

St Thomas More's Parish

*St Thomas More's Catholic Parish, a welcoming people of faith,
lives out God's Mission, embracing love, justice and peace.*

*We acknowledge the Giabal and Jarowair people, the Traditional Owners
who have walked upon and cared for this land for thousands of years.
We acknowledge the continued deep spiritual attachment and relationship
of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to this country
and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.*

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Parish Leader: a/h phone: 0407 804 461. Email: parishleader@stthomasmores.org.au

Parish Email: parishoffice@stthomasmores.org.au

Parish Council Email: parishcouncil@stthomasmores.org.au

Parish Website: www.stthomasmores.org.au

Parish Facebook Page: [@stmparishtwmba](https://www.facebook.com/stmparishtwmba)

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year B, 28 - 29 April, 2018

Readings: Acts 9:26-31; 1 John 3:18-24; John 15:1-8

Again and again, life's experiences teach us that, as members of the Earth community, we cannot make it on our own. We need one another, other living beings, the sun, the soil, the water and everything else that formed from exploding stars in the distant past. The gospel reading reminds us that as baptised Christians we are not just intimately interlinked but that the source of our unity is the Risen Christ. As limbs and leaves and sap of the same vine, we simply cannot survive in isolation.

The vine image picks up one of the most potent biblical images for God's relationship to the people of Israel. It is an image of life and growth, of colour and vibrancy. It holds the promise of a life-sustaining grape harvest that is ultimately transformed into wine, the biblical symbol for joy. God brought Israel "the vine" out of Egypt (Psalm 80:9). For the prophet Isaiah, Israel is also a vineyard planted and nurtured by God (5:1-7; 27:3). For Jeremiah, Israel is the choice vine "of fully tested stock" planted by God (2:21).

The Johannine Jesus makes the claim: "I am the true vine/vineyard" and God is the "vinegrower". He goes further: "I am the vine/vineyard and you are the branches". The potency of this image resides in the fact that a vine without branches is inconceivable. It draws us into the mystery of the mutual interchange of life between us and the risen Christ, into the mystery of God. It also invites us to acknowledge our interconnection with the whole of the Earth community, to nurture the wonderful biodiversity of our planet, and to accept the inevitability of "pruning" if we are to "bear fruit" and "become disciples".

"Pruning" can take various forms. A chance encounter, a sudden inspiration, a word from a friend, an unexpected illness, a confronting story: any such experience can bring us to our senses and serve as a "pruning" device. The first reading for today recounts the story of Saul of Tarsus who is "pruned" quite dramatically through his encounter with the Risen Christ on the road to Damascus. He is transformed from persecutor to defender of Christ and Christ's followers. Saul becomes a disciple and "bears much fruit". The Greek-speaking Christian Jews are suspicious, even murderous, when he tries to preach the gospel among them. Peace ensues, however, and the movement takes hold in the regions where Jesus had first preached the gospel. It is worth reflecting on the cultural diversity that characterised earliest Christianity and the tensions that had to be resolved between different language groups or groups of different ethnic origin for the gospel to flourish and bear fruit. John's gospel is written against the backdrop of such "pruning" within the early communities. Sometimes the requisite "pruning" is hearing respectfully a point of view that differs from one's own.

(Reflection by Sister of Mercy, Sr Veronica Lawson RSM, Theologian and Biblical Scholar)

Parish Leader:..... Michael Bermingham
Priest Director: Peter Dorfield
Pastoral Council: Julie Hintz
Finance Committee: Tim Davis
Secretary:..... Donna Pugh
Secretary:..... Jenny Bartkus
School Principal:..... Michael Cash
APRE: Lee ann Weekes
School Board.....Matt Andreas
Parish Safeguards Representatives:
Maree Keating – 0435 173 882
Sarah Holcombe – 0408 193 636

Parish Diary: 30/04 – 6/05/2018

Monday: 9.00am.....Mass
6.00pm.....PPC Agenda Meeting
7.00pm.....St V de P.
Tuesday: 9.30am.....Faith Education
5.30pm.....Mass
Wednesday 9.00am.....Liturgy of the Word
10.00am.....Open Door
7.00pm.....Meditation
Thursday 10.30am.....Emmaus Prayer
Friday 9.00am.....Mass
9.00am.....Parish Playgroup
11.00am.....Meditation

Sixth Sunday of Easter- Year B

Mass: 6.00pm Saturday
8.30am Sunday
Readings: Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48
1 John 4:7-10
John 15:9-17



April/May 2018

30 April – Parish Pastoral Council – Agenda Meeting
7 May – Parish Office Closed – Public Holiday
13 May – Mother's Day
14 May – Parish Pastoral Council Meeting
14 May – Care & Concern/ Consolation Meetings
21 May – Finance Meeting
28 May – Parish Pastoral Council Agenda Meeting
29 May – Sacrament of Confirmation

HAPPENINGS IN OUR PARISH

Enrolment for Confirmation and First Communion:

Enrolment of the children for the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion will take place at both Masses this weekend. This is an opportunity for the community to welcome the children and their families and to offer them our support and prayers as the children complete their initiation into the Church Community. The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation will be held at St Thomas More's on Tuesday 29 May 2018 at 7.00pm. First Communion will be celebrated at both Masses on the weekend of 23 and 24 June 2018. Any queries, please contact Michael on 0407 804 461 or by email: parishleader@stthomasmores.org.au

Date Claimer – Pot Luck Dinner and Parish Dance:

Please reserve Friday 1 June in your calendars for a Pot Luck Dinner and Parish Dance under the guidance of accomplished dance instructor and music director, Peter Vernon. The evening will commence at 7 pm and will cater for all ages. More details to follow.

Parkinson's Group Luncheon:

On Thursday 3 May, the annual fundraising luncheon for the Parkinson's Group will be held in the Parish Hall. For further information see flyer on the noticeboard in the Church foyer. No take-away is available this year due to increased numbers so if you are planning on going make sure you book in.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

St Joseph's College Enrolments:

Enrolment interviews for students wishing to enter Year 7 in 2020 will commence during Semester 2, 2018.

If you are considering applying to St Joseph's for enrolment in Year 7, 2020 please complete an Enrolment Application Form and forward to the College. Enrolments for 2020 will be finalised by the end of Semester 2, 2018. If you intend enrolling your child at St Joseph's for 2020, you are urged to do so as soon as possible.

St Joseph's College Open Day 2020 will be conducted on Tuesday 22nd May 2018 commencing at 8.30am and concluding at 12.00pm. To request an enrolment package, please contact the Enrolment Officer on:

Phone 4631 8525 or by email: enrolments@sjc.qld.edu.au

For more information about St Joseph's College please visit our website: www.sjc.qld.edu.au

Cent Sale:

The Missionary Sisters of St Peter Claver are holding their MOTHER'S DAY Cent Sale on SATURDAY MAY 5. It will be held at ALL SEASONS FUNCTION HALL, cnr North and Tor Sts TOOWOOMBA. Doors will open at 12.30pm for a 1.30pm start. For an entry fee of \$5 each will receive a Free Sheet of Tickets, Lucky Door Entry and a Buffet Afternoon Tea. Excellent gifts for Mother's Day are among the prizes. All Proceeds go to Charity. For further information contact the Sisters on 4632 1818.

Downlands Open Day:

Downlands College Open Day is on Sunday 20 May 10.00am – 2.00pm. All welcome to attend.

Palms Australia:

Palms Australia is looking for volunteers from all walks of life to share their skills with communities in Africa, Asia and The Pacific. The next information session is on Saturday 5 May at the Toowoomba City Library Community Meeting Room 2, commencing at 10.30am until 12.00 noon. RSVP www.palms.org.au/volunteer

St Saviours Open Evening:

Open Evening will be held on Tuesday 15 May from 3.00pm to 6.00pm. All welcome.

SPRED FUNDRAISER: STEEL MAGNOLIAS

DATE: 3/5/18

TIME: 7:00am

LOCATION: Repertory Theatre, Toowoomba

RSVP: SPRED on 07 4632 8427 or spred@twb.catholic.org.au

COST: \$20 per ticket

Join the SPRED community for a night of laughs at the SPRED Repertory Theatre fundraising event to be held on Thursday, 3rd May 2018. This year's production is 'Steel Magnolias'.

Bus Trip Mariam Valley:

Saturday 19th May. Bus departs Neil St., outside St. Patrick's Cathedral at 7:30 am. Cost \$25. For bookings contact Theresa on 4564 9805, Mob. 0434 528 904.

St Joseph's College Toowoomba – Open Day

Invites you to its OPEN DAY on Tuesday 22nd May 2018 from 8.30am – 12.00pm Allow us to introduce ourselves to you on that day. Feel welcome to participate in the day's activities.

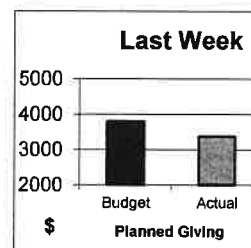
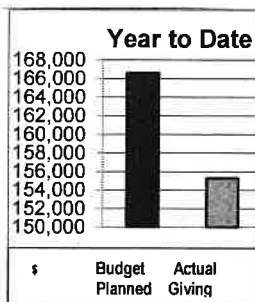
Features include:

Principal's address to parents at 9.00am; Displays of resources and student work; staff on hand to answer any enquiries; Enrolment packages available. We look forward to welcoming you on 22nd May.

For further information, please phone St Joseph's College on 46 31 8500.

PLEASE REMEMBER IN OUR PRAYERS:

Those who are ill: Brodie Slater, Bryan Flemming, Terry Tyers, Ned Sparksman, Michael Kelly, Mark Butlin, Pauline Dixon, Allan Wills, Damian Wyvill, Sara Mehari, Leo McCormack, Scott Murphy, Rosemarie Graham, Michelle Halpin, Christine Prescott, Toni Fitzgibbon, Camille Taylor, Patrick McNamee, Janice Lockhart, Dodie McGrane, Christene Andrews, Col Ward, Bev Parle, Brendan Moore, John Heeney.



This weekend, as we welcome families enrolling their children in the program to prepare them to receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist (Holy Communion), it is timely to reflect on what sacraments mean in each of our lives and in the life of the faith community. The following material is sourced from the Chapter titled: The Sacraments of the Church in the book At Home with God's People – Our Catholic Faith, a resource published by Evangelisation Brisbane (most recent edition 2016) and particularly used in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) Process:

“One of the distinguishing features of the Catholic Church is the importance which we attach to what we call the sacraments. They represent a particular understanding of the relationship between Christ and his Church, and indeed Creator and creation, which is characteristic of the Catholic tradition.

The term ‘sacrament’ was used more widely in the early Church than it is today. In the first six centuries, Christian writers (especially those we call the Fathers of the Church) used the Latin word *sacramentum* (an oath that Roman soldiers took on entering the army) to describe various aspects of the nature and life of the Church, and especially Baptism. In the Middle Ages the term ‘sacrament’ came to have a more precise meaning and it became necessary to determine which of the Church’s ancient practices fitted best the more precise definition of the term.

By the thirteenth century, there was agreement about the number of sacraments (seven) which Catholics and Orthodox Christians recognise today. The Protestant reformers, taking the approach that only those sacraments should be retained which Jesus could be shown in the Scriptures to have clearly instituted opted for just two sacraments – Baptism and the Eucharist. But although it took time for the Church’s formal understanding of the sacraments to develop, the actual practice of the sacraments was part of Christian life and worship from the early centuries.”

“The sacraments are a prime example of God’s ‘incarnational’ way of approaching and relating to human beings. By this we mean that God chose to share the divine life with us not in an invisible or purely ‘spiritual’ way, but through persons, events and things that we can touch and experience through our senses. The Catholic Church teaches that the first and primary sacrament is Jesus Christ himself. God chose to save humanity and to communicate his life and grace by becoming a man who lived and walked among us...Jesus is indeed the sacrament, the loving sign of God’s presence in the world...It can also justly be said that the Church is the sacrament of Jesus Christ.”

“Matthew who began his Gospel by identifying Jesus as *Emmanuel (God with us)* concludes it with the promise of the risen Christ to his disciples: *I am with you always, to the end of the age* (Matthew 28:20)...The belief in the continuing presence of Christ with his Church meant much more to the early Christians than just the inspiration of his memory....It was Paul who introduced the image of the Church as the body of Christ.

Out of such biblical insights came the view that the Church can be seen as the sacrament or effective sign of Christ’s continuing and permanent presence in the world. The bishops at the Second Vatican Council took up this understanding of the Church as *a kind of sacrament* of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all humankind.

To call the Church a sign of Christ’s presence in the world may seem an extravagant claim to make, because members of the Church are far from perfect. John positively reminds us that those who say they have not sinned deceive themselves (see 1 John 1:8-10). Membership of the Church does not ensure sinlessness, but is a call to holiness and perfection (see Matthew 5:48) and to promoting and advancing God’s kingdom (see Matthew 6:10). By responding to this call, the members of the Church help to build up the Body of Christ so that it becomes more and more the sacrament of Christ in the world.

During his lifetime on earth, Jesus himself established certain ways of sharing his life and power with humankind...Jesus also used certain people as visible human channels of the same grace that was at work in him. It is our belief that he meant all his followers, the whole Church, to be a sacrament of God’s grace to the world – a means by which his grace and power would enter the world after his return to the Father. This is what is meant by calling the Church a sacrament of Christ. “

“Besides using persons to carry on his mission and communicate his grace, Jesus also employed specific actions and objects as visible signs of the life and blessing he came to give. Water was one such sign, as when Jesus was baptised by John and the Holy Spirit descended upon him (Mark 1:9-11). He used ordinary food to show the power of God. His first miracle in John’s Gospel was to change water into wine (John 2:1-11), and later he multiplied bread and fish to feed the hungry crowd (Mark 6:35-44; 8:19). By action and gesture, he communicated the grace and power of God. He often touched people when he healed them, even lepers (Mark 1:40-45), and used clay and spittle to open a blind man’s eyes (Mark 8:22-26). He breathed on his disciples to give them the Holy Spirit (John 20:22), and on the night before he died, he made use of bread and wine to give them his body and blood (Mark 14:22-25).

All of these instances are Jesus’ use of ‘signs’ or ‘symbols’ – specific persons, gestures and objects, which visibly symbolised and conferred God’s abundant grace and blessings. It is because Jesus himself established certain ways or ‘channels’ of sharing his life with people that the Church recognises a number of sacraments. Symbol and ritual are important elements in the Church’s celebration of the sacrament...The seven sacraments recognised by the Catholic Church are all based upon some aspect of Jesus’ life or teaching, even though he did not explicitly command his followers to carry out all of them after his departure from the earth. The sacraments emerged as a distinctive part of the Church’s life as the apostles followed Jesus’ example and carried out his teaching.”

“In the *Constitution on the Liturgy* of the Second Vatican Council (no.34) we find the words: *The rites (of the sacraments) should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people’s power of comprehension and normally should not require explanation.* In the same *Constitution* (no. 59) the Council summed up the purpose of the sacraments: *The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify people, to build up the body of Christ, and to give worship to God. Because they are signs, they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but they also nourish, strengthen and express it.*”

Gathering: Bring Forth the Kingdom

M Haugen

CANTOR: You are salt for the earth, O people;

ALL: Salt for the Kingdom of God!

CANTOR: Share the flavour of life, O people:

ALL: Life in the Kingdom of God.

Refrain: *Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy,
Bring forth the Kingdom of peace;
Bring forth the Kingdom of justice,
Bring forth the City of God.*

CANTOR: You are a light on the hill, O people:

ALL: Light for the City of God!

CANTOR: Shine so holy and bright, O people:

ALL: Shine for the Kingdom of God!

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Gloria:

**Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will. (Repeat)**

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory.

Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. (R)

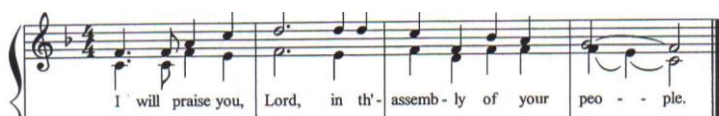
Lord Jesus Christ, Only begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father,
have mercy on us. (R)

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ.

With the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.

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Psalm: Psalm: I Will Praise You, Lord... C Smith



Refrain: *I will praise you, Lord,
in the assembly of your people.*

My vows I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.
May their hearts live forever and ever.

All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord,
All families of the nations shall worship before him.
They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth;
Before him shall bow down all who go down to the dust.

And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him.
They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come,
Declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn;
'These things the Lord God has done.'

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Verse before the Gospel: Alleluia

Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling with Holy Water:

Up from the Waters

M Haugen

**Up from the waters God has claimed you,
up from the waters, child of light.
Praise to the One who called and named you
up from the waters into life.**

Always proclaim the wonderful story:
Up from the waters, child of light.
How you were raised from death into glory:
Up from the waters into life.

Now you have crossed the River of Jordan:
Up from the waters, child of light.
Now you behold God's mercy and pardon:
Up from the waters into life.

No more shall sin have power to hold you:

Up from the waters, child of light.

Now let the grace of Jesus enfold you:

Up from the waters into life.

Come now and praise the God of the living:

Up from the waters, child of light.

Now let your song ring out with thanksgiving:

Up from the waters into life.

Water of life and grace and salvation:

Up from the waters, child of light.

Water that heals the heart of creation:

Up from the waters into life.

This is the life that rains down from heaven:

Up from the waters, child of light.

This is the new life Jesus has given:

Up from the waters into life.

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Prayers of the Faithful:

You are the vine and we are the branches.

Acclamation:

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your
Death, O Lord, until you come again.

Communion: Seed, Scattered and Sown D Feiten/E Gunnison/R Miller

*Seed, scattered and sown,
Wheat, gathered and grown,
Bread, broken and shared as one,
The Living Bread of God
Vine, fruit of the land,
Wine, work of our hands,
One cup that is shared by all;
The Living Cup, the Living Bread of God.*

Is not the bread we break a sharing in our Lord?

Is not the cup we bless the blood of Christ out poured?

The seed which falls on rock will wither and will die.

The seed within good ground will flower and have life.

As wheat upon the hills was gathered and was grown,

So may the church of God be gathered into one.

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Thanksgiving: A New Commandment

*A new commandment I give unto you,
That you love one another as I have loved you.
That you love one another as I have loved you.*

By this shall all know that you are my disciples

If you have love one for another.

By this shall all know you are my disciples

If you have love one for another.

*A new commandment I give unto you,
That you love one another as I have loved you.
That you love one another as I have loved you.*

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Recessional: Bring Forth the Kingdom

M Haugen

CANTOR: You are a seed of the Word, O people:

ALL: Bring forth the Kingdom of God!

CANTOR: Seeds of mercy and seeds of justice,

ALL: Grow in the Kingdom of God!

Refrain: *Bring forth the Kingdom of mercy,
Bring forth the Kingdom of peace;
Bring forth the Kingdom of justice,
Bring forth the City of God.*

CANTOR: We are a blest and a pilgrim people:

ALL: Bound for the Kingdom of God!

CANTOR: Love our journey and love our homeland:

ALL: Love is the Kingdom of God!

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