

St Joseph's Catholic Parish

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



The Ascension of the Lord
Year C, 1 June, 2025

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



Let us congratulate ...

Fr Mikael Loke today as he officially becomes the parish priest of the Murgon parish and Administrator of the Gayndah parish. His Installation Mass will be officiated by Archbishop Mark Collieridge at 10.30am at Saint Josephs Church, Murgon.

John 24: 46-53

The two men in white who challenge the disciples are the same ones who in Luke's version of the women at the tomb of Jesus say: "Why look among the dead for someone who is alive?" Today's feast is in one way also about our mission, sent as we are like them, clothes with the promised gift of the Spirit. Jesus is among us inviting us to spread his message of reconciliation and forgiveness, especially to those closes to us – family, friends, workmates and colleagues. We will always find him in a mix and middle of daily life. Is this why those disciples were so full of joy when they returned to Jerusalem even though their friend and teacher was no longer physically with them? May their joy be infectious as we celebrate today's feast and continue to seek the

living but often unrecognisable risen Lord Jesus. It is this gift of wisdom, with perception and knowledge, that Paul wishes upon the community at Ephesus. The power given to believers becomes a potent force in and through them and us, and will help us to discover how we can be effective witnesses to the saving power of mercy and forgiveness through Christ.

Ladies,

you are invited to a time of Bible teaching and Christian fellowship presented by CWCI Australia's Safari Ministry – Coffee and Dessert, Tuesday, 3 June 2025, 7.00pm, Church of Christ, 20 Thorn Street Murgon. Donation Box. Food is provided. For more details contact Linda Mollenhauer 0417 479 928



On the edge

Fr Andrew Hamilton SJ 22 May 2025

When I hear people described as servants, I am always a little doubtful. I remember encounters with public servants who seemed to delight in putting obstacles in my way. I think of priests who wanted to stop women from having their feet washed on Holy Thursday. But then I think of Pope Francis who washed the feet of a young Muslim woman with tats on Holy Thursday. This reflected his whole

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Weekend Mass schedule ahead

1st Sunday of Month - 31 May/1 June
Sunday, 10.30am, Murgon
(this is the only Mass in the parish this weekend)

2nd Sunday of Month - 7/8 June

Saturday, 9.00am, Proston
(Liturgy of the Word)

Saturday, 5.00pm, Wondai

Sunday, 8.00am, Murgon

Sunday, 10.30am, Cherbourg

Sunday, 6.00pm, Goomeri

3rd Sunday of Month - 14/15 June

Saturday, 9.00am, Proston

Saturday, 5.00pm, Wondai

Sunday, 8.00am, Murgon

Sunday, 10.30am, Gayndah

4th Sunday of Month - 21/24 May

Saturday, 9.00am, Proston

(Liturgy of the Word)

Sunday, 8.00am, Murgon

Sunday, 10.30am, Gayndah

Sunday, 6.00pm, Goomeri

Today's readings

Acts 1: 1-11; Ephesians 1: 17-23;
Luke 24: 16-53

Response:

God mounts his throne to shouts of joy:
a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! Go and teach all people
my gospel. I am with you always, until the
end of the World. Alleluia!

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life of service to people, his reaching out to people most in need and his vision of a Church in which we look out for one another and reach out to people on the margins to share God's love. We shall miss him. But we are also glad to have known and to have been inspired by his service of us. I am sure that he will now find ways in heaven to encourage us to follow Jesus. Jesus told his disciples to serve people. We take his instruction for granted but it must have seemed surprising at the time. In the New Testament stories servants were not highly esteemed.

Jesus describes all sorts of servants in his parables: industrious servants, lazy servants, servants who suffer and servants who embezzle, unprofitable servants, curious servants and much-loved servants, servants thrown into jail and servants healed. Many of the servants were slaves.

Different Picture

This picture of servants is little different than that of an earlier time portrayed in many novels and films today. Servants are generally seen and not heard, curtsy when spoken too, speak in an uneducated voice, and are usually the first suspects when Lady Delilah Cholmondeley-Browne's jewels go missing. Young women servants, too, were also vulnerable to grooming and exploitation by privileged males, followed by expulsion from service. To be a servant was to be confronted with your frailty and lack of esteem.

When Jesus told his disciples they were to be servants and to do such menial tasks as washing people's smelly feet, he meant more than that they should do as servants do. He also wanted them to think and feel as servants did. As servants were so often told by their wealthy masters, they were to know their place. They were unprofitable, unnoticed, suspected of being uneducated and unreliable. They had no dignity to stand on. That was why Saint Peter was so outraged when Jesus put on an apron and began to wash his feet. No one did that by choice, let alone the Son of God. But that is what Jesus did and wanted his disciples also to do.

Pope Francis caught that shock of displacement when he describes priests as shepherds who should smell like their sheep. In Jesus' society it was common to speak of kings and rulers as shepherds, and indeed of God as a shepherd. As shepherds they cared tenderly for their sheep and offered them protection.

Contrast

This image of shepherds represented their affection for their sheep. It also emphasised, however, the contrast between the intelligent shepherds and the dumb and defenceless sheep. The shepherds ruled the lives of the scatty and easily-led sheep in order to keep them safe.

This view of the shepherd seemed to match the differences of culture, knowledge, reading skills and power in many agricultural societies between the comparatively well-educated priest and the uneducated people whom he served. When it came to speaking of faith, the priest knew stuff about which the people were ignorant. The image of the shepherd emphasised the differences and not what they had in common. For people in such a society, Pope Francis' image of priests smelling like their sheep would be strong, even offensive.

In Jesus' world, however, not only the sheep were on the edge of society but also the shepherds. They had a reputation for being rowdy and coarse. They were also regarded as irreligious. Necessarily so, because their care for their sheep prevented them from observing the details of the Law to do with eating and washing. When Luke wrote the story of Jesus' birth, he wanted to emphasise that God came to join us in poverty and exclusion and not in high society. For his readers, the last people whom you would expect to be the first to be told the Good News of Jesus' birth and to be invited to join Mary in the celebration were shepherds. To convey the shock today, the shepherds' path to the crib would need to be marked by a few discarded joints and tinnies. Their equivalent today might be bikies. And smelling like shepherds would certainly be to smell unwashed.



Parish Directory, Saint Joseph's Parish

Parish Priest: Fr Mikhael Loke SVD
Tel: Parish Office, **0419 693 602**
Parish e-mail: murgon@bne.catholic.net.au
24 Angel Avenue, MURGON
PO Box 60 Murgon 4605

Parish website:
murgon.brisbanecatholic.org.au

We pray for those who are sick:

Jess Bradbury; Graham Burgess;
Margaret Connell; Rodney Euler;
Kevin Fry; Steven Heit, Nerla Knight;
Dr Graham McAllister.

Good Shepherd

When we hear Jesus described as the Good Shepherd today, we might think that the title distinguishes him from all the bad shepherds who lived on the edge of faith and God's Law. But that would be wrong. In his preaching and behaviour Jesus also lived on the edge of the Law because he was called to be with people who lived there. He infringed the Law by curing on the Sabbath, touched people with leprosy or chronic bleeding and dined with public sinners. His enemies would certainly have said that he that he stank like the shepherds and their sheep. And of course he died outside the Law.

In John's Gospel, of course, Jesus refuses to call us servants but calls us friends. But if we are his friends then we are to be like him and to be servants to one another. In his life Pope Francis showed how powerful and beautiful living like that could be. His heart and hands were those of the lost sheep. That is why he won our hearts.

