



Social Justice Sunday Liturgy Notes

August 30, 2020

22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Overview

The Australian Catholic Bishops' Social Justice Statement for 2020–21 is titled 'To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today'. It encourages faith communities, governments and each one of us, to make mental health a priority. It is a timely message in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic is affecting many members of our parishes, schools and communities. Understanding mental health will help us to be aware of those who need our support. The Statement encourages us all to reject stigmatisation, to work for the transformation of social determinants of mental ill-health, and to call for policies and service provision that meets the needs of the poorest and most marginalised members of our community.

For the Parish Bulletin

We celebrate Social Justice Sunday on 30 August. This year, the Australian Bishops' Social Justice Statement is titled: To Live Life to the Full: Mental health in Australia today. The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the mental health of many members of our parishes, schools and communities. Understanding mental health will help us to be aware of those who need our support. The Bishops invite us all to reject stigmatisation, to work for the transformation of social determinants of mental ill-health, and to call for policies and service provision that meets the needs of the poorest and most marginalised members of our community. Download the Statement at http://bit.ly/SocialJustice_2020.

Liturgy Notes

The following notes may be of use to link the 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time with Social Justice Sunday, 30 August, 2020.

Welcome

Today is Social Justice Sunday. The Australian Catholic Bishops have published a Social Justice Statement, titled: ***To Live Life to the Full: Mental Health in Australia Today.***

The Statement calls us to invite all people to an abundant life that engages the whole self physically, psychologically, and spiritually. It acknowledges that God created us out of love and for love to live life to the full in community. It examines how our social, economic and cultural life can be welcoming and inclusive of those who live with mental ill-health. It also offers ways of supporting people when they are most vulnerable, and it explores how to sow hope and opportunities for all people to thrive in body, mind and spirit.

Collect

God of might, giver of every good gift,
put into our hearts the love of your name,
so that, by deepening our sense of reverence,
you may nurture in us what is good
and, by your watchful care,
keep safe what you have nurtured.

We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Readings

The readings for this Sunday call people to a deeper understanding of discipleship. There is no need for a disciple to seek hardship, as faithfulness to the Gospel and to the Christian mission will bring enough challenge on their own. Within this, all are invited to put on the mind of God. We are invited to enter into the paschal mystery with Jesus where suffering is not the end, and power and authority are not markers of success. Authentic discipleship shares the daily joys and sorrows of people, especially those most in need. People who suffer from mental ill-health and those who walk with them are assured that God is not absent when times are hardest, and that mental ill-health does not take away a person's inherent dignity and worth in the eyes of God.

The Social Justice statement reminds us that God's grace is open to all, especially those who can be most often overlooked, sidelined or excluded. God is with those who most thirst for God's peace in their lives. Jesus has shown the way.

First Reading *Jeremiah 20:7-9*

Jeremiah makes it clear that choosing to follow Christ means that there will be challenge and hardship. However, those who follow Christ with a burning in their heart for mission will find and enable new life amongst their struggles. God is with those who hunger, thirst and speak for justice, especially when times are most difficult. How do we actively advocate for those who need support in maintaining their mental health or in living with mental ill-health, and those who care for them?

Responsorial Psalm *Psalm 62 (63): 2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9*

The psalm acknowledges that we all thirst for the true peace of God. God's glory and kindness offers safe shelter, especially in adversity; and we are sustained in both body and soul at God's inclusive banquet. We cling to God through all adversity, and give praise for God's faithful love. Everyone knows how it feels when their thirst is quenched. How are we offering God's living water to those who long for mercy, companionship, safety, and beauty?

Second Reading *Romans 12:1-2*

St Paul challenges people to offer their very selves in their daily lives as a living witness to God's love and mercy alive in the world. This acknowledges that the actions of our everyday lives that are lived in Christ can be simple but profound acts of worship that affirm the dignity of every human person.

Gospel *Matthew 16:21-27*

Suffering and death are never the last words in any life of faith; but they are painfully real. In accepting and living the reality of his cross, Jesus unites himself forever with all those who suffer. How are we accepting and living with the reality of mental ill-health in our communities, while also walking faithfully in solidarity together into new life?

Reflection on the Readings/Homily Points

As Christians, we are called to discipleship, and it is the work of a lifetime. A disciple seeks to do what Jesus would do and to be all they were created to be for the good of the world. God-given gifts and talents are recognised and nurtured, and others are enabled and supported to live into this fullness of life. God's gifts are meant to be shared, and shared abundantly.

The 2020 Social Justice Statement highlights the ways that mental health can be nourished and supported so that all people can fulfil their potential and flourish within a lifegiving community. Mercy, encouragement, and inclusion are vital; as are the practical supports for growing and maintaining good mental health, like housing stability and financial support.

Advocacy for those most vulnerable is necessary, as is genuine personal friendship and fellowship. Christ is present in the rejection of any stigmatisation, and when policies and services meet and serve the needs of the most at risk as integral parts of “us”.

It can be tempting to think that a blessed life is one with minimal hardship and challenge; and no one wants to see people suffer. Mental health challenges can still be a cause for shame and despair in some segments of Australian society, despite significant gains through education and societal change. The 2020 Social Justice statement calls people experiencing mental ill-health, those who care and walk with them, and all people, to open their hearts to hope. People experiencing mental ill-health are part of the Body of Christ with unique and rich gifts to offer and celebrate. There are also real and practical challenges in supporting all who live with mental ill-health. What needs to be done so that those who struggle with mental ill-health can take their place in our communities and wider Australian society? How do we walk together as disciples?

Jeremiah holds nothing back when he cries out the truth. It comes at a cost to him, as people would rather not hear what he has to say. It makes some people uncomfortable, and they let him know about it through constant insults. He also wishes it were not his lot to keep speaking when it would be easier to say nothing and fade into an easier life. However, he knows that his call is to speak the words that burn within him. He continues, even when it is hard; he knows that God is with him, despite the cost.

There are countless people who have brought better conditions and services over time for those who live with mental ill-health, despite some entrenched opposition. The voices of people living with mental ill-health are prophetic. They hold the key for ways of moving forward with agency through respectful listening, and hearing. God speaks to us through the broken and the powerless. Through the faithfulness and perseverance of many modern-day Jeremiahs in speaking uncomfortable truths, better care models and structures have been made and continue to be made possible.

Jesus always draws near to those who are frail, sick, poor, disabled, suffering mental ill-health, limited, despised, marginalised, or shunned: the Incarnation is God’s definitive statement of solidarity with all people. The second reading calls us to make our daily lives our worship for this lavish gift of God’s self: the way we live is what matters to God. We cry out to God for mercy, knowing that God is good and forgiving, and that God gives us what we need without reserve. Is this also what we, in turn offer to others? The Responsorial Psalm names both food for the hungry and water for the thirsty as part of God’s gifts. There is also a seat at the table at the banquet. Instead of drawing away, Jesus always stays close. By a holistic approach to care that prioritises inclusion in community, lives are restored and transformed.

The Gospel for this Social Justice Sunday is one that affirms the goodness and faithfulness of God, and of all who struggle with mental ill-health. God is near to those who suffer, and does not leave when the going gets tough: God’s presence and assistance is made manifest in loving words and practical actions in people’s lives as they are. The cross is not hidden but carried in community, becoming a source of revelation and wisdom for the community.

Taking on the mind of God sees gift, potential and dignity in every human life, no matter how broken or imperfect it may seem by temporal, worldly standards.

The Gospel acclamation set for this Sunday says it best. As disciples, may we be sowers of this lifegiving, unexpected, surprising, and abundant hope.

*May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ
enlighten the eyes of our mind,
so that we can see what hope his call holds for us.*

Prayers of the Faithful

The following intercessions are offered for incorporation in your Prayers of the Faithful.

Presider: Let us bring our prayers to the God of all people, knowing that the Lord hears us, walks with us and leads us into fullness of life:

For the church:

that it be a place of welcome and inclusion for all people,
especially those who can be most overlooked, sidelined, and excluded.
Let us pray to the Lord: **R. Lord hear our prayer**

For our church and civic leaders:

that our community structures and services
prioritise the care of disadvantaged and vulnerable persons,
seeking always to nurture the common good.
Let us pray to the Lord: **R. Lord hear our prayer**

For those experiencing mental ill-health:

that hope and healing come from the grace of knowing God's faithful care,
and the practical support of our communities.
Let us pray to the Lord: **R. Lord hear our prayer**

For all of us here:

that we be living signs of mercy in and for the world.
Let us pray to the Lord: **R. Lord hear our prayer**

Presider: God of compassion and accompaniment, in your loving kindness, grant mercy and healing to all who suffer mental ill-health. We ask that you bring all your people to fullness of life with you, through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.

Suggested Music

Music Resources

As One Voice 1 (AOV1)
As One Voice 2 (AOV2)
As One Voice Next Generation (AOVNG)
Catholic Worship Book II (CWB II)
Digital Download (DD)

Entrance

All Are Welcome (Haugen)	CWBII 535, DD (GIA)
All Creatures of Our God and King (Arr Vaughan-Williams)	CWBII 446, DD (OCP)
Christ Be Beside Me (Quinn)	CWBII 463
Christ, Be Near Us (Ogilvie/O'Brien)	AOVNG 21, DD (Willow)
Christ, Be Our Light (Farrell)	AOV2 -3, CWBII 540, DD (OCP)
Come to the Feast (Haugen)	AOV1- 151, DD (GIA)
Gather Your People, O Lord (Hurd)	AOV1-71, CWBII 490, DD (GIA)
I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say (Vaughan-Williams)	AOV1-54, CWBII 512, DD (OCP)
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	AOV2-586, CWBII 135, DD (OCP)
Send Down the Fire (Haugen)	AOV2-164, CWBII 389, DD (GIA)
Spirit and Grace (Manalo)	DD (OCP)
The Summons (Bell)	AOVNG 149, CWBII 645, DD (GIA)
We Belong to You (Thompson)	AOVNG 144, DD (OCP)

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 62 (63) My soul is thirsting for you (Herry): *Free DD from Marist Music*
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/52422a6fe4b06209130d02bd/t/5d215d79ad19550001205e88/1562467706726/22.+My+soul+is+thirsting+for+you+Ps+62++22A.pdf>

or Psalm 62 (63): My soul is thirsting (Angrisano) AOVNG 97 or DD (OCP)

Gospel Acclamation cf. Ephesians 1:17, 18 CWBII 43 (Alternate tone)

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes **of our** heart,
that we might see how great is the hope to which **we are** called. *Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!*

or *Alleluia* from Mass of A Joyful Heart (Angrisano) DD (OCP) Use chant verse

Procession of the Gifts

A House of Prayer (Alonso)	DD (GIA)
A Trusting Psalm (Bates)	AOV1-115, CWBII 293
A New Commandment (Arr Bartlett)	CWBII 443

As Gentle As Silence	CWBII 580
As the Deer Longs (Hurd)	AOV1-120, DD (OCP)
Be Still For the Presence of the Lord	CWBII 454
Come to the Water	AOV1-74, CWBII 473
Eye Has Not Seen (Haugen)	AOV1-146, DD (GIA)
I Will Never Forget You (Isaiah 49)	AOV1-89
Like A Shepherd (Bates)	AOV1-160
Open My Eyes (Manibusan)	AOV1-166, CWBII 582
Prayer of St Francis	AOV2-126, CWBII 555
Servant Song	AOV2-169, CWBII 461
The Lord is My Shepherd (Boniwell)	AOV1-26, CWBII 619

Communion

A Shepherd I'll Be to You (Bates)	AOV1-1
At the Table of Jesus (Alonso)	DD (GIA)
Be Not Afraid (Dufford)	AOV1-114, CWBII 653
Bread of Life, Hope of the World (Farrell)	CWBII 459, DD (OCP)
By Our Love (Kendzia)	DD (OCP)
Centre of My Life (Inwood)	AOV2-170
Do Not Be Afraid (Willcock)	AOV2-73, CWBII 481
High Above Our Way (Angrisano)	DD (OCP)
I Have Loved You (Joncas)	AOV1-126, CWBII 511
I Will Lift My Eyes (Alonso)	DD (GIA)
My Peace Be Upon You (Willcock)	AOV2-96, CWBII 558
O God, You Search Me (Farrell)	AOV2-31, CWBII 572
On Eagle's Wings (Joncas)	AOV1-153, CWBII 654
Remembrance (Maher)	DD (OCP)
Shepherd Me, O God (Haugen)	AOV1-33, CWBII 597
Ubi Caritas (Taize)	CWBII 634
We Come to Your Feast (Joncas)	DD (GIA)
What You Have Done For Me (Alonso)	DD (GIA)
Where there is Charity and Love (Connolly)	CWBII 638

Thanksgiving

Amazing Grace	AOV1-29, CWBII 450
For the Fruits of All Creation	CWBII 488
In Every Age (Whitaker)	AOVNG 77, DD (OCP)
Like A Child Rests (Walker)	AOV1-85
O God, Our Help in Ages Past	CWBII 568
Open the Eyes of My Heart (Baloche)	AOVNG 103, DD (OCP)
Shine, Jesus, Shine (Kendrick)	CWBII 550
The Fullness of God (Anderson)	AOV2-62
Trust in God, Hope in God (Finlandia)	CWBII 128
Your Grace is Enough (Maher)	AOVNG-156

Recessional

Be Thou My Vision	AOV1-9, CWBII 455
Glory and Praise to Our God (Schutte)	AOV1-16, CWBII 491
God of Day and God of Darkness	CWBII 498
Go Make A Difference (Angrisano)	AOVNG 52, DD (OCP)
Go Out, Go Out (Stephan)	DD (OCP)
Go Out in the World (Bolduc)	DD (OCP)
God is Love	CWBII 499
Great is Thy Faithfulness	AOV2-127
Lord of All Hopefulness	CWBII 541
Sing to the Mountains (Dufford)	AOV1-92, CWBII 604
Song For Human Rights	AOV2-135, CWBII 606
Take the Word of God With You (Walker)	CWBII 607
The Voice of God	CWBII 621
They'll Know We Are Christians (Scholtes)	AOV1-130
Though the Mountains May Fall (Schutte)	AOV1-182

Suggestion

The following prayer, issued with the Statement as a prayer card, could be given to parishioners or printed on the bulletin and said together.

Prayer for Mental Health

Jesus, you invite us all into the fullness of life.
May we support one another to flourish
in body, mind and spirit.
Strengthen our commitment to ensure
that nobody falls through gaps in our systems of care.

People called you mad.
Help us to recognise you
in those who suffer mental ill-health today.
Show us how to eliminate stigmatisation of mental
ill-health
from our parishes, schools, communities and
organisations.

You drew near to those
who were suffering in body or mind.
May we too feel your nearness

when we struggle with mental health challenges.
May we be one as members of Your Body.

You invite us to share in your ministry
of love and true compassion.
May we be empowered by your Spirit
to reach out to all people in need.
May we build communities of welcome and
inclusion.

Amen

For further details about the Catholic Bishops' Statement, visit the Office for Social Justice website www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au or call (02) 8306 3499

The Office for Social Justice website also has resources available for download, including a PDF version of the full Social Justice Statement, and a prayer card. A spoken version of the Statement is also available as three podcast episodes. A link to these can be found on the Office for Social Justice website.

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