

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME 11th July

The message of Jesus is to teach God's people to love God and love their neighbour. This is the principal concern of his disciples as they teach in his name.

MASSES

Vigil Saturdays 6p.m. Sundays: 9a.m. & 11a.m.
Working Holy Days: Vigil 6p.m. Holy Days 10a.m. & 7.30p.m.
Weekdays: Monday to Saturday 10 a.m.

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Feast days of the week

Tuesday 13th St. Henry. Duke of Bavaria and later Emperor, a just ruler, humble man of prayer, and reformer of the Church.

Wednesday 14th St. Camillus de Lellis. A gambler in his early life as a soldier, was converted at the age of twenty-five. Guided by St. Philip Neri he became a priest and worked for the sick. Founded hospitals and is Patron of nurses, hospitals and the sick.

Thursday 15th St. Bonaventure. Born in Tuscany, Minister General of the Franciscans.

Friday 16th Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

There will be a second collection (at the door) at all Masses next weekend 17th/18th July in aid of Diocesan Needs.

The Disciples return to Jesus

In the gospel last Sunday, Jesus sent his followers out with his message to proclaim God's Kingdom. The gospel today follows on immediately after this; having sent them out, they return to Jesus and he welcomes them back. *The apostles rejoined Jesus and told him all they had done and taught. Then he said to them, 'You must come away to some quiet place all by yourselves and rest for a while.'*

There is something very ordinary about this scene. I imagine the friends of Jesus returning excitedly after teaching, preaching and

healing; they have so much to share with Jesus. I see them sitting with Jesus and telling him all they had done. As they speak, I picture Jesus simply listening to them. We know from the gospels that Jesus was a great speaker. He often went to the synagogue to read the scriptures and preach. He spoke to the people in the streets and the market places and taught them through parables. Have we ever considered that Jesus was also able to make time and space for people and listen to them?

We recall the woman who reached out to simply touch the hem of Jesus' garment believing that she would be healed. When Jesus realised someone had touched him, he turned to the woman; *'there in front of everybody, she told him why she had touched him.'* Or as one version says, *she told him the whole story.* Jesus made time for her; he wanted to listen to her and hear her very personal experience. When Jesus meets the two on the road to Emmaus he asked them; *'What are you talking about to each other, as you walk along?'* He asks them a question; he walks with them, remains silent and listens to their story and all that had happened to them. Again, he takes the time to accompany others and wants to hear what is most important to them. He doesn't interrupt them.

Whenever, however and wherever we pray Jesus listens to us, no matter what we say. We might say prayers that we have known since childhood or we might simply talk to Jesus casually and informally as we would with a close friend. When we pray, we too are offered the opportunity to tell Jesus our own very personal and sacred story – whatever that is. When we pray can we see Jesus looking at us and hear him gently ask, *what are all things you are talking about as you walk along?* When we pray, whether on our own or with others, Jesus takes the time to listen to us. He is concerned about what is happening to us. He will not ignore or dismiss us.

We each have a personal and sacred story. Our story and our experiences, the positive, negative, challenging and the life-giving make us who we are today. Pope Francis said, *'Each of us has a unique story; a story of grace, a story of sin, a story of many things. It is good to pray with our own story.'*

While it is very important to pray for others, it is also necessary that we pray about and for ourselves. It is vital that when we pray we have the courage and humility to come to Jesus just as we are and tell him exactly how we are. He will sit and listen to us.

Sometimes we just need to take a break from being occupied and busy, from all our activities and to-do-lists, from the noise of the world around us and simply sit quietly at the feet of Jesus.

In him we will find rest.

