

**Parish Priest:**

Fr Thinh Nguyen
Presbytery: 9808 0650
Thinh.Nguyen@cam.org.au

Parish Secretary

Dominique Hockey
Amelia Younane

Parish Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday 9am—3pm

Baptisms & Weddings

Please contact the Parish Office.

St Scholastica's Primary School

Principal: Jenny Rohan
9808 7279
principal@ssbennettswood.catholic.edu.au

Child Safety Team

Fr Thinh Nguyen, Jenny Rohan,
Katherine Presley,
Kathy Menzies, Dennis Murphy,
Ferdinand La'Forgue
03 9808 1006
stschpar@bigpond.net.au

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

03 9808 1006
stschpar@bigpond.net.au

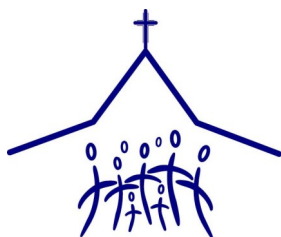
348 Burwood Highway,
Bennettswood VIC 3125
ABN 95 499 516 268

Phone: 9808 1006

Email: stschpar@bigpond.net.au

Website:

www.stscholasticaparish.com.au



5th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B 6th & 7th February 2021

Happy Parish Feast Day!

My dear Parishioners of St Scholastica,

On Wednesday, 10 February, we will celebrate the Feast Day of St Scholastica, Virgin and the patron of our Parish and Primary School.

What do we know of St Scholastica? She was born in Nursia, Umbria, Italy, in the year 480 of wealthy parents (Anicius Eupropius and his wife Claudia Abondantia Reguardati). According to a ninth century tradition, she was the twin sister of St Benedict of Nursia.

The most commonly told story about her is that Scholastica used to visit her brother once a year and, since she was not allowed to enter his monastery, he used to go with some of his monks to meet her at a house a little way off. They spent these visits in praising God and discussing on spiritual matters.

One day they had supper and continued their conversation. When Benedict indicated it was time for him to leave. Scholastica, possibly foreseeing that the time of her death was drawing near, begged her brother to delay his return till the next day that they might spend the time discussing the joys of heaven. Not wishing to break his own Rule, Benedict refused, insisting that he needed to return to his monastery.

When Scholastica found that she could not move him, she closed her hands in prayer, and after a moment, a wild storm came that Benedict and his companions were unable to set foot outside the door. He asked, "God forgive you sister; what have you done?", to which she replied, "I asked a favour of you and you refused it. I asked it of God, and He has granted it." Benedict was unable to return to his monastery, and they spent the night talking about holy things. The next morning they parted, and three days later Scholastica died.

I love the story of Scholastica and Benedict's holy conversation. The image of two saints talking of the joys of heaven, not allowing earthly cares or earthly distractions deter them.

May God grant to each of us encounters with such as St Benedict and St Scholastica. And grant us also, whatever storms we need to compel us to stop and listen. The faith of our Parish community today is sustained by the experience of many humble and faith-filled witnesses.

May St Scholastica intercede for us today and help us to follow her example. Like her, to focus on the one thing that matters, the moment at hand and the response the Gospel requires so as to build bridges that unite us all to Christ. Happy Feast Day to all Parishioners and friends.

Fr Thinh Nguyen PP



Committed to Serving our local Community
Contact Us Today for Your Free Copy of the Booklet
"Get the Highest Price for Your Property"
9831 9831

Cooper Newman
Real Estate
Reliable property advice



WEEKLY CALENDAR 2021

Monday 8 February

No Service

07.30pm Vinnies Meeting - GA

Tuesday 9 February

09.00am Mass followed Adoration and Rosary until 10am

Wednesday 10 February - Feast of St Scholastica's

10.00am Exposition

10.30am Rosary

11.00am Mass

01.00pm Legion of Mary - GA

Thursday 11 February

09.00am Mass followed by Rosary

Friday 12 February

09.00am Mass

Saturday 13 February

09.00am Mass followed by Rosary/Confession

05.30pm Mass

Sunday 14 February

09.00am Mass

11.00am Mass - baptism during mass

12.15pm Vietnamese Mass

05.30pm Mass

ROSTERS

| Day | Mass Time | 1st Sunday of the Month 6/7 February 2021 | |
|----------|-----------|--|------------------------------------|
| | | Readers/Musician | Special Ministers |
| Saturday | 5.30 pm | Stephanie Rozario ----- Pauline | Mary Ann Borg Christine Wates |
| Sunday | 9.00 am | Mario Tauro ----- Judy | Rosa Coniglio Sangeetha Thomas |
| | 11.00 am | Juancho Natividad ----- Henry | Anna Marie Ziino Marie Serophim |
| | 5.30 pm | ----- Sean | Marcia Nelson Arden Nelson |

ROSTERS

| Day | Mass Time | 2nd Sunday of the Month 13/14 February 2021 | |
|----------|-----------|--|---------------------------------|
| | | Readers/Musician | Special Ministers |
| Saturday | 5.30 pm | Janice Silvana ----- Lucy | Charlie Mellican Noela Corby |
| Sunday | 9.00 am | Sylvia Chuah ----- Judy | Betty McDonald Joy Guinane |
| | 11.00 am | Clare Gately ----- Henry | April Lewis Anna Nguyen |
| | 5.30 pm | ----- Rebecca | Michael Chan Netty Solomon |

Remembering Our Community

Sick

Ian Holmes, Michael Yau, Rachel Bransby, Doris Gauci, Doris Sinclair, Fred Hillas, Fran Panetta, Bichara Serophim, Natalie Balding, Rosemary Anderiesz, Maria Fonseca, Baby Mary Pauchnik, Margaret Sweeney, Susan Jenkins, Graeme Barr, Andrew Lim

Anniversaries

David Ho, Donald Thean Leong Ng, Marie Siew Lan Choo

Requirements when coming to Church

Please see a summary of requirements when entering the church:

- No pre-booking is required to attend mass - it will be a first come/first served basis
- It is recommended you arrive at least 10 minutes early to give everyone enough time to sign in and be appropriately socially distanced
- Mask wearing, is **mandatory** in church. Please wear a mask over your nose and mouth when you enter the church and sanitise your hands at the back of the church.
- It is **preferred** you register with the QR code on your phone, but if you do not have the ability to do so, please sign in at the back of the church.
- People must be sitting, 1 person per two square metre, to ensure people have enough room to maintain 1.5 metres distance between them. Please use the green dots as a guide as to where to sit
- Entry is only through the Narthex and you must sign in and hand sanitise before entering the church.
- Please only exit the church through the side doors where it is marked 'Exit Only'
- When you come up to receive Holy Communion, please sanitise your hands from the sanitising station 'right before you receive'.
- Reception of Holy Communion is in your hand until further notice.
- Use the wipes to clean where your hand rested, the kneeler and your seat itself. Take the wipe and put it in the bin as you exit the church and sanitise your hands when you leave.

If you have a cold, cough or any flu like symptoms of COVID-19, you must NOT attend mass. It is crucial that all these rules are followed for everyone's safety. Please be aware that if you arrive and the doors are locked the church has reached its capacity.

Seniors Social Night Functions

We are very excited to announce that our regular Senior Singles Social Night Functions are returning for 2021. These nights are a regular occurrence each month and are a perfect opportunity for you to enjoy the company of some fellow parishioners.

The February nights out will be held at Box Hill Golf Club at 6:30pm. The dates for February are:

- Men's Dinner - Tuesday 16th February
- Ladies Dinner - Tuesday 23rd February

Mark your diary now for a night of company and a nice meal. All are welcome.

St Scholastica's acknowledges that we gather, pray and live together on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nations.



NOTICEBOARD

Communion to the sick

Do you know anyone who is sick or housebound, who would like to receive a visit from Father Trinh? Perhaps the sick/homebound person is feeling isolated from the parish community and would like to receive communion on a regular basis. Please phone the parish office on 9808 1006.



Baptism at St Scholastica's

It is a requirement of the parish that a Baptism information night must be attended prior to having your child baptised. Contact the parish office on 9808 1006 to make a booking into one of the monthly sessions. Next session: Thursday 4th March 2021 at 7:30pm in the Parish Office.

Church Open for Private Prayer

The church is open for private prayer from *Tuesday to Friday 9am – 3pm*. All COVID safe guidelines must be adhered to and if you are in the church for longer than 15 minutes it is essential that you register using the QR code or writing your details in the book provided.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd - Volunteers/Helpers Needed

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a contemplative approach to religious formation for children ages 3-12 years. Based on Montessori principles of education, children are invited into a specially prepared environment called an Atrium and work with hand made materials reflecting on scripture passages and liturgy, coming to know the love of God.



Catechesis
of the
Good Shepherd

We opened the Parish Atrium in Sept 2005 and like a mustard seed, have grown slowly with love and prayers and volunteering from many parishioners. The voice of the Good Shepherd knows no boundaries and we are very blessed to welcome children from 30 different parishes and volunteers from 15 different parishes every week.

In January, our eldest volunteer who has been assisting in the Atrium for 9 years (and will be 82 later this year), has decided it was time to retire. We also have several volunteers who have gone on maternity leave this year.

We are really hoping to have 3 more volunteers, particularly for Tuesday from 3.45-6pm and one more volunteer for Saturday from 9.30am-12.15pm

If you are between the ages of 18+ age is no boundary, no experience is necessary (you will be trained), but you do need a current working with children check. For more information please contact the Parish office during business hours. God bless.

Working With Children Check

Anyone who volunteers in the parish must have a current working with children check. If you have not provided, or your card has been recently updated, please contact the parish office as soon as possible.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Opening Mass

Thank you to Fr Trinh and all our parishioners last Saturday for welcoming the children and their families from the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd who are discerning their readiness to receive Jesus. These 20 children participated in an hour Scripture Study on Zoom every Saturday morning between July and November 2020. Now we welcome them back to the Atrium, under COVID guidelines and are running a series of discernment retreats filled with group prayer, scripture, liturgical gestures as gift and personal work time. These children have been attending Atrium for 5+ years and it has been a privilege journeying with these families watching each child grow in their relationship with Jesus. Please join us in praying for these children, and all the children who are returning to listen to God's Word and the voice of our Good Shepherd.

St. Vincent de Paul Society - Monthly Food Collections

The monthly food collections will recommence this year at all masses this weekend of 6th & 7th of February 2021. The collections will be handled in a Covid safe way, and with the items being quarantined for a week before being provided to the needy. The most useful items are the staples such as: Pasta & pasta sources, rice, baked beans & other canned food & soups, canned fruit, spreads such as vegemite, peanut butter and jams and also breakfast cereals and long life milk as well as canned fish such as tuna and sardines. At present our pantry is bare and we thank you in anticipation for your generosity.



Cleaner Wanted

A parishioner is looking for a cleaner for a small unit in Burwood. If you are interested please contact Peter on 0409 149 344

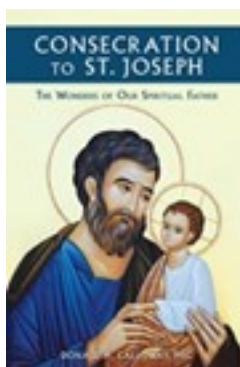
Weekly Updates and Thanksgiving

Please be aware that we are still sending weekly updates via email with all the relevant information as we are aware that some people might not yet be comfortable to come back to attending mass.

Thanksgiving envelopes can be dropped at the Parish Office. For direct deposits, the parish account details can be found below.

- Account Name: St Scholastica's Parish
- BSB: 083 347
- Account Number: 68681 8033
- Reference: **Please use as reference:**
Envelope number

Set up a direct debit or monthly credit card giving by contacting the parish office.



Consecration to St Joseph Book

\$25 Each.

A 33-day program By Fr Don Calloway. 336 pages. Free St Joseph Cloak Book and card.

Contact Juliette 98864848.



St. Scholastica's Kindergarten

St. Scholastica's Kindergarten is a Catholic based kindergarten located in Burwood, in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne, that provides sessions for 3 and 4 year old groups, as well as an activity group and extended care hours.

13 Pheasant Street Burwood VIC 3125
Telephone: 9808 9724
Fax: 9808 8782
Email: info@stscholasticaskinder.com.au

For All Computer Problems?
Call Aubrey
PH: 03 90130433
Mob: 0427879659

Pinewood Quality Nursery

478-484 Blackburn Road, Glen Waverley 3150

- A huge range of plants, potting mix and fertilisers
- Large gift shop with free gift wrapping
- Delivery service



Open 7 Days

Ph: 9560-8711 www.pinewoodnursery.com.au



TOBIN BROTHERS
FUNERALS

Celebrating Lives

Tom Tobin
Branch Manager
294 Burwood Highway
East Burwood 3151
Telephone: (03) 9886 1600

JA CAIN
REAL ESTATE

Successfully
Selling & Leasing Real Estate
For over 70 years
Phone: 9805 2900

A/H Bryan Cain 0418 320 525
1156 Toorak Road Camberwell



The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is an approach to religious formation of **children**

ages 3-12. They explore practical life (activities relating to daily life) teaching them love and care for themselves and the world around them.

For further info please contact 9808 1006,
email stschpar@bigpond.net.au
or visit our website
www.stscholasticaparish.com.au

inkirpm

www.inkifingus.com.au

online print shop & showroom now open

Unit 3/125 Highbury Road, Burwood

Justin Annesley
9882 4905 or 040 002 4905

ELECTRICAL PROBLEMS ?

CALL Will on 9803 6401
Reliable Repairs or Service
Prompt efficient work.

R.E.C.: 15044



Where community shapes
the heart of your retirement

New retirement village coming soon to Burwood East

For more information phone Lina or Michelle on 1800 288 299
45 Burwood Highway, Burwood East

St Scholastica's Catholic Primary School



To Live, To Learn, To Love

Tours are available on any school day throughout the year by appointment. Please telephone or email to make a time.

Come and see us in Action!

4-8 Starling Street, Bennettswood Vic 3125

Phone: 9808 7279

Email: principal@ssbennettswood.catholic.edu.au

Web: www.ssbennettswood.catholic.edu.au



Local Office - 131 546
www.jimsantennas.com.au

- * TV Antenna Systems
- * TV Wall Mounting
- * Free Quotes
- * Home Theatre
- * Surround Sound
- * Fully Insured

Mark McEvoy Mb: 0402 895 863
Franchisee Jims Antennas Forest Hill

ASHWOOD PANELS

- AUTOMOTIVE PANEL BEATING & SPRAY PAINTING
- RECOGNISED REPAIRER FOR ALL INSURANCE COMPANIES
- PRIVATE REPAIRS • RESTORATIONS
- FREE COURTESY VEHICLES
- FREE QUOTES

STEVE VAN OOSTEN

24 IRELAND STREET BURWOOD
PHONE: 9808 9181 FAX: 9808 3161



BURWOOD
9808-4067

WANTIRNA
9800-2177

HOPPERS
CROSSING
8369-6200

INSTALLATIONS
9754-0900

- EFFICIENT IRRIGATION
- RAINWATER HARVESTING
- WATER TANKS & PUMPS
- LAWN SOLUTIONS

WWW.SMART-WATER.COM.AU

Pray for the Unborn





Saint Scholastica's Parish

Parish Financial Update – February 2021

Dear Parishioners,

You may recall that in early December 2020, a notice appeared in the Chimes advising Parishioners of the closure of St Scholastica's Kindergarten.

As mentioned in that notice, there were numerous reasons for the closure including, the operational financial losses since 2015 and the significant costs this imposed on the Parish which were significant.

The actual closure of kindergarten and the payment of all liabilities including staff entitlements and debts has meant that to date the Parish has incurred a debt of just over \$80,000 and there are further costs to wind up the legal entity.

Compounding the above is the fact that due the COVID19 pandemic and our Church having to be locked down for many months, our Thanksgiving program collections for the calendar year is a fraction of what was budgeted.

Accordingly, to avoid going into debt and to help restore our financial position, I would like to commence a second collection in February, 2021.

I appreciate we live in uncertain and difficult times and so as is always the case, if you are able contribute to this collection, it will be greatly appreciated, and if you are not able to do so, equally, that is understood and perfectly fine.

Thank you for your ongoing support as your Parish Priest.

Yours sincerely,



Father Thinh Nguyen

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP
Premier of Victoria
Parliament House
Spring St
East Melbourne VIC 3002



Dear Premier

We write on behalf of the Muslim and Catholic communities in Victoria in solidarity with other people of faith, expressing profound concern over the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Bill 2020.

Every day we are working alongside our fellow Victorians to celebrate our diversity, care for the vulnerable and serve one another. We value our freedom to do so responsibly, by supporting and caring for people in their searching and questioning, with honesty, attentiveness, and compassion.

Unfortunately, this Bill doesn't just ban out-dated and insidious practices of coercion and harm, which we firmly reject. The bill also criminalises conversation between children and parents, interferes with sound professional advice, and silences ministers of religion from providing personal attention for individuals freely seeking pastoral care for complex personal situations. It includes ill-conceived concepts of faith and conversation, vague definitions, and scientifically and medically flawed approaches. It places arbitrary limitations on parents, families and people of faith. People change for all kinds of reasons, and should feel free to do so, whether it be on matters of personal identity, gender, sexuality, family association, or religion. Contrary to its intent, this Bill obstructs people's freedom by limiting, restricting and removing options for their good, thereby creating undesirable possibilities of harm.

If a simpler, clearer bill had been tabled, with adequate consultation, then we would be able to give full support to a focused and practical way to protect people from harm.

Other faith communities, religious representatives and organisations have contacted you and the Attorney General to seek resolution to these difficulties. With this letter we stand with them and look for respectful engagement.

At present the Bill appears to target people of faith in an unprecedented way, puts limits on ordinary conversations in families, and legislates for what prayer is legal and what prayer is not. Various amendments can be made to rescue the Bill from taking Victoria into strange new territory, in which prayerful advice and guidance, freely sought by one adult from another, is criminalised. We are working together as faith leaders to offer a constructive opportunity to prevent such a step from taking place, and seek your active support.

Specifically, we seek an urgent 'pause' on the Bill and a meeting with yourself and the Attorney General, and ask for transparent and comprehensive consultation. We make this request publicly and respectfully, always open to dialogue and to finding a constructive resolution.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Mohamed Mohideen,
President, on behalf of the Islamic Council of Victoria

Most Reverends Greg Bennet, Paul Bird CSSR, Peter A Comensoli, Terence Curtin, Shane Mackinlay,
Bosco Puthur, Peter Stasiuk CSSR, Antoine-Charbel Tarabay
on behalf of Catholic Dioceses and Eparchies of Victoria

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year B - 6/7 February 2021

Entrance Antiphon: Ps 94:6-7

O come, let us worship God and bow low before the God who made us, for he is the Lord our God.

First Reading: Jb 7:1-4. 6-7

A reading from the book of Job

I am filled with sorrow all day long.

Job began to speak:

Is not man's life on earth nothing more than pressed service, his time no better than hired drudgery?

Like the slave, sighing for the shade, or the workman with no thought but his wages, months of delusion I have assigned to me, nothing for my own but nights of grief.

Lying in bed I wonder, 'When will it be day?'

Risen I think, 'How slowly evening comes!'

Restlessly I fret till twilight falls.

Swifter than a weaver's shuttle my days have passed, and vanished, leaving no hope behind.

Remember that my life is but a breath, and that my eyes will never again see joy.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Ps 146:1-6. R. v.3

R. Praise the Lord who heals the broken-hearted.

Praise the Lord for he is good; sing to our God for he is loving: to him our praise is due. **R.**

The Lord builds up Jerusalem and brings back Israel's exiles, he heals the broken-hearted, he binds up all their wounds. He fixes the number of the stars; he calls each one by its name. **R.**

Our Lord is great and almighty; his wisdom can never be measured.

The Lord raises the lowly; he humbles the wicked to the dust. **R.**

Second Reading: 1 Cor 9:16-19. 22-23

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians

Punishment will come to me if I do not preach the Gospel.

I do not boast of preaching the gospel, since it is a duty which has been laid on me; I should be punished if I did not preach it! If I had chosen this work myself, I might have been paid for it, but as I have not, it is a responsibility which has been put into my hands. Do you know what my reward is? It is this: in my preaching, to be able to offer the Good News free, and not insist on the rights which the gospel gives me.

So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could. For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost; and I still do this, for the sake of the gospel, to have a share in its blessings.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Mt 8:17

Alleluia, alleluia!

He bore our sickness, and endured our suffering.

Alleluia!

Gospel: Mk 1:29-39

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

He cured many who suffered from diseases of one kind or another.

On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went with James and John straight to the house of Simon and Andrew. Now Simon's mother-in-law had gone to bed with fever, and they told him about her straightaway. He went to her, took her by the hand and helped her up. And the fever left her and she began to wait on them.

That evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were sick and those who were possessed by devils. The whole town came crowding round the door, and he cured many who were suffering from diseases of one kind or another; he also cast out many devils, but he would not allow them to speak, because they knew who he was.

In the morning, long before dawn, he got up and left the house, and went off to a lonely place and prayed there. Simon and his companions set out in search of him, and when they found him they said, 'Everybody is looking for you.' He answered, 'Let us go elsewhere, to the neighbouring country towns, so that I can preach there too, because that is why I came.' And he went all through Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and casting out devils.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon:

Let them thank the Lord for his mercy, his wonders for the children of men, for he satisfies the thirsty soul, and the hungry he fills with good things.

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year B - 14th February 2021

First Reading: Leviticus 13:1-2. 44-46

Second Reading: 1 Cor 10:31-11:1

Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

Scripture Commentary for the 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time - Year B

Last Sunday's Gospel described the first blow that Jesus struck against the rule of Satan in the world: his teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum in the course of which he dramatically frees a man possessed by an evil spirit (Mark 1:21-28). Today's Gospel (Mark 1:29-39) continues the account of that inaugural day of ministry. Leaving the synagogue, Jesus goes to Simon Peter's house and cures Simon's mother-in-law, who is ill with a fever (vv. 29-31). He then extends his healing and liberating activity to the whole town (vv. 32-34), before re-launching his mission on a wider scale (vv. 35-39).

The First Reading, an extract from the Book of Job, 7:1-4, 6-7, provides an effective background to the situation addressed by Jesus in the Gospel by dramatising the limitations of the human lot with such poignancy.

We should note, however, that the healing ministry of Jesus actually begins on a rather modest, even domestic scale. Simon's mother-in-law is in bed with a fever, a more threatening condition in those days but not necessarily something out of the ordinary. Simon (Peter) is the leading disciple of the four that Jesus has just called to leave off being fishers of fish and become 'fishers of people' (1:16-20). Responding to his call has meant leaving both livelihood and family behind. The fact that Jesus performs this healing for the benefit of a member of Simon's family shows that having the family's menfolk follow Jesus is not entirely loss. They are going to gain something as well – be drawn into the sphere of new life and healing associated with the new 'family of God', the band of disciples Jesus is beginning to gather around himself.

The language in which the healing action of Jesus is described, 'He came and took her by the hand and raised her up' echoes the language of resurrection. The 'service' that the recovered woman then provides for Jesus and his disciples is at one level simply the standard domestic service of preparing and serving a meal that a woman in that culture would provide. Here it certainly signals her complete restoration to health. At the same time, the language used (diakonein) seems to foreshadow the 'service' (diakonia) that Jesus himself will provide as the Son of Man who has come 'not to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for many' (10:45). Simon's mother-in-law thus anticipates the ministry that disciples who have experienced the healing and reconciling power of Jesus will go on to exercise in his name. Moreover, this healed woman, at the very start of Jesus' ministry, may also anticipate the loving service of the unnamed woman who, just before Jesus' passion, will lovingly and appropriately anoint him for burial (14:3-9). She begins a pattern to be played out in this gospel where women by and large grasp the true meaning of Jesus' mission, especially its entrance into suffering, and the male disciples, including Simon Peter, do not.

With the Sabbath ended at sundown, the townsfolk are free to bring their sick and tormented for healing as well. The prominence of exorcisms in the account raises for homilists the problem of how to explain this kind of activity to hearers of the gospel today. Undoubtedly, we find in the gospels generally and in Mark in particular the attribution to demonic possession of many conditions that modern medicine would prefer to ascribe to various kinds of psycho-physical pathologies. There is no good reason to suppose that the Galilean towns and villages where Jesus laboured were any more prone to cases of true demonic possession than is the case today. The gospel highlights the demonic, not only because its author attributed many more conditions to that cause than we would, but also out of the desire to portray all Jesus' activity – whether teaching, healing or exorcising – as a life-and-death struggle with the powers opposed to God for the freedom and enhancement of human life.

The gospel stresses the eagerness of the crowd to access the power of Jesus – both on this evening and then after his brief moment of retirement to a lonely place to pray. It dramatises in this way the desperation of the human condition and the sense that Jesus and he alone can provide the liberation they so deeply desire. So, from the family of Simon and the afflicted people of Capernaum, Jesus moves on 'to the neighbouring towns' to because as he says, 'It is for this that I came out' – came out from Nazareth but 'came out' more radically as the Son of God to confront and overcome the evil of the world.

In the Second Reading, 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23, Paul powerfully defends his own commitment to freedom in his apostolic service of the Lord.

© Brendan Byrne SJ

Since returning from graduate studies in Oxford in 1977, Brendan Byrne has been Professor of New Testament at Jesuit Theological College in Melbourne, Australia, of which he was Principal (1992-97). He was Rector of Campion College, Kew (1979-84) and a delegate to the 33rd General Congregation of the Society of Jesus in 1983. He was a visiting professor at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, Rome, in 1993 and has also taught in East Asia and East Africa. He was a member of the Pontifical Biblical Commission (Rome) (1990-96) and President of the Melbourne College of Divinity (2000-01). He was elected a Fellow of the Australian Academy of the Humanities in 1999. Brendan Byrne is the author of nine books, edits the theological journal *Pacifica* and regularly gives workshops on scripture to clergy and parish communities.