



28 June 2026

To Know, love and serve Jesus
by sharing our gifts through our baptismal mission

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Christianity not a Cult

by Fr Michael Tate

I remember that during the debate over the damming of the Franklin River in Tasmania in the 1970s and 80s, families were torn apart.

It was like that for the early Church. Christianity ripped families apart. Good Jewish families would have been appalled to see their sons and daughters go off to follow a crucified rebel and blasphemous.

But Jesus insists that the son or daughter give absolute priority to following him and, if necessary, suffer estrangement from the family. But, what about from the parents' point of view? Christianity looked like a deviant Jewish sect to many parents whose hearts would have been broken at their children's defection.

Now, today in Australia, it is more likely to be a Catholic father or mother whose heart is broken by a child joining some cult or sect.

But I want to briefly mention the danger that comes when Catholics act as if they are members of a sect, afraid of outside contamination, seeing the devil in every other religious impulse. I remember when my parents decided to send my brother to a state high school because St Virgil's gave up teaching French. The Archbishop summoned them and threatened them with refusal of the sacraments. They did not back down and he relented. This was the cult or sect mentality, in this case, elevating the Catholic tribe to an absolute status fearful of the world and deeply unattractive and certainly not evangelical.

Within the Church, we have some who say unless you believe that Our Lady appeared at so and so, and unless you carry out her supposed 'messages', then you are not a true Catholic. That is wrong, and they are wrong. But the Church leaves me free to accept or reject these claims.

And, what if the Church reduces herself to being a megaphone for the most strident moralising? In truth, the Church *always* remains more, but it can *appear*, to those outside to be an organisation, membership of which requires unquestioning observance of dictates delivered in a hectoring tone. This looks like a cult to outsiders.

No-one could deny that the late Pope Saint John Paul II personified what it is to be Catholic. But consider the significance of some remarkable gestures, unimaginable years ago. He pressed a piece of paper bearing a prayer into a crack in the so-called Wailing Wall, part of the surviving foundation stones of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem. And I remember the moving scene of the Pope as an old man shuffling across the floor of a Mosque in Syria, the first entry by a Pope into a Muslim place of worship.

Of course, there was no compromise of belief and faith in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, denied by both Jews and Muslims. But his actions were not those of one with the siege mentality of the member of a cult. This was the confidence of one secure in his Christian faith and who was able to respond to the promptings of the Holy Spirit to take these brave, imaginative steps recognising what was good amongst the adherents of those faiths.

When the Pope celebrates the Feast of St Peter and St Paul in St Peter's Basilica he does so over the tomb of St Peter who is buried on the side of The Vatican Hill only a few metres from the place of his crucifixion upside down.

Just as St Paul, and eventually St Peter, went fearlessly into the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds, so let us implore the Holy Spirit to break us out from any constricting cult-like tendencies so that we can go out into the world powerfully proclaiming the resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Entrance Antiphon
All peoples, clap your hands. Cry to God with shouts of joy!

First Reading from the book of the Kings 4:8-11. 14-16

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 88:2-3. 16-19. R. v.2

Response :Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Second Reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans 6:3-4. 8-11

Gospel Acclamation
Alleluia, alleluia! You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy people. Praise God who called you out of darkness and into his marvellous light.
Alleluia!

Holy Gospel according to Matthew 10:37-42

Communion Antiphon
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, his holy name.

NEXT WEEK
Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

First: Zechariah 9:9-10
Resp Ps Psalm 144:1-2. 8-11. 13-14 R. v.1

Second: Romans 8:9.11-13
Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30

Mass and Devotions

Sunday Mass

Saturday Vigil: 6pm

Sunday: 9.30am & 5pm

Samoan Mass:

1st Sunday at 12 noon

Maori Mass:

1st Sunday of each month at 2pm

Children's Mass: 5th Sunday of the month at 9.30am

Arabic Mass: 2nd Sunday of each month at 7pm

Weekday Mass

9am each day except Thursday;

Thursday at 7.30pm

Healing Mass on the 1st Saturday of each month at 9am.

Reconciliation

every Saturday at 11am

Devotions & Prayer groups

Eucharistic Adoration on 1st Sunday of each month at 6 to 7pm

Adoration with the Rosary: Saturday at 9.30am

Alliance of the 2 hearts Mass & devotion: 1st Friday of each month at 7.30pm

Divine Mercy Devotion: 3rd Sunday of each month at 3pm

Faith Circles: every Monday at 2pm & 7pm via zoom

Holy Family Fellowship: every 4th Saturday at 7pm.

Book Club: meets on the 3rd Wednesday at 10am.

Friendship Group: meets on the 1st Tuesday of each month.

Bible Study & Reflection Group: meets Monday at 10am.

Children's Ministry will meet on the 4th Sunday from 3– 5 pm

Ascent Youth Ministry: meets on the 2nd & 4th Friday from 6.30pm.

Pastoral Care Team meets on 4th Tuesday at 1.30pm

Grief Support Group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10am

Vinnies winter sleepout this weekend after 6pm Mass: Our Parish undertakes a Winter Appeal each year including a Community Sleepout. This offers an opportunity for our community to live out our Vision for Ministry/Service—Giving of ourselves- *“seeing their life as a part of Jesus’ mission and being responsive to the needs of the society in which we live, our community enables every member to use their unique gifts and skills in ministry, giving of themselves in the service of other”*.

With an experience of what it is like to sleep out for the night, encourages people to learn more about the problem they’re helping others with. By getting involved with the Sleepout, our community will play an active role in raising vital funds and awareness of this crisis, faced by many Australians who do not have secure housing or accommodation and life’s needs. You can donate to the winter appeal this weekend and/ or sponsor one of our parishioners who will be sleeping out.

Property Committee Meeting will be held on Wednesday at 7.30pm in the meeting room. Our Property Committee is responsible for managing the maintenance of our property buildings and grounds.

In our hall, the chairs we have been using for more than 10 years have needed replacing. The cost of replacing 150 chairs is very expensive (\$60- \$100 per chair). One of our team, Antony, has been able to obtain 150 chairs from a large hotel chain who have upgraded their chairs and we were able to purchase the second hand chairs for just \$5 each. And, in addition to this bargain, the cost of the chairs has been donated by one of our generous parishioners. Thank you both very much.

Working Bee on Saturday 4 July from 9am for cleaning and gardening in preparation for our Feast day celebration.

Come along for an hour or 2 and bring your gardening tools.

Expressions of Interest for New Altar Servers “Want to deepen your understanding of and appreciation for the Mass? Have you considered becoming an Altar Server?”

The Servers Ministry is currently seeking new members. If you have felt called to serve, or have simply wondered whether this ministry might be for you, we encourage you to pray about it and speak with one of our current servers to learn more.

Training for both junior and adult altar servers will be offered in the coming months. At this stage, we are inviting expressions of interest from anyone who would like to explore this rewarding ministry.”

The Friendship Group will be meeting on Tuesday 7th July at 11.30am for lunch, celebrating Christmas in July. Please bring a plate to share.

Pastoral care team meeting will be held on Tuesday 30th June at 1.30pm

Children's ministry gathering will be held this Sunday 28th June at 3pm

Mount Carmel Catholic College 40th Anniversary Open Day on Saturday 25 July:

ATTENTION ALL ALUMNI AND EX STAFF! You're invited back to MCCC to celebrate **40 years of memories, milestones, & community.** Whether you walked these halls in the early days or were part of the journey somewhere along the way, this is your chance to reconnect, reminisce, and rediscover the place that helped shape so many lives.

Come and see how MCCC has grown, transformed, and reimaged itself over the decades — from new facilities and programs to the vibrant community that continues to thrive today. Join us for a day of stories, laughter, familiar faces, and a few surprises.

Parish Social Media Channels We're on Facebook and Instagram! Scan the QR code to follow Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Varroville and stay connected with our community. Share with your family and friends so they can join us online too.



FIESTA Volunteer call out: The Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is a celebration that belongs to all of us. From the food stalls to the music, the liturgy to hospitality, every role matters and every pair of hands makes a difference. This year's Fiesta is on Sunday, 19 July and we need you. Whether you have an hour or a whole day to give, there is a place for you in our parish family. Want to get involved? Sign up using the link below and we will be in touch with more details.

Our 9-day Novena of Masses in preparation for the Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is coming up next month! Mark your calendars and get ready to journey with us in prayer, honouring our Mother and strengthening our parish community.

NOVENA MASS TIMES:

☐ 10, 13–17 July: 7:30pm; ☐ 11,18 July: 6:00pm; ☐ 12 July: 9:30am & 5:00pm
Come whenever you can. Every prayer counts, every visit welcome. Bring your family and friends along!

Working bee on Saturday 11 July from 9am to set up and prepare for our Fiesta.



CHURCH FIESTA VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP

Join in the Celebration!
Scan the QR CODE to sign up and help with our Church Fiesta.



JOIN US ON 19TH JULY AT 10 A.M. FOR MASS
CELEBRATED BY
BISHOP BRIAN MASCORD

FOLLOWED BY A PROCESSION WITH
OUR LADY'S STATUE
&
Fiesta Celebrations

NOVENAS FROM 10TH JULY TO 18TH JULY

Prayer intentions

For the sick and homebound:



Pat Cullen, Mary Ponnappalam, Myka Mangos, Kevin Cloran, Karen Browne, Reg Gardner, Sr Heather Burke, Barry Atkins, Carol & Gabriel Gonzales, Amelia Jimenez, Susan Mella, Sean Finnerty, Rose Levoune, Doris Wahhib, John Kajdryns, Pat Stewart, Allan Marquinez, Richard Scolyer, Mercy Espiritu, Vladdy Mher Peralta, Bill Scibberas, Bernie Briscoe, Stephen & Kathleen Mitrovics, Jadwiga Doomalewska

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

For our recently departed

Barbara Hughes, Pausumu Olaaiga, Dorothy Forland

Anniversaries that occur at this time:

Fr David Catterall, Damien Champion, Maurice Spillane, Benito Cossettini,
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, may

ROSTERS

05 July 2026	Saturday 6pm	Sunday 9.30am	Sunday 5pm
Welcomers	Estela, Cecilia	Bianca, Antony, Laura	Terry , Maree
Altar Servers	Ryan, Amana, Elijah P, Eliana D	Orly	Robert, Nathan
Readers	Loretta, Gerard	Irene, Aura	Mark, Madonna
Refreshments	Emmarie, Berna	Sarah, Tereza, John, Tess	Margaret, Geoff, Danni
Altar Linen	Maria	CLOTW: School Holidays	
Flowers	Asinate, Mago	Church Vacuuming	Parish Office
Counters	Louise, Lina	Church Foyer	Parish Office
Choir	C/ Nick	c/ Karen	c/ Grace



Contact Us

Parish Priest:
Fr Shane Kelleher OCD

Deacon:
Rev Stuart Lake

Parish Associate
Sr "Jill" Girlie Sudario, CM

Office Hours

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The Holy Gospel according to Matthew 10:37-42

Anyone who does not accept his cross is not worthy of me.

Anyone who welcomes you, welcomes me.

Jesus instructed the Twelve as follows: 'Anyone who prefers father or mother to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who prefers son or daughter to me is not worthy of me. Anyone who does not take his cross and follow in my footsteps is not worthy of me. Anyone who finds his life will lose it; anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it.

'Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me; and those who welcome me welcome the one who sent me.

'Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will have a prophet's reward; and anyone who welcomes a holy man because he is a holy man will have a holy man's reward.

'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, then I tell you solemnly, he will most certainly not lose his reward.'

The Gospel of the Lord



REFLECTION by Greg Sunter

The gospel for today can be a difficult one to hear. It calls us to place our discipleship before our loyalty to family and even before our own life. It is important to place this passage in the broader context of not only the chapter in which it sits, but also within the gospel as a whole.

Today's passage appears at the conclusion of Chapter 10 in the Gospel of Matthew. The entire chapter deals with the commissioning and sending out of the disciples to 'proclaim the gospel, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy and drive out demons.' (Mt 10:8) The previous chapter concludes with the words, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.' (Mt 9:37-38) Chapter 10 is a response to this call. Jesus sends the disciples to 'work the harvest' through proclamation, healing and exorcism.

At the end of the chapter, having spelt out all the difficulties a disciple must face, Jesus assures them that even the smallest act of welcoming the disciple will be rewarded.

It's also important to understand that the Jewish audience of the Gospel of Matthew found themselves under increasing persecution and there was often division within families between those holding to orthodox Jewish beliefs and those following the new Christian way. For some early Christians, there was the very real choice to be made between following their faith and remaining loyal to family. The Gospel of Matthew repeatedly affirms Jesus as the promised Jewish messiah; as the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy. For early followers of the Christian way, this difficult message about being a follower was in the context of an affirmation that the message of Jesus was deeply grounded in their Jewish faith.

What must it have been like to be one of those disciples of Jesus? Having followed their Rabbi, or teacher, for some time, he sends them out to 'have a go' at doing what he has been doing: preaching; proclaiming the good news; healing; curing lepers and casting out demons. The focus of a disciple is to be like their Rabbi. This is their first real test of being a disciple ... seeking to go out into the world without Jesus and do the things that they've seen their Rabbi do; to be like their Rabbi!

Jesus says, 'If anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water' to a disciple spreading the gospel, then their ultimate reward is assured. To give 'a cup of cold water' or 'a cold drink' to another person was the most basic act of hospitality or service. It is a metaphor for doing the absolute least service to another. Jesus is saying that even the most trivial act of service that recognises the work of the disciple will be welcomed and acknowledged. It suggests that 'practical loving kindness' is both the test and the result of discipleship.

Having spelled out the difficulties of discipleship throughout Ch 10, the gospel writer has Jesus reassuring the disciples that anyone who welcomes them welcomes him. There are echoes here of other parts of the Gospel of Matthew: the Beatitudes, with its blessings on the poor and humble of heart; the welcome of children, the 'little ones' of the kingdom; and the Last Judgment (Mt 24), that reminds us that whatever we do for the least in the world we do for Jesus. Jesus even describes the disciples as 'little ones' – a reminder both to them and to those who welcome them.