



The Parish of St Matthew's North Fawkner
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25th SUNDAY O/T – September 20, 2020 YrA

We are invited to become great in the sight of God by doing God's will, as Jesus did, surrendering our lives to Him by serving others.

The paradox of the first becoming the last: Here, Jesus stands conventional wisdom on its head: the truly great person is a *diakonos* – a deacon – a servant – a person who spends his/her day taking care of other people! What does it mean when Jesus states that those who want to be the first must be the last? Probably, Jesus is speaking of his life and death in this spirit of his being a servant and considered the last, the loser. Jesus wants his apostles to substitute their ambition to rule thus becoming the first, with the ambition to serve, thus becoming the last. We are all supposed to be serving, whatever our position or role in the society or family or in the Church may be because true greatness lies in being the servant or slave of all.

We must become great through humble, self-giving service.

- Greatness, in Jesus' view, is found in our willingness to accept, welcome and serve those who are considered unacceptable by reason of class, colour, religion, wealth or culture. We must welcome people the way a child welcomes them before he is taught discrimination. If we are to be truly great, we must be ready to accept four challenges:
 - To put ourselves last,
 - To be the servant of all.
 - To receive the most insignificant human beings with love, and
 - To expect nothing in return.

During the holy Mass let us pray for the true spirit of service, for an attitude of love for those around us. May the Holy Spirit help us to become truly great through humble, selfless service. St. Teresa of Calcutta (Mother Teresa) puts it like this: *"Be the living expression of God's kindness through humble service; kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile and kindness in your warm greeting."* Here is the motto of the Missionaries of Charity, the order of nuns founded by Mother Teresa:

**The fruit of Silence is Prayer.
 The fruit of Prayer is Faith.
 The fruit of Faith is Love.
 The fruit of Love is Service.
 And the fruit of Service is Peace.**

Recently Deceased: Maria Di Cello, Attasio Kalafatis, Gilda Papile, Ernesto Asuncion, Michele Malarbi.

Anniversaries: Nicola & Rosaria Scarmozzino, Gregorio & Filomena Torchia
 The sick in our parish: Teresa & Con Lamonaca, Leanne Branchflower.

Prayers in time of a pandemic - The Catholic Weekly

The early Christians prayed in the church of the home. Once more, in troubled times when public worship has to be restricted, we are called to pray in "the domestic church", always aware of the promise of Jesus, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am among them." (Matthew 18:20).

In this challenging time: Lord Jesus Christ, our true physician and healer, be merciful to us and bring us your aid in these troubled times. Heal all our sickness and every affliction of your people. Drive out our infirmities of soul and body; free us from all disease and especially from this pestilence. We place in your gentle Heart the elderly, the frail, people with disability, children, young people and families, our indigenous peoples, those who are poor, lonely and isolated. As you walk with us, free them from fear, and give them patience and hope together with our loving care. In your mercy deal also with the causes of our pitiful condition, that in curing our lack of faith and spiritual weakness, you may also remedy our bodily ills. We place our trust in you, the risen Lord, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

For those who care for the sick

Father of mercies, we thank you for all who care for the sick.
 When they diagnose, give them patience.
 When they protect the vulnerable, give them your protection.
 When they work to heal, give them strength.
 When they comfort, give them consolation.
 When they are tired, give them rest.
 When they are discouraged, bring them your hope.
 May we welcome and respect them as we support one another in this time of trial.

For those seeking a cure for the virus

Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten the minds of women and men of medical science who are working to find a solution to this viral infection. Guide their research and help them discover what you provide in creation, sure ways of control, protection, inoculation and healing. Strengthen them in their tiring work and enrich in them the virtue of hope. Amen.

For those who govern and represent us

Eternal Wisdom, guide our leaders called to serve us in our Nation. May they respond to the challenges of this affliction with prudence and sound judgement. With foresight, may their planning alleviate the economic burdens, compensate for losses, protect employment and ensure ample food for the poor and isolated. **Amen.**

For humility Merciful Lord, we stand before you in our human weakness. We confess that we have been caught up in the pride and presumption that drives our worldly society. Free us from the arrogance that afflicts our age, for now we stand confounded by conditions beyond our control or understanding. Give us humble and honest hearts to discern the greater mystery of your providence in creation. May we accept your justice and trust your redeeming mercy. **Amen**