

***“To be a strong and faith-filled Catholic fraternity committed to serving our Church throughout Australia.”***

**Theme: The Landscape – Calling us to Hope**

When one looks at a landscape – perhaps in ‘real time’, perhaps a painting, perhaps a photograph – we are invited to pause and look more closely at the scene. We can see an image that in the midst of all its various parts has a certain unity. That unity often reflects an idea of a timelessness and a future. Earlier we noted the presence of a certain stress and confusion abroad in our beloved Australian community. The reasons are many and varied but perhaps more importantly in the midst of that ‘faith-filled Christians’ respond with a desire to make things better, to heal, to look beyond into something else. This is the alternative view that the Lord Jesus brings. Presenting this view through words and actions is a genuine service to the Church throughout Australia.

**Step 1: Opening prayer:** from the Order’s Prayers

**Step 2: READINGS ON THE THEME**

“Furthermore, when media and the digital world become omnipresent, their influence can stop people from learning how to live wisely, to think deeply and to love generously. In this context, the great sages of the past run the risk of going unheard amid the noise and distractions of an information overload. Efforts need to be made to help these media become sources of new cultural progress for humanity and not a threat to our deepest riches.” (*Laudato Si* Paragraph 47)

“If a mistaken understanding of our own principles has at times led us to justify mistreating nature, to exercise tyranny over creation, to engage in war, injustice and acts of violence, we believers should acknowledge that by so doing we were not faithful to the treasures of wisdom which we have been called to protect and preserve”. [Pope Francis: World Day of Peace Message 1 January 2020]

“In our Christian experience, we constantly remember Christ, who gave his life to reconcile us to one another (cf. Rom 5:6-11). The Church shares fully in the search for a just social order; she continues to serve the common good and to nourish the hope for peace by transmitting Christian values and moral teaching, and by her social and educational works.” [Pope Francis: World Day of Peace Message 1 January 2020]

“For the followers of Christ, this journey is likewise sustained by the sacrament of Reconciliation, given by the Lord for the remission of sins of the baptized. This sacrament of the Church, which renews individuals and communities, bids us keep our gaze fixed on Jesus, who reconciled “all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross” (Col 1:20). It requires us to set aside every act of violence in thought, word and deed, whether against our neighbours or against God’s creation.

The grace of God our Father is bestowed as unconditional love. Having received his forgiveness in Christ, we can set out to offer that peace to the men and women of our time. Day by day, the Holy Spirit prompts in us ways of thinking and speaking that can make us artisans of justice and peace.

May the God of peace bless us and come to our aid.” [Pope Francis: World Day of Peace Message 1 January 2020]

**Step 3:** *Allow a few moments reflective silence.*

**Step 4: SCRIPTURE READING**

“It is for us who are strong to bear with the susceptibilities of the weaker ones, and not please ourselves. Each of us must consider his neighbour’s good, so that we support each one another. Christ did not indulge in his own feelings either; indeed, as scripture says: *The insults of those who insult you fall on me* (Psalm 69:9). And all of these things that were written so long ago were written so that we, learning perseverance and the encouragement which the scriptures give, should have hope. Now the God of perseverance and

encouragement give you all the same purpose, following the example of Christ Jesus, so that you may together give glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one heart.” (Romans 15: 1 – 6.)

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in your faith, so that in the power of the Holy Spirit you may be rich in hope.” (Romans 15: 13)

**Step 5: REFLECTION (5 Mins)**

**Step 6: SHARING (10 Mins)**

Hope is one of the three cardinal virtues (along with faith and charity). These are gifts from God to help us in our pilgrimage. Do any of us remember the traditional Act of Hope that we were taught years ago? Just to remind: *O my God, relying on your infinite goodness and promises, I hope to obtain pardon of my sins, the help of your grace, and life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, my Lord and Redeemer.*

In the midst of daily life, do I even think about the Virtue of Hope?

What do I do to encourage others who may, for one reason or another, be struggling?

Recall a message of hope given to you when you were in need.

**Step 7: CONCLUSION**

We pray together;

Heavenly father, I am your humble servant,  
I come before you today in need of hope.  
I need hope for a calm and joyful future.  
I need hope for love and kindness.  
I pray for peace and safety.  
Some say that the sky is at its  
darkest just before the light.  
I pray that this is true, for today seems stormy and dim.  
I need your light, Lord, in every way.  
I pray to be filled with your light.  
Help me to walk in your light, and live  
my life in faith and service.  
In your name I pray, Amen.

**Step 8: *The meeting proceeds***

**Step 9: CLOSING PRAYERS – FROM THE ORDER’S PRAYERS**