

OUR EUCHARISTIC FOUNDATION FOR SHARING WITH THE NEEDY

33rd SUNDAY ORDINARY TIME – 13 NOVEMBER 2022



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THANK YOU, GARY CREEVEY

We give thanks today for the many years of service of Gary Creevey as St Joseph's School Principal.

We thank you for your leadership, commitment to the staff, and to the students and their families.

We thank you for the sense of calm and pride that you instil in others.

Later in this Eucharist, we will pray for you, and call you forward.

TODAY

Today we focus on:

- Our parish solidarity with donations.
- The message of Pope Francis for [World Day of the Poor](#)
- A selection of quotes from Pope Francis in his message that speak about our Eucharistic biblical tradition for taking up donations and the spirituality of Christ and poverty
- An example of an artwork about poverty
- Examples of Vatican outreach to the poor during this year's World Day of the Poor
- Today's Gospel Luke 21:5-19 about devastation, persecution and endurance

OUR GIVING TO THE NEEDY

In our community, we value the work of the St. Vincent De Paul Conference, the efforts of parish members in support of Blackall/Tambo Parish in central Queensland, and the way that we support the water wells project in South Sudan.

We all have the opportunity of supporting them with donations, whether it is for the Christmas Hampers, items for the Blackall Fete, or financial contributions.

This weekend we have a recent update in our parish newsletter from Sister Rita in South Sudan. We recently sent a large donation over to Sister Rita from what we had collected for the water wells. The money had been accumulating for some time.

Her message said,

“Deepest gratitude to all at the very generous supporters of provision of safe, fresh, clean drinking water for the people of South Sudan and especially the many beneficiaries in our parish of Mapuordit. This morning I received notice from our Administration last of the successful transfer of US\$18988.80. I’m aware that your parish supports many additional needy families and situations.

From the people of Mapuordit; THANK YOU. Blessings”

In a message from the Sisters there to donors, I quote from part of their message.

“... Peace has made it possible for farmers to extend gardens and plant extensively. Those who planted with the first rains are now harvesting their ground nuts. Smiles are on many faces! It’s wonderful to see young boys with a spring in their steps carrying their local sugar cane to market. Our local Mapuordit market has grown and expanded to the benefit of all. Lorries were able to move freely with food and a great variety of market goods. The Rumbek market appears to be overflowing with trade wares extending right to the footpaths. Our three schools are fully operational: the Nursery, Primary and Secondary. Several new teachers have enriched our teaching staff; a university graduate from the Juba University now heads the Primary school; a university lecturer from the Juba University is teaching Maths in the Secondary school. These are welcome developments. The Mapuordit women have new opportunities to address their family traumas through monthly organised gatherings.

Sr. Virginia’s return to Mapuordit has enabled professional and compassionate listening and transformational responses to the many issues of over-burdened, weary mothers often left alone with all family burdens, due to polygamy. Sr. Wendy’s return is also a welcome enrichment to our community and to the many elderly poor and disabled ladies. Sr. Bernadette is totally committed to the Nursery; her many small protégées are introduced early to training and character building. A wonderful centre of early formation! Sr. Rita still occupies herself with provision of fresh clean water, working with a very skilled and reputable driller; agriculture with skills acquisition for intensive cropping also features strongly among the many women’s groups. A Satellite school scored third place in Lakes State in last year’s Primary 8 National exams. Sr. Rita remains grateful for continued good health enabling involvement with the growth and development of Mapuordit and its people. We remain forever grateful to all benefactors for your generous support to our various outreach efforts; thank you for feeding the hundreds of literally hungry elderly, children, and disabled. Your generosity directly reaches the many genuine personal, desperate situations we encounter daily. Thank you indeed! Forever grateful, Srs Wendy, Bernadette, Virginia and Rita”

POPE FRANCIS AND WORLD DAY OF THE POOR

The Message of Pope Francis for the [Sixth World Day of the Poor, 13 November 2022: For your sakes Christ became poor \(cf. 2 Cor 8:9\)](#)

This message is for the 33rd Sunday of Ordinary Time (one of the Sundays in November).

It was released months in advance so preparation would be possible.

I recommend the reading of the entire message of Pope Francis during the week ahead.

POPE FRANCIS SHARES A SCRIPTURAL, EUCHARISTIC BASIS FOR COLLECTING FOR THE NEEDY

From this document, I have extracted today, the Pope's references to the early Christian tradition of giving to the poor and needy, based on the teaching of St Paul.

*"We are asked to reflect on the summons of the Apostle to keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, who **"though he was rich, yet for [our] sakes became poor, so that by his poverty [we] might become rich"** (cf. 2 Cor 8:9). During his visit to Jerusalem, Paul met with Peter, James and John, who had urged him not to forget the poor. The community of Jerusalem was experiencing great hardship due to a food shortage in the country. The Apostle immediately set about organizing a great collection to aid the poverty-stricken. The Christians of Corinth were very understanding and supportive. At Paul's request, on every first day of the week they collected what they were able to save and all proved very generous.*

From that time on, every Sunday, during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, we have done the same thing, pooling our offerings so that the community can provide for the needs of the poor. It is something that Christians have always done with joy and a sense of responsibility, to ensure that none of our brothers or sisters will lack the necessities of life.

*We find a confirmation of this from Saint Justin Martyr, who wrote in the second century to the Emperor Antoninus Pius and described the Sunday celebration of Christians. In his words, **"On Sunday we have a common assembly for all our members, whether they live in the city or in the outlying districts. The recollections of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as there is time... The Eucharist is distributed, everyone present communicates, and the deacons take it to those who are absent. The wealthy, if they wish, may make a contribution, and they themselves decide the amount. The collection is placed in the custody of the presider, who uses it to help the orphans and widows and all who for any reason are in distress, whether because they are sick, imprisoned, or away from home. In a word, care is provided to all who are in need"** (First Apology, LXVII, 1-6).*

*"As for the community of Corinth, after the initial outburst of enthusiasm, their commitment began to falter and the initiative proposed by the Apostle lost some of its impetus. For this reason, Paul wrote them, asking in impassioned terms that they relaunch the collection, **"so that your eagerness may be matched by completing it according to your means"** (2 Cor 8:11).*

*"It is interesting to observe that the Apostle does not desire to oblige Christians to perform works of charity: **"I do not say this as a command"** (2 Cor 8:8). Paul is instead **"testing the genuineness of [their] love"** by earnestness of [their] concern for the poor (ibid.). Certainly, Paul's request is prompted by the need for concrete assistance; nonetheless, his desire is much more profound. He asks the Corinthians to take up the collection so that it can be a sign of love, the love shown by Jesus himself. In a word, generosity towards the poor has its most powerful motivation in the example of the Son of God, who chose to become poor."*

*"Indeed, the Apostle makes it clear that this example on the part of Christ, this **"dispossession"**, is a grace: **"the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ"** (2 Cor 8:9). Only by accepting it can we give concrete and consistent expression to our faith. The teaching of the entire New Testament is unanimous in this regard. Paul's teaching finds an echo in the words of the*

apostle James: “Be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in the mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act – they will be blessed in their doing” (Jas 1:22-25).”

“By appealing to the “grace” of Jesus Christ, Paul wants to confirm the message that he himself preached. It is the message that true wealth does not consist in storing up “treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume, and where thieves break in and steal” (Mt 6:19), but rather in a reciprocal love that leads us to bear one another’s burdens in such a way that no one is left behind or excluded. The sense of weakness and limitation that we have experienced in these recent years, and now the tragedy of the war with its global repercussions, must teach us one crucial thing: we are not in this world merely to survive, but to live a dignified and happy life. The message of Jesus shows us the way and makes us realize that there is a poverty that humiliates and kills, and another poverty, Christ’s own poverty, that sets us free and brings us peace.”

“The words of the Apostle chosen as the theme of this year’s World Day of the Poor present this great paradox of our life of faith... Jesus’ treasure is his love, which excludes no one and seeks out everyone, especially the marginalized and those deprived of the necessities of life. Out of love, he stripped himself of glory and took on our human condition. Out of love, he became a servant, obedient to the point of accepting death, death on a cross (cf. Phil 2:6-8). Out of love, he became the “bread of life” (Jn 6:35), so that all might have what they need and find nourishment for eternal life. Just as it was difficult for the Lord’s disciples to accept this teaching (cf. Jn 6:60), so it is for us today as well. Yet Jesus’s words are clear: if we want life to triumph over death, and dignity to be redeemed from injustice, we need to follow Christ’s path of poverty, sharing our lives out of love, breaking the bread of our daily existence with our brothers and sisters, beginning with the least of them, those who lack the very essentials of life. This is the way to create equality, to free the poor from their misery and the rich from their vanity, and both from despair.”

A CALL TO ACTION THROUGH ART

The Canadian artist Timothy Schmalz has produced another sculpture, ‘*Sheltering*’ which Pope Francis has blessed. Deborah Castellano Lubov interviewed him for Vatican News. The Vatican News article is called [“Timothy Schmalz: ‘Sheltering’ statue, reminder of our spiritual duty to the poor”](#).

There will be a QR code near the statue so that people can contribute to the poor.

EXAMPLES OF ACTIONS IN ROME

Below are [some of the actions](#) that the Dicastery for Evangelization at the Vatican has organised, at the request of Pope Francis. This is in addition to 1,300 people experiencing poverty, who are invited to a special meal after Mass, celebrated by Pope Francis.

- *“free medical examinations in mobile clinics and the distribution of medicines to the poor in Rome, There will also be a camper equipped to carry out tests for hepatitis C, HIV and tuberculosis. The project is carried out thanks to the help of the CUAMM*

missionary doctors, doctors of PTV Policlinico Tor Vergata Foundation, the Corps of Voluntary Nurses of the Red Cross, the BIOS Group, the volunteers of the Italian charity Misericordia, the Italian Society of Infectious and Tropical Diseases (SIMIT) and the Italian Society of General Medicine and Primary Care (SIMG). Clinical tests, on the other hand, are provided by the GILEAD company.”

- *“5,000 food boxes with food items offered by an Italian chain market will be also delivered across Rome to parish priests who have requested them for local families.”*
- *“during the week, as the energy crisis grinds on aggravating the conditions of poverty that many families already endure, electricity and gas bills will be paid to reduce the financial burden of those who are struggling the most.”*

GOSPEL OF LUKE 21:5-19

In 2018 when I visited Iraq, it was terrible to see the damage done by ISIS previously in northern Iraq. Such devastation. A nightmare of destruction. Back in 2009 when I visited northern Iraq, I was told that extremists could one day devastate the region.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus predicted the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. *“When some were speaking about the temple, how it was adorned with beautiful stones and gifts dedicated to God”, he said, “As for these things that you see, the days will come when not one stone will be left upon another; all will be thrown down.”*

Some decades later, the Roman Army destroyed the Temple and the city.

Jesus warned about the persecutions of Christians to come. *“they will arrest you and persecute you; they will hand you over to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors because of my name. This will give you an opportunity to testify.*

So make up your minds not to prepare your defence in advance; for I will give you words and a wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to withstand or contradict. You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. You will be hated by all because of my name... ”

In my 2009 visit, I heard from some local Christian people about the persecution and intimidation that they were experiencing in Iraq. Since then, we have heard as a parish community from Catholics who have arrived in Brisbane since 2016 from Iraq and Syria.

In the last sentence of today’s biblical passage, Jesus said *“By your endurance you will gain your souls.”*

The word ‘Endurance’ for the Greek *hupomone ὑπομονή* implies steadfastness in faith that overcomes trials and overcomes what we feel as devastation at the time.

LET US PAUSE & PRAY

Let us pause and pray for those facing incredible hardships anywhere and for the gift of a loving, uplifting relationship with Jesus.

We include Ukraine, Myanmar, parts of northern Africa and other places experiencing terrible violence. **[pause and pray]**

We are called to love, to accompany people, to support our neighbour.

God gives us the meaning that gives our lives purpose.

We are called to endure together.

In Eucharist, we are called in love, to share with others.

We are invited to help the needy.

Let us pray.

Father Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/111322.cfm>



Acknowledgement and thanks to The Catholic Leader for their photograph

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We thank you for your leadership, commitment to the staff, and to the students and their families.

We thank you for the sense of calm and pride that you instil in others.

In the Eucharist today, we pray for you.

Father Gerry Hefferan & the Parish of St. Joseph & St. Anthony

The image above is from a 2016 Catholic Leader article '[Brisbane's newest Iraqi refugee intake have started school after years of terror](https://bit.ly/CatholicLeader2016)' and may be read at: <https://bit.ly/CatholicLeader2016>