

In the light of the above it is appropriate that the Orthodox liturgical year begins on **1st September** with prayer to God the Creator. In 1989, the Patriarch of Constantinople, Dimitrios 1, declared this day a day of prayer for all creation. Pope Francis formally invites Catholics also to join in keeping September



1 as a **Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation**. "In this ecological crisis affecting everyone, we should also feel close to all other men and women of good will, called to promote stewardship of the network of life of which we are part." (Pope Francis 2019) Although we will be mainly locked down am sure we can voice our concerns to God and pray to God in union with our whole church and Orthodox friends on this next Wednesday, September 1.

On the national level, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference will continue its journey of conversion by:

- Renaming the Office for Social Justice the Office for Justice, Ecology and Peace to better reflect contemporary Catholic Social Teaching.
- Embark on the 7 goals as above.
- Promote the annual celebration of Laudato Si' Week (16 – 24 May)

Hopefully our Parish Council can take on board this recent Social Justice Statement and lead us along a more ecological parish path. I have photocopied several copies of this year's Social Justice Statement and they will be on my front porch in a tray for anyone to pick up and read.

On another similar social justice issue I am very thankful for the great response once again to our 7th Annual Way of the West Food and Living Essentials Collection for Refugee and Asylum Seeker Families during the month of August. I think a great tradition has been put in place on this one. Hundreds of items have been donated. Thanks

There is a sermon from this weekend's readings on fathergreg.online

Yours 'in Christ'
Fr Greg 24/8/2021

St Mary's Parish



A community where we bring together our gifts and talents

116 Cecil Street, Williamstown 3016
Telephone: 9397 6066
Email: williamstown@cam.org.au
Web: www.stmaryswilliamstown.org.au

29th August, 2021

TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B

FIRST READING:

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy. 4:1-2, 6-8

RESPONSORIAL PSALM:

The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

SECOND READING:

A reading from the letter of James. 1:17-18, 21-22, 27

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

The Father gave us birth by his message of truth, that we might be as the first fruits of his creation.

GOSPEL: MARK 7:1-5

Now when the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed hands. For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders. And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds. So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?"



Parish Priest

(Fr.) Greg Trythall
PH: 9397 6066
MO: 0400 524 363
Email:
greg.trythall@cam.org.au

Pastoral Associate

Monique Julian
0450 789 951
Monday, Tuesday

Parish Office Manager-Secretary

Heidi Zahra
Tuesday 8:30am – 4pm
Thursday 8:30am – 4pm
Friday 8:30am – 4pm

Wednesday Secretary

Kylie Skinner
8.30am—3.30pm

St. Mary's School

Principal
Anthony Hockey

Normal Mass Times

Consult bulletin inside for any changes.
Saturday at 6:00pm
Sunday at 8:30am and 10:30am
Tuesday to Friday 9:15am

Reconciliation

Saturday 10:00am

Silent Adoration in Church

2:30pm – 3:30pm
Wednesday

Baptism Preparation Night

Third Thursday monthly
7.00pm at Parish Centre.
Baptism must be booked prior to attending Preparation Night.

Baptism 12:30am Sunday

IN OUR PRAYERS

We pray for Leo O'Brien, Haizil Joseph, Santhi Komatineni, Kevin Murphy, Sarah Rodgers, Cathy Reid, Assunta Delgrosso.

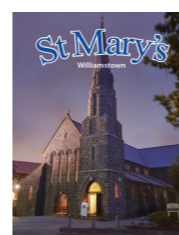
RECENTLY DECEASED & ANNIVERSARIES

We pray for Olga Cutajar and Angelo Di Battista, who died recently and for: Betty Donald, Clare Twomey, Vincent Boseley, Pauline Conway, Pina Laudato, Kathleen Featherston, Lawrence Galea, William Dillon, Caterina Politi, Maria Pos, Nicholas Kurkowski Senior, Mr & Mrs Lomakin, Ronald Purcell, Maureen Haughey, Shirley Dervan, Kevin Doohan, Anna Dubiel, Martino Doria, Pasquale Vivona, Lucia Caputo, Mick Spiller, George Francis, Rene Norton, Betty O'Rourke, Myra Matthews, Anne Kenny, Jo Schobben, Lloyd Molineux, Patrick O'Brien, Peter Warr, George Cassar, Edward Armstrong, Stasha Bajsuk, , Beryl Saidy, Pasqualina Fabbro, Peter Spurling, Rose Achkar, Giuseppe Sokolic, Mamie Fitzpatrick, Allan Sargeant, Constantino Sammut, Jacob Van Lilth, Jason Medlicott, Paolo Pecora, Angelina and Natalino Meilak, Joan Spiteri, Michael Meilak, Carmela Sammut, Nunzio Ficcarra, Blondina and Lawrence Sammut, Maria Cassar and Michael Paicquadio; whose anniversaries are at this time.



ATTENTION!!! Don't Forget to Save Your Seat At Mass

As there is a maximum on the number of Mass attendees, please ensure that you register to book your (free) ticket to Mass. This can be done via our website: stmaryswilliamstown.org.au under the heading: **SIGN UP TO ATTEND MASS** or by accessing the link: signupgenius.com/go/stmarys



UPCOMING CALENDAR EVENTS

Saturday 11th September	9am—11am Working Bee.
Sunday 12th September	4pm—5pm New Altar Servers training at the church.
Sunday 19th September	4pm Wedding planners meeting at the Presbytery.
Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th October	Renewal of wedding vows
Sunday 24th October	After 10.30am Mass new parishioners luncheon in the Parish Centre.

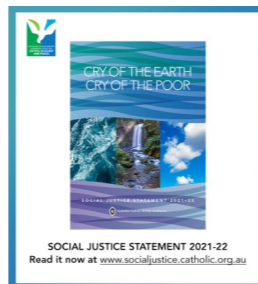
Dear Parishioners,

If anyone wants to borrow a book which contains the annual 'Social Justice Statements' from Australia's Catholic bishops from 1988 onwards then you are welcome to borrow the ones I have in my possession.

The Social Justice Statements started in 1988 with 'PRISON THE LAST RESORT' (a Christian response to Australian prisons), then 1989 'CATHOLICS LOOK AT WEALTH DISTRIBUTION' (Second progress report on the distribution of wealth in Australia) followed by 'SOCIAL JUSTICE IN EVERYDAY LIFE' and 1991 raised another extremely important social justice topic: 'I AM A STRANGER: WILL YOU WELCOME ME' (The Immigration Debate). From 1988 through to 1991 and now every year since there has been a topic for discussion challenging us to respond with a better knowledge to a human concern in line with our Saviour's command "love one another as I have loved you." These annual statements over the years have varied from 'supporting the unemployed', 'eradicating poverty in our world', 'the challenge of ageing', 'woman and man', 'rural and regional Australia', 'challenging racism in Australia', 'dignity and justice for our Aboriginal brothers and sisters', 'young people and justice', 'the social and economic challenges facing families today'. No deep human concern should not go unaddressed, especially by our leaders in the faith in Australia. They are our spiritual leaders and we expect them to lead whether we are diocesan priest, religious or laity.

Back in 2002 the annual justice statement was entitled: '**A New Earth**' (the environmental challenge). Maybe the Australian bishops were a few years before their times on this one but was anyone listening at that stage! With the commencement of the changing frequency and intensity of severe weather events, such as Canada experiencing one or two 50-degree days recently, I think most of us are now ready to not only listen but be concerned. We see fires, floods, and droughts becoming less predictable and more intense. So close to us (not in outback NSW but even close to Sydney) Penrith on January 4th, 2020 was the hottest place on earth and in 2019 Parramatta in outer Sydney sweltered through 47 days with temperatures over 35 degrees. July on our planet this year was the hottest month since records have been taken in our planet! It was also estimated that nearly 3 billion native animals were in the path of the 2019-2020 bushfires in New South Wales and Victoria.

I would like to quote from the Social Justice Statement 2021 when it states: 'Rising sea levels, bigger king tides, coastal erosion, coral bleaching, and decreasing fish stocks are already a daily reality for Pacific Island nations.' Those words even by themselves are the reason why this year's statement is labelled: '**CRY OF THE EARTH....CRY OF THE POOR**'.



The suffering of our rivers and waterways, our groundwater, reefs and oceans is plain to see. 'The Great Artesian Basin cries out for our protection. It is at risk from over extraction of water and the potential introduction of pollutants and petro carbon from fracking.'

However, the news on the ecology front is not all bleak -bleak. For instance, may we can take heart as the Social Justice Statement stresses from the past way our **Aboriginal ancestors have understood the importance of land**. Prominent Victorian aboriginal Vicki Walker expressed it beautifully in this way: "The land and environment are our Mother. Treat her with love and tenderness, nurture and never mistreat her, or take more than what is required."

Of course, a certainty minority within Australian and overseas will always place present economic gain over any human help to the environment. Nevertheless, our young are waking up and many of us of an even older age group are realising that things need to change. This change as the Social Justice Statement remarks is based on '.....wisdom from Scripture, our theological tradition, Catholic Social Teaching, and human knowledge to water the seeds of change. We acknowledge the unique place of **the wisdom of the First Nations peoples**, who were caring for country before Abraham set out for the promised land, and who continue to do so today.'

And if I may continue: '.... **Infused in the Scriptures is the absolute love and commitment of God to all creation.....**As Pope Francis points out.....Now we can better appreciate that we are creatures within creation, in relationship with the whole earth, plants, birds, beasts, fish, soil and garden. We are called to be caretakers (Genesis 2:15) rather than exploiters.' Even Jesus while on this earth referred to God's care for the birds of the air and the flowers of the field as examples of the care that God holds for even the most passing of the things of nature. We hold certain Saints like St Francis of Assisi as great lovers of God's creation, especially the birds of the air and the animals of the land.

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Compared say to The Salvation Army the work of the average member of the St Vincent de Paul Society is often hidden. Yet incredible work is done by members every day of the week, and not displayed with fanfare. Likewise, the depth and wisdom **from CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING** is often passed over by humanity yet its impact may be far greater than we can imagine. For instance, in the 1970's Pope Paul VI spoke on the fate of the earth at the Stockholm Conference and at the United Nations. Throughout the 1990's and into the new millennium, Pope Paul 11 spoke increasingly often about the stewardship of creation. Now the great Pope Francis is helping us to understand stewardship in a less human-centred and more mutual way. We are in communion with our fellow creatures who also sustain and care for us. Pope Francis is calling us to a relationship based less on duty and more on love. We are being challenged to understand that we do not stand outside of creation but are part of it, "joined in a splendid universal communion" with other creatures. (Pope Francis in his wonderful encyclical letter Laudato Si 2015)

In 2022 we reach the 20th anniversary of our Australian Social Justice Statement 'A New Earth': The environmental challenge, which called for an ecological conversion, led to the establishment of Catholic Earthcare Australia (now a project of Caritas Australia). The call to ecological conversion is a major theme in Pope Francis 2015 'Laudato Si' encyclical along with the need for an integral approach to economic, social and ecological issues.

In their annual Social Justice Statement, CRY OF THE EARTH, CRY OF THE POOR the Australian Catholic bishops state: "We stand with Pope Francis acknowledging that a very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system and that humanity is called to recognise the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it." While there are also other factors contributing to climate change, we have a particular responsibility to address those related to human activity.

It is worthwhile noting that '**The National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council**' stressed the following: "It is time that all Australians, particularly those following in the footsteps of Christ, recognise that God's creation, our wonderful home here on earth, needs to be loved, looked after and kept, not degraded or abused. **We have long felt the 'cry of the earth'** following the arrival of Europeans and others who do not always share our deep regard for our country. This hurts us to the core of our being". Consequently, it is worth noting the warning given by the Australia Bishops back in their 2002 Statement: to achieve reconciliation with creation, "we must examine our lives and acknowledge the ways in which we have harmed God's creation through our actions and failure to act. We need to experience a conversion or change of heart". In regard our ecological future Pope Francis follows familiar lines: "...many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change."

By calling us to a humbler, more sustainable way of living, our ecological conversion entails an economic conversion. Pope Francis advocates a ".....circular model of production capable of preserving resources for present and future generations, while limiting as much as possible the use of non-renewable resources, moderating their consumption, maximising their efficient use, reusing and recycling them."(Laudato Si' 2015)

The Vatican 'Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development' is fleshing out some action plans over the coming months under their main themes in order for communities such as parishes or organisations to take on board the following seven goals of Laudato Si' within a seven-year journey. Hopefully over the next year we can take these on board in some way or other as listed below:

- Responding to the cry of the earth (might be just cutting down less rainforests/planting more trees as one practical step)
- Responding to the cry of the poor (might be engaging with Pacific Islander communities who are in danger from a rising sea level)
- Ecological economics.
- Adopting simple lifestyles.
- Ecological education.
- Ecological spirituality.
- Community involvement and participatory action.



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