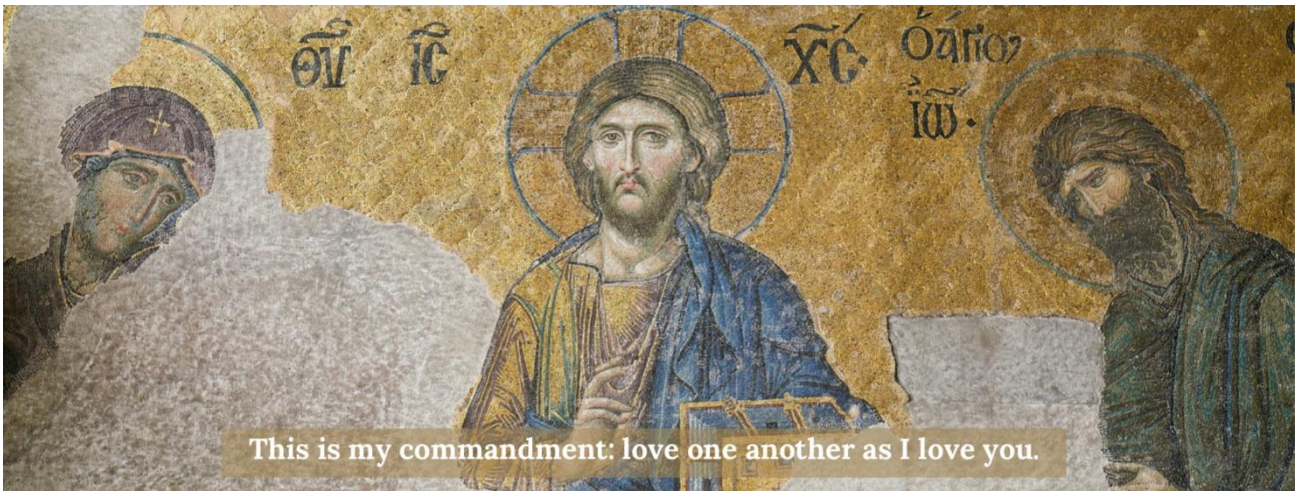


FOLLOWING GOD'S INVITATION IN 2021
SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – 9 MAY 2021



Jesus Christ Pantocrator - Hagia Sophia, Istanbul

MARY & MOTHER'S DAY

We celebrate the month of May as the month of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Each day during May, we pray for Mary's intercession in our prayer to Jesus.

Today, on the second Sunday of May in Australia, we celebrate Mother's Day. In some countries, the older tradition of Mothering Sunday is celebrated on one of the Sundays in Lent before Easter.

We thank God for the inspiration and love,
nurturing and hope,
courage and witness
of our many Mothers and Grandmothers
and those who have a special mothering role in our lives.
We pray for them as we now light a candle for them.

[pause]

PRAYER & BLESSING

We now invite all Mothers and Grandmothers
and those with mothering role in our lives,
to stand as our community thanks you
and prays for God to bless each of you.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48

In this incredible biblical story,
the rules, the practice and mission of Christians changed forever.
Christians no longer were restricted to being Jewish.
Christians could be from all cultures and ethnic groups.

There is room for each of us.
We come from many cultures in the world.
God does not have favourites.

CORNELIUS & PETER

This event had a major impact on the whole church and on ourselves today.
It was confirmed at the Council of Jerusalem, recorded several chapters later.
Cornelius was a centurion of the Italian Cohort.
He was a Gentile, not a Jew.
He lived in Caesarea.
He sent three people to Joppa to find Peter.

As they were journeying, Peter in Joppa received a vision, which puzzled him.

The three delegates of Cornelius arrived, and the Holy Spirit said to Peter,
*“Look, three men are searching for you.
Now get up, go down, and go with them without hesitation;
for I have sent them.”*

Peter greeted them, heard their story and provided hospitality for them.
The following day they traveled to Caesarea with some Christians from Joppa.
Cornelius invited his relatives and close friends to be present.
The dialogue was between Peter and Cornelius, but both invited others.

Peter had already broken Jewish religious law by travelling up to see Cornelius.
And he told Cornelius that God had shown him not to reject Gentiles.
Cornelius explained the vision that he had received,
and his openness to do what God commands.
Peter did not stand on status or pomp or privilege or favouritism.

Peter revealed this dramatic change with the words:
*“Then Peter began to speak to them:
‘I truly understand that God shows no partiality,
but in every nation anyone who fears him
and does what is right is acceptable to him. “*

The readings continued:
*“While Peter was still speaking, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who
heard the word.
The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were
astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out
even on the Gentiles, for they heard them speaking in tongues
and extolling God.
Then Peter said,
‘Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people
who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’*

*So he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.
Then they invited him to stay for several days.”*



Peter Baptising the Centurion Cornelius, by
Francesco Trevisani, 1709

QUESTIONS

Will the forthcoming Plenary in Australia be as dramatic?

Will the synod in Rome be as dramatic?

Is the Holy Spirit calling us beyond our present practices?

Where is the Holy Spirit calling?

Cornelius acted, following God's invitation and revelation.

Peter acted, following God's invitation and revelation.

They both followed God's direction and the world changed.

Let us follow God's invitation and revelation today.

Let us take the time during this week to ponder the remarkable initiatives of God in our lives.

Let us pray.

Fr Gerry

readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/050921.cfm>

Plenary Council: <https://plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au/>

