

# STS PETER & PAUL'S CATHOLIC PARISH SOUTH MELBOURNE

Under the Pastoral care of the Capuchin Friars

25th August, 2019



## 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time

There is a question that has always nagged believers: Will there be many or few people saved? During certain periods this problem became so acute as to cause some people terrible anxiety. This Sunday's Gospel informs us that Jesus himself was once asked this question. "Jesus passed through towns and villages, teaching as he went and making his way to Jerusalem. Someone asked him, 'Lord, will only a few people be saved?'"

The question, as we see, focuses on the number — How many will be saved? Will it be many or few? In answering the question, Jesus shifts the focus from "how many" to "how" to be saved, that is, by entering "through the narrow gate."

We see this same attitude in regard to Jesus' second coming. The disciples ask "when" the return of the Son of Man will happen and Jesus answers indicating "how" we should prepare ourselves for that return, and what to do during the time of waiting (cf. Matthew 24:3-4).

Jesus' way of responding to these questions is not strange or discourteous. He is just acting in the way of one who wants to teach his disciples how to move from a life of curiosity to one of true wisdom; from the allure of idle questions to the real problems we need to grapple with in life.

From this we already see the absurdity of those who, like the Jehovah Witnesses, believe they know the precise number of the saved: 144,000. This number, which recurs in the Book of Revelation has a purely symbolic value (the square of 12 — the number of the tribes of Israel — multiplied by 1,000) and is explained by the expression that immediately follows: "A great multitude that no man could number" (Revelation 7:4, 9).

Above all, if 144,000 is really the number, then we can both close up shop. Above the gate to heaven there must be a sign like the ones parking lots put up: "Full."

If, therefore, Jesus is not so much interested in revealing to us the number of the saved as he is in telling us how to be saved, we can understand what he is trying to tell us here. In substance, there are two things: one negative and the other positive.

It is useless, or rather it is not enough, to belong to a certain ethnic group, race, tradition, or institution, not even the chosen people from whom the Saviour himself comes. What puts us on the road to salvation is not a title of ownership ("We ate and drank in your presence..."), but a personal decision, followed by a consistent way of life. This is even more clear in Matthew's text which contrasts two ways and two gates, one narrow and the other wide (cf. Matthew 7:13-14).

Why are these ways respectively called "narrow" and "wide"? Is it perhaps that the way of evil is always easy and pleasant to follow and the way of goodness always hard and tiresome?

Here we must be careful not to cede to the usual temptation of believing that here below everything goes magnificently well for the wicked and everything goes terribly for the good.

The way of the wicked is wide, but only at the beginning. As one goes down this way it gradually becomes narrow and bitter. In any case, it becomes very narrow at the end because it finishes in a blind alley.

The joy that is experienced in it has the characteristic of diminishing more and more as one tastes it, and it finally causes nausea and sadness. We see this in certain forms of intoxication experienced in drugs, alcohol and sex. A larger dose or stronger stimulation is needed each time to produce pleasure of the same intensity.

Finally the organism no longer responds and it begins to break down, even physically.

The way of the just is instead narrow at the beginning, when one starts off on it, but it then becomes a spacious boulevard because hope, joy and peace of heart are found in it.

Fr Raniero Cantalamessa

**COMING  
UP**

**Alpha**  
Fridays in the  
hall, 7pm

**Ordination**  
Sat 7th Sept,  
10am

**Winter  
Warmer**  
Wed 18th  
Sept, 7pm

**Around the  
World  
Concert**  
Sun 15th Sept,  
2:30pm

### MASS TIMES

Sunday 10am, Saturday 6pm (Vigil)  
Mon - Thurs: 8am, Friday: 10am, Saturday: 10am  
Confession Times: Sat 10:30am, 5:30pm

### PARISH PRIEST:

Fr Dean Mathieson OFM Cap

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Secretary Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:30am - 3pm



## FATHER'S DAY RAFFLE

The craft group has put together 4 great prizes for the Father's day raffle.

Tickets are 3 for \$5 and will be on sale after Mass from August, and will be drawn after the 10am Mass on Father's Day, Sunday 1st September.

## WINTER WARMER

**Wed 18th Sept, 7pm at Emerald Hotel**

Speaker Bernie Brophy - "The Orange Parades". Bernie has had a long involvement in the politics of Northern Ireland and a few years ago he was a member of an International Observer Group observing the Orange Parades in Belfast. Sign up sheet will be available next weekend or you can phone Carol on 9699 2892 to make a booking.

## AROUND THE WORLD CONCERT

Parishioner and pianist Ann Nguyen, along with fellow members of the University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, will present a concert on Sunday 15th September at 2.30pm in the church. Tickets available after the Sunday 10am Mass. You can also book on <https://trybooking.com/BEPMP>. Early Bird \$20 till August 30th, from September 1st \$25.00. Proceeds will go towards church maintenance.

## ALPHA

Season has started and will be in the parish hall every Friday evening, 7pm.

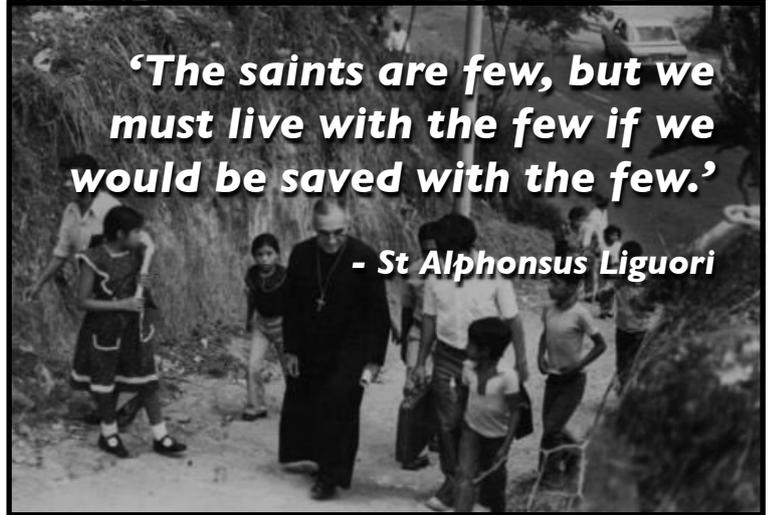
Alpha is for anyone who's curious and wants to learn more about the faith in a friendly environment. It is a great opportunity to invite people who don't normally come to Mass.

See parish website for details:  
[stspeterandpauls.com/alpha](http://stspeterandpauls.com/alpha)



***'The saints are few, but we must live with the few if we would be saved with the few.'***

***- St Alphonsus Liguori***



## VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH CHURCH FLOWERS

Please speak to Fr Dean or Doris if you would like to help

## Parishioner Profile: Tim Tindale

Tim Tindale has been at Peter and Pauls for a year but has taken the opportunity to get actively involved with the parish life.



*How did you come to this parish?*

"We're from Sydney, but my wife got work down here about a year ago. Peter and Pauls is the nearest church to our apartment in St Kilda Road."

*We are a melting pot of cultures here. In that sense, what is your background?*

"I'm a 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Australian with an anglo-celtic mix of Irish, Scottish, Welsh and English cultures."

*What keeps you busy?*

"I have a bit of time on my hands down here, and I try to use it."

Tim admits to a certain skill at handywork and you may have seen him exercising that talent in various ways around the parish and friary.

"... helped put up shade cloth in the back yard, did a bit of painting ..."

"... they roped me into the kitchen and I ended up washing up. It's great to be involved. They are very nice people and I feel like I am part of it."

For now, Tim is regularly spending one day a week on the kitchen, one day working outside on different things.

*Anything to say to your fellow parishioners?*

"I encourage people to think of their long term goals, but then just take on a short-term project that is part of the longer goal."

"At a certain point in time you have to either take your faith seriously and do something about it, or be a hypocrite. It's not enough to just turn up at mass every Sunday."

"For me, this is a time when I am able to do the Spiritual Exercises with the Jesuits. It's about focusing on the life of Christ a bit, trying to make a bigger effort to make changes in my life."

## FRIDAY MORNINGS

New Mass time on Fridays, followed by a time of Adoration and then morning tea in the hall.  
Mass 10am | Adoration 10:30am | Morning Tea 11am

## ORDINATION TO PRIESTHOOD

Archbishop Peter Comensoli will ordain 4 new priests to the Melbourne Archdiocese on Saturday 7th September, 10am, at St Patrick's Cathedral.  
Everyone is invited.

## UNPLANNED MOVIE SCREENING

Private screening of *Unplanned*, a new release Christian movie about being heroically pro-life on Saturday 31st Aug at 2pm at Hoyts, Highpoint. Tickets are \$22 and can be purchased at: [www.trybooking.com/BESPZ](http://www.trybooking.com/BESPZ)  
50% of proceeds will go to the Caroline Chisholm Society, who support pregnant women in crisis.

## CATECHISM CORNER

*Faith - the beginning of eternal life (n. 165)*

It is then we must turn to the witnesses of faith: to Abraham, who "in hope... believed against hope"; to the Virgin Mary, who, in "her pilgrimage of faith", walked into the "night of faith" in sharing the darkness of her son's suffering and death; and to so many others: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith."

## GOSPEL REFLECTION

### Gateway to Life

Jesus doesn't answer the question put to Him in this Sunday's Gospel. It profits us nothing to speculate on how many will be saved. What we need to know is what He tells us today—how to enter into salvation and how urgent it is to strive now, before the Master closes the door.

Jesus is "the narrow gate," the only way of salvation, the path by which all must travel to enter the kingdom of the Father (see John 14:6).

In Jesus, God has come—as He promises in this week's First Reading—to gather nations of every language, to reveal to them His glory.

Eating and drinking with them, teaching in their streets, Jesus in the Gospel is slowly making His way to Jerusalem. There, Isaiah's vision will be fulfilled: On the holy mountain He will be lifted up (see John 3:14), and He will draw to Himself brethren from among all the nations to worship in the heavenly Jerusalem, to glorify Him for His kindness, as we sing in today's Psalm.

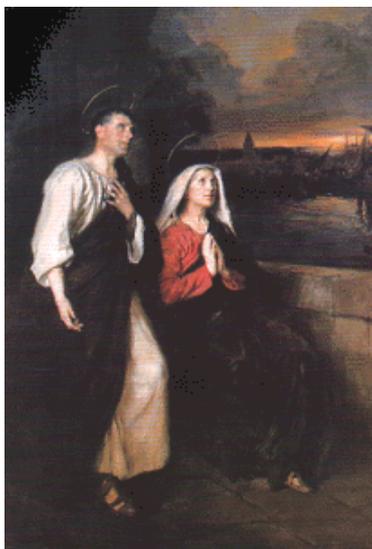
In God's plan, the kingdom was proclaimed first to the Israelites and last to the Gentiles (see Romans 1:16; Acts 3:25–26), who in the Church have come from the earth's four corners to make up the new people of God (see Isaiah 43:5–6; Psalm 107:2–3).

Many, however, will lose their place at the heavenly table, Jesus warns. Refusing to accept His narrow way they will weaken, rendering themselves unknown to the Father (see Isaiah 63:15–16).

We don't want to be numbered among those of drooping hands and weak knees (see Isaiah 35:3). So, we must strive for that narrow gate, a way of hardship and suffering—the way of the beloved Son.

As this week's Epistle reminds us, by our trials we know we are truly God's sons and daughters. We are being disciplined by our afflictions, strengthened to walk that straight and narrow path—that we may enter the gate and take our place at the banquet of the righteous.

Scott Hahn



## FEASTS OF THE WEEK

### St Monica and St Augustine - 27th and 28th August

St Augustine is one of the most important convert, bishop, and doctor of the Church. St Monica was his beloved mother. Augustine was a brilliant and gifted man but rejected the faith from an early age, opting instead to follow the Manichean religion and lived an immoral and selfish life. She prayed, fasted, and cried for many years for her son and always stayed close to him, following him to Rome and Milan. In Milan, she met St Ambrose, the great bishop, who became her spiritual director. He promised her, 'surely the son of so many tears will not perish'. Not too long after Augustine's conversion, Monica died. The day before her death, she and her son had a beautiful conversation about the joys of heaven. Monica's feast occurs the day before the feast of her son. Her tears, prayers, and sacrifices over many years helped bring about his conversion. It is only fitting that their feast days are celebrated so closely together.

