

Catholic Parish of Lindfield-Killara Diocese of Broken Bay

Holy Family Parish Church, Lindfield
Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish Church, Killara

MASS TIMES:	LINDFIELD:	KILLARA:
	Saturday 6:00pm Sunday: 8:15am 10:15am 12:00 (Chinese Community Mass) 6:00pm (for both our communities) (5:30pm on 2 nd Sun. of month)	Saturday Vigil: 5:30pm Sunday: 9:15am

Weekdays:

Monday	9:15am	7:30am
Tuesday	6:00pm	7:30am
Wednesday	9:15am	~
Thursday	9:15am	~
Friday	9:15am	7:30am *
Saturday	9:15am	~

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: Saturdays 5:00 – 5:30pm (Lindfield)
For 15 minutes after the 5:30pm Mass (Killara)

* NO 9:15 Mass at Lindfield nor 7:30am Mass at Killara on the 2nd Friday of each month

* Healing Mass on the 2nd Friday of each month at 10am at Killara

ELEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME **17 – 6 – 18**

This week: Ezek 17:22-24; 2 Cor 5:6-10; Mk 4:26-34

Next week: Is 49:1-6; Acts 13:22-26; Lk 1:57-66,80

Growth.

Not completion.

Jesus' parables of the Kingdom are so often images of a growing thing,

and the point is that a growing thing isn't finished. It's on the way.

Christians so often get dissatisfied with themselves
because of the flaws within themselves of which they're so aware.

And they assume that God looks at them in the same way.

And having established that habit they then look at others in the same way.

But Jesus tells us that the Kingdom is like a mustard seed, 'the smallest of seeds':

something which is a long, long way from being a mustard *tree*.

Our challenge is to become more patient with our incompleteness, our flaws, our sins
for the simple reason that God is.

Parables of *growth*, not completion.

Fr Colin

Youth News ...



Fusion Youth at Lindfield Killara



youth.fusion



youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au

YOUTH@LINDFIELD KILLARA PARISH

YOUTH MASS @ LINDFIELD - ALL AGES INVITED!

Join our Parish's growing youth community for a warm and wonderful Mass! Featuring an all-youth choir and a family-friendly Mass, all are welcome. Pot Luck supper afterwards – please join us!

NEXT MASS: SUNDAY 8 JULY

SPECIAL TIME: 5.30PM

PRIMARY SCHOOL YEARS 3 - 6

BLAST is for kids in school years 3 - 6. We meet most months on the second Sunday of the month, from 4.00 - 5.30 pm. Meetings start in the Shirley Wallace Centre.

Next Meeting Date... SUNDAY 8 July 2018 4 - 5.30pm



HIGH SCHOOL YEARS 7 - 12

The aim of FUSION is to provide a comfortable, welcoming place where teens can get away from the pressures of school life and just be themselves.

Fusion
youth

Our Youth leaders, university students from our parish, understand what it's like to be a teenager today. We meet twice a month in the Shirley Wallace Centre:

Sunday after Youth Mass and one other Friday during the month.

NEXT MEETING.....FUSION YOUTH goes to HOLLYWOOD!*

FRIDAY, 29 June at 6.30 pm

more info to come...watch this space!

*ok we're not actually going to Hollywood, but it sounds better than "Shirley Wallace Centre"

CELEBRATIONS IN OUR PARISH SCHOOL:

Year 5 will celebrate their classroom Mass *this* Thursday 21st June at 11am. All class families welcome.

Year 2 will celebrate their class liturgy *this* Friday 22nd June at 11am. All class families welcome.

NOT THE WHOLE STORY ...

Jesus exhorts us to avoid judging the lives of others (Mt 7:1; Lk 6:37). Although there are situations in which it is appropriate for the Church to make a determination, such as that envisaged in 1 Corinthians 6:1-6, mostly we have to recognise the dimness of our vision and suspend all evaluation. This is more than naiveté or innate optimism. It is a stance that derives from faith. I choose to believe that no one is beyond the mercy of God and I am prepared to grant the possibility that one whom I condemn as a sinner may well be holier than I. My personal experience of mercy and forgiveness should lead me to be confident in God's power to convert even those who seem to be farthest from righteousness. "Let us not forget what we were once and then we will not lose hope for those who are now what we used to be".¹

It is this same theocentric hope that enables us to continue to affirm the holiness of the Church without being blind to the sinfulness of its members. Saint Augustine, conscious of the elitist tendencies of the Donatist sect, was very sensitive to the importance of suspending judgement when faced with others whose lives do not conform to our ideals or expectations. His vision of the Church is very realistic. Its essential holiness is not compromised by the habitual wickedness of some or the occasional wickedness of all. What is good and holy in the Church not only outweighs what is negative, but is in the process of converting what is malign into holiness. The presence of wickedness may never serve as a pretext for withholding love, because it is only love that can change what is ugly into something beautiful.

*Brothers, let no one deceive you. If you do not wish to be deceived and you wish to go on loving the brothers then understand that every profession in the Church includes phonies. I am not saying that everyone is phoney but every profession includes persons who are phoney. There are bad Christians – but there are also good ones.*²

...Because the Church preaches high morality, it is satisfying for those hostile to it to be able to point the finger of blame at the misdemeanours (and worse) of its own members. In this way, we can excuse ourselves for our failure to be guided by the moral principles the Church proclaims. It is easy to mutter about pastors not practicing what they preach. Yet we all sin in many ways; if we silenced sinners, who would proclaim the Gospel? Those whom Jesus sent forth to announce the demands of God's kingdom were sinners like ourselves and sometimes failed in what was expected of them. No matter how much we hate the manifestations of human weakness, blindness, and malice, we cannot realistically expect the Church of today to be any better than the of the Apostles. Weeds grow among the wheat. While we are yet on our journey we are wary and begrimed. That is part of the story, but it is not the whole story.³

¹ St Augustine, *On Psalm 50* 24; CChr 38, p.615.

² St Augustine, *On Psalm 99* 13; CChr 39, p.1402.

³ This article is from: Fr Michael Casey ocsa, (monk of Tarrawarra) *Fully human, fully divine: an interactive Christology*, John Garratt Publishing, Mulgrave, Victoria, 2004 pp. 187-190.

A Forum on Child Protection and the Child Sexual Abuse Crisis within the Church



What did the Royal Commission find & recommend?
Are our children safe in churches and schools within our Diocese?

Has the Royal Commission and the media treated the Church fairly?

How does the church respond to victims of past abuses?



Tuesday 26th June 2018 from 7-9pm in St Brigid's Hall
(above the Holy Family, Lindfield Church)

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the criminal charges against Cardinal Pell, the conviction of Archbishop Philip Wilson, and other recent events raise questions about how the Catholic Church is dealing with issues relating to child sexual abuse and protection.

The Royal Commission noted that abuse can lead to a 'collective sense of trauma, shame or betrayal' of faith communities. Limited opportunities exist for parishioners to directly express their views and feelings, ask questions or receive information, support and pastoral care.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the forum is to provide an opportunity for dialogue on issues arising from the child sexual abuse crisis, and to provide parishioners with:

- information about the Royal Commission and its findings;
- information about how these issues are being handled in our diocese;
- information about what is being done in our diocese to protect our children;
- an opportunity to seek transparency & accountability;
- an opportunity to ask questions, express views and feelings;
- counselling and pastoral support.

PANEL

Our panel will include:

- Very Rev. David Ranson, our diocesan Vicar General;
- Ms Jodie Crisafulli, our Diocesan Safeguarding (Child Protection) Manager Officer;
- Aaron Tang, a member of our own parish and a lawyer who worked with the Royal Commission in Private Sessions;
- Stephen Crittenden, the former ABC religious journalist who was the principal policy officer and lead writer of the Royal Commission's final volume on religious institutions.

FORMAT

The forum will consist of:

- short presentations and;
- Q&A with the audience, moderated by an independent moderator.

MODERATOR

Ky Chow is a lawyer, journalist, and freelance moderator with experience moderating forums/debates on Catholic issues

COUNSELLOR

Julie Blyth was the Clinical Advisor at the Child Abuse Royal Commission and has worked extensively with clients dealing with trauma resulting from violence and abuse.

QUESTIONS

To make the forum as beneficial and directed as possible, we would appreciate if questions were emailed to forum@lindfieldkillara.org.au beforehand. If we have questions ahead of time, we may be able to ensure that all areas of concern are covered.

There will also be an opportunity to ask questions on the night.

This is of course a free event, however, we would appreciate if bookings could be made via trybooking ~ <https://www.trybooking.com/WHUB> or through the Parish Office to provide an indication of numbers of attendees – which will help us in setting up for the event.

PARISH DIARY : JUNE ~ JULY

Sunday 17th June: morning tea after 9:15am and 10:15am Masses.

Tuesday 26th June: Forum on the Abuse Crisis (see article on p.4).

Sunday 1st July: Morning tea after 9:15am and 10:15am Mass
Children's Mass at 9:15am at Killara.

Sunday 8th July: Monthly Youth and Children's Mass at 5:30pm at Lindfield followed by food in St Brigid's Hall.

Friday 13th July: Monthly Healing Mass and morning tea at 10am at Killara.

SOME ADVANCE DATES TO PUT INTO YOUR DIARY

Tuesday 13th November Our annual **Thank You Night** for all those involved as volunteers in our parish ministries and activities: beginning with Mass at **7:30pm** in Holy Family church and followed by a social evening with food and drink in St Brigid's Hall.

Sunday 18th November Our parish welcome to the Kindergarten families in our Parish School for 2019: a welcome by a Principal and a blessing at the 10:15am Mass followed by morning tea.

Friday 7th December: **A Festival of Christmas:** our annual combined parish and school celebration of Carols with lots of delicious food stalls.

THIS WEEK'S FINANCIAL UPDATE

As we approach the end of this Financial Year a further update on our progress:

- Our **Second Collection** income (which provides all the operating funds for the parish) is still **\$20,000 behind compared to the same point last year.**
- The **First Collection** has also slipped back somewhat and is now **\$1800** compared to the same point last year.

Please help us to catch up on our shortfall over the next two weeks.

If you would like to make a one-off additional donation before the end of the Financial Year our account details are:

For donations to the First Collection:
BSB 062 784 Acct 1116 8002

For donations to the Second Collection
BSB 062 784 Acct 1116 8001

Please include your surname as the reference.

The Parish Finance Committee



YOU COULD HELP US by advertising in our parish bulletin. The weekly advertisements help supplement our parish income – and in turn help your business. Please contact the Parish Office for more information. Please consider helping us in this way.

THE PRAYERS AND RESPONSES OF MASS

GLORIA:

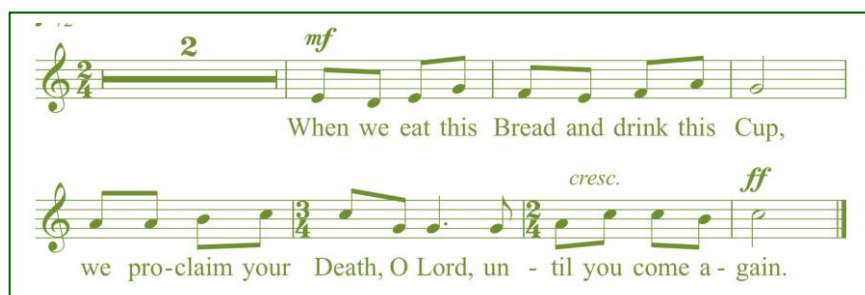
Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you,
we give you thanks for your great glory,
Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son,
Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,
you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us;
you take away the sins of the world,
receive our prayer;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION:



When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we pro-claim your Death, O Lord, un - til you come a - gain.

THE PSALM Ps 91:2-3. 13-16.

It is good to give thanks to the Lord
to make music to your name, O Most High,
to proclaim your love in the morning
and your truth in the watches of the night.

The just will flourish like the palm-tree
and grow like a Lebanon cedar.

Planted in the house of the Lord
they will flourish in the courts of our God,
still bearing fruit when they are old,
still full of sap, still green,
to proclaim that the Lord is just.
In God, my rock, there is no wrong.

*At Masses at which the Psalm is sung
the response is: Lord, it is good to
give thanks to you.*

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION
Alleluia, alleluia! The seed is the word
of God, Christ is the sower;
all who come to him will live for ever.
Alleluia!

THE NICENE CREED

I believe in one God,
the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the Father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,

(all bow at the following words in bold):

**and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of
the Virgin Mary, and became man.**

For our sake
he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the
Father.

He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father & the Son,
who with the Father and the Son
is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy,
catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one Baptism
for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward
to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen

NEXT SUNDAY, being 24th June, will be
the Solemnity of the Birth of St John the
Baptist (which of course will also be
celebrated at the Vigil Masses).

Our Parish SCRIPTURE STUDY GROUP

will meet this month
on the **third (rather
than the second)**
Wednesday of the
month (**this Wed.
20th June**) from
10am – 11am. The
venue is the Library in
the Shirley Wallace Parish Centre.



We are working through John's Gospel and
so it would be helpful to have read John chp
16 for the coming meeting.
All welcome. *Fr Colin*

NEW!

WEEKLY EXPOSITION OF THE EUCHARIST

We now have an hour of Exposition of the
Eucharist following the 7:30am Mass at
Killara on Fridays as a time for quiet prayer
in the Lord's presence. This will take place
every Friday **except when there is no 7:30am
Mass** (for instance on the 2nd Friday of each
month when we have the Healing Mass).

A CHRISTIAN MEDITATION GROUP

meets in the *Meeting Room at the rear of and
under Holy Family Church* each Wednesday
from **8:40am – 9:05am** (finishing in time for
9:15am Mass). Everyone is welcome. For
further information contact Kay at 9416
2194 Kay.Hunt@optusnet.com.au or
Catherine 9415 6345
catherinecwillis@gmail.com

COULD YOU HELP US? REPLACEMENT COMPUTERS



The computers in our
Parish Office are really
showing their (great)
age and with varying
degrees of urgency
need to be updated. If
you would be willing
to donate the cost of
one of the new
computers please let
us know in the Parish
Office.

Pastoral Planning : Towards a Parish Vision Statement

As you may know, our Parish Pastoral Council hopes to produce a parish Vision Statement which will be more than merely a collection of words but hopefully a statement which is the fruit of reflection by us all and which can therefore be owned by us all and serve as a focus for the type of Christian community we want to be for now and as we move forwards.


To achieve this the PPC is ensuring that the development of the Vision Statement is a consultative one. You may recall that several months ago we asked all those at Mass to choose six words from a much larger list that stood out to you as the key issues for our parish as we move forward. We also went through this process with the parents involved in our First Reconciliation Programme and, more recently, with the parents involved in our Confirmation programme.

The results of these surveys have now been collated and we can report that the words which have risen to the top are as follows:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1. Faith | 6. Family |
| 2. Prayer | 7. Welcoming |
| 3. Community | 8. Kindness |
| 4. Spirituality | 9. Peace |
| 5. Loving others | 10. Worship |

The next part of the process is that the PPC has asked 5 different groups/individuals to prepare a draft Vision Statement based on these results. Once the PPC has received these drafts we will then enter into the next and final stage of discerning together with our parish community what our Vision Statement will be.

Lindfield Dental Practice



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Clinical Assoc Professor

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If I can ever be of assistance
to you, a family member or a friend
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selling or renovation tips, I would be
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Parish Staff and Contact Information

We are the one parish of Lindfield-Killara containing our two distinct but collaborating and cooperating communities centred on our two churches at Killara and Lindfield.

Holy Family Church: cnr Pacific Hwy and Highfield Rd, Lindfield
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church: cnr Fiddens Wharf Rd and Charles St, Killara
Parish Priest: Fr Colin Blayney colin@lindfieldkillara.org.au 9416 7195
Assistant Priest: Fr Thomas Alackakunnel VC thomas@lindfieldkillara.org.au 0421 406162

PARISH OFFICE:

Parish Secretary: Philita Marundan: philita@lindfieldkillara.org.au
Address: Level 1, 2 Highfield Road (cnr Pacific Hwy) Lindfield NSW 2070
 (Postal: PO Box 22, Lindfield NSW 2070)
Ph: 9416 3702 **Fax:** 9416 3913 **Email:** parish@lindfieldkillara.org.au
Parish Office Hours: Monday to Friday 9:30am-1:00pm and 1:30pm-4:00pm

Catechist Coordinator (Primary Schools):

Sue-Anne Sherwood sue-anne@lindfieldkillara.org.au
 0416 141 508

Sacramental Programme Coordinator:

Sue-Anne Sherwood sue-anne@lindfieldkillara.org.au
 0416 141 508

Assistant Sacramental Programme Coordinator:

Maia Schulze Tsang maia@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Priest's Secretary: Maia Schulze Tsang maia@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Bookkeeper: Alison Williams alison@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Child Protection Coord. Alison Williams alison@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Facilities Coordinator (volunteer): Anthony Cassidy anthony@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Youth Ministry Coordinator (volunteer) Jean Shatek youth@lindfieldkillara.org.au

Parish Primary School: Holy Family School, 4 Highfield Rd, Lindfield 2070

Ph: 9416 7200 **Fax:** 9416 9342

Principal: Mr Lou Dogao

Email: info@holyfamily.nsw.edu.au

School Website: www.hfldbb.catholic.edu.au

Parish Website:	www.lindfieldkillara.org.au
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Saturday		16 June	23 June
Lindfield	6:00pm	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Fr Colin Blayney
Killara	5:30pm	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel
Sunday		17 June	24 June
Lindfield	8:15am	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Fr Colin Blayney
Killara	9:15am	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel
Lindfield	10:15am	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Fr Colin Blayney
Lindfield	12:00noon	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel	Visitor
Lindfield	6:00pm	Fr Colin Blayney	Fr Thomas Alackakunnel

CHINESE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

第十一主日

17/6/2018

讀經一（我使矮小的樹長高。）

恭讀厄則克耳先知書 17:22-24

我主上主這樣說：「我要親自由高大的香柏樹梢，取下一條枝條，從嫩枝的尖上，折下一根嫩芽，親自把它栽植在高山峻嶺之上，栽植在以色列的高山上。

「它要生長枝葉，結出果實，成為一棵高大的香柏；各種飛鳥要棲息其中，棲息在他枝葉的蔭影之下。

「如此，田野間的一切樹木，都承認我是上主，都知道：我曾使高大的樹矮小，使矮小的樹長高，使綠樹枯萎，使枯木發綠；我上主，言出必行。」——上主的話。

（默想片刻）

答唱詠 詠 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16

【答】：上主，歌頌你的聖名，是多麼美好！（參閱詠 92:2）

領：至高的上主，感謝你，歌頌你的聖名，是多麼美好；清晨傳述你的慈愛，夜間宣揚你的仁義，是多麼幸福。【答】

領：正義的人像棕櫚樹一樣茂盛，似黎巴嫩香柏一樣高聳。他們被栽植在上主的殿裡，在我們天主的庭院裡，開枝散葉。【答】

領：他們雖已年老，仍然結果，枝葉茂盛，永遠長青。可見上主是多麼公義；他是我的磐石，他處事無不公允。【答】

讀經二（我們或住在或出離肉身，都要專心以討主的喜悅為光榮。）

恭讀聖保祿宗徒致格林多人後書 5:6-10

弟兄姊妹們：

不論怎樣，我們時常放心大膽，因為我們知道，我們幾時住在這肉身內，就是與主遠離，因為，我們現在只是憑信德往來，並非憑目睹。我們放心大膽，是為更情願出離肉身，與主同住。

為此，我們或住在或出離肉身，都要專心以討主的喜悅為光榮。因為我們眾人，都應出現在基督的審判台前，按照各人藉肉身所行的，或善或惡，領取應得的報應。——上主的話。

（默想片刻）

福音前歡呼

領：亞肋路亞。

眾：亞肋路亞。

領：天主的話是種子；基督是撒種者；所有來到他那裡的人，將生活到永遠。

眾：亞肋路亞。

福音（它比一切的種子都小，生長起來，卻比一切蔬菜都大。）

恭讀聖馬爾谷福音 4:26-34

那時候，耶穌對群眾說：「天主的國，好比一個人，把種子撒在地裡；他黑夜白天，或睡覺或起來，那種子發芽生長，至於怎樣，他卻不知道，因為土地自然生長果實：先發苗，後吐

穗，最後穗上長滿麥粒。當果實成熟的時候，他便立刻派人，以鐮刀收割，因為到了收穫的時期。」耶穌又說：「我們以什麼比擬天主的國呢？或用什麼比喻，來形容它呢？它好像一粒芥子，種在地裡的時候，比地上一切的種子都小；當下種之後，生長起來，比一切蔬菜都大；並且長出粗大的枝條，以致天上的飛鳥，都能棲息在它的葉蔭下。」

耶穌用許多這樣的比喻，按照群眾所能聽懂的，給他們講道。如果不用比喻，耶穌就不給他們講什麼，但私底下，卻給自己的門徒解釋一切。——上主的話。

（講道後默想片刻）

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Sunday School 主日學

12noon Parish Meeting

Room

(continued from p. 12...)

I think I will, says God.

I might let you have a room or two.

I like it, says God. I'll take the two.

You might decide to give me more some day.

I can wait, says God.

I'd like to give you more,

but it's a bit difficult. I need some space for me.

I know, says God, but I'll wait. I like what I see.

Hm, maybe I can let you have another room.

I really don't need that much.

Thanks, says God, I'll take it. I like what I see.

I'd like to give you the whole house

I'm not sure I want to sell,

but I'm not sure—

Think on it, says God. I wouldn't put you out.

I'm not sure I want to sell,

Your house would be mine and my son would live in it.

You'd have more space than you'd ever had before.

I don't understand at all.

I know, says God, but I can't tell you about that.

You'll have to discover it for yourself.

That can only happen if you let him have the whole house.

A bit risky, I say.

Yes, says God, but try me.

I'm not sure—

I'll let you know.

I can wait, says God. I like what I see.

If we look back on our lives and are truly honest, we have to admit that of all the invitations that God has sent us, we've probably accepted and acted on only a fraction of them. There have been countless times we've turned away from an invitation. For every invitation to maturity we've accepted, we've probably turned down a hundred. But that's the beauty and wonder of God's richness. God is not a petty creator and creation, itself, is not a cheap machine with barely enough energy and resources to keep it going. God and nature are prodigal. That's plain everywhere. Millions and millions of life-giving seeds blow everywhere in the world and we need only to pick up a few to become pregnant, fecund, capable of newness, maturity, and of producing life.

Fr Ron Rolheiser omi, Centre for Liturgy, University of St Louis

Lord, in Jesus your Son, you restored to us the gift of everlasting life.

Grant that life to:

Recently deceased: Peter O'Sullivan, Sr Veronica McCarthy (aunt of Anthony Cassidy), Anthony Pittorino, Myrna Vallecer Amurao, Helen Logan.

And for: Freda Mercer and Eileen Wade.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THOSE WHO ARE SICK : Joe Agius, Maureen Hobbs, Ian Coffey, Yvette Marie and Jeff Oras, John and George Agius, Fr Franciscus Choi, Ken Kan, Gizelle Tan, Basilisa Choi, Cyril Ferriere, Br Braden, Brian Couper, Kieran Norton, Sean Maguire, Pakie Maguire, Naneth Bernado, Michael Swan.

REFLECTING ON THIS SUNDAY'S SCRIPTURES

But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches. (Gospel)

A PRODIGAL GOD

A few years ago, Barbara Kingsolver wrote a book entitled *Prodigal Summer*. It tells the story of young woman who got pregnant during a summer within which everything seemed to be dangerously fertile. From the plants, through the insects, through the animals, to the people, everything seemed to be teeming with fecundity, overactive, overabundant in seed. Life seemed to be bursting forth everywhere. The title of the book is good metaphor for what she describes, a summer overabundant in fertility.

Nature is like that, teeming with everything, prodigal, fertile, overabundant, wasteful. Why else do we have 90% more brain cells than we need and why else is nature scattering billions of seeds, of virtually everything, all over the planet every second?

And if life is so prodigal, what does this say about God, its author?

God, as we see in both nature and in scripture (and know from experience), is over-generous, over-lavish, over-extravagant, over-prodigious, over-rich, and over-patient. If nature, scripture, and experience are to be believed, God is the absolute antithesis of everything that is stingy, miserly, frugal, narrowly calculating, or sparing in what it does out. God is prodigal.

Dictionaries define “prodigal” as “wastefully extravagant and lavishly abundant.” That certainly describes the God that Jesus incarnates and reveals.

We see this in the parable of the Sower. God, the sower, goes out to sow and he scatters his seed generously, almost wastefully, everywhere—on the road, among the rocks, among the thorns, on bad soil, and on rich soil. No farmer would ever do this. Who would waste seed on soil that can never produce a harvest? God, it seems, doesn't ask that question but simply keeps scattering his seed everywhere, over-generously, without calculating whether it is a good investment or not in terms of return. And, it seems, God has an infinite number of seeds to scatter, perpetually, everywhere. God is prodigious beyond imagination.

Among other things, this speaks of God's infinite riches, love, and patience. For us, there is both a huge challenge and a huge consolation in that. The challenge, of course, is to respond to the infinite number of invitations that God scatters on our path from minute to minute. The consolation is that, no matter how many of God's invitations we ignore, there will always be an infinite number of others. No matter how many we've already ignored or turned down, there are new ones awaiting us each minute. When we've gone through 39 days of lent without praying or changing our lives, there's still a 40th day to respond. When we've ignored a thousand invitations, there's still another one waiting. God is prodigal, so are the chances God gives us.

Sr Margaret Halaska once captured this wonderfully in a poem she entitled, *Covenant*:

The Father knocks at my door, seeking a home for his son:

Rent is cheap, I say

I don't want to rent. I want to buy, says God.

I'm not sure I want to sell,

but you might come in to look around.

(continued on p. 11):