

St Joseph's Catholic Parish

Twenty-Sixth Sunday in Ord. Time
Year B, 29 September, 2024

Embracing the communities of
Cherbourg, Goomeri, Murgon,
Proston and Wondai



Unity in Diversity ... being one in Christ through Baptism!



If you have a friend or loved one who is away from the Church, they likely need more than just additional information and facts about the Catholic faith. They need what the Church calls the *kerygma*.

The *kerygma* is the foundation of everything we believe and do as Catholics. It's the Good News that "Jesus Christ loves you; he gave his life to save you; and now he is living at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and free you". Indeed, the *kerygma* is the proclamation of the Gospel that converted the pagan Roman Empire and countless souls around the world over the last 2,000 years and that continues to transform people's lives today.

The Gospel: A Love Story

When those original followers of Jesus shared their faith in Christ with others, what they said captured people's attention. For example, after Saint Peter preached to the crowds on Pentecost, many were cut to the heart and repented. Three thousand people were baptised in a single day!

Whatever Peter said worked. Surely, not everyone agreed. And some were even vehemently opposed to what the apostles proclaimed. But, at least from what we find in Acts of the Apostles, no one listening to Peter and the apostles was bored. No one yawned.

Everyone who heard the message they proclaimed was captivated. Some might

have been angry. Some might have mocked them. Others were moved to repent and be baptised. But all were drawn in to the dramatic story those apostles told and made a personal decision one way or another about how they would respond.

The Kerygma

What was it that the apostles proclaimed?

First, let's consider what they didn't do: They didn't announce a long list of abstract doctrines. They didn't focus on apostolic succession, papal infallibility and transubstantiation. They didn't give a lengthy series of moral instructions. They didn't hand out catechisms.

Rather, they told a simple, basic, core message that summarised the story of God's love. Indeed, the apostles' initial proclamation was centred on the Person of Jesus Christ: that Jesus was the Messiah and Lord, the One who fulfilled the prophecies and God's plan for the human family. And he did so by dying on the cross for our sins, rising again on the third day, and ascending to heaven.

This basic message of the Gospel is known as the *kerygma*, which is based on the Greek word *kerysso*, meaning 'herald' or "one who proclaims".

Their proclamation was simple, concise and laser-focused. Later, the Church needed to expound on this core message of the faith. The writings of Saint Paul and other early Christian leaders, as well as synods and councils of bishops, addressed various challenges and errors that arose in the Christian community. Over time, various teaching documents emerged, such as creeds and decrees from the bishops and popes, that were essential for responding to new questions and for ensuring that God's people maintained the one true faith of the apostles. The Catechism arose from this tradition and serves as a common reference point for all believers.

Following all these teachings remains essential today for being faithful to

Sunday Mass Times

Murgon

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Sunday	8.00am

Wondai

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Saturday	5.00pm

Proston

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Saturday	9.00am

Goomeri

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Sunday	6.00pm

Gayndah

WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays	10.30am
every	2nd, 4th Sundays	9.00am

Cherbourg

WEEK	DAY	TIME
5	Sunday	4.30pm

Weekday Mass Times

12 noon, Wednesday, Gayndah
5.00pm, Wednesday, Wondai
9.00am, 2nd, 4th Thursdays, School/Parish Mass, Murgon
9.00am, 1st, 3rd Thursdays, Castra

Holy Hour for Peace

Wondai, 4.00pm to 5.00pm,
Wednesday, before Mass

Today's readings

Numbers: 25-29; James 5: 1-6; Mark
9: 38-43, 45, 47-48

Response:

The precepts of the Lord give joy
to the heart.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Your word, O Lord, is
truth: make us holy in the truth. Alleluia!

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Jesus Christ. But if we don't know the basic story of God's love, our sin and his rescuing us and healing us – and not just knowing this intellectually, but interiorising it and knowing it in a life-transforming way – then the many doctrines and practices of the Catholic faith are less likely to be received fully in our hearts and shape our entire lives.

First Proclamation

Announcing the core Gospel message of God's love and the saving mission of Jesus Christ is called First Proclamation because it is ordinarily meant to come before the more in-depth, systematic presentation of the deeper mysteries of the faith.

The *kerygma*, therefore, is not just first in an ideal faith-formation sequence; it's also of first importance, something we need to come back to over and over again. Priests in their homilies, parents with their children, and parish leaders in their catechetical ministries need to bring everything back to the *kerygma* ... linking everything back to the story of God's love is crucial to facilitate an ever-deeper encounter with Christ.

Too Basic?

We must be careful not to think of the *kerygma* as too basic: "Yes, I know God created me, loves me, died for me and has a plan for me. ... I know that already. Can we move on to deeper things like the liturgy, the virtues or theology of the body?"

The saints were lovingly overwhelmed when they pondered the most foundational mysteries of the faith. If we, too, are not in awe and wonder over the mystery of God creating us, his pursuing us even though we sinned against him, his becoming one of us and dying for us, and his sending his Spirit into our hearts to heal and transform us, then something is seriously broken in us. If we think all that is "too basic", we are probably becoming lukewarm. We are in grave need of a deeper conversion. We need to more deeply interiorise the *kerygma*.

Changing Culture Through the Gospel

Much of our culture today is deeply wounded by individualism, by narcissism; it is wounded by materialism that denies the transcendence of the

human person. It is confused by false ideologies about what it means to be male or female. Men and women of faith are facing rejection, ostracism, exclusion from an ascendent secularism that has confused people about what is real, what is good and true. Many today have been bewitched with a false sense of human autonomy that even justifies the killing of a baby in her mother's womb.

This explains a lot about why our politics have become so polarising. And since neither party fully reflects Catholic social teachings, Catholics should feel 'homeless' in either political party. Nevertheless, as faithful and faith filled citizens, we should exercise our right to vote. And Catholics should see politics as a noble vocation in which people of faith can dedicate their lives with integrity to serve the common good of society and help create the conditions necessary for human flourishing.

The political commentator Andrew Breitbart had a famous quote, "Politics is downstream from culture." As people change their beliefs about what is 'good and true,' their politics change as well. Pope Saint John Paul II, who survived both Nazi and communist tyrannies, understood this. In fact, when bishops would meet John Paul II for their ad *liminavisits*, he wouldn't ask them what they were doing to change the politics in their particular countries. Rather, he would ask them, what were they doing to change the culture? The Church, through the preaching of the Gospel, wants to change the culture and thus to effect change in our politics by shaping a culture based on what is truly "good and true".

While the Catholic Church is not – nor does she want to be – a political party, she does have a profound interest in the good of the political community, the soul of which is justice. She does have something to say, a word to share. That Word is Jesus Christ, who, because he is true God and true man, is the human face of God and the divine face of man.

For this reason, the Church engages in a wide variety of public-policy issues, including the defense of unborn life, which, because of the vulnerability of the unborn child, remains a "preeminent priority".

This stems from a Judeo-Christian anthropology, that is, our understanding of man as the *imago Dei*. "God made us



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We pray for those who are sick:

Orlando Dyrit; Glenda Geragherty;
David McIntosh.

✝ If you know anyone in need,
please contact Lindsay Poilly
President, Saint Vincent de
Paul Conference, on
0437 864 667 or 5459 5234

in his own image and likeness, male and female he created us".

The individualism, the narcissism, the materialism of popular culture today has brought us "deaths of despair" – people dying from drug abuse or suicide; it has undermined civil society among many other ills. The healing of culture and politics will require hard work and will not be easy. But it will only come about through the rediscovery of what is truly "good and true" that begins in acknowledging the rights and dignity of every human being, made by God in his image and likeness, not to die one day, but to live in communion with him and in community with one another.

Edward Sri is a theologian



Safeguarding

If you have experienced abuse or misconduct, you can ring the help line, 1300 304 550. Information can be shared anonymously.