First Reading  Acts 9:26-31
A reading from the Acts of the Apostles
He explained how the Lord appeared to Saul and spoke to him on his journey.
When Saul got to Jerusalem he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him: they could not believe he was really a disciple. Barnabas, however, took charge of him, introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord had appeared to Saul and spoken to him on his journey, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. Saul now started to go round with them in Jerusalem, preaching fearlessly in the name of the Lord. But after he had spoken to the Hellenists, and argued with them, they became determined to kill him. When the brothers knew, they took him to Caesarea, and sent him off from there to Tarsus.
The churches throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria were now left in peace, building themselves up, living in the fear of the Lord, and filled with the consolation of the Holy Spirit.
The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm
Ps 21:26-28, 30-32, R. v.26
(R.) I will praise you, Lord, in the assembly of your people.
or:
(R.) Alleluia.
1. My voice I will pay before those who fear him.
The poor shall eat and shall have their fill.
They shall praise the Lord, those who seek him.
May their hearts live for ever and ever! (R.)
2. All the earth shall remember and return to the Lord, all families of the nations worship before him.
They shall worship him, all the mighty of the earth; before him shall bow all who go down to the dust. (R.)
3. And my soul shall live for him, my children serve him.
They shall tell of the Lord to generations yet to come, declare his faithfulness to peoples yet unborn.
'These things the Lord has done.' (R.)

Second Reading  1 Jn 3:18-24
A reading from the first letter of St John
His commandments are these: that we believe and that we love one another.
My children, our love is not to be just words or mere talk, but something real and active; only by this can we be certain that we are the children of the truth and be able to quieten our conscience in his presence, whatever accusations it may raise against us, because God is greater than our conscience and he knows everything.
My dear people, if we cannot be condemned by our own conscience, we need not be afraid in God's presence, and whatever we ask him, we shall receive, because we keep his commandments and live the kind of life that he wants. His commandments are these: that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and that we love one another as he told us to. Whoever keeps his commandments lives in God and God lives in him. We know that he lives in us by the Spirit that he has given us.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation  Jn 15:4-5
Alleluia, alleluia!
Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord;
my branches bear much fruit.
Alleluia!

Gospel  Jn 15:1-8
A reading from the holy Gospel according to John
All who live in me, and I in them, bear much fruit.
Jesus said to his disciples: 'I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine-dresser. Every branch in me that bears no fruit he cuts away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes to make it bear even more. You are pruned already, by means of the word that I have spoken to you. Make your home in me, as I make mine in you. As a branch cannot bear fruit by itself, but must remain part of the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing. Anyone who does not remain in me is like a branch that has been thrown away - he withers; these branches are collected and thrown on the fire, and they are burnt. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it. It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples.'
The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection
by Greg Sunter
The Lectionary of this Easter season draws out some of the 'classic' gospel passages, particularly some of the discourses from the Gospel of John. Like many 'famous' or familiar passages, it can be true that familiarity breeds contempt - we think we are so familiar with the passage that we don't need to pay it much attention.
At first glance, it appears that there is a certain ruthlessness about the image of the vine-dresser pruning the vine: perform or perish! However, the process of cutting away and pruning branches is an incredibly nurturing action; it is removing the unproductive portions of the plant so that the vine has an even better opportunity to produce fruit in the next season. It is an act of love; not an act of economic rationalism. Within our own lives we are called to make decisions about which of our thoughts and actions are life-giving (fruit-bearing) and which are unproductive; negative; crippling; life-diminishing. If we are able to prune our unproductive thoughts and actions we allow ourselves the freedom and the ability to really flourish. Feelings of jealousy, greed, resentment, self-doubt and lack of confidence can limit our ability to be fully alive just as addictive and harmful behaviours can physically take away our ability to perform at our best.
I am reminded of the old Karate Kid movie where the boy, Daniel, is introduced to the art of bonsai. He is told to close his eyes, imagine the perfect tree and then start clipping and shaping the plant to make real the perfection that lies within it. It is only through a process of cutting away and pruning that we can nurture ourselves to realise the beauty of our potential.
PARISH LEADERSHIP TEAM
Fr Patrick Mugavin
patrick.mugavin@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Manager: John Hockey
manager@stmaryshamilton.org.au
Parish Secretaries:
Carolyn Stanhope and Kymhan Watson
hamilton@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Noreen McLeish: faith@stmaryshamilton.org.au
Colleen Johnson: pastoralcare@stmaryshamilton.org.au

PLEASE REMEMBER
IN YOUR PRAYERS.

DEATHS:
Floyd Crawford, Mary Tedesco, Bernadett Blohm, Catherine Howman, Lucille Selman, Fr. Vin Sproules.

THOSE WHO ARE SICK:

ST MARY’S PRIMARY, HAMILTON
Principal: Jo-Anne Bond
Phone: (03) 5551 9000

ST JOSEPH’S PRIMARY, PENSHURST
Principal: Ben van de Camp
Phone: (03) 5576 5438

MONIVAE COLLEGE, HAMILTON
Principal: Mark McGinnity
Phone: (03) 5551 1200

ST MARY’S ROSTER: Next Weekend - 9th & 10th May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mass 1st Sun</th>
<th>Mass 2nd Sun</th>
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<tr>
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<td>No Serv (To Ham)</td>
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Karen Brewis
Volunteer

1st Reader
Bev Kaay
Margaret Roberts

2nd Reader
Chris Jansen
Carmel Schlaghecke

Offertory
T Tuppen & J Gustus
Trish & Janine Daffey

PowerPoint
Volunteer
Hockey Family

Ministers of Communion
M Walter, K Brewis & Volunteer
F Soulsby, G Howell, D Dunn & D Brody

This Weekend

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Hamiton
Fri. After 10am Mass
Sat. 5.30 before Mass

Other Mass
Centres
Sundays
Before 9am

St Mary’s Church Cleaning May
S McCaigill, K Mulley, M Callaway

ST VINCENT DE PAUL
Maryknoll
Clarendon St, Ham.
Welfare, Assistance, Support Centre
Mon.- Fri. 1-3pm
55719859 or 0408923181

Interested volunteers please enquire on above Mobile No.

Weekday Mass or SAWC

<table>
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Parish Collections

Weekday counters: V & F O’Brien, G McGrath, M Stewart & J Watt
Next w/e counters: I & B Ferguson & L Stevens
F.Y.T.D.: $87,001 Pledged total $109,200
Weekly Priest’s Support: $1,292

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Greeting all

This note is to inform you that I have been granted extended leave by the bishop from May 4 to August 3. I have felt this need for some time due to a feeling of "burnout" and general tiredness.

Much of this is stress related, maybe attributed to my ongoing involvement with many persons and families who have suffered sexual abuse from church personnel.

My place of regeneration has consistently been when I seek out nature and "go bush". This I intend to do by taking a pilgrimage through outback NSW and QLD, camping in the bush, in State and National Parks, etc.

I look forward to the opportunity to refresh and renew my spirit through time for reflection and prayer, as well as relaxation.

Fr Peter Wood MSC has graciously accepted my invitation to supply in my absence. Fr John McKinnon will also be in residence most of this time and will offer a weekend mass as well as attend to the weekday masses.

Please pray for me as I will be praying for you.
Fr Paddy.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Welcoming Celebration for all NEW Parishioners to St Mary’s Parish Hamilton after Mass Sat. 23rd & Sun. 24th May. More information to come.
- CWL - Annual Diocesan Conference Thursday 28th May, Booking & Info: Margaret Rowe 5358 2521.

Priests Support – 1st Collection

Please view the chart below which highlights a decline in the giving to our first collection of approx. 19% on last year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>31,210</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>38,577</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>40,877</td>
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<td>2012</td>
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Please consider a regular increase in your contribution to this collection which is used directly for the expenses of our current and retired priests.

Sunday Session # One

ISIS Barbarism—What on Earth is God Doing?

Fr John McKinnon

Sunday 3rd May, 11:45am—1pm
St Mary’s Church Hamilton (Day Chapel)
Morning Tea Provided

Prayer

O God, you have grafted us onto Christ, that we may abide as living branches joined to the true Vine.

Bestow on us the comforting presence of your Holy Spirit, so that, loving one another with a love that is sincere, we may bear a rich harvest whose fruits are holiness and peace.

Through Christ our Lord Amen
The Sunday Assembly
- Warm family reunion feel
- Happy to be together, “it’s good to be here”
- Mutual acceptance
- “… to authenticate the Sunday assembly as the great sacrament of unity in Christ”
- Friendliness of Welcomers essential ingredient.

A Ministry to Community
- Explicit welcoming
- Welcomers to realise they are the first point of contact when people arrive
- We need to welcome people as we would Jesus.

How do we create the invitation into the vision?
Remembering that Christ is present in our midst in the:
WORD, ALTAR, CELEBRANT, BLESSED SACRAMENT
and the PEOPLE ASSEMBLED

A Ministry of Grace WELCOMERS
- Be there
- Arrive early
- When should we hand out Bulletins?
- Be at your best
- Welcomers at all entrances

EVERYONE HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MINISTRY OF WELCOME
- How can we expand the Ministry of welcome? Eg To children
- Strategic addressing of specific groups.
- The Mass is important – Central
- Monthly sessions to be held after Sunday Mass
- What about Saturday evening Mass goers?
- We need to focus on families – the future
- Remember all groups
- We are one Parish Community and all that we do aims to include all members.
- How do we do this?

Action:
Meeting of Core Rebuild Committee - Thursday
Where to from here?
23rd April at 7pm
Parish House Dining Room.