



Embracing God's Mission in Partnership



Extraordinary Mission Month

Introduction

*For the month of October 2019, I have asked that the whole Church revive her missionary awareness and commitment as we commemorate the centenary of the Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* of Pope Benedict XV (30 November 1919). Its farsighted and prophetic vision of the apostolate has made me realise once again the importance of renewing the Church's missionary commitment and giving fresh evangelical impulse to her work of preaching and bringing to the world the salvation of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again. (Pope Francis)¹*

As one with the universal Church throughout the Extraordinary Mission Month of October, we as Good Samaritans therefore focus particularly on embracing God's mission in partnership and fostering ecclesial community. We gather in prayer and engage in spiritual reading as "one particular way of listening to what the Lord wishes to tell us in his word and of letting ourselves be transformed by the Spirit".²

This booklet has been developed as a way for us to participate in the Extraordinary Mission Month, personally, communally and as a congregation. For each day in October, excerpts from *Baptised and Sent*³ and the homilies of Pope Francis' are provided. The third section then draws on the wisdom of the Good Samaritan Benedictine tradition through quotes, reflections, prayers, images and poems.

The readings of the day lead us gently into the reflections. We read God's word in prayer, asking that it 'enlighten and renew' us. You may wish to take five minutes of silence to reflect upon how God is speaking through the text. Responding to some of the following questions may assist with reflection:

I think about my life

- What is God asking me to listen to?
- What does God want me to pay attention to?
- What is God prompting, directing and leading me to in this reading?

I think about my community and the world

- What is God asking of us at this time?
- What does God want us to attend to in our community or world?
- What is God prompting, directing, leading and guiding us towards?⁴

***Prayer for the
Extraordinary Mission Month***

Heavenly Father,
when your only begotten Son Jesus Christ
rose from the dead,
he commissioned his followers
to “go and make disciples of all nations”
and you remind us that through our Baptism
we are made sharers in the mission of the Church.

Empower us by the gifts of the Holy Spirit
to be courageous and zealous
in bearing witness to the Gospel,
so that the mission entrusted to the Church,
which is still very far from completion,
may find new and efficacious expressions
that bring life and light to the world.

Help us make it possible for all peoples
to experience the saving love
and mercy of Jesus Christ,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, forever and ever.

Amen.

Living the Extraordinary Month of Mission

Mission: God's liberating plan for the universe
Fr Noel Connolly SSC

I am a Columban missionary priest and mission is my life. However, mission is an often misused word. I often wish I could invent a new word.

Traditionally, mission has been seen in terms of Church growth through individual conversions, or as the expansion of the Church into foreign lands. But while the growth of the Church is important, mission is not primarily about the extension of the Church. It is something more profound than that.

The major change in the meaning of mission came with *Ad Gentes*, the missionary document of the Second Vatican Council. The bishops rejected the prepared schema and, in late 1964, asked a committee assisted by Yves Congar and Joseph Ratzinger to prepare a new document. This committee went back to the Trinity to ground mission: 'The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature. For it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she takes her origin, in accordance with the decree of God the Father' (*Ad Gentes*, §2).

Up till then, the Church was the principal agent of mission. The Church tried to convert and Christianise the world. The committee reminded the bishops that mission flows directly from the nature of God, a loving community of three persons. Their love for one another gives birth to creation. And like parents, the Trinity continues to love creation, wanting to draw it into its own divine life. It is God's mission. God has a liberating plan for the universe, including us. God wants the world to reveal who God is: love, community, equality, diversity, mercy, compassion and justice. The three persons of the Trinity are constantly creating, healing, reconciling, transforming and uniting the world. It is not the Church that has a mission, but the mission has the Church as its servant, sign and sacrament.

Creation is God's first act of mission. The mission of the Creator Spirit has been active in the world since the beginning and comes to its fullest expression in

Jesus, who is the perfect revelation of God. Jesus also reveals to us God's plan for the universe: the kingdom or reign of God.

All the gospels point to the belief that something radically new was happening in Jesus. He himself proclaimed it most clearly in Mark 1:15: 'The kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent and believe the Good News.' Jesus was extremely conscious of the power of evil in the world. His whole life was a struggle against evil. However, at the same time, he was confident that a new age had dawned and that the power of God was greater than the power of evil, so the struggle was worthwhile.

Jesus never defines the kingdom of God. It is too big a reality for a definition. He describes it in symbols: a banquet, a treasure in the field, a mustard seed. St Paul gives us the fullest description: 'the kingdom of God does not mean eating or drinking this or that, it means righteousness and peace and joy brought by the Holy Spirit' (Romans 14:17).

The Church is the community gathering in Jesus' name to carry on his mission. We are to be a witness to God's kingdom; we are to give hope—people should be able to look at us and take hope—and to struggle for its coming, for the transformation of the whole cosmos. People should be able to look at us and learn something of God and God's hopes for the world.

However, the kingdom is bigger than the Church. God is present wherever people strive for justice, peace, freedom, reconciliation, interreligious dialogue and so on. Our role is not just to do the good of the kingdom but also to seek it out and enjoy the kingdom in and around us, even in 'secular, plural Australia'—to celebrate and build on it. The Church is most missionary when it is stretching itself, exploring and discovering what God is doing in the world.

Our image of mission is important. Some images are too heavenly, some too earthly. The advantage of seeing mission as God's, and of seeing our role as helping to build the kingdom, is that it honours Jesus' dream. It is an inspiring vision that can give all of us in the Church a feeling of community and a sense of mission—something we badly need today. I find it energising and hopeful to

believe that God has a liberating plan or dream for the universe and that I am called to participate in a project that is powered by God and is as big as the cosmos.

Questions for Reflection

1. How would I describe 'mission'?
2. Looking back over my life, has my understanding of mission changed?
3. How can I personally respond to the call to be a disciple?
4. Think about the work of mission in Australia. What do you think God is calling us to?



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*... throughout the world, let us be
'permanently in a state of mission'.*

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, §25

Tuesday 1 October

Zec 8:20-23, Ps 87:1b-7, Lk 9:51-56

Memorial of St Thérèse of the Child Jesus

From Baptised and Sent

The Church's mission is to conform itself to the person and the mystery of Christ. It is a conversion that engages one's whole life, leaving to the Lord the task of opening the doors of mission and moving people's hearts. The times and ways of the conversion of the nations are the Lord's work; the task of the Church is to convert itself to the Spirit and to the person of the Lord Jesus. (p. 85)

From Pope Francis

The Church, as Benedict XVI has told us, grows by attraction, by witness. And when people see this witness of humility, meekness and docility, they feel the need" which the prophet Zechariah spoke of, saying: 'Let us go with you'. Faced with the witness of charity, people feel this need.... Charity is simple: worshipping God and serving others. This is the witness that makes the Church grow. "Precisely for this reason, St Thérèse of the Child Jesus, who was "so humble and so trusting in God, has been named Patroness of the missions, because her example makes people say: we want to come with you"⁶.

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

The name sufficiently indicates the scope, since the religious are called to imitate the charity of the kind Samaritan who was moved to pity the poor wounded man, and having poured oil and wine into his wounds to heal him, afterwards conveyed him to a place of security. In like manner, the religious will use all gentleness and compassion for the unhappy whom they are to tend and all fervour of charity in restoring souls to the fold of Jesus Christ.⁷

Wednesday 2 October

Neh 2:1-8, Ps 137:1-6, Mt 18:1-5, 10

Memorial of the Holy Guardian Angels

From Baptised and Sent

Every disciple is missionary because she is sent to proclaim good news, supported and accompanied by angels, divine messengers who keep her open to contemplation as the foundation of mission and to the challenges of the world to which she offers witness. Like the guardian angel to whom each of us is entrusted, the child disciple always sees in Jesus the face of the Father to discover always and in anyone the face of a brother, the existence of a sister, to love (p. 88)

From Pope Francis

Sometimes, when we see the troubles, difficulties and wrongs all around us, we are tempted to give up. It seems that the promises of the Gospel do not apply; they are unreal. But the Bible tells us that the great threat to God's plan for us is, and always has been, the lie. The devil is the father of lies. Often he hides his snares behind the appearance of sophistication, the allure of being "modern", "like everyone else". He distracts us with the view of ephemeral pleasures, superficial pastimes. And so we squander our God-given gifts by tinkering with gadgets; we squander our money on gambling and drink; we turn in on ourselves. We forget to remain focused on the things that really matter. We forget to remain, at heart, children of God. For children, as the Lord tells us, have their own wisdom⁸

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

Let us consider, then, how we ought to behave in the presence of God and his angels, and let us stand to sing the psalms in such a way that our minds are in harmony with our voices (RB 19:6-7)

Thursday 3 October

Neh 8:1-4a, 5-6, 7b-12, Ps 19:8-11, Lk 10:1-12

From Baptised and Sent

Missionary disciples must burn with the same passion and love for the world, so that all may be saved, going to seek out the men and women of every generation, of every place and city, so that no one should miss the proclamation of the Gospel of salvation. (p.92)

From Pope Francis

We are thus called to translate into concrete acts that which we invoke in prayer and profess in faith. There is no alternative to charity: those who put themselves at the service of others, even when they don't know it, are those who love God. The Christian life, however, is not merely extending a hand in times of need. The task which the Lord gives us, on the contrary, is the *vocation to charity* in which each of Christ's disciples puts his or her entire life at his service, so to grow each day in love.

How many hearts have been comforted by volunteers! How many hands they have held; how many tears they have wiped away; how much love has been poured out in hidden, humble and selfless service! This praiseworthy service gives voice to the faith, – and expresses the mercy of God, who draws near to those in need.⁹

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

We weren't Catholics then but my brother used to do a milk round for Hough's and they reported our plight to the nuns. Mum didn't know anything about it. She went to the grocer to pay the bill. He said, "It's already been paid for." And we went to Woods the little butcher. "It's already been paid." We found out later they were collecting at St Joseph's and paid for the bread and milk and stuff until we got on our feet. My mother said, "If that's religion it'll do me." And she took us all down and had us christened.¹⁰

Friday 4 October

Bar 1:15-22, Ps 79:1-5,8,9, Lk 10:13-16

Memorial of St Francis of Assisi

From Baptised and Sent

The journey of conversion, which should be characterised by the recognition of personal and structural sin, is certainly always a gift from the Lord, but risks being dissipated in a hasty self-assertion, or in a merely formal and fundamentalist recovery of gestures, rites, formulas, and phrases that will never have the strength of an evangelising mission. (p. 95)

From Pope Francis

We know that in our heart there are many inclinations towards sin, towards greed, jealousy, hate and gossip. What of the notion of gossip? We despair when we hear news of wars, but to gossip is a form of war; it is a war of the heart to destroy the other. When “the Lord tells us: ‘no, do not gossip, keep quiet, we do not listen and simply do as we please.’¹¹

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story



The St Francis Fresco at Subiaco Monastery is considered to be the most accurate depiction of St Francis. Thought to have been painted during a visit to Subiaco in 13th century, the image has no halo, indicating it was painted before Francis' death, and no stigmata, indicating it was before he received these holy wounds later in life.

Today, St Francis of Assisi is the patron saint for ecologists — a title honouring his boundless love for animals and nature. In 2013, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergogli chose to honor Saint Francis by taking his name, becoming Pope Francis.

St Francis Fresco at Subiaco Monastery¹²

Saturday 5 October

Bar 4:5-12,27-29, Ps 69:33-37, Lk 10:17-24

From Baptised and Sent

The word of God today calls us not only to consider the different aspects of the mission, but also to actively discover what these realities reveal to us of God. When we recognise with faith the ways in which God comes and works in us, we can allow the Spirit to carry out this mission to others through us. The profound communion of missionary disciples with Jesus, in his loving, divine unity with the Father, gives joy, passion, and zeal for the missionary effort. (p. 98)

From Pope Francis

It is the symptom of a spiritual sclerosis when we are only interested in objects to be produced rather than on persons to be loved. This is the origin of the tragic contradiction of our age: as progress and new possibilities increase, which is a good thing, less and less people are able to benefit from them. This is a great injustice that should concern us much more than knowing when or how the world will end. Because we cannot go about our business quietly at home while Lazarus lies at the door. There is no peace in the homes of the prosperous as long as justice is lacking in the home of everyone.¹³

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

“Go and do likewise”. They just do it. They see a need, they have gone and done it. And they are continually doing it. It is not static. It is such a dynamic process that they have got. There is always something new starting, whether it be visiting prisons or the shanties or things within the Kinder School. They are living out that Gospel through and through, 100%!!

The sisters are just amazing. I think walking into the Community Centre, walking into the Kinder school and seeing how they live out that parable, in really, really practical ways, it just makes the story come alive. They are the Good Samaritan and Jesus in those places. The way that they give such dignity to these people and they do not discriminate. They give dignity and hope to anyone who is in need. I just saw Jesus in these people¹⁴

Sunday 6 October

Hab 1:2-3; 2,2-4, Ps 95:1-2,6-9, 2 Tm 1:6-8,13-14, Lk 17:5-10

From Baptised and Sent

We come to see the difference, then, which faith makes for us. Those who believe are transformed by the love to which they have opened their hearts in faith. By their openness to this offer of primordial love, their lives are enlarged and expanded. The self-awareness of the believer now expands because of the presence of another; it now lives in this other and thus, in love, life takes on a whole new breadth. (p. 103)

From Pope Francis

The Christian life that each of you has, also comes from afar. It is a gift we received in the Church which comes from the heart of God our Father, who wishes to make each of us a masterpiece of creation and of history. Every carpet, and you know this well, must be made according to a weft and a warp; only with this form can the carpet be harmoniously woven. So too in the Christian life: every day it must be woven patiently, intertwining a precise weft and warp: the weft of faith and the warp of service. When faith is interwoven with service, the heart remains open and youthful, and it expands in the process of doing good. Thus faith, as Jesus tells us in the Gospel, becomes powerful and accomplishes marvellous deeds. If faith follows this path, it matures and grows in strength, but only when it is joined to service.¹⁵

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*Compassion is the deep, gut wrenching response to and embracing of the situation of another. As a radical critique of blind legalism, cynical indifference, or established subservience, it is a work of justice, which announces that another's dignity or hurt is to be taken seriously. And it is woven into the whole fabric and all seasons of a Benedictine community's life.*¹⁶

Monday 7 October

Jon 1:1-2:2,11, Jon 2:3-5,8, Lk 10:25-37

Memorial of Our Lady of the Rosary

From Baptised and Sent

Only love evangelises effectively. It is not a matter of developing a religion of worship, of morality, of legalistic prescriptions; it is a matter of making neighbours of Christ the wounded women and men that we meet on our roads to Jericho. It is a question of making sure that our meticulously planned programs give priority to caring for the wounded we encounter on our roads. It is about giving first aid with what we have: the oil of mercy and the wine of love. It is about bringing humanity ever closer to God's saving goodness. (p. 106)

From Pope Francis

The Samaritan of the Gospel acts impartially: he does not question the man lying on the ground, before helping him, to know what his provenance and faith are, or to understand if he has been wrongly or rightly beaten. No. The Good Samaritan does not subject the wounded man to any prior examination, he does not judge him and does not subordinate his aid to moral prerogatives, let alone religious ones. He simply soothes his wounds and then entrusts him to an inn. Behind his figure there stands that of Jesus Himself... offering His salvation to every human being.¹⁷

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

The Immaculate Mother of God is our mother also. Each one of us has made her profession, under her loving protection, and each House of the Institute has her as its chief patroness. Each day we have recourse to her in the Hours of the Little Office, and her hymns and antiphons form part of the familiar furniture of our minds... The Litany of Our Lady sung in every house of the Institute on Saturdays, the special devotions for the month of May – customs brought by the Archbishop of Downside and continued in his Benedictine community as long as it existed – were handed on to his newly formed Institute of the Good Samaritans.¹⁸

Tuesday 8 October

Jon 3:1-10, Ps 130:1b-2,3-4ab,7-8, Lk 10:38-42

From Baptised and Sent

The vocations of Martha and Mary are two different and complementary ones, driven by the same intention: to recognise the uniqueness of the One who knocked on the door. These two women, then, do not represent an antithesis, as has too often been suggested. Serving and listening are shown to be reciprocal rather than opposing actions in the mission that Jesus entrusts to the Church. The presence of Jesus calls us to take up the journey to enter the heart of every person by listening to the Word and by service... (p. 108)

From Pope Francis

Tenderness is a sign of the love that God shows to those who suffer and are cast aside. Suffering need not only be physical; one of today's most frequent pathologies is also spiritual. It is a suffering of the heart; it causes sadness for lack of love. When we experience disappointment or betrayal in important relationships, we come to realise how vulnerable and defenceless we are. The temptation to become self-absorbed grows stronger, and we risk losing life's greatest opportunity: *to love in spite of everything!*

The happiness that everyone desires can be expressed in any number of ways and attained only if we are capable of loving. This is the way. It is always a matter of love; there is no other path. The true challenge is that of who loves the most.¹⁹

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*Our three old houses are alive; the kitchens still make jam, put tea into tea pots, serve food to visitors. Their rooms are still turned out for annual spring cleaning; their stairs still creak at night. Useful, practical and beautiful things keep a number of people going in these houses through out the year, because charity and love are there, God is there.*²⁰

Wednesday 9 October

Jon 4:1-11, Ps 86:3-6,9-10, Lk 11:1-4

From Baptised and Sent

Prayer is always an experience of relationship with God, an encounter with Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. The Our Father, as a summary of the Gospel, offers us the fundamental criteria for this encounter and the mission that flows from it. The grace to turn to God as Father enables us to live as sisters and brothers. (p. 112)

From Pope Francis

The Church is catholic because she is *universal*, she is spread abroad through every part of the world and she proclaims the Gospel to every man and to every woman. The Church is not a group of elite; she does not only concern the few. The Church has no limits; she is sent to the totality of people, to the totality of the human race...The Church is catholic, because she is the “home of harmony” where *unity and diversity* know how to merge in order to become a great source of wealth. Let us think about the image of a symphony, which implies accord, harmony, various instruments playing together.²¹

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

Not being a musically inclined person, I am always humbled by God’s graces imparted to me through singing with the Monastery Schola... The miracle of harmony, though, is what gives me pause most often. Many of the music pieces we sing are in three-part harmony. When we begin practicing a new hymn, it is often difficult to hear the beauty of the overall piece because of the work involved in learning my own part. I often have trouble appreciating the sound of my own voice and how it contributes to the harmonious sound of the Schola. Discerning a religious vocation can be a lot like learning the harmony part in a musical piece. Sometimes discerning women wonder, “Will my individual experiences and gifts harmonise with the Community, or will I sound like a sour note? Will my own voice be drowned out in the Community’s identity?”²²

Thursday 10 October

Mal 3:13-20b, Ps 1:1-4,6, Lk 11:5-13

From Baptised and Sent

Pope Francis often uses a simple and useful description of the mission: “Mission is at once a passion for Jesus and a passion for his people” (EG 268). This means that every missionary who experiences a profound encounter with Jesus through personal friendship will want to share with others the fruits of this encounter. Starting from a personal encounter with God, we then desire to be friends with others in sharing their friendship with the Lord Jesus. (p. 115)

From Pope Francis

How do we pray? Do we pray piously and calmly out of habit or do we place ourselves courageously before the Lord to ask for grace, to ask for what we are praying for? Our attitude is so important for prayer that is not courageous is not real prayer. When we pray, we need the courage to trust that the Lord is listening to us, we need the courage to knock at the door... The Lord himself says: ‘everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened’. Do we get involved in prayer? Do we know how to knock at the door of God's heart?²³

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

Whenever we want to ask some favour of a powerful person, we do it humbly and respectfully, for fear of presumption. How much more important, then, to lay our petitions before the Lord God of all things with the utmost humility and sincere devotion. We must know that God regards our purity of heart and tears of compunction, not our many words. Prayer should therefore be short and pure, unless perhaps it is prolonged under the inspiration of divine grace. In community, however, prayer should always be brief; and when the superior gives the signal, all should rise together. (RB 20: 1-5)

Friday 11 October

Jl 1:13-15; 2:1-2, Ps 9:2-3,6,16,8-9, Lk 11:15-

From Baptised and Sent

The missionary disciple must, like Jesus, be involved in the struggle against evil. This should be one of our main concerns, because it genuinely demonstrates our filial relationship with God and our communion with Jesus. Curiously, however, being witnesses demands that disciples confront their own humanity. On the one hand, they must be aware of being able, by virtue of grace and effort, to participate in the Lord's mission. But along with these great possibilities, disciples must also be aware of their limitations. (p. 117)

From Pope Francis

Ours is a hopeful perspective, but one which is also demanding. The temptation is always within us to resist the Holy Spirit, because he takes us out of our comfort zone and unsettles us; he makes us get up and drives the Church forward. It is always easier and more comfortable to settle in our sedentary and unchanging ways. In truth, the Church shows her fidelity to the Holy Spirit in as much as she does not try to control or tame him. And the Church shows herself also when she rejects the temptation to look only inwards. We Christians become true missionary disciples, able to challenge consciences, when we throw off our defensiveness and allow ourselves to be led by the Spirit. He is freshness, imagination and newness.²⁴

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*Imagination is learning to see beyond what we have to what could be if we simply rearranged our present resources in other ways: foster parenting rather than orphanages, computers rather than typewriters, water piped from wells through dry areas rather than crops left to die from drought, basic housing for the poor rather than rain-sogged tents. Imagination comes out of new ways of seeing old things done differently. It takes the resources we have and makes new and better ways of using them. It is God speaking to us through human ideas reshaped through the creative energy of the human soul.*²⁵

Saturday 12 October

Jl 4:12-21, Ps 97:1-2,5-6,11-12, Lk 11:27-28

From Baptised and Sent

The image of Mary as a faithful disciple who lives a pilgrimage of faith engages the sensibility of modern people and the understanding of the Church in its call to discipleship. Pope Francis writes in *Evangelii Gaudium*, twice quoting John Paul II's Encyclical *Redemptoris Mater*: "Mary is the woman of faith, who lives and advances in faith, and 'her exceptional pilgrimage of faith represents a constant point of reference for the Church.' Mary let herself be guided by the Holy Spirit on a journey of faith towards a destiny of service and fruitfulness. (p. 120)

From Pope Francis

Today let us all ask ourselves whether we are afraid of what God might ask, or of what he does ask. Do I let myself be surprised by God, as Mary was, or do I remain caught up in my own safety zone: in forms of material, intellectual or ideological security, taking refuge in my own projects and plans? Do I truly let God into my life? How do I answer him? Am I a Christian by fits and starts, or am I a Christian full-time? Our culture of the ephemeral, the relative, also takes its toll on the way we live our faith. God asks us to be faithful, daily, in our everyday life...Faith is ultimate fidelity, like that of Mary.²⁶

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

Archbishop Polding took over the more formal aspects of training of the young religious, impressing on them his strong conviction that devotion to Our Lady would give light and balance to their Benedictine vocation... he bequeathed his own fervent devotion to the Mother of God, as the Mother of hope, grace and holy joy. "Do you my dear children, bear ever this thought with you in your gratitude and jubilation, and if in the warmth of your hearts, you would desire to hear her voice, think that all she ever says and does is comprehended in that great saying of hers at the marriage feast, Whatever he says to you, do it".²⁷

Sunday 13 October

2 Kgs 5:14-17, Ps 98:1,2-4, 2 Tm 2:8-13, Lk 17:11-19

From Baptised and Sent

The mission of the Church brings and communicates the saving grace of God because it recreates men and women from the destruction of sin, from the separation of death. Welcoming the Gospel means entering into the Paschal Mystery of Christ, accepting his re-creating death and contemplating his fidelity in the resurrection. Reborn in the baptismal font, the Church's new Jordan River, and grateful for the undeserved salvation, we are made missionaries in the ordinary experiences of life: get up, go your way, return to your home. (p. 125-126)

From Pope Francis

God surprises us. Are we are afraid of what God might ask, or of what God does ask? Do I let myself be surprised by God, as Mary was? Or do I remain caught up in my own safety zone: in forms of material, intellectual or ideological security, taking refuge in my own projects and plans? Do I truly let God into my life? How do I answer God? *God asks us to be faithful*, remember Christ always – and thus persevere in faith. *God surprises us with love, but demands that we be faithful in following him.* We can be unfaithful, but God cannot: God is “the faithful one” and demands of us that same fidelity.²⁸

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*God takes account of our goodwill: let us not think that we must take up every new idea or book that is presented. Simplicity is a precious quality in our praying, as well as a steady effort to be genuinely faithful... Pray as you can. We are all different: we are indeed unique and we can give God the prayer, the unique gift that he expects, if we are truly ourselves... I need to accept myself AS I AM...*²⁹

Monday 14 October

Rom 1:1-7, Ps 98:1-4, Lk 11:29-32

From Baptised and Sent

Paul's service is based on the word of Christ, nourished by the word of Christ, and communicates the word of Christ. His life is Christocentric. The opening lines of the letter depict the dynamism of God's salvation, which turns from particularism to universality: in Christ salvation no longer has privileged recipients, but is addressed to everyone, even to those who are far away. His Church, the universal sacrament of salvation, in a permanent state of mission, is sent to everyone, calling together everyone to Christ. (p. 129)

From Pope Francis

Peace is not achieved by normative frameworks and institutional arrangements between well-intentioned political or economic groups. Jesus finds the solution to the harm inflicted through a personal encounter between the parties. It is always helpful, moreover, to incorporate into our peace processes the experience of those sectors that have often been overlooked, so that communities themselves can influence the development of collective memory. "The principal author, the historic subject of this process, is the people as a whole and their culture, and not a single class, minority, group or elite – the people as a whole and their culture –. We do not need plans drawn up by a few for the few, or an enlightened or outspoken minority which claims to speak for everyone. It is about agreeing to live together, a social and cultural pact" (EG 239).

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*The question is: What is the way to the beginning of peace? The philosopher Blaise Pascal wrote, "The unhappiness of a person resides in one thing, to be unable to remain peacefully in a room". It is silence and solitude that brings us face to face with ourselves and the inner wars we must win if we are ever to become truly whole, truly at peace.*³⁰

Tuesday 15 October

Rom 1:16-25, Ps 19:2-5, Lk 11:37-41

Memorial of Saint Teresa of Jesus

From Baptised and Sent

Traditions, practices, and customs, when they are imposed and observed in an inflexible way, move away from their secondary and instrumental finality to educate our weak and impressionable hearts to do good and to love. But they can become real barriers of separation and opposition. Only the recovery of conversion to loving dialogue with Christ, who is not afraid of overcoming barriers, sterile precepts, and empty traditions, can generate life and new relationships of communion, within which even the law and its precepts can help us live well and in a manner ordered to the newness of salvation. (p. 131)

From Pope Francis

The man who invited Jesus to dine with him was scandalised that he did not wash his hands, yet just as Paul did not mince words when speaking of idolatry, so Jesus does not mince words with hypocrites: “You Pharisees cleanse the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside you are full of extortion and wickedness. It could not be clearer! You are greedy and wicked. You fools!” What does Jesus counsel? Give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything will be clean for you. This is the way of the Lord: to adore God, to love God above everything and to love one's neighbour as oneself. It is so simple and yet so difficult. It is only possible with grace. Let us ask, then, for this grace.³¹

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*As regards the celebration of the Mystery, this can only take place when the vessel is steady, sailing with the wind on the lee beam. To prevent scruples, whenever you doubt whether you can without difficulty celebrate, in all cases of doubt decide you will not celebrate...*³²

Wednesday 16 October

Rom 2:1-11, Ps 62:2-3,6-7,9, Lk 11:42-46

From Baptised and Sent

In the kingdom of God, what determines relationships between people, overcoming barriers of discrimination and separation, is the mystery of the goodness of God who, in Jesus, unites himself to every person and offers mercy to all. Missionary disciples of Jesus are called to give what they possess within. Not only to give material goods in alms, but to offer themselves first of all: their own lives and their own hearts. (p. 136)

From Pope Francis

“Apostle”, in fact, is a Greek word meaning “sent”, “dispatched”. An Apostle is a person who has been given a mandate, he is sent to do something and the Apostles were chosen, called and sent out by Jesus to continue his work, that is to pray — which is the primary job of an apostle — and, second, to proclaim the Gospel. This is important, because when we think of the Apostles we might think that they were only sent out to proclaim the Gospel, to do many good deeds.³³

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*As the first six sisters sailed out of Sydney Harbour on the SS Changte on 15 October 1948, in some way all of us, Good Samaritans, co-workers and friends, embarked with them on what was to become arguably the most significant journey in our history. Life was changed profoundly. We were set on a path of internationality and cross-cultural living that continues to enrich and challenge us to this day.*³⁴

*The general reaction to the Sisters’ coming is one of great gratitude to the Catholic people of Australia. The Christians here are so genuinely pleased, the Japanese Sisters so sincerely thankful, the Bishop and priests so deeply grateful, that I am sure that God will shower very special graces on the Catholic Church in Australia.*³⁵

Thursday 17 October

Rom 3:21-30, Ps 130:1b-6ab, Lk 11:47-54

Memorial of St. Ignatius of Antioch

From Baptised and Sent

Paul rejects the attitude of those who would consider themselves justified before God on the basis of their own works. Such people, even when they obey the commandments and do good works, are centred on themselves; they fail to realise that goodness comes from God. Those who live this way, who want to be the source of their own righteousness, find that the latter is soon depleted and that they are unable even to keep the law. They become closed in on themselves and isolated from the Lord and from others; their lives become futile and their works barren, like a tree far from water. (p. 139-140)

From Pope Francis

Jesus is not present in ideologies. Jesus is tenderness, love and meekness, whereas ideologies of whatever sort are always rigid. So much so, that they risk making a Christian “a disciple of a particular way of thinking” rather than “a disciple of Jesus”. This is not a new illness... and the illness is caused by a lack of prayer, since without prayer the door of the heart closes. Therefore the key to opening the door to faith is prayer.³⁶

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.” And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” But wanting to justify himself...

(Lk 10: 25-29)

Friday 18 October

2 Tm 4:10-17b, Ps 145:10-13,17-18, Lk 10:1-9

Feast of St Luke the Evangelist

From Baptised and Sent

Those who are sent, like the Lord, establish with those who receive them relationships in which living the peace of the kingdom has begun. Their behaviour leads them to depend on those who welcome them, to whom they entrust themselves and their very lives. Missionaries are therefore fully exposed, even as regards their livelihoods, to the risks of the mission: welcome or rejection, success or failure. (p. 142)

From Pope Francis

Pope Francis sees the homes for elderly priests and religious sisters as shrines of apostolic life and holiness. In these homes, one will find priests and sisters who live under the weight of solitude, and who wait for the Lord to come to knock at the door of their hearts. Unfortunately, we tend to forget about these shrines because they are not beautiful places, because there we see what awaits us. However if we look at them more deeply, they are beautiful; they house a wealth of humanity. To visit is to make a true pilgrimage to a place of apostolic life and holiness. These sisters and priests wait for the Lord a little like St Paul did: they are a bit sad, it is true, but they also have a certain peace, their faces shine with joy.³⁷

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*Cultivate towards your fellow passengers and officers a cheerful disposition, no familiarity, but all the ease and gentleness and desire to oblige which, constituting the ordinary politeness, becomes, when animated by supernatural motive, a Christian virtue.*³⁸

Saturday 19 October

Rom 4:13,16-18, Ps 105:6-9,42-43, Lk 12:8-12

From Baptised and Sent

How can anyone who rejects the Spirit, who is the very source and agent of the forgiveness, repentance, and renewal of the disciples, be forgiven? Luke sees this confirmed in the experience of the hardening and blindness of those who have rejected the witness of the apostles. It is a total, free, and conscious closure to the action of the Spirit and to the Spirit's movement of reconciliation and forgiveness, to such an extent that no one can be forced, against explicit will and action, to be saved. The welcoming or the rejection of the Spirit of God is a mysterious relationship of our conscience and our freedom with God; our hearts are fully scrutable only by God and in God. Only God, who knows our hearts, grants forgiveness of sins and salvation. (p. 145)

From Pope Francis

Abraham "hoped against hope" in God's promises. Trusting in the Lord's word that a son would be born to him, Abraham left his home for a new land. Although the fulfilment of God's promise was long delayed and seemed to be impossible, Abraham continued to hope. Abraham, our father in faith, shows us that sure trust in God's word does not mean that we will not have moments of uncertainty, disappointment and bewilderment...³⁹

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road, though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always, though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.*⁴⁰

Sunday 20 October

Ex 17:8-13, Ps 121:1-8, 2 Tm 3:14-4:2, Lk 18:1-8

World Mission Day 2019

Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for World Mission Day 2019
BAPTISED AND SENT: THE CHURCH OF CHRIST ON MISSION IN THE WORLD

From Baptised and Sent

The efficacy of continuous prayer, of constant supplication, of the insistent search for love for truth and justice, forges the disciple's capacity for mission. Only those who insistently pray put Christ at the centre of their lives and of the mission entrusted to them, growing in faith. Only those who insistently pray become attentive and able to listen, to realise and discover the needs and requests for material and spiritual redemption so present in the heart of today's humanity. (p. 150-151)

From Pope Francis

The saints are men and women who enter fully into the mystery of prayer. Men and women who *struggle with prayer*, letting the Holy Spirit pray and struggle in them. They struggle *to the very end*, with all their strength, and they triumph, but not by their own efforts: the Lord triumphs in them and with them. The saintly witnesses fought the good fight of faith and love by their prayers. That is why *they remained firm in faith, with a generous and steadfast heart...* May we cry out day and night to God, without losing heart. May we let the Holy Spirit pray in us, and may we support one another in prayer.⁴¹

CRA National Day of Sorrow and Promise

5.00pm - 6.00pm: one hour together on one day, to be one across the nation

CRA wishes to call all our congregations to set aside time and space in unity:

- *to offer a national response from Catholic Religious across the country to recognise survivors and all who have been harmed from abuse in the Church and to make a commitment to a safer future. To bring together all congregations and at the same time in a coordinated manner, to make a national gesture of sorrow and promise, with a unified voice and responding to the needs within each individual community*
- *to honour those who spoke their stories to break the silence and those who work in the interests of those harmed by abuse and for the safety of the vulnerable*
- *a Liturgy of Sorrow and Promise will be provided*

Monday 21 October

Rom 4:20-25, Lk 1:69-75, Lk 12:13-21

From Baptised and Sent

The concerns of this world are listed in detail in the Sermon on the Mount. “I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat [or drink], or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?... But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil” (Mt 6:25,33-34). Only faith as eternal life provides the proper measure to everything, to our time, to our relationships. (p. 154-155)

From Pope Francis

If I give to those who are in need “it is a good sign”, but I must also ask myself: “How much do I give? What do I give? My leftovers? In this case, it is not a good sign. I have to realise in giving I may have to deprive myself of something that might be necessary for me. In that case my gesture signifies that love for God is greater than my attachment to wealth. Therefore, the first question: Do I give? second: How much do I give?; third: How do I give? In other words, do I give like Jesus, by giving “with a loving caress, or like one who is paying a tax? When you help people, do you look them in the eyes? Do you touch their hand? We must not forget that before us is the flesh of Christ, it’s your brother, your sister. And in that moment you are like the Father who never leaves the birds of the sky without food.”⁴²

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*What does God not expect us to do for the poor and the ignorant, who are loved above all others in the world?... Does not the fullness of our heart proclaim within us that as God has generously dealt with us, so should we deal with the widow, the orphan and those who are in sorrow? Do we not feel called to be ministers of God’s mercy and messengers of God’s compassion?*⁴³

Tuesday 22 October

Rom 5:12,15b, 17-19,20b-21, Ps 40:7-10,17, Lk 12:35-38

Optional Memorial of St John Paul II

From Baptised and Sent

From God's perspective, waiting responds to the law of love. For us who live, the long period of waiting only increases our desire to meet God face to face. We must be strong to bear the burden of holding to a promise with no deadline. It is important to be aware that all the seasons of a life well lived, seeking and doing God's will, are a kairos, a time favourable to being called home. Our being ready for this moment will make our lives successes. (p. 159)

From Pope Francis

Understanding God's superabundant love helps us also to understand Jesus' preferential love for sinners. They accused him of always keeping company with tax collectors and sinners and eating with tax collectors was scandalous, because sin abounded in their hearts. But Jesus went to them with the superabundance of his grace and love. Some of the saints say that one of the ugliest sins is the sin of diffidence, i.e. distrust of God. How can we distrust a God who is so close, so good, and who shows such preferential love for our hearts, sinners though we are? Such is the mystery:... But perhaps these three words will help us: contemplation, to contemplate this mystery; closeness, this mystery hidden for all ages in a God who is close and who draws near to us; and abundance, a God who always triumphs over sin through the superabundance of his grace and tenderness, through the richness of mercy.⁴⁴

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*The spiritual writer Thomas Merton once wrote about standing on a street corner and suddenly seeing everyone around him surrounded by a beautiful light. It filled him with unutterable peace, but at the same time a wish to tell everyone how shining and beautiful they were. This is what happens when we begin to see with the eyes of mercy.*⁴⁵

Wednesday 23 October

Rom 6:12-18, Ps 124:1b-8, Lk 12:39-48

From Baptised and Sent

Those who decide to exclude God from their hearts will not find it easy to welcome their neighbours and to recognise the divine plan for them. The Gospel declares that the Lord will come again as a judge and all people will have to account for their own lives. It is not a threat. It is not part of God's pedagogy to force himself on us with the spectre of punishment. The Christian community is the home of the Father where life and love are celebrated. It is the choices of each of us that will result in reward or exclusion. (p. 160-161)

From Pope Francis

A heart full of desire. We all have desires. The poor ones are those who have no desire, no desire to go forward, toward the horizon; and for us Christians this horizon is the encounter with Jesus, the very encounter with him, who is our life, our joy, our happiness. I would like to ask you two questions. First: do you all have a desiring heart? A heart that desires? Think about it and respond silently in your hearts. I ask you is your heart filled with desire, or is it a closed heart, a sleeping heart, a heart numb to the things of life? The desire to go forward to encounter Jesus. The second question: where is your treasure, what are you longing for? Jesus told us: where your treasure is, there will be your heart — and I ask you: where is your treasure? What is the most important reality for you, the most precious reality, the one that attracts your heart like a magnet? What attracts your heart? May I say that it is God's love? Do you wish to do good to others, to live for the Lord and for your brothers and sisters? May I say this? Each one answer in his own heart.⁴⁶

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*No matter what your work is, even if it is only picking up straw or bits of paper, do it well and do it for God.*⁴⁷

Thursday 24 October

Rom 6:19-23, Ps 1:1-4,6, Lk 12:49-53

From Baptised and Sent

This brings to mind another teaching of Jesus, which requires from his disciples a love greater than the love they have for their relatives. The reason is very simple: he is the source of love. It is he who teaches us to truly love, giving our lives for the people we love. Love motivated only by family ties is very fragile. On the other hand, when I become a follower of Jesus, I not only learn to truly love my own family, but I abandon all greed and hypocrisy, every selfishness and discrimination, opening my heart to universal fellowship, welcoming with sincere love people different from my own religion, ethnicity, culture, skin colour, social status – people who were previously foreigners to me. (p. 166)

From Pope Francis

Let us ask for the grace to hear the cry of all those tossed by the waves of life. The *cry of the poor*: it is the stifled cry of the unborn, of starving children, of young people more used to the explosion of bombs than happy shouts of the playground. It is the cry of the elderly, cast off and abandoned to themselves. The cry of the poor daily grows louder but is heard less and less. Every day that cry gets louder, but every day heard less, drowned out by the din of the rich few, who grow ever fewer and more rich. The cry of the poor finds a hearing with God. Yet I ask, does it with us? Do we have eyes to see, ears to hear, hands outstretched to offer help? Or do we keep repeating: “Come back tomorrow”? Jesus demands that we do something more to give to those who have nothing to give back, to love *gratuitously*. Let us look around in our own day. For all that we do, do we ever do anything completely for free, something for a person who cannot repay us?⁴⁸

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*If any one cause may be considered the source of injustice in the world, the inordinate love of gain is the undoubtedly the cause.*⁴⁹

Friday 25 October

Rom 7:18-25a, Ps 119:66,68,76,77,93,94, Lk 12:54-59

From Baptised and Sent

Many people who listened to him and saw his works were astonished and, giving glory to God, said, “We have seen incredible things today” (Lk 5:26). To the disciples of the Baptist, who asked him if he really was the Messiah or if they needed to wait for another person, Jesus responded by pointing to the fruits of his evangelising work: “the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them” (Lk 7:22). (p. 169-170)

From Pope Francis

Bear witness as a holy people. We may be tempted to think that holiness is only for a few. However, “we are all called to be holy by living our lives with love and by bearing witness in everything we do, wherever we find ourselves” (Gaudete et Exsultate, 14)... We choose to be saints by shoring up the outskirts and fringes of our society, wherever our brothers and sisters lie prostrate and experience rejection... It is up to us to fix our gaze on those brother and sister and to offer a helping hand, because they bear the image of God, they are our brothers and sisters, redeemed by Jesus Christ. This is what it is to be a Christian; this is holiness lived on a day-to-day basis.⁵⁰

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

Mother Magdelene Adamson had an unquestioning instinct for goodness and rightness that not even chaos itself could have disheartened or put out. These matter-of-fact qualities of disposition and mind enabled her to undertake incredibly heavy burdens... she won to loving affection and trust of the most diverse characters. Children... recognised the essential gentleness and kindness of heart behind the characteristic aversion to any endearing terms of expression, save only that one universal ‘My Child’. Testimonies attest to the even handedness of her government... all speak of her as the most kindly and maternal person... never showing them anything inconsistent in her character.⁵¹

Saturday 26 October

Rom 8:1-11, Ps 24:1b-4ab,5-6, Lk 13:1-9

From Baptised and Sent

As an ecclesial community, it goes without saying that we are called to a two-fold commitment: first, to convert ourselves without ceasing, becoming ever more transparent to the Word of God and docile to the Spirit of love that gives life, and second, to work for the conversion of the world, never obscuring the merciful and patient face of God, Father of Jesus Christ, whose first and only desire is to save and not to condemn. Experience shows that hearts respond more generously when they are shown trust; we do not conquer people for divine love with fear, imprisoning them in their misfortunes..(p. 173)

From Pope Francis

John Paul II asked us to recognise that “there must be no lessening of the impetus to preach the Gospel” to those who are far from Christ, “because this is the first task of the Church”. Indeed, “today missionary activity still represents the greatest challenge for the Church” and “the missionary task must remain foremost”. What would happen if we were to take these words seriously? We would realise that missionary outreach is *paradigmatic for all the Church’s activity*. Along these lines the Latin American bishops stated that we “cannot passively and calmly wait in our church buildings”; we need to move “from a pastoral ministry of mere conservation to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry”. This task continues to be a source of immense joy for the Church.⁵²

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

When we invited the community to be involved in the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation, they took it very seriously,” [Sr Liz] said. “Families gather at home each night for prayer, and respect and understanding of differences in people would have been in their prayer that week.”

*“As an Aboriginal community, some of the issues experienced in the cities are not as significant here, so we broadened the focus of the Week of Prayer to include an understanding and respect for the differences within our own community and the wider global community”.*⁵³

Sunday 27 October

Sir 35:15b-17,20-22a, Ps 34:2-3,17-19,23, 2 Tm 4:6-8,16-18, Lk 18:9-14

From Baptised and Sent

We do not approach God in the Temple in order to celebrate and contemplate ourselves in a self-referential pose, looking down at others from above. We stand before God for an encounter of love, and to meet others in him. In this sense, prayer is contemplation of the Lord, a celebration of the wonders that his grace works every day in the bosom of human frailty, and of his indefatigable mercy that lifts up those who have fallen and who want to get up again. (p. 178)

From Pope Francis

True joy comes from a profound harmony between persons, something which we all feel in our hearts and which makes us experience the beauty of togetherness, of mutual support along life's journey. But the basis of this feeling of deep joy is the presence of God, the presence of God in the family and his love, which is welcoming, merciful, and respectful towards all. And above all, a love which is patient: patience is a virtue of God and God teaches us how to cultivate it in family life, how to be patient, and lovingly so, with each other. To be patient among ourselves. A patient love. God alone knows how to create harmony from differences. But if God's love is lacking, the family loses its harmony, self-centredness prevails and joy fades. But the family which experiences the joy of faith communicates it naturally. That family is the salt of the earth and the light of the world, it is the leaven of society as a whole.⁵⁴

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*If the world looks down on them, you do not... take them by the hand as a wayward child and, if they have been accustomed to look down, teach them to look up... teach them the principles of a new life, to respect themselves.*⁵⁵

Monday 28 October

Eph 2:19-22, Ps 19:2-5, Lk 6:12-19

From Baptised and Sent

Let us also bear in mind that the group of the Twelve is the prefiguration of the Church, where there must be room for all charisms, peoples and races, all human qualities that find their composition and unity in communion with Jesus. (p. 182)

From Pope Francis

A society grows sick when it is unable to celebrate change in its sons and daughters. A community grows sick when it lives off relentless, negative and heartless complaining, gossip. But a society is fruitful when it is able to generate processes of inclusion and integration, of caring and trying to create opportunities and alternatives that can offer new possibilities to the young, to build a future through community, education and employment. Such a community is healthy. Even though it may feel the frustration of not knowing how to do so, it does not give up, it keeps trying. We all have to help each other to learn, as a community, to find these ways, to try again and again. It is a covenant that we have to encourage one another to keep. Keep fighting, all of you, to seek and find the paths of integration and transformation.⁵⁶

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

There is a pure joy that is evident in their interactions with one another and with those they welcome, with big smiles and their complete presence. Laughter, song and dance were shared and relished by both visitors and locals, duly recorded by both on mobile phones to be replayed and relived at a later time. It is this community spirit which brings a smile to my face each time I reflect on our week in Kiribati. A sense of connection, a sense of welcome and then belonging, to a people and a place. Like the good Samaritans, the i-Kiribati make a welcome space for everyone, often sitting on the floor, cross-legged under their maneaba, where all can see one another's faces, and expressions as they share a joke, a song and to dance, they absolutely love a celebration.⁵⁷

Tuesday 29 October

Rom 8:18-25, Ps 126:1b-6, Lk 13:18-21

From Baptised and Sent

How many times have we been fascinated by the beauty of creation, while contemplating a starry night, sitting along the banks of a river caressed by a light breeze, admiring a sunset or rainbow, or watching children play together happily without regard for race, colour, or social class? How many times have we asked ourselves: Why must this marvellous world, which welcomes us and takes care of us only for a short period, suffer such violence at our own hands? (p. 185)

From Pope Francis

Let us also humbly acknowledge that, if we are honest with ourselves, we too can find the teachings of Jesus hard. How difficult it is always to forgive those who hurt us; how challenging always to welcome the migrant and the stranger; how painful joyfully to bear disappointment, rejection, betrayal; how inconvenient to protect the rights of the most vulnerable, the unborn or the elderly, who seem to impinge upon our own sense of freedom. Yet it is precisely at those times that the Lord asks us: "What about you, do you want to go away too?" (Jn 6:67).⁵⁸

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*We are wattle and Cherry blossom
Growing together in the same soil;
Reaching toward the same sky;
Nurtured by the same Sun
Created by the same God.
Sisters.*

*We are Uluru and Fuji
Rising up as guardians of the same earth;
Bathed by the sky's same tears;
Shaped by the same hand.
Creator's gifts to the same world.
Sisters*

*We are kookaburra and crane
flying in the same firmament;
Singing the same song,
With voices gifted from the same God.
Songs of peace, love and renewal.
Sisters*

*We are Santa Maria and Seiwa
Born of the same beginning,
We look in God's mirror;
We see each other;
We see the Spirit.
We are one.⁵⁹*

Wednesday 30 October

Rom 8:26-30, Ps 13:4-6, Lk 13:22-30

From Baptised and Sent

The violation of justice and human rights can close to us the door of the kingdom. The doorway is narrow, but it has not been closed yet. The door may yet be narrow, but since Christ himself is the door of the Father, the hope of being able to enter and be saved becomes stronger... Jesus' warning is therefore also addressed to the ecclesial community, so that it does not make the mistake of presuming the guarantee of election, rather than following Jesus on the path of faith, hope, love, and justice. The rule remains valid: even those who are far from home, the last ones, the marginalised, the sinners, those of different culture and religion can become, with the practice of love and justice, the guests of honour at the feast of the kingdom. (p. 191-192)

From Pope Francis

Of course Jesus' door is a narrow one but not because it is a torture chamber. No, not for that reason! Rather, because he asks us to open our hearts to him, to recognise that we are sinners in need of his salvation, his forgiveness and his love in order to have the humility to accept his mercy and to let ourselves be renewed by him. Jesus tells us in the Gospel that being Christians does not mean having a "label"! I ask you: are you Christians by label or by the truth? And let each one answer within him, or herself! Not Christians, never Christians by label! Christians in truth, Christians in the heart. Being Christian is living and witnessing to faith in prayer, in works of charity, in promoting justice, in doing good. The whole of our life must pass through the narrow door which is Christ.⁶⁰

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

I have been overcome with grief at times, and felt my heart like a stone in my breast, it was so heavy, and always I have heard too, that voice, "Pray". What can we do? We can pray without ceasing, as St Paul said... There is another bit of Scripture which stands out in my mind these days. It is this: 'Where sin abounds, there did grace more abound'. Resting in this promise, I am content.⁶¹

Thursday 31 October

Rom 8:31b-39, Ps 109:21-22,26-27,30-31, Lk 13:31-35

From Baptised and Sent

Christ is the love that dwells forever in us and awakens those who sleep in the sleep of death, the love that is with us from the beginning of our story until the end of time and beyond, that descends into the depths and enters the heavens, that saves us from all fear and slavery and from every enemy and oppressor, that liberates us in the glory of life in communion. He is the love that strengthens us, makes us confident, audacious, invincible, not only towards human and visible enemies, but also before invisible spirits, because God is with us. (p. 195)

From Pope Francis

Paul saw the love of God, an inexplicable love. Every man and woman can refuse the gift and say: 'I do not want it! I prefer my vanity, my pride, my sin. But the gift is there! That gift is the love of God, a God who cannot break away from us. This is God's 'powerlessness'. We say 'God is powerful, and can do all things except for one: be separated from us. Mighty God, the Creator, can do all things yet God weeps and those tears are all love. God weeps over me, when I am separated from love; God weeps over each of us; God weeps for those wicked ones, who do so many bad things, so much harm to humanity. Indeed, God waits, does not condemn, and cries. Why? Because God loves!⁶²

From the Good Samaritan Benedictine Story

*We come to bring Christ to ancient hills,
To shrines and temples,
Among treasures left by artist and by poet,
In scroll and in song.*

*Our round eyes are blind
to Christ in this land,
In this literature
And this people.*

*We work, and await, expectantly, the beginnings of 'The Mission'.
Slow learners, we find at last, the heart of Mission –
Christ is here already,
Christ has been here always...⁶³*

Endnotes

- ¹ <https://catholicmission.org.au/emm/extraordinary-missionary-month-parish-resource>
- ² Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium #152*
- ³ *Baptised and Sent*, Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples Pontifical Mission Societies
- ⁴ <https://catholicmission.org.au/images/uploads/EMM-Parish-Resource-Booklet.pdf>
- ⁵ <https://catholicmission.org.au/emm>
- ⁶ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae* "The humility and strength of the Gospel," Tuesday, October 1, 2013
- ⁷ *Rules of the Institute of the Oblate Sisters of the Good Samaritan of the Order of St Benedict in the Archdiocese of Sydney, Australia*, Scope and Character of the Institute
- ⁸ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150118_srilanka-filippine-omelia-rizal-park.html
- ⁹ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*, "The joy of Christian memory," Thursday, October 3, 2013
- ¹⁰ Margaret Walsh, *The Good Sams*, p. 258
- ¹¹ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*, "The grace of penitence," Friday, October 6, 2017
- ¹² <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/09/30/22/0930226d34c7d1f75bfc69886a8ba992.jpg>
- ¹³ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2016/documents/papa-francesco_20161113_giubileo-omelia-senza-fissa-dimora.html
- ¹⁴ *Good Samaritan Education* teachers visiting the Good Samaritan ministries in Bacolod, Philippines
- ¹⁵ Apostolic Journey to Georgia and Azerbaijan (September 30 - October 2, 2016), Mass in the Church of the Immaculate, Homily of the Holy Father, Sunday, October 2, 2016
- ¹⁶ Verna Holyhead SGS, *The Gift of St Benedict*, p116
- ¹⁷ Audience with the Italian Red Cross
http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2018/january/documents/papa-francesco_20180127_croce-rossa-italiana.html
- ¹⁸ *The Wheeling Years*, Our Lady and the Good Samaritans
- ¹⁹ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2016/documents/papa-francesco_20160612_omelia-giubileo-ammalati-disabili.html
- ²⁰ *The Wheeling Years*, Three Houses of the Good Samaritans
- ²¹ General Audience, St. Peter's Square, Wednesday, October 9, 2013
- ²² <http://www.duluthbeneditines.org/connect/blog/sister-ann-marie-wainright-harmony-and-the-benedictine-life/>
- ²³ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*, "Courageous prayer," Thursday, October 10, 2013
- ²⁴ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*, "Vigilant against worldliness," Friday, October 13, 2017
- ²⁵ https://www.monasticway.org/sites/default/files/monway_pdf/019dPwKkt0XVlotZz8618monway.pdf
- ²⁶ Apostolic Letter *Maximum Illud* of Pope Benedict XV
- ²⁷ *The Wheeling Years*, Our Lady and the Good Samaritans
- ²⁸ Mass, Homily of the Holy Father, St. Peter's Square, Sunday, October 13, 2013
- ²⁹ Philomena Gallagher SGS, *The Good Sams* p355
- ³⁰ Joan Chittister OSB, <http://www.joanchittister.org/articles/time-peace>
- ³¹ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. "Love of God and neighbour conquers idolatry and hypocrisy," Tuesday, October 15, 2013
- ³² C. F. Fowler, *At Sea with Bishop John Bede Polding*, p349
- ³³ General Audience, St. Peter's Square, Wednesday, October 16, 2013

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- ³⁴ Clement Basden SGS, *The Path Between: The Story of the Good Samaritan Sisters in Japan 1948-1998*, p4
- ³⁵ Clement Basden SGS, *The Path Between: The Story of the Good Samaritan Sisters in Japan 1948-1998*, p29
- ³⁶ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. "Disciples of the Lord and not of ideology," Thursday, October 17, 2013
- ³⁷ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. "The eve of the Apostle's life," Friday, October 18, 2013
- ³⁸ C. F. Fowler, *At Sea with Bishop John Bede Polding*, p349
- ³⁹ General Audience, Paul VI Audience Hall, Wednesday, December 28, 2016
- ⁴⁰ Thomas Merton, *Thoughts in Solitude* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux: 1999), 79.
- ⁴¹ Mass, Homily of the Holy Father, St. Peter's Square, Sunday, October 16, 2016
- ⁴² Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. "How and how much," Monday, October 19, 2015
- ⁴³ Archbishop John Bede Polding, 1863
- ⁴⁴ Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. "Contemplation, closeness, abundance," Tuesday, October 22, 2013
- ⁴⁵ *What Pope Francis says about mercy: 30 days of reflections and prayers #22*
- ⁴⁶ Angelus, St. Peter's Square, Sunday, August 11, 2013
- ⁴⁷ Mother Scholastica Gibbons
- ⁴⁸ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20181118_omelia-gionatamondiale-poveri.html
- ⁴⁹ Archbishop John Bede Polding, 1861
- ⁵⁰ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2018/documents/papa-francesco_20180925_omelia-estonia-tallin.html
- ⁵¹ *The Wheeling Years*, Good Samaritans and their Origins
- ⁵² Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Introduction, Section III, "The new evangelisation for the transmission of the faith"
- ⁵³ The Good Oil, *The enormous spirit of the Santa Teresa community*
<https://www.goodsams.org.au/article/the-enormous-spirit-of-the-santa-teresa-community/>
- ⁵⁴ Mass, Homily of the Holy Father, St. Peter's Square, Sunday, October 27, 2013
- ⁵⁵ Margaret Walsh, *The Good Sams*, p. 164
- ⁵⁶ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2019/documents/papa-francesco_20190125_omelia-penitenziale-panama.html
- ⁵⁷ Good Samaritan Education, *Staff Immersion 2018- Kiribati reflections*,
<http://goodsameducation.org.au/staff-immersion-2018-kiribati-reflections/>
- ⁵⁸ Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, Introduction, Section III, "The new evangelisation for the transmission of the faith"
- ⁵⁹ Anne Young, former staff member of Santa Maria College
- ⁶⁰ Angelus, St. Peter's Square, Sunday, August 25, 2013
- ⁶¹ Dorothy Day, *Selected Writings*.
- ⁶² Morning meditation in the Chapel of the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. "Like a mother hen," Thursday, October 29, 2015
- ⁶³ Rose Pekin SGS, *First Impressions*