

## SIXTH SUNDAY EASTER (A)

25<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2014

### ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH STANTHORPE

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### EVANGELII GAUDIUM - THE GOSPEL OF JOY

The Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in today's world by Pope Francis was published on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2013 on the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe. It is a document that is easily read and is being widely studied and will bring inspiration and guidance for the Church for many years to come.

These first words in the introduction to the document are certainly worth reading carefully and are spiritually helpful for us all. This is a document that will not gather dust on a bookshelf, but will inspire us and guide us for many years to come.

1. THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew. In this Exhortation I wish to encourage the Christian faithful to embark upon a new chapter of evangelisation marked by this joy, while pointing out new paths for the Church's journey in years to come.

#### A JOY EVER NEW, A JOY WHICH IS SHARED

2. The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor. God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of His love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades. This is a very real danger for believers too. Many fall prey to it, and end up resentful, angry and listless. That is no way to live a dignified and fulfilled life; it is not God's will for us, nor is it the life in the Spirit which has its source in the heart of the risen Christ.
3. *I invite all Christians, everywhere, at this very moment, to a renewed personal encounter with Jesus Christ, or at least an openness to letting Him encounter them; I ask all of you to do this unflinching each day. No one should think that this invitation is not meant for him or her, since "no one is excluded from the joy brought by the Lord".* The Lord does not disappoint those who take this risk: *whenever we take a step towards Jesus, we come to realise that He is already there, waiting for us with open arms. Now is the time to say to Jesus: "Lord, I have let myself be deceived; in a thousand ways I have shunned Your love, yet here I am once more, to renew my covenant with You. I need You. Save me once again, Lord, take me once more into Your redeeming embrace".* How good it feels to come back to Him whenever we are lost! Let me say this once more: God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking His

mercy. Christ, who told us to forgive one another "seventy-seven times" (Mt. 18:22) has given us His example: He has forgiven us seventy times seven. Time and time again He bears us on His shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love. With a tenderness which never disappoints, but is always capable of restoring our joy, He makes it possible for us to lift up our heads and to start anew. Let us not flee from the resurrection of Jesus, let us never give up, come what will. May nothing inspire more than His life, which impels us onwards!

**49<sup>TH</sup> WORLD COMMUNICATIONS DAY THIS SUNDAY.** Pope Francis said: *In the area of communications we need a Church capable of bringing warmth and stirring hearts".*

**Stirring Hearts** is an online resource for parishioners, schools, youth groups, parish councils to use. You can find twelve stories (5 – 6 minutes YouTube Videos) on the website [www.stirringhearts.org.au](http://www.stirringhearts.org.au) The **theme** of this World Communications Day is ***Stirring Hearts – Communication At The Service Of An Authentic Culture Of Encounter.***

#### PREPARING FOR CONFIRMATION

**This weekend** the children preparing for their Confirmation will come forward and together pray a lovely prayer to the Holy Spirit and take this prayer home and pray it each day. In the **instruction session this week** they will learn about the laying of hands and the anointing with Chrism. **Let us keep in our prayers** the children to be Confirmed on Friday night 13<sup>th</sup> June at 6.30PM by Bishop McGuckin.

**BAPTISMS:** We welcome into the Church five infants being Baptised during the 8.30AM Mass this weekend – ***Olivia Grace Turner***, first child and daughter of Cameron and Debbie (nee Patti); ***Addyson Kate Gasparin***, first child and daughter of David and Deborah (nee Cosmo); ***Allegra Mia Cannavo***, fourth child and daughter of Mario and Liza (nee Weldon); ***Havana Catherine Torrisi***, first child and daughter of Steven and Amy (nee Sulzberger), ***Eloise Grace Verri***, first child and daughter of Paul and Paulette (nee Denton).

We share the joy of these parents and families on the day of the Baptism of their children and with them thank God for the gift He has given them in their children. *"By God's gift through water and the Holy Spirit we are reborn to everlasting life. May He continue to pour out His blessings on these children."* (Rite of Baptism)

**DECEASED:** **Patricia Shanahan** (Logan), **Fr. Miah McSweeney** (Cairns - Last Seminary Classmate of Fr. Lino's), **Olga Quirk** (Wife of Jim, Father & Father-In-Law of Robert & Susan, Janette & Doug, Wayne, Suzie & Bruno Speranza), **Frank Gleeson** (Sippy Downs – formerly of Stanthorpe and Toowoomba: Husband of Betty, Father & Father-In-Law of Sharyn & Mario, Geoff & Gail, Robyn & Napoleon, David & Rona, Shirlee & Allan & Annette), **Kenneth Slade Pearson**, **Maria Caterina De Marco**, **Franco Viterale**, **Maria Wurst**, **Olga Marini**, **Alan Neil**

**TO REMEMBER:** Giuseppa Caltabiano (1<sup>st</sup> Anniv. 24/05/14), Fr. Francis Hall

**FOR THE SICK:** **Stella Bayley** (Melbourne - Mother of Debra Bayley), **Alyssa Coxen**, Ev Thompson, George Brac, Debra Micallef, Margaret Ballinger, Lorraine McQualter, Dennis Manahan, Cathy Sullivan, Rita Girgenti, Ron Shambrook, Ev Hayes, Rosemary Paget, Marie Keen, Mavis Plant, Bridey Kelly, Enid McCarthy

**ALTAR SERVER ROSTERS** available in the Foyer for collection.



**VINNIES WINTER APPEAL** is now being conducted. *Envelopes are now available in the foyer.* **Donations can also be made at the local Vinnie's premises at 21 Creek Street.** There are posters in the Church advertising the appeal. Thank you for your support.

**THIS WEEK:**

**MASSES:** MON: 7AM; TUES: 7AM; WED: 11.45AM; THURS: 9.15AM;  
FRI: 5.30PM; SAT: 7AM; **SAT VIGIL:** 6.30PM; **SUN:** 8.30AM

**FEAST DAYS:** MON: *ST. PHILIP NERI*; SAT: *VISITATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY*

**NEXT SUNDAY:**

**CHILDREN'S LITURGY:** On the following Sundays at the 8.30AM Mass, children (usually Primary School Age children) are invited to join with other children at Children's Liturgy held in the Parish Centre adjacent to the Church to reflect on the Gospel reading for the day and enjoy some activities appropriate for their age. The dates for the Children's Liturgy will be **NEXT SUNDAY 1<sup>ST</sup> JUNE** and **Sundays 20<sup>th</sup> July, 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 7<sup>th</sup> September, 12<sup>th</sup> October.**

**COMING UP:**

**ECUMENICAL SERVICE:** The annual **Pentecost Ecumenical Prayer Service** will be held this year at the **Uniting Church, High Street 7PM** on **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> June.**

**DIAMOND JUBILEE CELEBRATION FOR FR. LINO**

**Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2014** will be the **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Fr. Lino** who was ordained in St. Mary's Church, Warwick on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1954 by Bishop William Brennan.

To celebrate this special milestone in Fr. Lino's life, there will be a **10AM Mass** on **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> June** in **St. Joseph's Church**, followed by a **luncheon** in the **Bathersby Centre** (the School Gymnasium). ***Please note there will be no 8.30AM Mass that Sunday.***

Tickets for the luncheon are being presold \$20 per head (children under 12 years free). **For catering purposes, tickets for the luncheon need to be purchased and paid for by Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> June.** Tickets can be purchased at Sunday Masses or at the Parish Office or through St. Joseph's School.

**"BECOME REVOLUTIONARIES OF TENDERNESS, HOLINESS  
AND JOY" (POPE FRANCIS)**

In an address by Fr. Thomas Rosica, a Vatican spokesman and English language assistant to the Holy See Press Office, he reflects on the impact of Pope Francis in the Church and the world.

I am certain that every single person in this assembly today has been touched in some way by this great man. For the first time in many years, ordinary people in the street are taking a new and more appreciative look at the pope and the Church. He has introduced to us a new way of speaking as he revolutionizes the ancient papacy and brings it into the modern world. Francis' words ring out across the face of the earth with these sayings and so many more:

*"How I would like a church that is poor and for the poor!"*

*"The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the Blood of Christ: all of us, not just Catholics. Everyone! Even the atheists. Everyone!"*

*"We have fallen into a "globalization of indifference."*

*"I want things messy and stirred up in the church. I want the church to take to the streets!"*

*"I see the Church as a field hospital after battle."*

*"I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."*

*"God never tires of forgiving us."*

*"I have a dogmatic certainty: God is in every person's life."*

*"An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral."*

*"Mercy is the greatest of all virtues."*

*"The Church is not a tollhouse."*

*"We need to promote a culture of encounter."*

*"How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points?"*

What lessons is Francis teaching us? He has not come to overturn doctrine and age-old beliefs that are the bedrock of our Catholic Christian faith! He wants to make those teachings understandable and part of our lives. Pope Francis opens doors to a faith that offers attractive, compelling answers to questions deep in the hearts of all men and women. There is something incredibly appealing here not only to Catholics, but to Christians... in fact to all men and women of good will. His words are addressed to an ecumenical and interfaith audience. Is it any wonder, then why the world is listening to him? Knowing we're made for something more, knowing we have responsibilities toward one another and the freedoms we enjoy, makes us leaders in the renewal of our lives, families, communities, institutions, country, and culture.

Francis rejects the reduction of Catholicism to hot-topic moral issues. He does not want to reduce the church to discussions of abortion, gay marriage, contraception and homosexuality. In his comments, he makes a distinction between dogmatic and moral teachings, reminding us that they do not hold the same weight. With Pope Francis, the church must re-enter public discourse with a full-throated defence of the common good that rises above bitter partisan divisions.

Francis stands for something much greater than division, rancor, labeling and meanness of spirit that have dominated politics and infected the Church. He calls for a church 'of and for the poor' that is not turned in on itself, but 'in the streets.' The culture of prosperity deadens us; we are thrilled if the market offers us something new to purchase; and in the meantime all those lives stunted for lack of opportunity seem a mere spectacle; they fail to move us." Francis speaks with authority and integrity because he has lived the church's social teaching in his own ministry. He walks his talk and walks the walk.