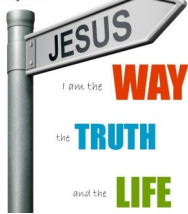


7 May 2023
Fifth Sunday of Easter



Entrance Antiphon

O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia .

First Reading from the Acts of the Apostles 6:1-7

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 32:1-2. 4-5. 18-19. R. v.22

Response: Lord, let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you .

Second Reading

from the first letter of St Peter 2:4-9

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia!
I am the way, the truth, and the life, says the Lord;
no one comes to the Father, except through me.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel according to John 14:1-12

Communion Antiphon

I am the true vine and you are the branches, says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.

Next Week

Sixth Sunday of Easter
Year A

First: Acts 8:5-8. 14-17

Response:

Ps 65:1-7. 16. 20. R. see v.1

Second: 1 3:15-18

Gospel: 14:15-21

We acknowledge and respect the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we stand, the elders, past and present and all the Dharawal people. May we too be good stewards of this land.

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

The Opening Prayer of today's Mass begins, 'Almighty, ever-living God', the One beyond all dimensions of time and space. And that is true. Could such a God really be 'at home' with us earthly creatures, bound as we are in time and space? It seems improbable.

Conversely, is there a possible way in which we earthlings can dwell in God, can inhabit the Divine realm of being? St John's Gospel gives a resounding 'yes' to both questions. God can be at home with us and we can dwell in God.

We are all familiar with the famous passage at the start of St John's Gospel: 'The Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us.' Here is a more literal translation: 'The Logos was made flesh and pitched his tent amongst us.'

The Jewish runaway slaves, who wandered for forty years in the wilderness after escaping from Egypt, carried around a tent where they believed God's presence was more intensely located: a good place to go and pray and to be inspired. St John is saying that the Word who is God took on the tent of human nature and pitched his tent among us, took up a dwelling place with us, inhabited our human world of time and space, becoming for us 'the Way, the Truth and the Life'.

That is at the beginning of St John's Gospel.

And now, towards the end of the earthly journey of the Word who pitched his tent amongst us, we have today's Gospel passage. The disciples are full of premonitions that their beloved leader was about to be cruelly done to death, leaving them abandoned. Yet he tells them: 'Let not your hearts be troubled.'

Why not? Why shouldn't their hearts, our hearts, be troubled by the disappearance of Our Lord's physical presence? Because there is a purpose to his passage through death. It was to bring about a situation where our Risen Lord and the disciples of Jesus can inhabit the same space.

How does this come about? Listen to St John's Gospel a few verses further on. Jesus says, 'Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and *make our home with them.*' (v.23) We are a dwelling place of God! You personally, together with other lovers of Our Lord, are a dwelling place of God! And here is something just as astonishing. Here is what I say when, after the gifts are brought to the altar, I pour a little water into the chalice of wine: 'By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.'

What a powerful verb! To share, to participate in. For us this means that we share in, participate in, the Divine Life of Jesus Christ, of the Risen Lord.

As the Greek saints of the early church used to say in very daring fashion: 'God became human so that humans might become God.'

Of course, this is by grace. We are adopted into this Divine life.

We anticipate this at every Holy Communion when the Divine life of our Risen Lord dwells within us under the appearance of bread and wine. As Pope John Paul II used to say: 'We digest, as it were, the secret of the Resurrection.'

We become a tent for the Risen Lord! What a communion! What a Holy Communion!

Let us look forward to sharing in that Holy Communion at this Mass.

Let us pause after Holy Communion and let us reverence the Divine Life dwelling in us, a foretaste of our dwelling in Divine Life. God the Almighty? Yes, but dwelling in us so that we might dwell in the Almighty God. Why should this be so? Because Almighty God loves us.

Homily By Father Michael Tate

Worship: Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass	Weekday Mass	Devotions
Saturday Vigil: 6pm	Mon, Tues, Wed Mass at 9am	Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday 9.30am
Sunday: 9.30 am & 5pm	Thursday - Mass at 7.30pm	Divine Mercy Devotion: Third Sunday at 3pm
Filipino Mass: Third Sunday at 11.15am	Fri & Sat Mass at 9am	Alliance of the 2 Hearts Mass and Devotion: Friday 14 April from 7.30pm
Samoan Mass: First Sunday of even months at 12 noon		
Maori Mass: First Sunday at 2pm		Reconciliation: Saturday 11 am

Contact us

Office Hours: Tuesday-Friday 9.30am-12.30pm
 Phone: 9603 7373 / 0434 705 176
 Email: varroville@dow.org.au
 Website: varroville.dow.org.au

Parish Priest: Fr. Shane Kelleher OCD

Assistant Priest: Fr "Sam" Ransom Raporap OCD

Parish Associate: Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM

Prayer intentions

For the sick & homebound: Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Amanda & John Meredith, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Marie & Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Joe Spinnato, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Francisco Carmona, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdrys

May they experience the saving power of the risen Lord amidst their pain & affliction.

For our recently dearly departed: Phyllis Cooper, Emmanuel Vella, Hugh Madden, June Wrightman.

Those whose anniversaries occur at this time: Hilda Young,
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may perpetual light shine upon them.



Our Community: Rosters

14 May	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Suzanne, Russell & Berna	Chris, Margaret & Bianca	Geoff & Margaret
Altar Servers	Berna, Ralph & Kenneth	Orly, Claire & Meliame	Vu
Readers	Richard & Tracey	Gabriel & Ofa	Gloria & Rachel
Refreshments	Suzanne & Myra	Irene & Meg	
CLOTW			
Flowers	Maria & Estela	Church Vacuuming	Tamisin family
Counters	George & Wendy	Foyer Cleaning	Suzanne

Our Community

Fundraising Cash Raffle: We will be selling raffle tickets in our annual major raffle to be drawn at the parish feast day on 16 July. Tickets will be sold after Mass and books of tickets are available to take home and sell.

Sacramental Preparation dates are now available on the parish website. Preparation for First Holy Communion commences this weekend. Please keep the children who are preparing and their families in your prayers at this time.

Baptism for infants and children under the sacramental age is conducted on the second and fourth Sunday of each month. Registration is essential at the parish office. Parents must attend a parent preparation session prior to the baptism date.

Marriage must be arranged through the parish office at least 6 months in advance. Couples wishing to marry must undergo a marriage preparation course.



Bulletin Notices

Our Parish Feast Day will be celebrated on Sunday 16 July this year. We will be forming a committee to ensure all the organisational aspects of this important day are prepared in advance. Our first meeting will be held on Monday 8 May at 7.30pm in the meeting room. Please come along to this meeting with your ideas for this year's event.

The Rosters will finish at the end of May. All current serving ministers will be invited to join the rosters for the next 6 months from June – November. All ministries will welcome new members. To sign up please contact the parish office or speak to one of the welcomers in the foyer after Mass today. Discernment and training will be provided if you are unsure where you can serve our parish community.

Have you registered your family with our parish office. If you have been attending Mass here and consider this to be your parish, please register your details with the parish office. Also, if your contact details have changed, please let us know. Knowing how many active families are in our parish helps us plan for the future.

An invitation to join electronic parish planned giving from your Parish Finance Council; An electronic regular gift provides many benefits. You will find it a secure, convenient, and efficient way to regularly support your parish, while also reducing our administration costs. It will also help us to confidently forecast and plan, as we know that we can rely on your support. You can increase, decrease, discontinue, or restart your monthly gift at any time. Please visit <https://dow.sh/parishgiving> to learn of the four simple ways you can support our parish electronically.

Ageing with Confidence – Free Information Sessions 9.00am-12.30pm; CatholicCare, with the assistance of the Committee for the Aged will be holding a FREE information session for Parishioners. Guest speakers will include representatives from My Aged Care, CatholicCare, local funeral director and solicitor. On Wed 10 May at Campbelltown RSL. Morning tea provided. To register Call: 02 4227 1122 Or online: <https://www.catholiccare.dow.org.au/get-involved/events-calendar/>. For any other information contact Jane Hollier: Email: janeh@catholiccare.dow.org.au or Call: 0417 018 152

Understanding Aboriginal Catholic Spirituality Come for an introduction in Aboriginal Catholic Spirituality. Designed as an in-service for SRE Catechists, the talk will be open to all parishioners interested about learning more about Aboriginal Spirituality, and in particular the beautiful Aboriginal Art Resource: Sacrament Series by artist Donna Marie Sadler. At Campbelltown - 15 May; from 9:30am - 1:30pm: Morning Tea will be provided. To register: <https://www.dow.org.au/events/understanding-aboriginal-catholic-spirituality/>

Anointed: MGL Sisters Pentecost Intensive, 24-28 May; Deepen in your anointing as a Christian called to intentional relationship with the Trinity, radical discipleship, generously sharing the charismatic gifts and a life of mission and service through inputs, discussion and practical workshops. Join us for 5 days live-in at Carmel House, Varroville. More info & register: www.trybooking/cbrf.

2023 PILGRIMAGE in the "Footsteps of St Mary MacKillop" You are invited to join Fr David Catterall (Parish Priest of St Mary MacKillop Parish, Oran Park) and fellow parishioners from across our Diocese and beyond on a pilgrimage in the footsteps of St Mary MacKillop. This pilgrimage (that departs Melbourne 16 October 2023 | returns Adelaide 26 October 2023) is a graced opportunity to set out together on a true Australian Pilgrimage through the life and times of Mary MacKillop, as we rekindle the story, landscapes, and spirit of our nations' first canonized saint. You can download the pilgrimage brochure HERE: <http://bit.ly/2023parishpilgrimage>

The Journey, Weekly Podcast This Week: Fr Joshua Whitehead says that Philip's question in the Gospel, how can we know the way, is our question too. Mother Hilda says we must spend time staring at God. Plus, Fr Mike Delaney, Trish McCarthy and Fr Dave Callaghan, and some great contemporary Christian music. The Journey podcast is available at www.jcr.org.au.

Go Deeper in your Faith with popular & FREE Catholic Podcasts

● **Bible in a Year** Last year, Ascension Press ran the Catholic Bible in a Year Podcast featuring Fr Mike Schmitz and Jeff Cavins. It was the world's number 1 Religious Podcast with over 250 million downloads. It will run again throughout 2023 – and while a new podcast is released daily, you can do it at your own pace signing up at www.ascensionpress.com/biy and it's not too late to catch up or simply work through at your own pace.

● **Catechism in a Year** This year, Ascension Press have commenced the Catechism in a Year podcast which will slowly and prayerfully read through and break open the Catechism over 365 days. It's not too late to catch up, and the daily podcasts can be listened to at your own pace. It is available at www.ascensionpress.com/ciy

The Chosen – A TV Series about Jesus is a new 'free to view', series, now in its third season, that beautifully and creatively presents the life of Christ and his followers. The shows are of the highest quality and are receiving acclaim around the world across denominations. Go to watch.angelstudios.com/thechosen to watch or get the free app for use on your phone / laptop via The Chosen app (download) or for your Smart TV. Watch it on your own, or better still with family and friends.

'A vocation view In my Father's house, there are many dwelling places.' Prepare a place in the Father's Mansion by living His promises here on earth. (John 14:2) If you want to talk about your discernment, please contact the diocesan vocations director, Fr Duane Fernandez at vocations@dow.org.au

Caritas: Caritas Turkey is responding to a series of powerful earthquakes. Thousands of lives have been lost already and the death toll increases by the hour. Your generous support can help provide emergency relief to help families recover and rebuild from the disaster. Visit <https://caritas.org.au/donate/emergency-appeals/turkey-and-syria-earthquake/> or call 1800 024 413 toll-free to provide much-needed support to our East Emergency Appeal.

Holy Gospel according to John 14:1-12

I am the way, the truth, and the life.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God still, and trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house; if there were not, I should have told you. I am now going to prepare a place for you, and after I have gone and prepared you a place, I shall return to take you with me; so that where I am you may be too. You know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus said: 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you know me, you know my Father too. From this moment you know him and have seen him.'

Philip said, 'Lord, let us see the Father and then we shall be satisfied.' 'Have I been with you all this time, Philip,' said Jesus to him 'and you still do not know me? 'To have seen me is to have seen the Father, so how can you say, "Let us see the Father"? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak as from myself: it is the Father, living in me, who is doing this work. You must believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; believe it on the evidence of this work, if for no other reason. 'I tell you most solemnly, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father.'



The Gospel of the Lord.

Homily by Pope Francis

In today's Gospel passage (cf. Jn 14:1-12), we hear the beginning of Jesus' so-called "Farewell discourse". They are the words he addresses to the disciples at the end of the Last Supper, just before facing the Passion. In such a dramatic moment Jesus began by saying, "Do not let your hearts be troubled" (v. 1). He says it to us too, in life's troubles. But how can we ensure that our hearts are not troubled? Because the heart does become troubled.

The Lord indicates two remedies for being troubled. The first is: "Believe in me" (v. 1). It would seem to be rather theoretical, abstract advice. Instead, Jesus wants to tell us something precise. He knows that, in life, the worst anxiety, anguish, arises from the sensation of not being able to cope, of feeling alone and without points of reference when faced with events. We cannot overcome this anguish alone, when one difficulty is added to another. We need Jesus' help, and this is why Jesus asks us to have faith in him, that is, to lean not on ourselves but on him. Because liberation from being troubled depends upon entrusting ourselves. Entrusting ourselves to Jesus, taking the "leap". And this is liberation from feeling troubled. Jesus is risen and lives precisely to be always by our side. We can thus say to him, "Jesus, I believe that you rose again and are beside me. I believe that you listen to me. I bring to you what upsets me, my troubles; I have faith in you and I entrust myself to you".

There is then a second remedy for being troubled, which Jesus expresses with these words: "My Father's house has many rooms... I am going there to prepare a place for you" (v. 2). This is what Jesus did for us: he reserved a place in Heaven for us. He took our humanity upon himself to carry it beyond death, to a new place, to Heaven, so that we might also be where he is. It is the certainty that comforts us: there is a place reserved for each of us.

There is a place for me too. Each of us can say: there is a place for me. We do not live aimlessly and without destination. We are awaited. We are precious. God is in love with us, we are his children. And he has prepared for us the most worthy and beautiful place: Paradise. Let us not forget this: the dwelling place that awaits us is Paradise. We are in transit here. We are made for Heaven, for eternal life, to live forever. Forever: it is something we cannot even imagine now. But it is even more beautiful to think that this forever will be entirely in joy, in full communion with God and with others, without any more tears, without resentment, without division or turmoil.

But how can we reach heaven? What is the way? Here is Jesus' decisive phrase. He says to us today: "I am the Way" (v. 6). Jesus is the way to go up to Heaven: to have a living relationship with him, to imitate him in love, to follow in his footsteps. And I, a Christian, you, a Christian, every one of us Christians, can ask ourselves: "Which way do I follow?". There are ways that do not lead to Heaven: the ways of worldliness, the ways of self-affirmation, the ways of selfish power. And there is Jesus' way, the way of humble love, of prayer, of meekness, of trust, of service to others. It is not the way of my self-centredness. It is the way of Jesus, who is the protagonist of my life. It is to go forth every day, asking him: "Jesus, what do you think of the choice I made? What would you do in this situation, with these people?". It will do us good to ask Jesus, who is the way, for the directions to reach Heaven. May Our Lady, Queen of Heaven, help us to follow Jesus, who opened Heaven for us. **(10 May 2020)**