

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Monday Patchwork Group meet @ 12.30pm
Tuesday Friendship Group meet @ 10am
Wednesday Golf Group meet @ 7am
GFS Women's Group meet @ 7.30pm
Saturday Visit to Araluen @ 10am

SUNDAY SUPPLY – please give a warm welcome to the Reverend Tim Spencer who will lead and preach at both services today.

VISIT TO ARALUEN – last Sunday to get your name down to go. We have ordered a bus to take 12 people who don't want to drive, cost \$10 each, plus \$6 for entry. For those who don't fit on the bus we'll car-pool to minimise the number of cars.

The cost to enter Araluen is \$10 per head, or \$8 concession if in a single vehicle. Please put your name on the notice board and indicate your preference of going on the bus or driving there yourself.

Please pray for: Paul; Colleen & Ted; Marge; Lynne; Frances; Isla; Brad; Peter; Lois; Albert, Ivan; Suzie; Dan; Jean; Jennifer; Serena; Colin; Stuart; Dennis; Peggy; Merle; Jodi; Jack, Sara; Jan



*Happy birthday to Praise Longrande on 28th;
Merle Coussens on 29th*

Wardens - Noeleen Stewart Phone: 0414 505 064

Judith Smith Phone: 9246 3745

Parish Priest – the Reverend Josie Steytler Phone: 0421 115 438

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Welcome to Worship



Pentecost 12

23rd August 2020

We are a warm-hearted community who are delighted to have you worshipping with us today ...

Our Mission is to

- **Know God personally**
- **Love and respect one another deeply**
- **Disciple and serve those around us**

Sentence: Jesus said to them, 'Who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.'

Matthew 16:15-16

Collect of the Day

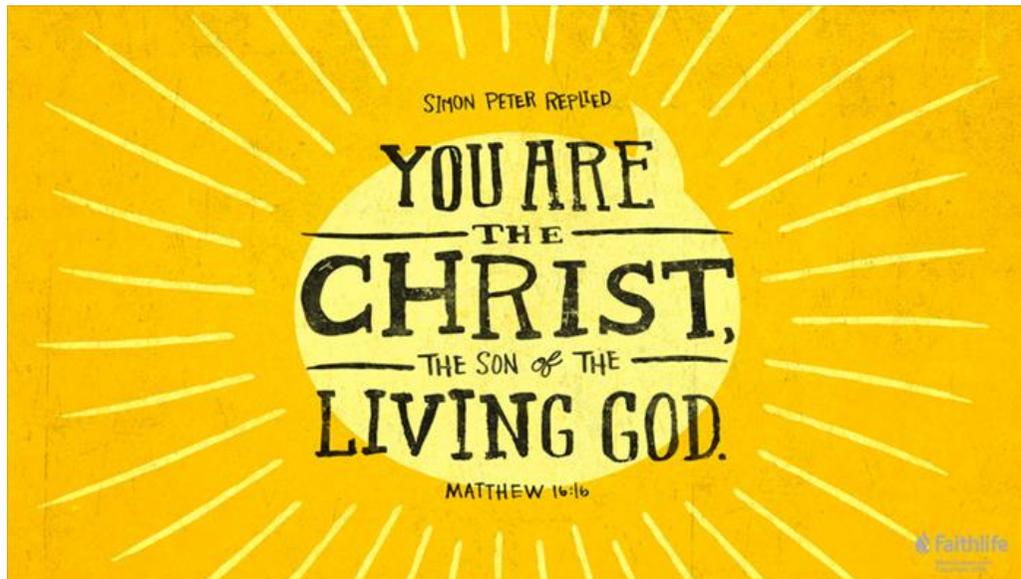
O God, fount of all wisdom,
in the humble witness of the apostle Peter
you have shown the foundation of our faith:
give us the light of your Spirit,
that, recognising in Jesus of Nazareth
the Son of the living God,
we may be living stones
for the building up of your holy Church;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Today's readings:

Exodus 1:8-2:10
Psalm 124
Romans 12:1-8
Matthew 16:13-20

Next Week:

Exodus 3:1-15
Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26
Romans 12:9-21
Matthew 16:21-28



Pentecost 7 – Matthew 16:13-20

Jesus said to his disciples, “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church . . . ”

In Matthew’s Gospel, Peter’s confession of faith is a turning point in the ministry of Jesus. Jesus will now concentrate on preparing his disciples to take on the teaching ministry and leadership of the Church he will establish.

The scene of today’s Gospel, Caesarea Philippi, was the site of temples dedicated to no less than 14 different pagan gods, ranging from the Syrian god Baal to Pan, the Greek god of nature. In the middle of the city was a great white temple built by Herod and dedicated to the “divinity” of Caesar (hence the name of the city). In the midst of this marketplace of gods and temples, Jesus first indicates his plans and hopes for his church.

Jesus “sets up” Peter’s declaration of faith by asking his disciples what people are saying about him. Many believed that Jesus is the reincarnation of John the Baptizer or the long-awaited return of the prophets Elijah or Jeremiah (Malachi 4: 5-6), whose return would signal the restoration of Israel. Simon Peter, however, has been given the gift of faith (“flesh and blood has not revealed this to you”) and unequivocally states that Jesus is the Messiah.

Jesus blesses Simon with the new name of “rock” (**Kepha** in Aramaic, **Petros** in Greek), indicating that his faith will be the foundation for Jesus’ new Church. Peter is entrusted with the keys of the kingdom of heaven (an image drawn from Isaiah 22: 15-25, today’s first reading) and the mission to bring sins to consciousness and to proclaim to sinners the love and forgiveness of God.

The question Jesus poses to Peter and his disciples is asked of us every minute of every day. Every decision we make is ultimately a response to the question, *Who do you say I am?* Our love for family and friends, our dedication to the cause of justice, our commitment to the highest moral and ethical standards, our taking the first step toward reconciliation and forgiveness, our simplest acts of kindness and charity declare most accurately and effectively our belief in the Gospel Jesus as the Messiah and Redeemer.

Peter is the first of the disciples to grasp the divinity of Christ. On the faith of Peter “the rock” Christ establishes his Church. Peter becomes, then, the first stone in the foundation of the Church. We who are baptized into the faith handed down to us by Peter and the apostles become stones of Christ’s new church; the faith we live and the hope we cherish in the empty tomb of Easter are the foundation of the Church of the Risen One.

The “keys of the kingdom of heaven” are entrusted by Christ not just to the institutional Church but to each one of us. Christ has given every one of us a “key” to the kingdom: the means to “unlock” the presence of God in our world by our own efforts, however small and hidden, to realize God’s love in our midst. Our “keys” may be patience and understanding, a talent or skill we possess that we can use to unlock a door or open a pathway enabling us and those we love and care about realize the kingdom of heaven here and now.

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