



St Peter Chanel & St Joseph Berala

Streams of living water will flow from within. ~John 7:38

Parish Office: 60 Kingsland Rd, Berala, 2141, **Ph:** 96447787 **E:** info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au

Parish Website: www.stpeter-stjoseph.org.au, **facebook:** [stpeterstjoseph](https://www.facebook.com/stpeterstjoseph)

Holy Mass at Berala: Monday to Friday 6.45am, Wednesday to Friday 9.15am, Saturday 8.00am, Saturday 9.00am Adoration & Novena. **Holy Mass at Auburn South:** Tuesday 9.00am (during school term only)
Lord's Day Mass Berala: Saturday 5.00am (Vigil) Sunday 10.00am **Lord's Day Mass Auburn South:** Sunday 8.00am
Reconciliation at Berala: Saturday 9.00am - 10.00am. Or contact the parish office for any other time.
For Baptisms, Weddings, Bible Study and Catholic Enquiry, please contact Fr Thomas or the parish office on 9644 7787.

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time—Year A

20 August 2017

First Reading

Is 56:1.6-7

Thus says the Lord: Have a care for justice, act with integrity, for soon my salvation will come and my integrity be manifest. Foreigners who have attached themselves to the Lord to serve him and to love his name and be his servants – all who observe the sabbath, not profaning it, and cling to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain. I will make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their holocausts and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples.

Second Reading

Rom 11:13-15. 29-32

Let me tell you pagans this: I have been sent to the pagans as their apostle, and I am proud of being sent, but the purpose of it is to make my own people envious of you, and in this way save some of them. Since their rejection meant the reconciliation of the world, do you know what their admission will mean? Nothing less than a resurrection from the dead! God never takes back his gifts or revokes his choice. Just as you changed from being disobedient to God, and now enjoy mercy

because of their disobedience, so those who are disobedient now – and only because of the mercy shown to you – will also enjoy mercy eventually. God has imprisoned all men in their own disobedience only to show mercy to all mankind.

Gospel

Mt 15:21-28

Jesus left Gennesaret and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Then out came a Canaanite woman from that district and started shouting, 'Sir, Son of David, take pity on me. My daughter is tormented by a devil.' But he answered her not a word. And his disciples went and pleaded with him. 'Give her what she wants,' they said 'because she is shouting after us.' He said in reply, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel.' But the woman had come up and was kneeling at his feet. 'Lord,' she said 'help me.' He replied, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the house-dogs.' She retorted, 'Ah yes, sir; but even house-dogs can eat the scraps that fall from their master's table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, you have great faith. Let your wish be granted.' And from that moment her daughter was well again.'

Antiphons, Readings & Reflections

Entrance Antiphon **Ps 83:10-11**

Turn your eyes, O God, our shield;
and look on the face of your anointed one;
one day within your courts
is better than a thousand elsewhere.

Responsorial Psalm:

(R) O God, let all the nations praise you!

1. O God, be gracious and bless us and let your face shed its light upon us. So will your ways be known upon earth and all nations learn your saving help. **(R.)**
2. Let the nations be glad and exult for you rule the world with justice. With fairness you rule the peoples, you guide the nations on earth. **(R.)**
3. Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. May God still give us his blessing till the ends of the earth revere him. **(R.)**

Gospel Acclamation **Mt 4:23**

Alleluia, alleluia!

Jesus preached the Good News of the kingdom and healed all who were sick.
Alleluia!

Communion Antiphon **Ps 129:7**

With the Lord there is mercy;
in him is plentiful redemption.

Next Week's Readings: (Migrants & Refugees Week)

Is 22:19-23
Rom 11:33-36
Mt 16:13-20

Reflections

From the Perspective of a Disciple

As we passed through a little village near Sidon this Canaanite woman suddenly started calling on the master to help her daughter. We all expected the master to help her out as usual but he really put her in her place! He told her that his ministry was not for pagans like her. That should have stopped her, but she kept on and on, even turning the master's words back on him! She was rude. We were about to push her out of the way so that the master could move on when he suddenly told her that her faith was great and that her daughter was better. Great faith? A Canaanite? He never ceases to surprise us!

Historical Context

When Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, the 'Promised Land' they sought was the land of Canaan (approximately the area of modern Israel, TransJordan, Syria and Lebanon). Here they were commanded to utterly destroy the Canaanites and to

subdue the land. (Exodus 23:23-24) The Israelites never successfully removed all the Canaanites from the Palestine region. By the time of Jesus, the Israelites had established themselves in the region between Judea in the south and Galilee in the north, while the original inhabitants of the area had been 'squeezed out' - predominantly to the north. The Canaanites were dispossessed of their land by the Israelites and it is easy to see why there was tension between them.

Scriptural Context

This passage is the second of a group of three stories that make up Chapter 15 of Matthew's Gospel. The first story shows Jesus challenging traditional views of cleanliness and uncleanness—one of the great separators between Jews and Gentiles. The story in this week's gospel follows with its account of the Canaanite woman's great faith being recognised. Finally, Matthew relates the story of the feeding of the four thousand—a dramatic sign by Jesus of the open invitation to receive his message and ministry. The three stories taken together, form a powerful chapter that makes clear that the message of Jesus is not exclusively for the Jews.

Parish Priest

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Priest in Residence

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M. 0418 459 431

Parish Secretary

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Pastoral Co-ordinator

Andrew Kozah
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Youth Ministry Co-ordinator

Tommy Francisco
tommy.bolin.francisco@gmail.com

Pastoral Relations Officer

Mariana Tannous T. (02) 9644 7787

Pastoral Council

Charlie Scully (Chair) T. 0402 071 849
Karim Kassis (Vice Chair) T. 0402 071 849
Maureen Hynes (Secretary)
Joji Salar (Asst Secretary),
Micheline Botham (Social Committee)
T. 0422 939 342
Jenny Michael (Liturgy Committee)
Pat Kavanagh (Social Justice),
Jann Rockliff (Hospital Visit),
Rhia Victorino, Arthur Doumit (SVDP) and
Principals of the Parish Schools.

Finance Committee

John Le Mottee (Chair)
T. (02) 9644 8859
Micheline Botham (Secretary) 0422 939 342
Joe Moses, Ingrid Scharenguivel, Brendon
Nazareth (Finance Controller)

Parish Schools

St Peter Chanel, Regents Park
T. (02) 9644 9083
Principal - Phil Townsend
Family Educator - Barbara Mucha

St Joseph the Worker, Auburn South
T. (02) 9646 1434
Principal - Gai Melville
Family Educator - Angela Finnane

Alcohol & Drug Information Service:

(Confidential) 02 9361 8000

CatholicCare: Ph:13 18 19

Spiritual Retreats: Benedictine Abbey
Jamberoo - www.jamberooabbey.org.au/
retreats Ph: 4236 0533

Carmelites Varroville -
www.carmeliteretreats.com.au
Ph: 8795 3400

Healing After Abortion: 0400 092 555

Vincentian Retreat Centre Somersby -
www.divineretreatcentre.org.au
Ph: 4372 1598

Sara's Place: For pregnancy support or
grieving after abortion visit
www.sarasplace.org.au

Parish Diary This Week

Monday	6.45am Mass
Tuesday	6.45am Mass 9.00am Mass (SJW)
Wednesday	6.45am Mass 9.15am Mass 7.00pm RCIA Inquiry (SPC Church)
Thursday	6.45am Mass 9.15am Mass 1.30pm Starting Afresh this Winter (St Joseph's House) 7.00pm Psalmists followed by Parish Choir (8 Wallace St Sefton. To join Parish Choir call Maureen on 9644-5818)
Friday	6.45am Mass 9.15am Mass 12.30pm Pastoral Care of Sick Meeting & Lunch (St Joseph's House)
Saturday	CWF Collection 8.00am Mass 8.30am Rosary 9.00am Novena Adoration Confession 5.00pm Sunday Vigil Mass
Sunday	CWF Collection 8.00am First Holy Communion Celebration Mass (SJW) 10.00am Mass

Family that pray together stay together"

PILGRIM STATUE**FROM ST PETER CHANEL**

at the Nazareth Home
3/65 Regent Street, Berala
Please join them any evening at
7.30pm for the Rosary.

To host the Pilgrim Statue and Rosary
prayer please contact Mona
on 9709 8701 or 0417 282 603.

FROM ST JOSEPH THE WORKER

at the Michael Home

To host the Rosary Statue from St Joseph
the Worker contact the Legion of Mary.

*"The rosary should be said with faith—for
our Blessed Lord said, "Believe that you
shall receive; and they shall come unto
you."
~St. Louis De Monfort*

Roster Next Week

27 AUGUST 2017		21 st SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME	
Mass	VIGIL (SPC)	FIRST HOLY COMMUNION 8AM (SJW)	10AM (SPC)
ACOLYTE	Bob KENSEY	William ANDREWS	Roland JAVIER
ORGANIST	Kate PARISH		SAMOAN
CANTOR	S EAMIGUEL & PARISH CHOIR		YOUTH
LECTOR/S	Flavia NARAYAN	Karim KASSIS	Sharon IACONO
	Sharon SEBASTIAN	Michael Chow	Maureen HYNES
COMMENTATOR	Lawrence LOPEZ	Ingrid SCHARENGUIVEL	Monica SMITH
GIFTS	Helen Le MOTTEE		Alan & Margaret THAM
SP. MINISTER	Kay SCULLY		Jenny MICHAEL
SP. MINISTER	Phirum DUCH		Angela TANG
CHURCH SHOP	Charlie SCULLY		Anna MANGANARO
GREETERS	Jann ROCKLIFF & Joyce ZHANG	Loutoa OLIE	Pat KAVANAGH
HOSPITALITY			Christina ESCOBAR

Hospital Visitation Sat: Amato Hehea & Bernadette Hawthorn	Altar: Group 4 Anita Yip; Catherine Naidu-Narayan, Malia Pei
Hospital Communion Sun: Charlie & Kay Scully	
Cleaners SPC : Roland & Aida Javier	Children's liturgy: Vinita Nazareth

Saturday	26 AUGUST
LECTOR FOR MASS	Christine KENSEY

Mass Intentions

Recently Deceased: Maria Camua Martin, Avelina C Florendo, Des Ryan, Peter Joseph Nguyen
Deceased: Girgis Aboumelhem, Enmaza Aboumelhem, Peter Michael, Karime Michael, Joan
Buefari, Josie Bittar

Anniversary: Seabellone Giovanni, Phillip Basile, Valerie De Souza,
Peter Oh

Deceased members and friends of : Erwin & O'Dwyer Families, Ross &
Mitchell Families, Duong Family, Michael Family, Beaini Family,
Aboumelhem Family, Amores & Florendo Families

Other Intentions: Simone Raspante, Concetta Raspante, Teresa Raspante, Maree Khater &
Khater Family



The Canaanite Woman who Subverted the Idea of Faith

I got home from my home visit last Tuesday night. The next day, Wednesday, I was at the regional conference of Pastor, Principal, REC, Family Educators of the Catholic Schools, the whole day. The facilitator of the conference was Mons Tony Dougherty, and he spoke about the 'spirituality of contradictions'. He enumerated a number of bible passages to make his point. The bible presents us with a number of contradictions. Jesus' encounter with the Canaanite woman (Mt 15:21-31) is one of such kind. While Tony calls it contradiction, I would say that it is something more than a contradiction. In this passage and in most of the Gospels we see how Jesus subverts the religious view as well as the world view of the people. While you and I should be expecting real faith-filled response from the Jews who were considered the chosen people of God, it is the non-Jewish, Canaanite woman who demonstrated the best of the faith-filled response to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.



The hypocrisy of the elite of the Jewish religion, Pharisees and the Scribes angered Jesus. He asked, "Why do you break God's commandments for the sake of your own traditions?" (Mt 15:3) Jesus also accused the Jewish people, who boasted of the Law of Moses they possess, as the 'blind leading the blind' (Mt 15:14) which would bring nothing but disaster. Such harsh criticism of the powerful Jewish leaders made so many powerful enemies that it was hard for Jesus to continue in his homeland. Therefore he escaped into a non-Jewish territory, Tyre and Sidon, present day southern Lebanon.

Locals of this area are not Jewish and the Jewish people would refer to them as dogs, such was the hate. In such a situation a local woman, a Canaanite, pleads to Jesus to heal her daughter. Jesus first ignores her plea. Then when the plea is more intense he dismisses her harshly saying, "I am sent only to the lost sheep of Israel" That made the woman all the more insistent. What follows next is terrible. Jesus says "it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the house-dogs". Jesus in effect was calling her a house dog. Such contempt is typical of Jewish people against pagans. But in this Gospels case, this brings about a great profession of faith from the part of the pagan Canaanite woman. She has already called Jesus Son of David alluding to him as the Saviour the Jews were waiting for. The pagan woman makes a profound profession of faith in Jesus and says "but even house-dogs can eat the scraps that fall from their master's table" (Mt 15:27). At that strong expression of faith, the Canaanite woman had her wish granted. In doing so Jesus makes another revelation that the Saviour the Jewish people were waiting for, is not just for the Jewish people, but for anyone who has faith. Salvation and Jesus's message goes beyond all cultural barriers. Jesus subverted the world about Faith and Religiosity.

What are the implications of this message for us? We cannot be satisfied by the inheritance of our faith. We cannot be satisfied by doing the so called "Christian things" and boast about our Christian culture. We have to actively put our trust in God. Is your faith strong like that of the Canaanite woman or is it more like that of the Pharisees and the Scribes whom Jesus called hypocrites?

Feasts & Memorials of the Week

Monday—St Pius X, Pope



Giuseppe Sarto was born in 1835. From this humble beginning he was eventually elected pope in 1903. His motto was "To restore all things in Christ". Pius X was remembered for advocating the frequent reception of holy communion of children from the age of about seven; reform of church

music, encouraging the use of Gregorian chant; reform of Canon Law; reorganization of the Roman curia; and separation of church and state in France. He found some aspects of the Vatican's wealth and ceremony distasteful. Before his death in 1914, he wrote in his will, "I was born poor, I have lived poor, and I wish to die poor."

Tuesday - The Queenship of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Feast was established by Pius XII in 1955 and was celebrated on 31 May. Since 1969 it has been observed on 22 August to stress its relationship to the Assumption (15 August). On the day of her Assumption, Mary our Mother was solemnly crowned by Christ and received by the whole court of Heaven as Queen. What Christ has done in Heaven and the Church was done on our behalf we should now do individually, that is, we should recognize Mary's Queenship, enthrone her in our homes, consecrate ourselves to her and, by this means, establish in our lives the reign of Mary Immaculate Queen of the Universe.

(Picture Source: www.catholictradition.org)



Thursday—St Bartholomew

St Bartholomew was one of the twelve apostles, but very little is known about him. Scholars believe that he was the man known as Nathanael, who was introduced to Jesus by St Philip. In the synoptic Gospels he is named Bartholomew, which means "son of Tolmai". Some believe that he may have preached in India, where a Hebrew copy of Matthew's Gospel was found – believed to have been left by Bartholomew. He is also believed to have preached in Armenia where he was martyred.



Planned Giving Request Form

Your financial contribution to the Planned Giving of the Parish is your appreciation for the Parish. At the end of the financial year you will receive a receipt for your contributions. To join the Planned Giving Program fill this form, tear this part off and place it in the Sunday Collection plate.

Your Name:

Telephone No Email

☐ Yes, please organise a set of envelopes.

☐ Yes, please organise automatic credit card deductions. (An authority form will be sent for completion)

🎂 Happy Birthday Fr Thomas! 🎂

Fr Thomas celebrates his birthday on Sunday 20 August. On your birthday, wishing you a day filled with sunshine and a heart warmed by the touch of God's love. May the Lord always smile upon you and bless you with everything that is good. May His love fill your heart and keep you safe! May He bless you today and always.



Parish Notices

Catholic Inquiry (RCIA)

RCIA Program for those who are making inquiry to become Catholics is meeting on Wednesday, 23 August at 7 PM in Berala Church. Anyone wishing to enrol into the program please contact Fr Thomas on 9644 7787 or email info@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au.

Charitable Works Fund Appeal

This weekend we are continuing the CWF collection. Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible. **Our Parish contribution to this collection is \$5400.** Your generous donation would be of great benefit and much appreciated.



Catholic Mission

Thank you for supporting this year's Catholic Mission Church Appeal, for joining in Jesus' life-giving mission and supporting women and children's health in Uganda and around the world. Our Parish collected a total of \$2,136.

Fr George is promised help for School at Chima Impel



This time when I went home, I met with Fr George Kallumkal. He is recovering from a car accident which broke one of his ribs. He asked me to convey his regards to all his friends and parishioners. I told him

of our fund raising plans for his school and he was very thankful for the good will the parish is showing. He also showed me pictures of his school which is badly in need of rebuilding. You can sponsor bricks for the school. One Hundred dollars will sponsor a brick. You are welcome to buy a few of them according to your capacity. You will get a personalised certificate for your sponsorship and your name will be inscribed on plaque and displayed permanently at St Xavier's School Chima Impel India. Arthur Doumit (0417270923), Charlie Scully (0402 071 849), Evelyn Safadi (0416 140 378), Tony Draybi (0403 367 789), Jenny Michael (0413 679 931), and Ivica Kovac (0407 467 692) are coordinating the fund raising activities. Both SPC & SJW Schools and Trinity College are also helping by selling raffle tickets with attractive prices. You are welcome to contact one of coordinators or me to discuss how you could also help with this overseas mission as thanksgiving to God for his goodness to us. ~Fr Thomas

The CFC Handmaids of the Lord

The CFC Handmaids of the Lord, a family ministry of Couples for Christ invite women to a Christian Life Program, an integrated course intended to lead the program participants into a renewed understanding of God's call to them as Christian women. It is open to all mature women such as single mothers, widows, separated women, unmarried mature women & married women whose husbands are working in another state or country or are not willing nor able to participate in any religious affiliation. It runs for 8 consecutive Sundays starting on 17 September 2017 at St Felix Valois Parish Church, Bankstown. For more information, please contact Joy Skerritt - 0401353826, Portia Mariano - 0421694078 or Josielyn Dunshea - 0431870733. Please feel free to call if you have any questions.

Playgroup

St Peter Chanel School, Berala runs a fun playgroup session every Thursday from 9.00am to 11.00am in the school Library (during school term). Children's ages range from 12 months to 5 years. Singing, dancing, story-time and craft are some of the activities offered. A great place for mum/carers to catch up with other adults too. Please let friends who do not speak English know about the playgroup.



St Joseph the Worker, Auburn

Come join us with your little ones for some music, singing, storytime, craft and painting. Just bring a piece of fruit to share. All welcome. Cost: Free! Playgroup resumes Thursday 20th July. When: Thursday mornings 9-11am (during school term) Where: St Joseph the Worker, Auburn in the Fr Mark Spora Room.

Thinking about volunteering?

The St Vincent de Paul Society, Sydney Night Patrol is a homelessness food service operating every night of the year in the city. For those who visit the Sydney Night Patrol service, these winter nights can be a particularly difficult time. While they offer soup on Night Patrol as much as possible, they don't always have volunteers available to help out during the day. Sydney Night Patrol would love to be able to offer soup every day, and are looking for volunteer teams of 2-4 people to go into their kitchen in Lewisham to prepare a batch of soup. If you are interested please contact the Family Educator, Angela Finnane, St Joseph the Worker on 9646 1434.



Just for Laughs

The Pastor came to visit the other day. He said that at my advanced age I should be thinking of the hereafter. I told him, "Oh, I do it all the time." "No matter where I am - in the living room, upstairs, in the kitchen, or down in the basement, I am always asking myself: 'Now, what am I here after?'"

Sacrament News

First Holy Communion

Please remember our young candidates in your prayers as they receive their First Holy Communion on Sunday 27 August (SJW), Sunday Vigil (Sat 2 Sept – 5.00pm Mass (SPC), Sunday 3 Sept – 10.00am Mass (SPC).

First Reconciliation Enrolments

Enrolments for the Sacrament of first Reconciliation will be accepted before all Masses on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th of September. The cost of the program is \$15 and we ask all parents to supply a copy of the child's baptism certificate if they were not baptised in our parish. There will be a parent meeting on Tuesday 12 September in the Jubilee Hall. At this meeting the First Reconciliation program will be explained. The outline of the Reconciliation Program will be announced at the parents meeting.

Pastoral Co-ordinator News

Men's Ministry

St Peter Chanel and St Joseph Parish Berala is starting a new men's ministry for single or married men over the age of 25 and upwards. The idea of this ministry would be to build friendships and foster a brotherhood, where men of all ages catch up on a monthly basis. Ultimately, the primary purpose would be to grow spiritually in Christ!

If you are interested in any of the above please email Andrew Kozah (Pastoral Coordinator) at pastoral@stpeter-stjoseph.org.au. Alternatively, contact the parish office on 02 9644 7787 to provide your details.

~Andrew, Pastoral Co-ordinator

Sydney Catholic Schools—Media Release

Outstanding gains in NAPLAN sustained in Sydney Catholic Schools

Sydney Catholic schools have experienced their best year ever in the 2017 NAPLAN test gains, maintaining a trend of continual improvement in academic achievement. This year's results in Catholic schools showed a substantial improvement in all year levels, particularly in the areas of Reading and Numeracy. Once again, Sydney Catholic schools performed significantly above the national and state means in every dimension of the national testing data.

The Executive Director of Sydney Catholic Schools, Dr Dan White, was delighted with the 2017 results.

"The rate of student growth achieved by our students was particularly impressive," he said. "On virtually every indicator, the level of improvement exceeded the comparable improvements in overall NSW data."

Of special note was the outstanding performance of Year 3 students in Reading with more than 64% of all children achieving results in the top two bands, compared to a state average of 51%.

Similarly in Numeracy, 41.5% of Year 5 Catholic school students were placed in the top two bands, nine percentage points higher than their state counterparts (32.5%). Dr White especially commended Year 9 students in Catholic schools for a 'across the board' lift in standards.

"For many years, the national Year 9 performance in Writing has shown a gradual decline. This year our students improved their mean scores by 21 points, and the percentage of students in the top two achievement bands jumped from 13% in 2016 to 22% this year."

Dr White also paid tribute to the outstanding professional work of Sydney Catholic Schools' teachers, principals and support staff.

"Our system of 152 Catholic schools has strongly embraced a whole of school improvement culture. Driven by the detailed analysis of student data and informed by the latest educational research, each school has formulated explicit improvement goals that focus on meeting the needs of every child.

"It is all about maximising the learning growth of every child", Dr White added. "Teachers and learning support officers have dedicated themselves to a multi-faceted program of professional learning and devote enormous time and energy in personalising the learning program for each student.

"The success achieved in Catholic schools has not happened overnight or by accident, but rather by our community of schools being focussed and committed to ensuring each child achieves their God-given potential." Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS) offers a non-selective, low-fee education for over 70,000 children, across 152 schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney.



Speaking the truth in love

Eph 4:15

To the priests of the Archdiocese of Sydney

15 August 2017

The Assumption of Our Lady

Dear brothers in the ministry of mercy

The Royal Commission's Report on *Criminal Justice* issued yesterday is more than 600 pages long, with 85 recommendations, and will take quite some time for Church leaders and their advisers to digest, let alone the rest of the community. But we understand it recommends that the civil law no longer privilege what Catholics and Orthodox Christians confess to God through their priest in the Sacrament of Confession.

Australia has always recognised the freedom of the Christian Churches and other serious faiths to practice their sacraments and other rituals unimpeded. I believe we should continue to give people of faith that space.

One in four Australians belongs to a church – Catholic or Orthodox – that believes in Confession. Some came to this country from Communist Vietnam or totalitarian regimes in Eastern Europe, precisely to enjoy the freedom to practice that religion in Australia. What is now proposed would be a grave interference with the practice of their faith.

Child sexual abuse is a terrible crime. It is very, very rare for a perpetrator to confess it, as sadly perpetrators do not accept how evil their deeds are. If trust in the “seal” or absolute confidentiality of Confession is diminished, then it is less likely that the rare perpetrator who does approach a priest will be encouraged to face the evil of their actions, to report to the authorities, and to take appropriate action to cease the offending.

Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP, DD BA LIB BTheol DPhil
Archbishop of Sydney

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Moreover, If a perpetrator or a victim of abuse tells a Confessor of this crime in Confession, the Confessor is free to ask the penitent to repeat this to him outside Confession so that they can resolve together what further action might be taken.

It is also noteworthy that the Royal Commission report does not propose removing the legal privilege currently recognised for confidential communications with lawyers or psychiatrists. Nor does it examine the non-institutional settings where most child abuse occurs. Why should priests be the only ones targeted here?

I understand that some people purporting to speak for the Catholic Church have welcomed the proposed change in the law, or suggested that contrite penitents might be refused absolution until they self-incriminate, or claimed that what victims of abuse report in Confession need not be treated as confidential. I do not agree.

Like Archbishop Hart (whose statement I attach), I believe the spiritual encounter between a penitent and God must remain inviolable and that Catholic priests and penitents should not be threatened with a criminal offence for practising their religion. The proposal to abolish the confessional seal will help no child. We should focus on measures that really will protect children and I fully support every effort by the Royal Commission and others to do that. We should not interfere with a practice core to the religious belief of so many Australians.

In the meantime I exhort all priests to maintain an absolute seal on everything they learn from beginning to end of each Confession. And I thank you, dear brothers in the ministry of mercy, for persevering in generously offering your people opportunities to participate in this sacrament.

Yours fraternally in Christ



Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP, DD BA LIB BTheol DPhil

Archbishop of Sydney

Other Notices

Postal Plebiscite on "same-sex marriage" announced

The Australian Government has announced there will be a postal plebiscite on whether the definition of marriage in the Marriage Act 1961 should be changed to include "same-sex marriage". Ballot papers will be sent out to households on Tuesday, 12 September and all votes must be received back by Tuesday, 7 November. If you are not enrolled to vote, or if you need to update your postal address, go to www.aec.gov.au/enrol/ before the cut-off date of Thursday, 24 August. Vote No, to keep marriage as a unique relationship between a woman and a man.

Australian Catholic Youth Festival—ACYF. Early bird registrations for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival need to be paid by 25 August 2017. Final group registrations close on 22 September, so we still have time to register additional young people from our parish. Please contact Tommy Francisco, Youth Co-ordinator via email tommy.bolin.francisco@gmail.com. The Festival will attract around 15,000 young people from all over Australia. Please support this major initiative of the Australian Bishops and encourage your young people to register. There are 30 free registrations available to State School students also available through the Deanery Coordinator.

An Unforgettable Concert. That's how Markus Karas, organist at Bonn Cathedral, described the AUSTRALIAN CHAMBER CHOIR's program, performed across Europe 14 times during July. Director, Douglas Lawrence selected works that explore the text "By the Waters of Babylon I sat down and wept": the Israelites mourn the loss of their homeland. Settings by Bach and Palestrina are sung alongside Bach Motets, other Renaissance works and two new Australian pieces. The program is presented at: St Mary's Cathedral Crypt, 2.30pm **Sunday 27 August.** Book: www.AusChoir.org/Babylon

Australian Catholic Historical Society. 20 August at 2.00pm, Crypt Hall at St Patrick's, Church Hill – Free of Charge. Presenter: Mons. John Usher, the former Chancellor of the Sydney Archdiocese and former Director of the Catholic Family Welfare Bureau/Centacare/CatholicCare. Subject: Where is their Sanctuary?

Mount St Benedict Centre. Your Journey, Your Song. This day of reflection is an invitation to explore and celebrate the power of music and song in engaging us with our God. This day offers an opportunity to look at how we use music as a means of prayer and of reflecting on our spiritual journey and our relationship with God, others and all of creation. Through listening, singing and conversation you are invited to reflect on the music of your own life, acknowledging that our God is indeed a musical God who summons us to the universal song. All are welcome – no previous singing or musical experience is required! Date: **Saturday 9 September** 10.00am-3.30pm, Facilitator: Beth Riolo and Marianne Patton, Cost: \$30.00, Morning Tea provided; BYO lunch, Bookings by: Monday 4 September, email: mtstbenedict@goodsams.org.au, Phone: 9484 6208, Where: 449D Pennant Hills Road, entrance off Hull Road.

2018 National Charismatic Retreats for Priests, Deacons, Religious & Associates. It will be held at Newman College, University of Melbourne, in Swanston St., Melbourne, in **January, 2018.** These retreats are held every January and are now in their 40th year of their existence. Many Priests and Religious have benefitted from attending the Retreats over the years. Should you have any further enquiries, please contact any of the Team members on 03 9458 3077 or 0457 644 757. Flyers available at the back of the church with more information.

Grief to Grace – Healing the Wounds of Abuse – is a spiritual retreat for anyone who has suffered degradation or violation through physical, emotional, sexual or spiritual abuse. The retreat will be held **April 8th – 13th 2018.** To request an application contact Anne by emailing info@griegtograceaus.org.au or phone **0407704539.** For more information visit www.griegtograce.org

Catholic Cemeteries. For further information please contact Bereavement Support on **(02) 9646 6908** or email: Bereavementsupport@catholiccemeteries.com.au

Father's Day Mass: Saturday 2 September 2017

A special Mass to remember the Fathers and Grandfathers we love. 10.30am – Chapel of Reflection, Liverpool Cemetery | 10.30am – The Pavilion, Kemps Creek Cemetery | 12.00pm – Mary, Mother of Mercy Chapel, Rookwood Catholic Cemetery

Position Vacant: Sydney Multicultural Community Services—Care Workers Needed—Casual Position. Sydney Multicultural Community Services specialises in the provision of support services to members of our multicultural communities. We currently have a number of casual positions available for Care Workers who speak a second language to provide support services to older people in their own homes who come from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds (CALD). For more information please phone: **(02) 9663 3922** or email info@sydneymcs.org.au.

Vocation Weekend with the Capuchin Franciscan Friars: 1-3 September 2017. Come for a chance to explore the inspiring and uplifting vocations to the priesthood and to consecrated religious life. It's a Live-in weekend retreat for young men (18-35) to aid the discernment of God's call and our response. Starts 7:30pm Friday at 98 Catherine St, Leichhardt and concludes with 6pm Mass on Sunday. Cost is FREE/optional donation. There will be Mass on Saturday and Sunday, Adoration, quiet prayer, talks, confession available, quiet time and the opportunity to get useful advice. If you're discerning, come along! Contact Fr Thomas on **0432 362 052** or vocations@capuchinfrs.org.au or . Retreatants must register as there are limited spaces available. capuchinfrs.org.au.

Archdiocese Of Sydney App. The Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney had released a Smartphone App (for iPhones and Androids only) for parishioners in the Archdiocese, featuring parish Mass times, the latest news from the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Catholic Church in Australia, information about upcoming Archdiocese events, as well as announcements from the Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP, Archbishop of Sydney. The App is available to download for free – search for "Archdiocese of Sydney" in the Google Play and App stores.

Bereavement Support Reflections Mornings. Third Wednesday of Every Month 10.00am – 1.00pm. For family and friends who grieve and their companions. Understanding and managing life's changes in Loss, Grief & Bereavement. Morning tea provided. For further information please refer to the flyer attached or contact Bereavement Support Ph **(02) 9646 6908 / bereavementsupport@catholiccemeteries.com.au**.

Natural Fertility Services is looking for suitable applicants in the Greater Sydney area to train as Fertility Educators. Thorough, in-depth training over a 12-month period is provided to successful applicants and sessional work is available to those who complete the training and become accredited educators. For more information and application forms please contact The Manager NFS **(02) 9509 1222.**

Tell Your Story in The Catholic Weekly. Do you have a local parish news story which would be of interest to the many readers of the Catholic Weekly? The Catholic Weekly is always looking for human interest, inspirational and faith-based stories for our weekly publication. If you have a story please send it to: cweditor@catholicweekly.com.au or call **02 9390 5407.** We'd love to hear your story.

The Benedict XVI Retreat Centre now offers a series of fun, innovative facilitated activity programs to complement and enrich any group retreat. Whether you are looking for adventure, team building, opportunities for reflection or simply to have fun with your group, our specially trained facilitators can tailor a program to meet your needs and budget. Activities include flying fox, archery, bushwalking, leadership challenge, communications challenge, camp craft, environmental programs and more. Contact Reception on **(02) 4572 2899 / email bxvi@sydneycatholic.org** to find out more or visit www.benedictxvicentre.org.au.