

Dear Parishioners,

On Wednesday evening, I went for a long walk from Paddington to the city. I could see the transformation that was taking place. Retail stores and restaurants are preparing to open after a long hibernation. Glass windows and doors are cleaned, lights are on, and a few staff are re-organising products and displays in some stores. It is spring cleaning time.

Sydneysiders are looking forward to easing of restrictions, bored from limited activities in the last four months. Will we overindulge? After months of stay-at-home order, will the crowd embark on an impulsive shopping spree and excessive partying? Many are looking forward to visiting family and friends. We will have to wait and see. There is also rising anxiety levels in the community about safety and health. People are nervous and anxious, which is understandable after months of stay at home order and watching media reports on rising cases and outbreaks.

We would experience the consequences of the pandemic and lockdowns in the coming months and years. Society is changing and everyday life will be different, acceleration of technology, government policies, education and training, health care, employment, customer service and even life in the Church. Children and teenagers, who are most impacted will form a world view different to ours because of their pandemic experience.

I am looking forward to welcoming everyone to mass and our parish churches when 80% vaccination is reached. If you are anxious about attending mass or going to church, please do not hesitate to contact me. At the parish level I hope we will engage in good conversations with faith and wisdom. Mindful of how belief systems of politicians, policymakers, and others who have responsibilities in society for formation and education, will have a long-lasting impact upon the structure and function of societies beyond the pandemic.

*Fr Anthoni Selvaraj OFM*

## **TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B**

**10 October 2021**

*If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But with you is found forgiveness, O God of Israel.*

*Opening prayer*      May your grace, O Lord, we pray, at all times go before us and follow after and make us always determined to carry out good works. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.

*A reading from the book of Wisdom (7:7-11)*

I prayed, and understanding was given me; I entreated, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me. I esteemed her more than sceptres and thrones; compared with her, I held riches as nothing. I reckoned no priceless stone to be her peer, for compared with her, all gold is a pinch of sand, and beside her silver ranks as mud. I loved her more than health or beauty, preferred her to the light, since her radiance never sleeps. In her company all good things came to me, at her hands riches not to be numbered.

The word of the Lord.      **Thanks be to God.**

*Responsorial Psalm*

R. Fill us with your love, O Lord, and we will sing for joy!

Make us know the shortness of our life  
that we may gain wisdom of heart.  
Lord, relent! Is your anger forever?  
Show pity to your servants. (R.)

In the morning, fill us with your love;  
we shall exult and rejoice all our days.  
Give us joy to balance our affliction  
for the years when we knew misfortune. (R.)

Show forth your work to your servants;  
let your glory shine on their children.  
Let the favour of the Lord be upon us:  
give success to the work of our hands. (R.)

*Second Reading*

A reading from the letter to the Hebrews (4:12-13)

The word of God is something alive and active; it cuts like any double-edged sword but more finely: it can slip through the place where the soul is divided from the spirit, or joints from the marrow; it can judge the secret emotions and thoughts. No created thing can hide from him; everything is uncovered and open to the eyes of the one to whom we must give account of ourselves.

The word of the Lord.      **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation*

Alleluia, alleluia!

Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs!  
Alleluia!

### ***Gospel***

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark (10:17-30)*

Jesus was setting out on a journey when a man ran up, knelt before him and put this question to him, 'Good master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. You know the commandments: You must not kill; You must not commit adultery; You must not steal; You must not bring false witness; You must not defraud; Honour your father and mother.' And he said to him, 'Master, I have kept all these from my earliest days.' Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and he said, 'There is one thing you lack. Go and sell everything you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.' But his face fell at these words and he went away sad, for he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked round and said to his disciples, 'How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!' The disciples were astounded by these words, but Jesus insisted, 'My children,' he said to them, 'how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.' They were more astonished than ever. 'In that case' they said to one another, 'who can be saved?' Jesus gazed at them. 'For men' he said, 'it is impossible, but not for God: because everything is possible for God.' Peter took this up. 'What about us?' he asked him. 'We have left everything and followed you.' Jesus said, 'I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, brothers, sisters, father, children or land for my sake and for the sake of the gospel who will not be repaid a hundred times over, houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and land – not without persecutions – now in this present time and, in the world to come, eternal life.'

The Gospel of the Lord.     **Praise to you, Lord Jesus**

### ***Reflection by Fr Anthoni ofm***

When someone looks with a loving gaze and makes a request it is hard to say "No". I have seen gazes between a child and a parent seeking permission, between a couple looking for an agreement, consensus between friends, and elderly parents with their children. We have all experienced or witnessed those moments. In today's gospel passage, we encounter such a moment. "Jesus looked steadily at him and loved him, and said...then come, follow me".

Rules do not make us good, but they do help us to live a righteous life. The man in the Gospel presumes that there is something else he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus, the good teacher, shifts the man's focus from what he must do to the

goodness and generosity of God. As a good Jew the man knows what he *must not do* to his neighbour, as the “social” commandments listed in the Torah. The man protests, as he has kept them since his youth. He is looking for something more, suggests there is a gap to be filled. The invitation of Jesus to a way of life based on an intimate relationship with Him involves crossing a threshold, a total transformation of life.

Sadly, the man goes away, unable to let go of the present direction of his life. Jesus proposes a way of life centred totally on Him rather than on the Torah. The man makes the mistake of taking his eyes off Jesus and the relationship that is being offered. He was still focused on his wealth and in his own capacity of not being able to let go.

The Christian life is a way of life, made up by discernment and prayer, in partnership with God. Everything is possible for God! Once we embrace this way of life, wisdom serves as a tool for decision making and orders our days. It is not measurable like goals and resolutions but the person we become, which endures to eternal life. As the book of Wisdom reminds us in the first reading. “I loved her more than health or beauty, preferred her to the light, since her radiance never sleeps. In her company all good things came to me, at her hands riches not to be numbered.”

### *Profession of faith followed by Prayers of the faithful*

Presider: Let us pray for the wisdom to appreciate God’s gifts with gratitude and use them for the good of all. Our response is: **God of Wisdom, fill us with your love.**

Reader: That pastors, preachers and teachers may proclaim the “living and effective” Word of God with understanding, wisdom and compassion. Lord hear us.

Reader: That nations and governments of the world may work together to provide all people with a just share of the earth’s harvest. Lord hear us.

Reader: That business and financial institutions may conduct their affairs with integrity and respect for the dignity of every person. Lord hear us.

Reader: That we may embrace the gospel spirit of poverty, for a simpler life for the sake of the poor, the homeless, and the hungry. Lord hear us.

Reader: That Governments and communities will support those affected physically, mentally or economically by the pandemic. Lord hear us.

Reader: That the delegates appointed to the Plenary Council will listen humbly and with open hearts to the Holy Spirit and the voice of Australian parishes. Lord hear us.

Presider: O God, give us wisdom so that we may follow Jesus faithfully, seeking your mercy and justice for all people. Through Christ our Lord. **All: Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

We entreat your majesty most humbly, O Lord, that, as you feed us with the nourishment which comes from the most holy Body and Blood of your Son, so you may make us sharers of his divine nature. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen

### **Notices**

- The Plenary Council website <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>
- Mass at St Francis of Assisi, Paddington, will be live-streamed on Sunday at 10 am. You can watch without signing in, click **Not Now** button, [www.facebook.com/StFrancisStJoseph](http://www.facebook.com/StFrancisStJoseph)
- If you are **fully vaccinated** and wish to join Fr Anthony or Fr Joseph for mass or prayer, please contact the parish office. No public masses until the 80% vaccination threshold is reached.
- One of the results of the pandemic is Cashless transactions. After consultation and discussion with parish finance committees, I plan to introduce Tap and Go as an option. Any thoughts or reactions about offering for parish and friars?
- The anti-euthanasia coalition, HOPE has developed an online tool that will allow you to send an email directly to your state MP and to all members of the NSW Upper House. The tool is available: [https://www.no euthanasia.org.au/petition\\_2108\\_ocp\\_nsw](https://www.no euthanasia.org.au/petition_2108_ocp_nsw)
- Archbishop's Afghan Refugee Appeal - to support Afghan families and individuals fleeing their homeland in the wake of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. Donations can be made online: <https://www.ourfaithourworks.org/ara/>
- CAPSA is campaigning for more support for those fleeing violence and persecution in Afghanistan. Consider adding your name in the letter to Federal MP, email Fr Anthony your first name, surname, suburb and electorate. Thank you to those who forwarded your names. Please we need more names...