

And the world came together as the people stayed apart. ¹

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



INTENTIONS

We pray for the medical staff and others who have died due to the COVID-19 virus.

We pray for our deceased relatives and friends.

We pray for the heroes, saints and angels who bring care and comfort to others.

For what else shall we pray...

Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

OPENING PRAYER

We pray that, according to the riches of God's glory, we be strengthened in our inner being with power through the Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in our hearts through faith that is grounded in love. Together with the angels and saints, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(Adapted from Ephesians 3:14-21).

WE LISTEN

Speak Lord, your servant is listening...

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 5:1-10

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

WE REFLECT

The Beatitudes are sometimes referred to in parallel with the Ten Commandments. However, the Beatitudes are not 'rules' or 'instructions' for life as the Commandments are. They are more in line with a strategy that today we would call 'positive reinforcement'. They celebrate those who respond to God's call through particular attitudes towards life and towards others. Jesus presents them to the disciples and the crowd as images to inspire imitation. They're not hard and fast rules for life, but attitudes for life; the Be-Attitudes, so to speak. Those who live with these attitudes in this life are to be celebrated – 'Happy are you' – for they will be saints. They will be welcomed into communion with God in heaven.

- Greg Sunter, *Liturgy Help* - 1/11/2020

WE RESPOND

In this extraordinary year we have seen over and over that caring is not just the work of "superheroes, canonised saints and angels in heaven"! We've come to know more than ever that our nurses, childcare workers, doctors, paramedics, teachers, social workers and parents are our everyday heroes, saints and angels. These are the people who do the care work of sustaining human wellbeing: the washing, cleaning, feeding, comforting and supporting of human lives in a myriad of ways.²

During this pandemic year, who are the 'heroes, saints and angels' for you?

Spend a silent moment prayerfully thanking them.

CLOSING PRAYER

O Great Love, thank you for living and loving in us and through us. May all that we do flow from our deep connection with you and all beings. Help us become a community that vulnerably shares each other's burdens and the weight of glory. Listen to our hearts' longings for the healing of our world. Knowing you are hearing us better than we are speaking, we offer these prayers in all the holy names of God. Amen.³

Saint Marcellin Champagnat
Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop
Mary Our Good Mother
And let us always remember

Pray for Us
Pray for Us
Pray for Us
To Pray for One Another

Our world and its peoples always need hope. Living as sisters and brothers offers a hopeful and caring means by which our differences enrich our communion.

- *Water From the Rock #120*

¹ Jennifer Wagner, 2020

² Adapted from, *The Invisible Heart*, Madeleine Bunting, *The Tablet*, 24 October 2020 pp 4,5

³ *Prayer for Our Community*, Richard Rohr ofm, *Daily Meditations*, Center for Action and Contemplation. Meditations@cac.org