

## Gospel Reflection

When we hear the term, yoke, we tend to think about the yoke that is used to harness oxen together or the yoke that someone might carry on their shoulder to balance a heavy load. This yoke across the shoulder was adopted into tailoring and so the shoulder piece set into a shirt is also called a yoke. However, in the Jewish tradition there is a completely different meaning to the term. The yoke of a rabbi was his particular interpretation of Torah (the Law); his particular teaching. Disciples who followed a particular rabbi sought to take on his yoke; his particular interpretation. The yoke of any rabbi was best identified by asking him, 'Which is the greatest commandment?' A rabbi's answer to this question revealed his interpretation of Torah. When Jesus is asked that question, he answers, 'Love God and love your neighbour,' and goes on to say that all of the rest of the Law and the prophets flows on from these two commandments. This is the yoke – the interpretation of Torah – that Jesus taught. In today's gospel, Jesus calls to him all those who labour and are overburdened. It is the Pharisaic interpretation of the Law that burdens these people. Trying to maintain the Law was burdensome and complicated for the everyday person. Jesus says, 'Shoulder my yoke and learn from me ... my yoke is easy.' The yoke of Jesus was easy: Love God and love your neighbour. Compared to the 613 mitzvot (commands) set out in the Torah and strictly maintained by the Pharisees, the yoke of Jesus was incredibly easy to understand and adopt. So simple, in fact, that it required a child-like simplicity to accept this yoke.

REFLECTION by Greg Sunter (Liturgy Help)

## SEA SUNDAY

There are about 1 million seafarers on the world's oceans on any given day. Piracy is a scourge on the lives of seafarers, with 246 acts of piracy on shipping in 2015 alone, and in that year - about 20 ships were held hostage, and around 200 crew were held hostage. Some crew are killed or remain hostage for years. Much of this criminal activity occurs in the oceans surrounding Australia. Apart from isolation and distance from family while at sea, seafarers can be confronted with very real threats and danger to their lives, as well as poor working conditions on some ships, so much so that mental health for seafarers has become a primary concern of union and church groups. Suicide, depression and self-harming is common, creating situations in ministry and pastoral care previously not encountered.

About 90% of Australia's trade is reliant on shipping. Various ports scattered around the coastline deal with the export/import of goods and services. Australia trades in commodities, livestock and produce, together with a service trade that is generally leisure, with over 1.5 million Australians holidaying on cruise liners per year.

Cargo vessels generally do not have large crews, but the volume of shipping is huge. The cruise liner industry relies on crews of 1,000 or 1,500, but the cargo volume is less. Commercial shipping would have thousands of ships visit Australian ports every year, whereas only 500-600 cruise liners visit per annum. Some busy Australian ports can have about 10,000 seafarers visit the local Stella Maris centre every year, with many ships in local harbours on any given day.

*There will be a leaving collection after Mass today to support Sea Sunday.*

## CONFIRMATION

Will be held at Sacred Heart, Blackheath on Sunday 17th September at 9:30am, and our Celebrant will be the Very Rev. Fr Chris de Souza.

## ST VINCENT PALLOTTI SCHOLARSHIP: APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

The St Vincent Pallotti Scholarship Trust offer scholarships to enable lay people to further their understanding and skills in leadership/ministry or a specialised activity, such as promoting faith enhancement, social justice and pastoral care. Applications close 17 July 2017. Details and application: <http://www.pallottine.org.au/scholarships/st-vincent-pallotti-scholarship-for-lay-ministry.html>

## EAST AFRICA APPEAL

Most parishioners will have seen the shocking media coverage of the appalling situation in East Africa where as many as 23 million people, across 8 countries are facing extreme food shortages. Famine has been declared in South Sudan. On Sunday 23 July our Parish will be conducting a special appeal to assist financially and in Prayer.

## VOLUNTEERS FOR AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC YOUTH FESTIVAL (ACYF)

ACYF is looking to engage around 600 volunteers for this festival, providing leadership to the young people through service and hospitality. Way Finders, Program & Stage Management Support, Ushers, Marshals, Welcomers & more. All volunteers must be 26 years of age or older (as at 1st December 2017) and must hold a valid Working With Children Check. For more information and volunteer registration please visit:

<http://youthfestival.catholic.org.au/get-involved/volunteers>

## HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS: 28 JULY

Everyone is welcome to join the Holy Hour for Vocations now on 4th Friday of the Month from 6:30pm (please note new day) for an hour of adoration, prayer, music and quiet time in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel in St Patrick's Cathedral, 1 Marist Place, Parramatta. For information about priesthood in the Diocese of Parramatta and Holy Spirit Seminary, please contact Fr John Paul Escarlan, Director of Priestly Vocations,

[vocations@parra.catholic.org.au](mailto:vocations@parra.catholic.org.au)

**PARENTS' ROOM:** The Sacristy, which contains a few books and toys, is available for parents to use when your young children are restless. We hope this makes it a little easier for you and your children. Thank you for making the effort of bringing these littlies with you to Mass



## Sacred Heart Care Group:

This is just a reminder that our Care Group is here to assist parishioners in times of need.

Please contact Monica Bright on 4757 3943 if you think we can help

## PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND THEIR CARERS:

Catherine Beaver, Barry Bowden, Adrian Carroll, Margaret Clancy, John & Marion Crowley, Norma Longmuir, Kevin Madden, Ray Phillips, Philia Portelli, Amber Simmons, Paul Windle and Roma Ziolkowski.

## Happy Birthday

Robyn Carroll ~ 10th July

Dave Harris ~ 82 on 12th July

**EAST AFRICA APPEAL**  
**23<sup>RD</sup> JULY – PLEASE HELP**  
**CARITAS HELP US!**



✠✠ In memoriam Cecily O'Brien ~ 9th July John Forster ~ 12th July ✠✠