



The Massabielle

The Weekly Newsletter of St Bernadette's
Parish Community, Castle Hill, NSW

AUGUST 29 & 30 – TWENTY SECOND SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Issue Number 324

THE INCONVENIENCE OF CHRISTIAN COMPASSION

St Patrick's Cathedral was set on fire at about 3.45 pm on Monday February 19, 1996. It burnt to the ground. Around eight o'clock that night the police informed me that they had a suspect. The arsonist was arrested and placed in the cells under the Parramatta Police Station. I visited him two days later in the cells, and when I came out of the court house, the assembled press asked me what I had said to the man who set fire to the cathedral. I said that I told him that he was forgiven for what he had done. The strong adverse reaction from the local community surprised me. Even Catholics went on talk-back radio to say that I must have gone mad to talk of forgiveness and show compassion to someone who had done such a terrible thing.

Later I went to court and pleaded with the judge saying that the arsonist should not get a custodial sentence because it would serve no real purpose. The judge agreed jail would not be in his best interests but, because the community expected a jail sentence, he would meet the community's expectation. He got four years.

I found it difficult to cope with the uncaring and un-Christian attitude people showed to me in the days following the publicity surrounding my act of forgiveness. I discovered you could be pilloried for standing up for Christian principles, even by fellow Catholics. "Let him rot in hell" was a common slogan shouted at me from people who were genuinely offended by my practical Christianity. Remember this was some one's son they were speaking about. I never had any contact with the arsonist's mother and father. They did not come to court to support their son. I found this unbelievable.

If a member of your family committed a criminal offence would you go to court to support them?

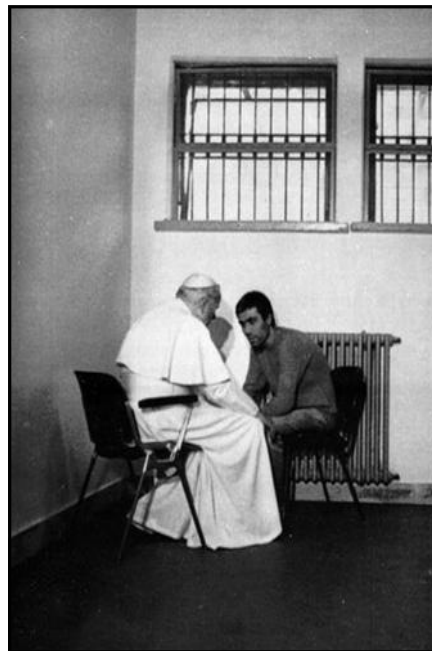
How bad would the crime have to be before you washed your hands of them?

Years ago a nun from the parish primary school arrived at the Darlinghurst presbytery door late one afternoon with a policeman in tow announcing that one of our parishioners had been arrested for shoplifting. I didn't know the parishioner and she was newly-arrived in the country, didn't speak English and her husband was "somewhere" trying to find work. Through an interpreter, she had told the police that the Catholic Church would help her.

"Would the parish pay her bale money?" the policeman wanted to know. It was \$2,000. Where would I get \$2,000? I was the junior curate, and as is always the case, the parish priest was never around when you needed him.

I went to the office safe and looked at the money from the Sunday collections, still in their envelopes, uncounted. In that inner-city parish, the envelope collection only came to \$200 a week anyway. It didn't look good. But, then, as if given a God, Spirit-filled directive, I spied the Housie float. Housie was what kept the parish going. To run it you needed a staff of generally poorly paid teen workers who supplemented their meagre wage with an innovative and practical occult compensation arrangement that allowed them, and then the parish, to make money. The Housie float was made up of the

twenty-cent, ten-cent and five-cent pieces that were needed to exchange the notes into silver to buy the Housie cards. One Housie card cost five cents. The float was \$1,000 exactly. As Sister Kerry, a Sister of Charity, went off to raid the school's Project Compassion boxes and tuckshop money, the policeman and I settled down to count the collections. It took some time, but eventually we had the bale money cobbled together from these



The Pope forgives Mehmet Ali Agca, who had tried to shoot him in May 1981. "They had declared brotherhood when the Pope visited him in prison," Adnan Agca said of the 1983 meeting. "He was Agca's brother, would not you be sad if you had lost your brother?"

various sources. With the help of the policeman, we struggled with six money bags into the police car for the trip to the police station.

Now you need to understand that this was a few years ago. Housie tickets were only five-cents each and Sister was dressed in Mother Foundress' uniform while I looked like a Legionnaires of Christ operative, in a black surge suit complete with Roman collar. Wool blends were not in then. We were sitting in the back of the police car holding heavy bags of money.

Outside Anthony Hordan's, the police parked the car to attend to some minor robbery that they witnessed. Sister Kerry and I were left in the back of the police car with our special loot. So many people were looking through the window at us that I announced to Sister I was getting out of the car. But the police must have had other criminals in the back seat of their car before us because the door handles were missing and we were unable even to wind down the windows to tell the curious passers-by that everything was okay and that were not under arrest. What one does to help parishioners!

When we returned to the presbytery, with the accused now free on bale, it was very late. It had taken the police in the station over an hour to count the money in our six money bags, even with me helping. Sister would be in trouble for missing vespers and I was having doubts about getting a Christian response from the parish priest. In checking the accuracy of this story with Sister Kerry, she reminded me that she had been locked out of the convent and was faced with the prospect of sleeping on a stretcher in the Sacred Heart Hospice for the Dying.

The parish priest was furious that I had used the Housie float. He had no qualms about using Church money to bale the woman out, but insisted that next time I go to the St Vincent de Paul to get the money because he couldn't face the Housie workers when they discovered that the float was missing.

In today's Second Reading, James says, "Pure, unspoilt religion, in the eyes of God our Father is this: coming to the help of orphans and widows when they need it..." Would James include coming to the help, when they need it, of non-English speaking, newly-arrived women accused of criminal offences, needing bale money? If you preach forgiveness and compassion I think you have to live it, despite the inconvenience.

Father John.

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CHAT & CRAFT GROUP meets every second and fourth Friday in the Marian Centre from 10.00am for conversation, craft and companionship. BYO lunch. Contact Ellen Wallace on 9634 7276 for details. All welcome.

LITURGY CORNER

Our lectionary for Year B moves back to the Gospel of Mark from the Johannine section on the Bread of Life. We return to the section from Mark where Jesus underlines the hypocrisy of those worshippers who may follow 'the letter of the law', but do not live 'the spirit of the law'. Ritual purity had immense importance for the Jewish people. The laws governing washing probably originated in practices to ensure health and hygiene but physical signs of impurity came to be seen as symbolic of a moral or spiritual imperfection. Are we ever in danger of concentrating on the externals of religious practice instead of focussing on a pure heart (*Create in me a clean heart, O God Ps51:10*)? The Summit, adapted

Today's Readings



First Reading: Deuteronomy 4:1-2,6-8. Moses demands that the people keep the commandments he gives them so that they may have life and enter the promised land.

Second Reading: James 1:17-18,21-22,27. We are called to do what the word tells us and not just listen to it.

Gospel: Mark 7:1-8,14-15,21-23. The scribes and Pharisees are denounced by Jesus for concentrating on externals rather than the truth that comes from within them.

Next week: 23rd Week in Ordinary Time - Year B

Isaiah 35:4-7, James 2:1-5, Mark 7:31-37.

HOLY HOUR every Thursday from 8.00 to 9.00pm including Rosary, prayers, hymns & scripture reading. All welcome!

Feast Day this Week

St Gregory the Great - Thursday, 3 September

DWF APPEAL: With a further \$2,500 being donated to the Diocesan Works Fund Appeal last weekend we are a mere \$2,500 short of our quota. Thank you once again for your magnificent effort. Any further donations will be gratefully accepted and any amount over \$2.00 is tax deductible.

FIRST FRIDAY MASS WITH ANOINTING OF THE SICK will take place this Friday, September 4 at 12 noon followed by a light lunch in the Marian Centre. All welcome. If you can help with transport (drivers needed) or by providing sandwiches, it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Marion Heron on 9659 9385.

EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION this Friday following 6.45am Mass until 9.15 and following 9.15 Mass until 11.45am.

MOUNT ST BENEDICT CENTRE: Making Paper from Recycled Materials on Saturday, 19 September from 9.30 to 3.30. Cost is \$40.00 (all materials supplied). Held at Mount St Benedict Centre, Pennant Hills. Facilitator is Judith Souter sgs. Registration: 0408 435782 or mtstbenedict@bigpond.com.

Our salvation is bound together

It's our mission. Play your part

Envelopes are available on the seats today to enable you to donate to the annual Catholic Mission Appeal. Join with Catholic Mission this week to reach out around the world to those most in need, and give life. This year's theme is a call to action. A call to join with Catholic Mission and proclaim God's gift of salvation as liberation from everything that oppresses humanity, to reach out and give life to each other, particularly to those who are most in need. With your generous donation today, you can play your part in salvation.

JESUS AND MEN MEETING: Parish Hall 26th September, 2009. 8.45am – 11.45am, Gary Raymond (President & Senior Chaplain of the NSW Volunteer Rescue Association) will be speaking on 'How to be Rescued by God'. Please join in a morning of learning, sharing and fellowship. Enquiries & Registration: Steve Decker on 02-9688 6226.

FATHERS' DAY MASS this Thursday September 3 at 6.45am. The children of St Bernadette's School will celebrate with their dads at this Mass. It will be followed by breakfast and open classrooms.



ST VINCENT de PAUL DOORKNOCK APPEAL The annual Western Sydney Doorknock Appeal happens again this weekend raising funds to help families in need. If one of the Vinnies Doorknock Team knocks on your door, please give generously.

YEAR OF THE PRIEST "Thank You Father" COMPETITION: You could win \$1000 for yourself and \$1000 for your nominated priest. Simply fill out the special coupon that will be appearing in The Catholic Weekly over the next 6 weeks and attach a picture of the Patron Saint of Priests, St John Vianney, appearing in The Catholic Weekly over 6 weeks starting with the September 6 issue. The Catholic Weekly is available each week for just \$2.00.

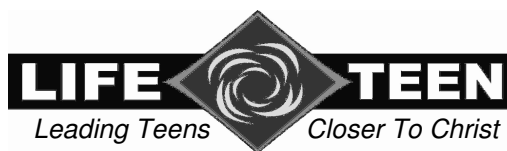
SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION 2009: Families who were unable to attend the closing ceremony can pick up their presentation folders from the parish office during office hours.

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION 2010

Any families who still wish to be part of the new sacramental preparation program but did not attend the information evenings must obtain a copy of the DVD and information handouts from the parish office asap.

Information and Enrolment packs available soon. Fr John will commence meeting with interested families from next week, Tuesday 8th and Friday 11th September, at various times between 3.00 – 6.00pm and 7.00 – 9.00pm. Please call parish office to book your appointment. Full list of available meeting times will be outlined in the information booklets.

Faith Formation Course: Our course continues this Monday 31st August at 7:30pm in the parish hall with Bishop Kevin Manning.



Leading Teens Closer To Christ

Celebrating 10 Years at St Bernadette's.

Youth & Young Adults Ministry...

LIFE Nights Combined - NOISE!!!! TONIGHT, Aug 30 after 6.00pm Mass till 8.30 in the hall for all ages. Following LIFE Night for grades 9-12 **Do You Regurgitate?**

Into LIFE will be back to normal routine from 14 September, 7.00 till 8.30pm in the hall under the church.

AMF Bowling for all ages. Monday 7 September. 6.30 till 8.00pm. 3 Salisbury Rd, Castle Hill. One game \$13 or two games \$17.50. Don't be late if you want two games. RSVP by 23 August on youth@stbernadette.org.au.

Don't forget to check out www.lifeteen.com for some great facts on faith, reflections on upcoming Sunday Mass readings and other scripture, inspiring and insightful podcasts and more! This is a fantastic website for all youth and young adults to get more out of our Catholic faith.

Thanks to everyone for biting back at hunger by doing the **40 Hour Famine!** Remember to return all famine books (used or unused) and money raised to the parish office or a LIFE night leader asap and **no later** than the 20th September.

ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL SPRING FAIR - 5 Sept

There will be entertainment, activities and lots of fun at the fair, which will cater to all members of the family. There will be carnival games, rides, face painting, silent auctions, raffles, and chocolate wheel. Bag a bargain with homemade crafts, plants, white elephant and showbags. Check out the food stalls with an array of foods, from cupcakes to gourmet multicultural cuisine and, of course, a barbeque.



Where: 1 Marist Place, Parramatta.

When: Saturday, 5 September 10-4pm.

Details: Sr Susan 8839 8412, stpatscathedral.com.au

RETREAT FOR WOMEN at Mt Schoenstatt on 12 & 13 September at 230 Fairlight Rd, Mulgoa. Phone 4773 8338. Details at www.schoenstatt.org.au.

St Bernadette's Parish Community
Parish House, 367 Old Northern Road, Castle Hill, NSW 2154

Telephone 9634 2622 Fax 9899 3511 Email: admin@stbernadette.org.au
 Web page: http://www.stbernadette.org.au

Parish Staff

Fr John Boyle, Parish Priest
 Fr Eugene Szondi, Assistant Priest
 Fr Sunny Michael, ms, Assistant Priest
 Sr Judy McLeod, rsm, Pastoral Associate
 Mrs Alice Bradshaw, Sacramental Co-ordinator
 Mr Luke Hackett, Pastoral Associate (Youth)
 Mrs Frances Gallagher, Office Manager
 Mrs Monica Rubic, Parish Secretary (Finance: Mon-Thu)
 Mr Michael Watson, Maintenance Co-ordinator
 Mr Darren Edwards, Maintenance

Mass Times for this Week

Sunday Sat 6.00pm
 Sun 7.30am, 9.00am, 10.30am &
 6pm Parish LIFE TEEN Youth Mass

Weekdays Mon 6.45am
 Tue 6.45 am,
 Wed 6.45am, 9.15am
 Thurs 6.45am,
 9.15am Communion Service
 First Fri 6.45am, 9.15am, 12 noon
 Sat 8.00am

Mass on Public Holidays at 8.00am

Reconciliation Sat 8.30am-9.00am; 4.30pm-5.30pm

Baptisms and Marriages: By appointment only. Contact the Parish House. Please note the Church law: Parents are obliged to take care that infants are baptised in the first few weeks. As soon as possible after the birth or even before it, they are to go to the pastor to request the sacrament for their child and to be prepared properly for it. [Can. 867 §1]

St Bernadette's Parish School: Mr Paul Colyer, Principal 9634 2898

Please pray for Alan Bradshaw, Ni Shu Ying, Janette Iles, Hugo Herrera and Karam Salib who have died recently and for the anniversaries of Mariam Afram (30 Aug), Frank Novacek, Jeff Lisboa, Jacob Soosaipillai, Barbara Elaine Eaton (25 Aug), Pao-Chin Yang (30 Aug), Barry Taylor (2 Sept), May Taylor (15 Sept), Lucy D'Souza and Ma. Erlinda Narciso Leyso Sr.

ROSTERS FOR NEXT WEEKEND – September 5 & 6

ACOLYTES/ SERVERS	LECTORS	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF COMMUNION
VIGIL Stephen MacMahon S6	Vanessa D'Emanuele Martin Collins Clare Budge	Jessica Fearnside, Marjorie, Dominic & Natasha Orioles, Rebecca Barrett, Harry Reyden, Jackie/Cassandra Holden, Moira Mitchell, John Geoghegan
7.30AM Philip Myers S7	Anne Parker Colleen Baines Matthew Troy	Rose & Peter Huby, Gerard & Geraldine Kearney, Carmel Moriarty, Joyan Fife
9.00AM Melvyn Myers S8	David Green Von Lulan Mike Lulan	Christine Kelly, Rodney Jilek, John Hogan, John Leach, Hilary Fong, Joan Claxton, Gi Zenere, Mike Reidy, Yvette Braganza
10.30AM Terry O'Mara S9	Bill Gleeson Elizabeth Fogolin Michael Puckeridge	Tim Abrams, Coney & Charlie Lau, Letty & Robert Yu, Ollie Nguy, Susana Lorenzo, Adel Boudib, Dawn Wickramasinghe

6.00 PARISH LIFE TEEN YOUTH MASS MINISTRY ROSTER - September 6

Adult Servers Marc Clasquin Gillian Pak	Extraordinary Ministers of Communion Adam Chioatto Mitchell Waters Belinda Lee Darren Edwards Ian Pomeroy	Musos Bass Erich Gracias Flor Piano Alice Bradshaw Guitar Michael Smith Daniel Ang Horns/Strings/ Winds Ashley Adams Matthew Ashton
Lectors Stef Musgrave Jen Austin Raquel Lobo	Projectionist Larissa O'Callaghan	Singers Alice Bradshaw Aarti D'Cruz Cassie Knezevic Darian Jessup- Lonsdale Sara Ang Julia Calixto Tim Bywater
Altar Servers S10	Ushers Alfonso Aguilera	Welcomers Tony Muscat Tina Muscat
Gift Preparation Michael Piggott		

CHILDREN'S LITURGY Fathers' Day No Children's Liturgy FLOWER ROSTER Olivia Cheng	CHURCH HOUSEKEEPING Jeannette Leach, Cathy Teh, Joanne Leach, Alicia Maunsell COUNTING (1st Collection) Bert Hofstaetter Helga Hofstaetter	COUNTING (2nd Collection) Adrian Franks, David Tye, Robert Natoli, Cosimo Miccoli, Vincent Traynor BOOKSHOP Maureen Gain / Carmel Moriarty / Christine Jenneke / Maria Barros / Bernadette Boulos
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