

THE COURAGE TO CARE & SPEAK GOD'S WORD  
12th Sunday in Ordinary time ~ 21 June 2020



**FIRST READING – JEREMIAH WRESTLING WITH HIS THOUGHTS**

In the verse before today's First Reading, Jeremiah is wrestling with his thoughts:

*"If I say, 'I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name',  
then within me there is something like a burning fire shut up in my bones;  
I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot."*

It can be so exhausting when we try to deny God's call to care and speak up.  
The huge energy we expend trying to deny God's will.  
And every day around the world it happens.



*Jeremiah by Michelangelo - Sistine Chapel*

Some of the reasons for our going into denial include:

- Because we want to maintain our comfort zones.
- We do not want to draw attention to ourselves.
- We do not wish to be unpopular
- We want to avoid pain and embarrassment
- We are scared, and perhaps overcome by fear.
- We do not want to travel into the unknown, beyond our control.

Jeremiah is called by God to speak.

Let us read today's passage and understand the pressure he is under.

**JEREMIAH 20:10-13**

*"For I hear many whispering: 'Terror is all around!  
Denounce him! Let us denounce him!'  
All my close friends are watching for me to stumble.  
'Perhaps he can be enticed, and we can prevail against him,*

*and take our revenge on him.'*  
*But the Lord is with me like a dread warrior;*  
*therefore my persecutors will stumble, and they will not prevail.*  
*They will be greatly shamed, for they will not succeed.*  
*Their eternal dishonor will never be forgotten.*  
*O Lord of hosts, you test the righteous, you see the heart and the mind;*  
*let me see your retribution upon them, for to you I have committed my cause.*  
*13 Sing to the Lord; praise the Lord!*  
*For he has delivered the life of the needy from the hands of evildoers."*

Jeremiah in Old Testament times, finds the courage to care.

Now we turn to the New Testament, where Jesus tells us to love our enemy.  
In all we do and think as Christians,  
we remember the two greatest commandments from Jesus

- *to love God and to love our neighbour.*

In today's Gospel we know that

- Secrets will be uncovered and brought into the light.
- Courage will overcome fear.
- God stands by us.
- God calls us to be transparent and accountable.
- As Christians, we are called to be people of the light - accountable to God and each other, and to our world and to future generations

Let us challenge our fears as we pray today's Gospel.

#### GOSPEL OF MATTHEW 10:26-33

*'So have no fear of them;*  
*for nothing is covered up that will not be uncovered,*  
*and nothing secret that will not become known.*  
*What I say to you in the dark, tell in the light;*  
*and what you hear whispered, proclaim from the housetops.*

*Do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul;*  
*rather fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*  
*Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?*  
*Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father.*  
*And even the hairs of your head are all counted.*  
*So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

*'Everyone therefore who acknowledges me before others,*  
*I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven;*  
*but whoever denies me before others,*  
*I also will deny before my Father in heaven.'*

## 2017 MISSION ADDRESS

*How do we as a community of disciples, of followers of Jesus, move forward?*

In the national Mission address three years ago, Bishop Vincent Long said that

- “We must abandon the old paradigm of a fortress Church which is prone to exclusivity and elitism.”
- “We must learn to rise to Christlike way of humility, inclusivity, compassion and powerlessness. “
- “May the Holy Spirit accompany us as we move boldly in the direction of the Kingdom.”

[‘Mission 2017 - One Heart Many Voices’ <http://mohmv.com.au/2017conference/>]

## CARING

We pause to reflect on the human family, including

- Caring for the world family during this COVID-19 Pandemic, maintaining safety protocols, and supporting our neighbours who are isolated and lonely at present.
- Praying for transparency and responsible leadership around the world.
- Caring for the Earth: Our Common Home and speaking up for the earth.
- Caring for each other and speaking up against racism in all its forms
- Caring for and advocating with refugees, the marginalized and the unemployed, the homeless and the persecuted, and asylum seekers living in detention in Australia.
- Caring for those in drought areas and those still recovering from the bushfires months ago.
- Caring for and advocating with those in danger of abuse in its many forms.

## WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

We remember in prayer, our friends

in this area supported by our local St Vincent de Paul Society, in the South Sudan villages, Blackall Tambo Parish, Burnie Wynyard Parish, in the School, College and University communities.

And we pray for staff and residents in Hospitals and Nursing Homes.

As we gather in prayer this weekend, we pray for courage to care for our neighbour and to speak God’s Word as individuals and as a community of faith.

May we find time to allow God to shine a light on our hearts and thoughts this week.

Acknowledging the huge number of people CODID-19 positive in the world and those who have died, we pray for them.

**[pause and pray]**

Let us pray together for COVID-19 safe Treatments and Vaccines.

### COVID-19 TREATMENTS & VACCINES PRAYER

We pray to you, Jesus,  
for all involved in the search for safe Treatments and Vaccines for COVID-19.  
We pray for the medical scientists and researchers.  
We pray for the safety of people during the trial phases.  
We pray for health authorities responsible for approval processes.

We pray to you, Jesus,  
that we remain proactive in our health precautions,  
as we await the development of effective treatments and vaccines.  
Amen

Fr Gerry

Readings:

<https://universalis.com/Australia/20200621/mass.htm>

[YouTube video – Sunday Mass, 21 June 2020](#)



*[COVID-19 Treatments & Vaccines Prayer](#)*