

**NEWSLETTER OF THE PARISHES OF BALMAIN AND ROZELLE,
ARCHDIOCESE OF SYDNEY**

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

(YEAR B) 18 July 2021

FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Dear Parishioners,

The third week of the lockdown has passed and we have another two weeks, taking us through to Friday 30 July with, I suspect, a real prospect of more time beyond that. There are no public liturgies, baptisms have been postponed, and some couples with weddings scheduled in September are getting jittery. All these means that, once we have come out of the lockdown, we will have a very crowded end of year programme, but we will get everything done. I have listed some of the **postponed events and the forthcoming baptism and weddings** below.

With the School, we have been using modern technology to maintain contact with parents and children. On Friday, we had a **virtual school assembly** with parents online and I was able to be part of that. Thank you to the Headmaster, Mr Bryson, and the Staff for all that they are doing in these difficult circumstances.

Parish work in a time of Covid: I have been making good use of the time although I must admit I felt a bit rudderless in the first week and was not particularly productive. I spent the second week working on a commissioned article for the journal *The Priest* on the recent revisions of Book VI of the Code. This week, I have been dealing with parish administration – completing the Mass census, contacting some parishioners by phone and email, interviewing parents for baptisms and school references, liaising with workmen and contractors, and working towards some parish restructuring. I intend to continue this work in the next week or so as well as finishing the article. Most days, I have rung the **Angelus** at noon. Today, a family who live a few doors away, expressed their appreciation of our ringing of the bell and, just as they were speaking to me, the midday Angelus rang out (courtesy of our sacristan and church cleaner, Brian Luhr!

Barbara Howard is compiling a list of names and dates of death for our **parish prayers for the faithful departed** from our parish records (both Balmain and Rozelle). If you have the details of any parishioners, relatives, or friends, you would like to be included in our parishes' memorial books and listed in the monthly intentions in the Bulletin, please contact Barbara at: balrozparishes@gmail.com. (See note below)

Fr Richard Waddell

Parish Administrator

POSTPONED EVENTS

At Home to farewell Fr Gregory, our **Poetry Evening with Professor Barry Spurr**, and the performance of **84 Charing Cross Road** by the Hunter's Hill Theatre Company. We are also planning an evening focussing on Benedictine spirituality for the lay faithful with **Sr Joanna Bagot OSB from Jamberoo Abbey**. Further details of the new arrangements will be provided when the future becomes a bit more certain.



FORTHCOMING BAPTISM

Luka Bailey HOBSON on Sunday 29 August 2021 at 12 noon at St Augustine's



FORTHCOMING WEDDINGS

Ben Vittorio WEISSEL with Rossy Giovannella GUTIERREZ-DALY on Friday 3 September 2021 at 4 pm in St Augustine's

Michael GALLARDO with Thalia FLOGERAS on Sunday 12 September 2021 at 1.30 pm in St Augustine's

Mak CAVANAGH with Gabrielle Anna SMALL on Saturday 18 September 2021 at 3 pm in the Chapel of Rose Bay Convent

In putting together the **Memorial List** for those who have their deaths recorded in the St Augustine's and St Joseph's registers I have found that St Augustine's has no records of deaths between September 1988 and December 1992.

If you have any details for this period, I would appreciate your help in updating the register accordingly.

Thank you,

Barbara balrozparishes@gmail.com

† PARISH INTERCESSIONS

We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers (1 Thess 1: 2)

For the sick and those in old age: Jaime Aponte, Brenda Atkinson, Nela and Brian Blakemore, John Blunt, Pina Borg, Margo Buckingham, Tony Carbon, Paul Joseph Clark, Ann Diver, Brent Egan, Vincent, Catherine and Eric Erskine, Mary Ferguson, Bruce Fernandez, Christine Forner, Sylvia Gallagher, Martha Lucia Gomez, Marcella Holsten, Beverley Kerin, Joan Leonard, Rosemarie Longworth, Shirley Lowe, Marie Meyrick, Roger Parsons, Anna Pasqua, Patricia Webster, Lyn Wilson, Keith Yates, John, Karen, and Ray.

† **For the faithful departed – those recently deceased:** Red O'Connor (06.02.21), Millie Leung (22.02.21), Veronica Jardin (27.02.21), Wendy Wheatley, Harry Fullerton, and Charlie Veech, Millie Leung, Pat Britton, Mary Haylen (23.04.21), Carmelo Battaglia (30.04.21) and Margaret May Meehan (25.06.21).

As well as for: Rita Agius, Anthony & Ron Barnes, Charlie, Teresa, Rose & Lawrence Borg, Ron Bovey, John Bransby, William, Irene & Gertrude Briggs, Charlie Camilleri, Martin Camilleri, Violet & Emanuel Camilleri, Joyce Josephine & Bertie Joseph Clark, Sr Mary Constable, André, Michel & Ginette Comolle, Gary Dollar, Sydney, Edna & Cecilia Edmonds, Doris Falzon, Bill Gallagher, Susan Hanchard, Kathleen & Maxwell Harris, Mary Houghton, Kate Kenna, John & Jackie Lowe, Marcia Cadiz McIlvenna, Sr Marie McMahan, Mable & Catherine Miles, Peter Modellino, Mollie Monan, Mary Anne, Anthony & Hugh Mulligan, Hazel & Bernie Olson, Vicky Pisani, Winifred & David Preece, Maria Roach, Antoinetta Scalone, Joyce Shiner, and deceased members of Manuli, Nitopi & Scalone families.

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine, et lux perpetua luceat eis. Requiescant in pace. Amen.

ETERNAL LOVE

Eternal love is on the streets

And always was

And always will be

No one seems to notice

eternal love is happy

Not to have a name

Working from behind the scenes

Letting others take the credit

Eternal love does wonders

- from *A Street Spirituality:*

The Poetry of David Christopher Marsh,

published by David's Place 2002

The Catholic Weekly: Special online edition of *The Catholic Weekly* while churches are closed during the COVID-19 lockdown in greater Sydney.

<https://www.catholicweekly.com.au/catholic-weekly-newspaper-online/>



See what's happening in our parishes – find us on Facebook at

<https://www.facebook.com/staugbalmain>



BRIEF ANSWERS TO THE BIG QUESTIONS

Q. If intelligent life exists somewhere else than on Earth, would it be similar to the forms we know or different?

Is there intelligent life on Earth? But seriously, if there is intelligent life elsewhere, it must be a very long way away otherwise it would have visited Earth by now. And I think we would've known if we had been visited; it would be like the film *Independence Day*. Stephen Hawking, *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*, 79.

Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et exultate* of the Holy Father Francis on the call to holiness in today's world (continued)

CHAPTER FIVE

SPIRITUAL COMBAT, VIGILANCE AND DISCERNMENT

158. The Christian life is a constant battle. We need strength and courage to withstand the temptations of the devil and to proclaim the Gospel. This battle is sweet, for it allows us to rejoice each time the Lord triumphs in our lives.

COMBAT AND VIGILANCE

159. We are not dealing merely with a battle against the world and a worldly mentality that would deceive us and leave us dull and mediocre, lacking in enthusiasm and joy. Nor

can this battle be reduced to the struggle against our human weaknesses and proclivities (be they laziness, lust, envy, jealousy or any others). It is also a constant struggle against the devil, the prince of evil. Jesus himself celebrates our victories. He rejoiced when his disciples made progress in preaching the Gospel and overcoming the opposition of the evil one: “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” (*Lk* 10:18).

More than a myth

160. We will not admit the existence of the devil if we insist on regarding life by empirical standards alone, without a supernatural understanding. It is precisely the conviction that this malign power is present in our midst that enables us to understand how evil can at times have so much destructive force. True enough, the biblical authors had limited conceptual resources for expressing certain realities, and in Jesus’ time epilepsy, for example, could easily be confused with demonic possession. Yet this should not lead us to an oversimplification that would conclude that all the cases related in the Gospel had to do with psychological disorders and hence that the devil does not exist or is not at work. He is present in the very first pages of the Scriptures, which end with God’s victory over the devil.^[120] Indeed, in leaving us the Our Father, Jesus wanted us to conclude by asking the Father to “deliver us from evil”. That final word does not refer to evil in the abstract; a more exact translation would be “the evil one”. It indicates a personal being who assails us. Jesus taught us to ask daily for deliverance from him, lest his power prevail over us.

161. Hence, we should not think of the devil as a myth, a representation, a symbol, a figure of speech or an idea.^[121] This mistake would lead us to let down our guard, to grow careless and end up more vulnerable. The devil does not need to possess us. He poisons us with the venom of hatred, desolation, envy and vice. When we let down our guard, he takes advantage of it to destroy our lives, our families and our communities. “Like a roaring lion, he prowls around, looking for someone to devour” (*1 Pet* 5:8).

Alert and trustful

162. God’s word invites us clearly to “stand against the wiles of the devil” (*Eph* 6:11) and to “quench all the flaming darts of the evil one” (*Eph* 6:16). These expressions are not melodramatic, precisely because our path towards holiness is a constant battle. Those who do not realize this will be prey to failure or mediocrity. For this spiritual combat, we can count on the powerful weapons that the Lord has given us: faith-filled prayer, meditation on the word of God, the celebration of Mass, Eucharistic adoration, sacramental Reconciliation, works of charity, community life, missionary outreach. If we become careless, the false promises of evil will easily seduce us. As the sainted Cura Brochero observed: “What good is it when Lucifer promises you freedom and showers you with all his benefits, if those benefits are false, deceptive and poisonous?”^[122]

163. Along this journey, the cultivation of all that is good, progress in the spiritual life and growth in love are the best counterbalance to evil. Those who choose to remain neutral, who are satisfied with little, who renounce the ideal of giving themselves generously to the Lord, will never hold out. Even less if they fall into defeatism, for “if we start without confidence, we have already lost half the battle and we bury our talents... Christian triumph is always a cross, yet a cross which is at the same time a victorious banner, borne with aggressive tenderness against the assaults of evil”.^[123]

Spiritual corruption

164. The path of holiness is a source of peace and joy, given to us by the Spirit. At the same time, it demands that we keep “our lamps lit” (*Lk* 12:35) and be attentive. “Abstain from every form of evil” (*1 Thess* 5:22). “Keep awake” (*Mt* 24:42; *Mk* 13:35). “Let us not fall asleep” (*1 Thess* 5:6). Those who think they commit no grievous sins against God’s law can fall into a state of dull lethargy. Since they see nothing serious to reproach themselves with, they fail to realize that their spiritual life has gradually turned lukewarm. They end up weakened and corrupted.

165. Spiritual corruption is worse than the fall of a sinner, for it is a comfortable and self-satisfied form of blindness. Everything then appears acceptable: deception, slander, egotism and other subtle forms of self-centredness, for “even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” (*2 Cor* 11:14). So Solomon ended his days, whereas David, who sinned greatly, was able to make up for disgrace. Jesus warned us against this self-deception that easily leads to corruption. He spoke of a person freed from the devil who, convinced that his life was now in order, ended up being possessed by seven other evil spirits (cf. *Lk* 11:24-26). Another biblical text puts it bluntly: “The dog turns back to his own vomit” (*2 Pet* 2:22; cf. *Pr* 26:11).

DISCERNMENT

166. How can we know if something comes from the Holy Spirit or if it stems from the spirit of the world or the spirit of the devil? The only way is through discernment, which calls for something more than intelligence or common sense. It is a gift which we must implore. If we ask with confidence that the Holy Spirit grant us this gift, and then seek to develop it through prayer, reflection, reading and good counsel, then surely we will grow in this spiritual endowment.

An urgent need

167. The gift of discernment has become all the more necessary today, since contemporary life offers immense possibilities for action and distraction, and the world presents all of them as valid and good. All of us, but especially the young, are immersed in a culture of zapping. We can navigate simultaneously on two or more screens and interact at the same time with two or three virtual scenarios. Without the wisdom of discernment, we can easily become prey to every passing trend.

168. This is all the more important when some novelty presents itself in our lives. Then we have to decide whether it is new wine brought by God or an illusion created by the spirit of this world or the spirit of the devil. At other times, the opposite can happen, when the forces of evil induce us not to change, to leave things as they are, to opt for a rigid resistance to change. Yet that would be to block the working of the Spirit. We are free, with the freedom of Christ. Still, he asks us to examine what is within us – our desires, anxieties, fears and questions – and what takes place all around us – “the signs of the times” – and thus to recognize the paths that lead to complete freedom. “Test everything; hold fast to what is good” (*1 Thess* 5:21).

Always in the light of the Lord

169. Discernment is necessary not only at extraordinary times, when we need to resolve grave problems and make crucial decisions. It is a means of spiritual combat for helping us to follow the Lord more faithfully. We need it at all times, to help us recognize God’s timetable, lest we fail to heed the promptings of his grace and disregard his invitation to grow. Often discernment is exercised in small and apparently irrelevant things, since greatness of spirit is manifested in simple everyday realities.^[124] It involves striving

untrammelled for all that is great, better and more beautiful, while at the same time being concerned for the little things, for each day's responsibilities and commitments. For this reason, I ask all Christians not to omit, in dialogue with the Lord, a sincere daily "examination of conscience". Discernment also enables us to recognize the concrete means that the Lord provides in his mysterious and loving plan, to make us move beyond mere good intentions.

A supernatural gift

170. Certainly, spiritual discernment does not exclude existential, psychological, sociological or moral insights drawn from the human sciences. At the same time, it transcends them. Nor are the Church's sound norms sufficient. We should always remember that discernment is a grace. Even though it includes reason and prudence, it goes beyond them, for it seeks a glimpse of that unique and mysterious plan that God has for each of us, which takes shape amid so many varied situations and limitations. It involves more than my temporal well-being, my satisfaction at having accomplished something useful, or even my desire for peace of mind. It has to do with the meaning of my life before the Father who knows and loves me, with the real purpose of my life, which nobody knows better than he. Ultimately, discernment leads to the wellspring of undying life: to know the Father, the only true God, and the one whom he has sent, Jesus Christ (cf. *Jn* 17:3). It requires no special abilities, nor is it only for the more intelligent or better educated. The Father readily reveals himself to the lowly (cf. *Mt* 11:25).

171. The Lord speaks to us in a variety of ways, at work, through others and at every moment. Yet we simply cannot do without the silence of prolonged prayer, which enables us better to perceive God's language, to interpret the real meaning of the inspirations we believe we have received, to calm our anxieties and to see the whole of our existence afresh in his own light. In this way, we allow the birth of a new synthesis that springs from a life inspired by the Spirit.

Speak, Lord

172. Nonetheless, it is possible that, even in prayer itself, we could refuse to let ourselves be confronted by the freedom of the Spirit, who acts as he wills. We must remember that prayerful discernment must be born of a readiness to listen: to the Lord and to others, and to reality itself, which always challenges us in new ways. Only if we are prepared to listen, do we have the freedom to set aside our own partial or insufficient ideas, our usual habits and ways of seeing things. In this way, we become truly open to accepting a call that can shatter our security, but lead us to a better life. It is not enough that everything be calm and peaceful. God may be offering us something more, but in our comfortable inadvertence, we do not recognize it.

173. Naturally, this attitude of listening entails obedience to the Gospel as the ultimate standard, but also to the Magisterium that guards it, as we seek to find in the treasury of the Church whatever is most fruitful for the "today" of salvation. It is not a matter of applying rules or repeating what was done in the past, since the same solutions are not valid in all circumstances and what was useful in one context may not prove so in another. The discernment of spirits liberates us from rigidity, which has no place before the perennial "today" of the risen Lord. The Spirit alone can penetrate what is obscure and hidden in every situation, and grasp its every nuance, so that the newness of the Gospel can emerge in another light.

The logic of gift and of the cross

174. An essential condition for progress in discernment is a growing understanding of God's patience and his timetable, which are never our own. God does not pour down fire upon those who are unfaithful (cf. *Lk* 9:54), or allow the zealous to uproot the tares growing among the wheat (cf. *Mt* 13:29). Generosity too is demanded, for "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (*Acts* 20:35). Discernment is not about discovering what more we can get out of this life, but about recognizing how we can better accomplish the mission entrusted to us at our baptism. This entails a readiness to make sacrifices, even to sacrificing everything. For happiness is a paradox. We experience it most when we accept the mysterious logic that is not of this world: "This is our logic", says Saint Bonaventure,^[125] pointing to the cross. Once we enter into this dynamic, we will not let our consciences be numbed and we will open ourselves generously to discernment.

175. When, in God's presence, we examine our life's journey, no areas can be off limits. In all aspects of life we can continue to grow and offer something greater to God, even in those areas we find most difficult. We need, though, to ask the Holy Spirit to liberate us and to expel the fear that makes us ban him from certain parts of our lives. God asks everything of us, yet he also gives everything to us. He does not want to enter our lives to cripple or diminish them, but to bring them to fulfilment. Discernment, then, is not a solipsistic self-analysis or a form of egotistical introspection, but an authentic process of leaving ourselves behind in order to approach the mystery of God, who helps us to carry out the mission to which he has called us, for the good of our brothers and sisters.

176. I would like these reflections to be crowned by Mary, because she lived the Beatitudes of Jesus as none other. She is that woman who rejoiced in the presence of God, who treasured everything in her heart, and who let herself be pierced by the sword. Mary is the saint among the saints, blessed above all others. She teaches us the way of holiness and she walks ever at our side. She does not let us remain fallen and at times she takes us into her arms without judging us. Our converse with her consoles, frees and sanctifies us. Mary our Mother does not need a flood of words. She does not need us to tell her what is happening in our lives. All we need do is whisper, time and time again: "Hail Mary..."

177. It is my hope that these pages will prove helpful by enabling the whole Church to devote herself anew to promoting the desire for holiness. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us a fervent longing to be saints for God's greater glory, and let us encourage one another in this effort. In this way, we will share a happiness that the world will not be able to take from us.

Given in Rome, at Saint Peter's, on 19 March, the Solemnity of Saint Joseph, in the year 2018, the sixth of my Pontificate. **Francis**

ST AUGUSTINE'S & ST JOSEPH'S DETAILS

St Augustine of Hippo's Church, Eaton Street, Balmain

St Joseph's Church, Cnr Victoria Road and Gordon Street, Rozelle

The Presbytery/Office: 3 Jane Street, Balmain NSW 2041

Parish Office: CLOSED UNDER CURRENT LOCKDOWN

Parish Secretary: Lorraine Thomy

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