

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A) 23 August 2020



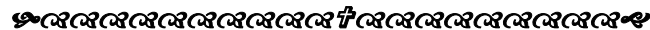
'Who Do You Say I Am?' Jesus asks his disciples this question in today's Gospel, He asks us the same question. He is not seeking a textbook response or for us to repeat what others have said about him. He wants to hear our personal response. May we answer his question as truthfully as possible, and then listen as he speaks to us.

Responsorial Psalm:

Lord, your love is eternal; do not forsake the works of your hands.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! You are Peter, the rock on which I will build my Church, the gates of hell will not hold out against it! Alleluia!



2020 Sacraments Program

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

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

Confirmation

**Friday 11 Sept @ 7pm, Saturday 12 Sept @ 12 & 3pm,
Friday 18 Sept @ 7pm and Saturday 19 Sept @ 2pm
No further candidates can be accepted.**

Confirmation sessions will be held in the Church on
Mondays 24th and 31st Aug from 3.30pm till 8pm.

Parishioners are welcome to come into the Church for private prayer, keeping in mind, the children and parents will be in attendance.

Please contact the Sacramental Coordinator for further information
sacraments@stambrose.org.au



Fr. Brian Egan, Parish Priest
Fr Chaminda Wanigasena, Assistant Priest
2 Burke St, Concord West NSW 2138
admin@stambrose.org.au
sacraments@stambrose.org.au
parishcouncil@stambrose.org.au
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

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: 2nd & 4th Sundays of the month at 11am by appointment.

Weddings: by appointment. Contact Parish Office.

21st Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year A) 23 August 2020



Please pray for the children of our parish and their families as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation through the Parish Sacramental Program over the coming weeks.



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



Recently Deceased: Milan Novacic, Ida Bova, Lorna Redolfi, Michael Picone, Luis De Marques, Giuseppe Scarnecchia, Maria Teresa Nguyen, Peter Le

Anniversaries: Giuseppe, Luigina and Antonio Anello, Silvestro Bonanno, Vladimir Susic, Elinda & Jack Tumminello, Frank MacCarthy, Michele Lancuba, Peter Rahme, Olva & Jack Jacono, Dianne Druitt

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, Anthony Zovaro, 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 Betto, Margaret Sharpe, Tamam Koloi, Helen Timpanaro, Mario Gemin, John Ryan, John & Gwen Kennedy, Antoinette Constable, Ludivina Green, Agata Rodi, John Baptista Zammit, Catherine and John Manning, Joe and Mary Mangion, Rema Flannery, Antonino Restuccia, Iris Moreno, Desti Manalu, Margaret Jean Sharpe, John Pomroy, Mary & Ernest Vanzella, Gaetano Patamia, Filomena Agostino, Luke, Alejandro Sotelo, Victoria Haguina, Hendra Kurniawan, Santina Martinelli, Ruby Madera, 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:

Maria Manno, Joseph Borg, Yuan Sheng Ye, Theresa Tan's mum, Veronica Rutherford, Baby Willow Rose Frazer, Paul Dovico, Jim Branley, David Bagnato, Angela, 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 volunteers have been continuing to care for older housebound people in our area. As some of the restrictions have been eased, we are taking some of them shopping each fortnight in our volunteer's cars. The regular shopping service using the Council Community Bus is not permitted at the moment. We have built up trust with these vulnerable people over some years. Those whose relatives live far away, know they can call on a VASA volunteer for help with transport to medical appointments when needed. They appreciate a friendly chat when we can visit them or otherwise over the phone. We had a Morning Tea last month with very limited numbers and the noise of the conversations was wonderful to hear!

VASA would welcome anyone who could help with transport either occasionally or on a regular basis. If you feel you would like to start some volunteer work in the community please ring for a chat.

Kerry 97363686

Trish 87651295



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.



PROGRESS OF PARISH SAFEGUARDING POLICY

CLARIFICATION AS TO WHY C O U N T E R S WERE ORIGINALLY INCLUDED IN THE LIST OF VOLUNTEERS TO BE COVERED BY THE SAFEGUARDING POLICY

You will notice that below that C O U N T E R S have been eliminated from the list of volunteers required for coverage under the Safeguarding Policy....as in some Parishes...COUNTERS and COLLECTORS ARE the same persons...(information acquired from Safeguarding Office)

Many thanks to all those who have assisted me in bringing this essential policy into reality here in St. Ambrose's for the purpose of protecting our children and any vulnerable adults, so that when the audit of our Parish occurs, we can then be listed as a "SAFE" Parish. It is to this end that I have been motivated to accept it and carry it through.

Our volunteers in the particular areas to be covered number as far as I can ascertain number 85. 25 volunteers have completed all requirements, thus being certified by a SALT Certificate from the Archdiocesan Office. 25 volunteers have contacted me to obtain the website on which to complete online training after which the volunteer receives the Salt Certificate. Hopefully the other volunteers have collected their K I T S from the foyer of the Church, as many did not sign, I am not sure that some K I T S were collected for completion.

Could you please let me know if you do not feel able to complete online training. That will give me some idea of the number of people requiring face to face training when it is practical to follow through.

I am required to submit to the Professional Standards Office all the details contained on the following:

1. Volunteer's Form
2. Code of Conduct Form
3. WWCC child protection
4. Online training - Salt Certificate's date

This Safeguarding Policy covers Eucharistic Ministers at Mass, in home or hostel, Collectors, Readers, Youth choir ministers, Parish Secretaries, Catechists, Sacramental Coordinators, Children's Liturgy Ministers

Contact: judith.clark@rscsisters.com.au

COVID-19 Update

The NSW Government has recommended parishioners wear face masks when attending religious services as an additional safeguard to help combat the spread of COVID-19.

Livestreaming

Our livestreaming has proven to be very popular. To ensure it's continuity we're wondering if anyone has a 'spare laptop' that could be donated to the Church.



- The minimum specs are
1. CPU – i5 4th gen onwards
 2. Ram – minimum 8GB
 3. Graphics card

4.

If you have a 'spare laptop' could you please contact the Parish on 97431023 or email admin@stambrose.org.au

Tax Receipts 2019/2020 – thank you to all who have contributed financially to parish and appeals on behalf of other agencies.

Anyone needing a tax receipt for giving to CFW, Project Compassion and or Priests Retirement Foundation please email admin@stambrose.org.au Receipts can be printed out for you and left in the foyer of the church or can be emailed to you. Please include your preference in your email.

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 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.

Br Julian's Reflection 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

"I'll give him (Eliakim) the key of the Davidic heritage. He'll have the run of the place - open any door and keep it open, lock any door and keep it locked... He'll secure the Davidic tradition."

Isaiah 22, 19-23

Jesus pressed them: "And how about you? Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter said: "You're the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Jesus responded: God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn't get that answer out of books or from teachers. My Father in heaven, God himself, let you in on this secret of who I really am."

Matthew 16, 13-20

Today's gospel reading is, at one and the same time, inspirational, challenging and puzzling - inspirational in Peter's profession of faith in Jesus, challenging in that, if we dare to be participants in the story, not just observers, we, too, are called to answer Jesus' question, and puzzling because, having accepted that Peter had identified him correctly as the Messiah, Jesus tells him and the other disciples not to breathe a word to anyone about his being the Christ, God's anointed messenger.

While all the Evangelists (Matthew 16, 13-20; Mark 8, 27-30; Luke 9, 18-21; John 6, 69) record Peter's profession of faith in Jesus, Matthew is the only one to record in any detail the exchange between Jesus and the disciples that followed Peter's textbook accurate answer to Jesus' question to them: "And how about you? Who do you say I am?"

It was not by accident that Matthew set the scene of Peter's extraordinary profession of faith in the district of Caesarea Philippi. In the city itself, there was a panoply of shrines and temples dedicated to various gods, including Pan, the Greek god of nature and the Syrian god, Baal. In the centre of the city there was a huge white temple built by Herod and dedicated to the "divinity" of Caesar. It was in this context that Jesus asked the disciples what the gossip was about him. Predictably, they began with what a fearful and superstitious Herod had been reported as saying: that Jesus might be John the Baptist who had come back from the dead to haunt him. They then advanced to the rumours that were circulating about Jesus being a reincarnated Elijah or some other prophet. That was not surprising because they were able to rely on the prophet, Malachi, who had quoted God as saying: "Behold, I will send you Elijah, the prophet, before the day of the Lord comes" (*Malachi 3, 23*).

It was then that Jesus took the risk of turning to those closest to him and asking: "And how about you? Who do you say I am?" It was a risk, because he exposed his own vulnerability. He stood to being deflated. Moreover, we know deep down that that's not a question that we human

beings dare to ask anyone, even our closest friends. We're also familiar with the hurt teenagers sometimes inflict by posts they put on twitter about one another. We know a bit about the reality of cyber bullying, and its consequences. We adults would run a mile rather than risk asking family and friends: "What are people saying about me? And who do you think I am as a person?"

So, I imagine that the disciples were taken aback, and that there was probably a long silence as they struggled with how they might respond. Fortunately, Peter came to the rescue with a response worthy of a reputable theologian: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16, 16), and in line with God's affirmation of Jesus at his baptism by John: "This is my beloved Son. My favour rests on him" (Matthew 3, 17).

Affirmed and encouraged by Peter's words, Jesus concluded that he had been inspired by God, and immediately appointed him to lead all those who would commit themselves to walking in Jesus' footsteps. Moreover, using the image from Isaiah of "the power of the keys" Jesus conferred on Peter the authority to "bind and loose" - to call people to their responsibility to live with integrity and to free them from fear and oppressive legalism (cf Isaiah 22, 22 "I, the Lord, will give to Eliakim the key to the Davidic heritage. He'll have the run of the place - open any door and keep it open, lock any door and keep it locked". Church leaders through the centuries have been quick to limit this power of binding and loosing to the sins of the people in the pews. Rather, binding and loosing are all about freeing people from all that oppresses them and helping them to appreciate that law is not about stifling people and tying them up in knots. Rather, law is about helping us all to preserve our own dignity and respecting the dignity of everyone we encounter.

Christians of my generation will have vivid memories of Parish Missions, in the course of which preachers set out to motivate us by threatening us with the fear of hell because of our sinfulness. The sad consequence was that many good people ended up being somehow obligated to a God of fear instead of being freed to grow into their true selves and to know that they are loved unconditionally by the God who had loved them into life.

I suggest that it well worth our taking the time to read the part of Matthew's Gospel that follows immediately after Peter's profession of faith. Jesus informs the disciples that "he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly there at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and be put to death, and raised up on the third day" (Matthew 16, 21). True to form, Peter has a rush of blood to his head and launches into using his newly acquired power of binding, protesting: "Impossible, Master! That can never be!" (Matthew 16, 22) For his outburst, Peter his severely reprimanded: "Peter, get out of my way. Satan, get lost. You have no idea how God works" (Matthew 16, 23).

I dare to suggest that binding and loosing are two aspects of the process of helping people to grow. They complement one another. When we understand the role of law and the need to live as thinking, responsible, human beings we are on the way to healthy human and Christian maturity. It is a bonus when we are loosed from the oppression of legalists and fundamentalists, and the fears encouraged by those who think they can frighten us into conformity. In entrusting Peter with the authority to bind and loose, Jesus was calling him to see the need for compassion and encouragement in his role as leader.

In the piazza at the front of St Peter's basilica in Rome there are two huge statues of Peter and Paul, giants of faith in Jesus. Yet both had their failures and human weaknesses. Peter denied Christ and Paul persecuted Christ's followers. They both discovered the need to change and to grow, to seek forgiveness for their failures; they both learned the way of compassion and encouragement. In today's second reading from Romans we hear Paul lamenting the fact that so many of his fellow Jews were unable to recognise that Jesus was the Messiah, the messenger of God to the world. Yet he was able to see that force could not compel people to believe and to admit that the ways of God are not our ways. Peter grew out of stumbling and opening his big mouth out of turn, and came to know in his heart that Jesus forgave his act of denial. They are both wonderful leaders for us all because their very lives are testimony that they were both wounded healers for their Christian communities.

If we care to think about it, everything we do and say in our lives is meant to be a response to Jesus' question: "Who do **you** say I am?" Most times our words and actions testify to our belief that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ of God. Sometimes we falter and miss the mark.

And as for the puzzling part of today gospel-reading, the answer as to why Jesus told the disciples not to broadcast the fact that Peter had rightly recognised him as the Messiah, these men had not yet grown to the point that their words and actions did not yet fully match. True witness requires credibility. Moreover, those not so close to Jesus would not have been able to cope with such a startling truth. There is still room for growth and conversion in all of us on the journey to becoming fully credible witnesses to the Gospel.