Mello, Michael Taffa, Gwen Kennedy,

**Anniversaries:** Gordon & Gwen Cootes, Ettore Ciccotti, Joe and Mary Mangion, Doris Cammilleri, Eleanor Williams, Margaret Bouke, Anthony Zovaro

**Others:** Fr Kevin McGovern, Patrick & Margaret Egan, Veronica & Anne Gough, Mario Iannacito, Angelo Iannacito, Mabel & Kevin Rice, Peter Waters, Helen Timpanaro, Paul Broderick, Harry O’Hara, Eugene & Aileen Morris, Ted & Laura Merlino, Harriet David, Terry Tully, Michael Culligan, Angelina Camuglia, Dr Leonado Dimaculangan, Jennifer Bast, Doug Kemp, Carmel Cullinan, Francesca Vizzari, Eric Pewal, Chris Elliott, Paola Pilosio, John Ferranda, Olivero Vendramin, Thomas Murickananickal & Kochappan, Joseph, Anna Nguyen, Gordon Bridges, John Baptist Nguyen, Giuseppe Rubbo, Teofilo Zamora, Paul, Filomena Agostino, Marie Madeleine Danev, Nicola Betro, Margaret Sharpe, Tamam Koloi, Helen Timpanaro, Mario Gemin, John Ryan, **John Kennedy**, Antoinette Constable, Ludivina Green, Agata Rodi, John Baptista Zammit, Catherine and John Manning, Rema Flannery, Margaret Jean Sharpe, John Pomroy, Mary & Ernest Vanzella, Gaetano Patamia, Filomena Agostino, Vladimir Susic, Ruby Madera, Anwar Ghraiche & Family, Caoile Families, Iannacito, Funaro & Di Iorio Families, Guiseppe & Maria Idiotta, Whiteford Family, Culligan Family, Cootes Family, Zammit Family, DeBono Family, Moses Family, Nancy’s Family, Dahdah Family, Wheeler & Higgins Families, Morson Family, Abraham, George & Cherote Families, Kennedy and McGovern Families, John White, June Bates, Dorothy Vantwest, Thelma & Stephen Muller & Family, Soloman Family, Merrell, Bourke, Gielis & Shields Families, deceased members of St Vincent de Paul Society, dearly departed souls and all souls in Purgatory.

**Please pray for the sick especially:**

Theresa Tan’s mum, Veronica Rutherford, Baby Willow Rose Frazer, Paul Dovico, Jim Branley, David Bagnato, Angela, Imogen Warner, Rosaria Natalina Patamia, Felice Minutillo, Charlie Rossini, Kelly & Ursula, Giuseppina Algozzino, Peggy Kerr, Viru, Fr Paul Boyers, Kevin McGrath, John and Betty Gattenhof, Esther Tully, Gary and Leslie McGrath, Rosa Mastro, Tanya Greenaway, Gianna, Matthew, Luisa, Zia Pina, Grace Comare, Sean Peters, Elizabeth Esguerra, Juliet Walsh, Barbara Wayne, , Marilyn Deguara, Elijah, Adrian Vanzella, Matthew Chan, John Rodrigues, Belinda Nicholls, Nan Peters, Carmela Smigliani, Shinta Widzaza, Alan Borg, Rosa Maria Santos, Bhupinder Tamber, Rebecca Sinclair, Marina Arasaratnam, Teresa Domalewski, Adel Abraham, Anne Vassily, Gloria Clark, Kim Long, Bob & Marion Merrell, Terry Murphy, Stacey Spencer, Joanne Ford, David, Celia and Gomes Family, Warwick Cook, Louise, James Anthony Manassa, June Corcoran, Rosina Morson, Celina Shaw, Laurence O’Connell, Sam Carroll, Dr Bede Muller, Robert Carey, Carmen Zammit, Mario Bianco, Rochelle Rodrigues, Kevin Desouza, Pat Toohey, Charmaine Yu, Anne Collins, Anna Viteznic, Adrian Walker, Lauren Wedd, Sara Benjamin & Family, Peter Weinfeoe, Ivy Ross, Dr Siri Kannangara, Maria Rosa de Angelis, Frank Zappia, Cecily Culligan

**VASA UPDATE**

VASA held their monthly meeting last week. VASA volunteers have been continuing to care for those older housebound people in our area who we take shopping and bring to Morning Tea. Because we have built up trust with these vulnerable people over some years, they tell us they appreciated the phone calls and dropping by to chat across their front yards. Many have told us they didn't want a stranger to start calling them when they felt uncertain at the time restrictions came into force. Some had helpful neighbours or relatives who assisted by shopping for them. Others relied on VASA volunteers to be there as needed. With no computers, most had only the landline phone, radio and TV to connect them to the world for the ten weeks of isolation at home!! Our regular shopping bus service will not be operating for some time yet and it was considered to be too soon to have Morning Tea this month.

If you feel you would like to start some volunteer work in the community please ring for a chat.

Kerry 97363686

Trish 87651295



**HELPING HANDS**

During the Covid restrictions of the past few months, members of the CWL and VASA who are knitters in the Concord Library Knitting Group have been busy. This group form part of a network of knitters in the community who knit squares for Wrap with Love Inc. Squares are sewn into blankets which are then distributed to people in Australia and many other countries around the world to areas of trauma and need. [www.wrapwithlove.org](http://www.wrapwithlove.org)

This generous group of Ladies contributed to the 38 knitted and crotched blankets that were delivered this week to the Bushfire Recovery Hub in Nowra! The ladies from the Country Women's Association who manage the hub were very happy to receive the rugs. They will be doing a road trip further south along the coast of NSW and the hinterland area to distribute them as soon as they can.

Many thanks to all those helping hands who saw a need and did something about it! Thirty eight people now have a new blanket to remind them they are loved. St Ambrose Parishioners have reacted in a positive way to the isolation due to Covid restrictions.



### St Vincent de Paul – Winter Appeal

Due to current restrictions, we will still be holding our Winter Appeal, but in a slightly different format.

We are most grateful for the support given to St Vincent de Paul and ask if you would like to make a donation that the following procedures please be observed.

**Cash donations** via the Poor Box or Blue Bucket at the Church exit. If you require a receipt for your cash donation, would you kindly provide your **own envelope** with your details.

**Credit card donations** to be made using **appeal envelopes**. These envelopes are old unused ones for either our Christmas Appeal or last year's Winter Appeal. The envelopes are available at the Burke Street side door and can be placed in the Blue Bucket.

As a result of the Covid 19 pandemic, we are all affected in one way or another. Our volunteers continue to assist the needy and St Vincent de Paul Concord West Conference are extremely grateful for your ongoing generosity and support of the local community that we serve.

#### **Prayer Resources during time of Pandemic**

The Archdiocese of Sydney has a dedicated webpage with prayers and scriptural reflections to help nurture your faith during these difficult times. You'll find the webpage here-

<https://www.sydneycatholic.org/coronavirus-updates/prayer-resources-for-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

**Room available** in retired professional's home with verandah and garden. Close to Concord Hospital and transport. Suit mature working lady or pensioner. Dog OK. Terms Negotiable. Please see or ring Fr Brian.

#### **CatholicCare outreach to the lonely and isolated**

CatholicCare and the Parishes of the Sydney Archdiocese are here to support vulnerable people in our local communities during lockdown. We can connect local volunteers to people who need help with their shopping and errands or even just for a regular friendly chat over the phone. If you, or someone you know, could use a little help during this time, CCareline 13 18 19 can connect you with a local volunteer from your community. CCareline 13 18 19 is a free and confidential helpline for counselling, relationships, parenting, ageing, disabilities, addictions and mental health. CCareline is here to help. Call 131819 Monday - Friday 8am to 6pm.



#### **THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING PROJECT COMPASSION 2020**

COVID-19 is affecting all of us. In these challenging times, your kindness and solidarity can make a world of difference to the lives of the most vulnerable. Your support is life saving.

#### **DO YOU HAVE PROJECT COMPASSION BOXES AND CASH TO HAND IN?**

We know that many of you may not be able to hand in your PC Boxes, or cash, to parishes or schools at this time.

Did you know that you can go online at 'lent.caritas.org.au' and securely donate with your credit card, or you can send a cheque to Caritas Australia, GPO Box 9830, Sydney, NSW 2001 Alternatively, if you require assistance with your PC Box or cash Please call our friendly team on 1800 024 413.

**Br Julian's Reflection. 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**“Do not fear those who deprive the body of life but cannot destroy the soul. Rather, fear him who can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna.”** Matthew 10, 26-33

Today's gospel reading is all about personal integrity and how we can allow fear to erode it. So, let's start with a poem:

*Burn the witch! The outcry came.  
So end the drought her sins inflame!  
Tickle her with tongues of fire,  
sear her flesh like hot desire.  
Burn the witch.  
Upon her head we heap the blame. Burning her, we burn our shame.  
End fear upon the funeral pyre!  
Burn the witch.  
In childhood dreams, the sugarcane  
burns. Craving sweetness, there we maim  
the wildlife, which is set afire  
and dies, for sugar and a buyer.  
And now the world, itself aflame  
Burns the witch.* Kimberley Starr, *Drought* (from her novel *Torched*, p.97)

Even a cursory look at what is happening in our world at present will lead us to conclude that there is a lot of human activity that is being driven by fear. We are afraid that we will succumb to the ravages of the coronavirus. Among the people of Hong Kong there is a palpable fear that the Chinese Government is going to severely curtail their freedom and remove the option of democratic elections and the freedoms of movement, speech, voicing criticisms, choice of entertainment and practice of religion, all of which have long been accessible to them. Underlying the rioting, demonstrating and civil disobedience linked to the issues of “Black Lives Matter” and imprisonment of refugees and asylum seekers is the deep-seated fear that politicians and law-enforcement agencies will continue to cheapen the value of the lives of every citizen and act as though the lives of people whose race and skin-colour are different from theirs are of less value. There is a fear that some people have less entitlement to respect and dignity simply because of their colour. Fear seems to be becoming contagious.

All this invites each of us to stop and reflect on the role fear plays in each of our own lives. What is it that I fear? Today's first reading offers me a good starting point for finding an answer to that question. Jeremiah tells us exactly what it is that has put the wind up him: “Yes, I hear the whisperings of many: ‘Terror on every side! Denounce! Let's denounce him!’ All those who were my friends are on the watch to catch me out for

any misstep of mine. ‘Perhaps he will be trapped; then we can prevail, and take our vengeance on him.’ (Jeremiah 20, 10)

Jeremiah is afraid that those who supported him are now out to get him. He is frightened about the gossip that is going on and gathering momentum. He is afraid that people he knows will turn on him and treat him as later generations treated witches. But he fails to appreciate the irony in the action he takes to retaliate against those who are frightening him with their threats. He wants God to come and terrorise them with “utter shame and lasting, unforgettable confusion”. Moreover, he wants to be around to witness their destruction.

Another human failing has long been to turn on those in the community who dare to express their integrity by speaking the truth. We even resort to putting labels on others, to attributing evil to them, to scapegoating them and have even burned some of them at the stake as witches. We human beings get drawn easily into blaming others for the problems that threaten and strike fear into our hearts.

Over centuries, there have been so-called religious people who want to attribute natural disasters and severe climatic events to God. Their cry is that God uses drought, fire, tsunamis and tornados as punishment for humanity's waywardness and sin. Their call to us is to appease an angry God by beating our breasts, acknowledging our sinfulness and adopting morally acceptable lifestyles.

When we get the urge to place the blame on others for misfortune, disaster and our own failures, we are motivated by fear or are lacking in personal integrity. While we are afraid that others might think less of us if we admit to our mistakes and failures, we also know that if we can shift the blame to others, if we can turn others into witches, there is for us the false reward of satisfaction and self-justification.

It was the fact that Jesus himself came to discover the paramount importance of personal integrity that led him to say to his disciples: “Do not fear those who deprive the body of life but cannot destroy the soul”(Matthew 10, 28). He came to understand that compromising one's integrity by cheating, dishonesty, deceit, playing favourites and turning a blind eye to injustice were soul-destroying, selling out on life and becoming a shell of a human being. His own life demonstrated that he preserved his integrity and put his trust in a God who would stand by him no matter what threats were directed at him. That does not mean that he did not experience fear. Arguably, the greatest struggle he faced was during his inner struggle in Gethsemane when fear enveloped him and he prayed that God would come to his rescue. His triumph was that he came through ready to face torture and execution. Yet even just before he breathed his last, he struggled to hold firm to his faith in God. It is indeed fear that is the very opposite of faith.

All this explains why, in today's gospel reading, after speaking of the fear of violence and the prospect of death, he can add: "Rather, fear him who can destroy both body and soul in Gehenna". The "him" certainly cannot refer to God who loves us endlessly and unconditionally. It is a reference to the spirit of evil that we can allow to invade our lives and eat away at our integrity.

This is all very challenging, especially in the circumstances in which we now find ourselves. A global pandemic claiming hundreds of thousands of lives is a frightening phenomenon, the likes of which few of us have previously experienced. Racism and the devaluing of black lives and refugees from war, and other violence are evils perpetrated by abusers of power and privilege. They can threaten faith on one hand and undermine integrity on the other, once we allow fear to be a controlling factor in our lives. Today's readings are a call to us to trust in a God who loves and cares for us in all the circumstances of life and a call, too, to live with integrity, come what may.