

BEING GENUINE IN OUR ACTIVE RESPONSE, IN CARING FOR GOD'S WORLD  
*SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY 2021 – 22nd SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME – 29 AUGUST 2021*



*Sandgate Foreshore - 5.30am, 28 August 2021*

### PHOTOGRAPHS & SENSE OF WONDER

When I was a young child, and later as a teenager, our family visited cousins on the Northside of Brisbane. We would save up our magazines and periodicals and take them on our visit. One of my cousins joyfully received them and made story books out of the photos. Living with Downs Syndrome, he showed us how to be joyful.

I learned from him about the importance of saving a few photos from calendars and magazines and placing them in a folder in my lounge room.

Each photo is about an aspect of creation, in the sea or a land feature, an animal or bird or of a sky formation. Sometimes when I come home, I have a cuppa, sit in a comfortable chair, and gaze at some of the photos with a sense of wonder. It slows me down and restores my sense of awe. The wonders of the earth, our common home, are truly inspiring.

In the readings today we learn that life is more important than external observances. In caring for the poor, oppressed and marginalized, in caring for the earth, our common home, we are called to move beyond lip-service. Our hearts must be truly in what we do and in caring for the earth and all who live on it.

### GOSPEL OF MARK 7: 1-8, 14-15, 21-23

One denial response is to focus on something else. In today's Gospel passage we learn that the Pharisees and some of the scribes are in denial. They will not acknowledge who Jesus really is. They will not acknowledge the message of Jesus. Instead they focus on externals like the washing of hands.

Another denial response is lip-service. We might say that we follow, but our hearts are not really in it.

The Gospel tells us:

*“He said to them,  
‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written,  
“This people honours me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me;  
in vain do they worship me,  
teaching human precepts as doctrines.”  
You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’*

*Then he called the crowd again and said to them,  
‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand:  
there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile,  
but the things that come out are what defile.’*

*For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come:  
fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit,  
licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly.  
All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’*

#### RESPONDING GENUINELY TO THE INVITATION OF JESUS

From the human heart, may we respond genuinely to the invitation of Jesus

- to be *doers*,
- to be *genuine in our response*

in caring for our neighbour,

#### JAMES 1: 17-18, 21-22, 27

We are created by God to seek the truth.

In the Letter of James, the disciples are called *‘my beloved’*.

We read:

*“In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth,  
so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures.”*

*“welcome with meekness the implanted word  
that has the power to save your souls.  
But be doers of the word,  
and not merely hearers who deceive themselves.”*

On this Social Justice Sunday, we are called to be doers,  
to be genuine in our response in caring for our neighbour,  
and in caring for the earth, our common home.

The Letter of James says:

*“Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this:  
to care for orphans and widows in their distress,  
and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”*

The Social Justice statement today is titled ["Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor."](#)

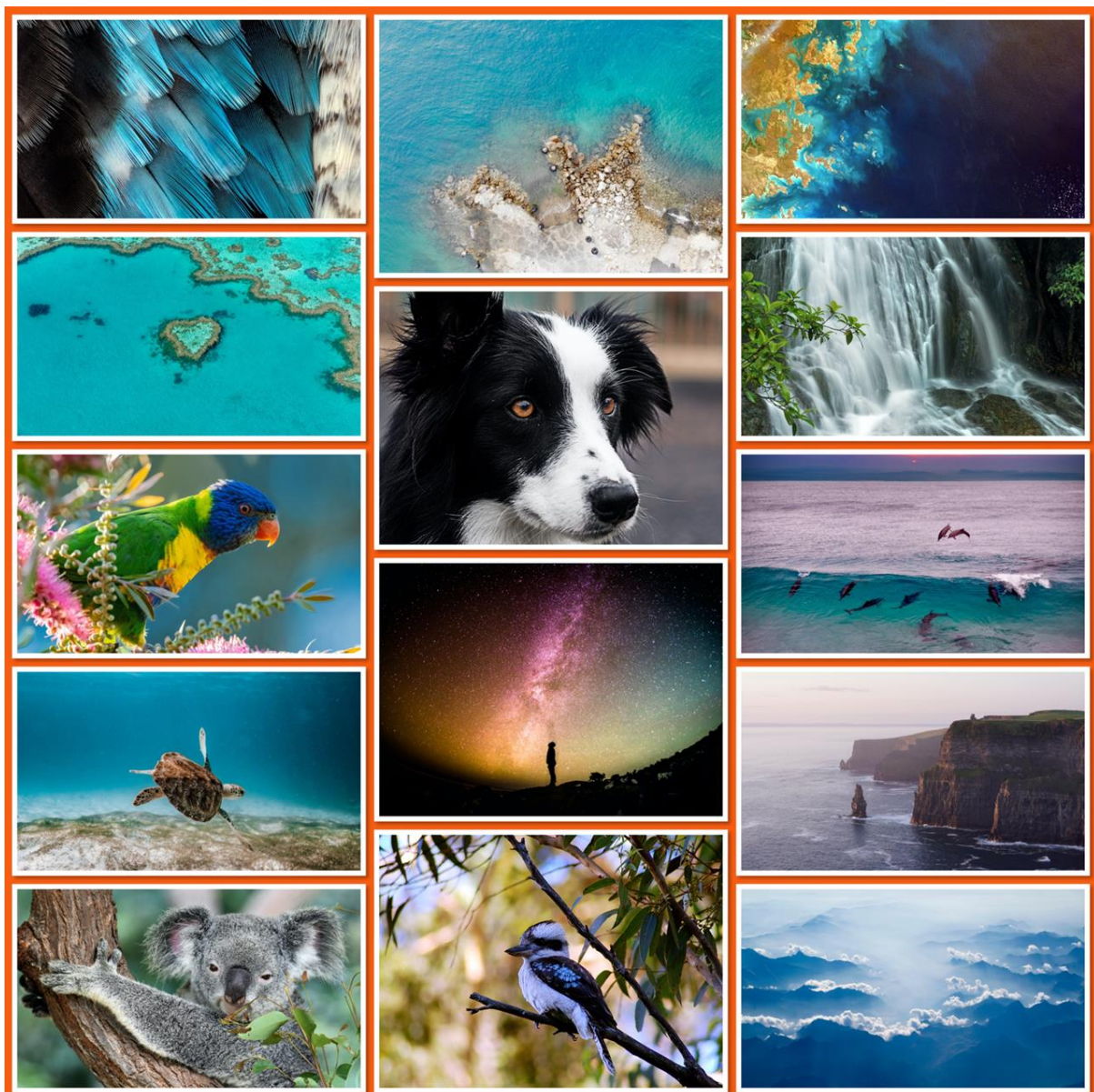
Sister Mary Tinney rsm will now lead us in a [reflection on the Statement.](#)

During this week, may we *rekindle our sense of wonder and joy,*  
and continue to *respond genuinely to the invitation of Jesus*

- to be *doers,*
  - to be *genuine in our response*  
*in caring for our neighbour, and in caring for the earth, our common home.*
- Amen.

Fr Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/082921.cfm>



above images were sourced from [unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)