

Deaf to Jesus' message

Three times in Mark's gospel, Jesus will tell his disciples about his future which will be about suffering, death and resurrection. Each time the disciples are unable to hear him.

These three instances occur in chapters eight, nine, and ten around verse thirty. In chapter eight, Peter identifies Jesus as the Messiah, but subsequent verses show that he has little understanding of the kind of Messiah that Jesus will be. When Peter tries to rebuke Jesus and tell him that this is not the envisaged future, Jesus definitively tells Peter that the future will involve every disciple taking up the cross if they are to be the followers of Jesus.

In chapter nine, Jesus again tells the disciples that he will be betrayed, killed, and three days later rise again, but they did not know what he was talking about. When they arrived in Capernaum, he asked what they were arguing about, but they were embarrassed as they had been arguing with one another about who was the greatest.

In chapter ten, after the disciples were looking for reward for leaving behind their families and their security in following Jesus, he affirms that they will be rewarded, but not in the ways that they expected in terms of material rewards in this life but in life hereafter. He explains that he will suffer, die, and rise, but again they are deaf to his words and James and John come forward and ask if they can sit on the right and the left of

Jesus in his kingdom. It is only at the end of the gospel, when they meet the risen Lord and are commissioned to proclaim the good news to all nations that they begin to understand. In reading Mark's gospel, one must wonder why the disciples were so deaf to the message of Jesus which was clearly communicated. I think that the answer lies in the expectations of the disciples. They are Jewish and the Jewish people had longed hoped for a Messiah. They had various understandings of who the Messiah would be and what he would do. Some hoped for a Messiah who would free them from the oppression of the occupying power which at this time was the Romans. Some hoped that their nation would be restored to the stature it had enjoyed under the reign of King David. Others, hoped for religious reform, but almost no one understood that the Messiah would proclaim and inaugurate the "kingdom of God" as a promise of God's salvation and hope for the transformation of the world.

We can take comfort in the fact that the first disciples did not understand for we can also be slow in understanding a suffering Messiah and accepting the challenge of the cross in living lives according to the values of Jesus rather than the values of self-achievement. The life of Jesus ever invites us to reflect and review the directions of our own lives.

Michael A Kelly CSsR
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MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

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24th SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME
Saturday 11 & Sunday 12 September 2021

Mother of Christ,
Do hear your people's cry,
Star of the deep
And portal of the sky.
Mother of Him
Whose hand your glory
made,
Sinking, we strive,
And call to you for aid.
Oh, by that joy
Which Gabriel did bestow;
O Virgin first and last,
Your tender mercy show.



O God, You willed that Your Word should take flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary at the message of an angel; grant us, Your humble servants, that we who truly believe her to be the Mother of God, may be helped by her intercession with You. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

We remember in prayer our parishioners whose anniversaries occur during September: Peter Bramwell, Victor Kurta, Leo Whittaker, Angus McDonald, Pamela Sumich, Mae Turich, Rona Boyce, Ray Keenan, Irene MacDonald, Marie Simmons

Dear Parishioners,

We are into week four of lockdown, and hopefully will receive some good news this coming week. As we look out on the rest of the country, it is good to see them heading towards relatively normal living again.

However, the Catholic Church across the country is nowhere near "back to normal"! Where we were looking forward to level 2 to start things again, the newly defined 'Delta Level 2' has caused a rethink.

The old level 2 allowed for one hundred people indoors. Level 2 Delta has cut that by half to fifty people indoors. Two metres distancing must be in place. People must sign in, and the wearing of masks is strongly recommended. Can you picture Mass like that?

From Hamilton diocese southward, Bishops have written to their parishioners about their policy. It varies from no Masses at all during level 2, to no Sunday Masses but perhaps weekday Masses may be allowed. Churches can be open for visits at level 2. Funerals may take place in church with the above requirements.

Bishop Pat has yet to make a statement, and he is waiting until further information is released next Tuesday.

Given the uncertainty, we need to have both a short-term and a long-term plan. Level 2 might last but a week, and we can wait for level 1, or it might not. Let us pray!

So, I hope that life this week has been ok. I have a Sunday homily in which I try to unpack one part of the meaning of the cross.

Read the readings first:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/083020.cfm>

and listen to the video. Thank you again, Akata Siale, for your thoughtful hymn to accompany the readings.

My homily is to be found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2G27cQsc7Nw>

and Akata's hymn can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTqE-vZDTu8>

As always, lots of encouragement at this time. Please reach out and ring at least one person a day.

May God bless us at all levels in this challenging time!

Fr John Dunn

Cathedral Appeal 2021

This money is used to support long term maintenance of our Mother Church, the Cathedral of St Patrick & St Joseph's, a heritage entrusted in us. **The envelopes will be at the entrance of the Church after lockdown.**

A reminder that the Diocese continues to provide broadcast **Sunday Mass**. It is uploaded at 5.30pm Saturday night (as per a Vigil Mass time) to the **Youtube channel Auckland Catholic**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCb7o1XYfQet-mOW1mJSzfow>

It is also broadcast on Shine TV Sundays at 2.00pm Free-to-air TV Channel

MOVIE NIGHT – MY SISTER'S KEEPER - Friday 10/09 at 7pm

Grab some popcorn and end the week with a movie night! The Auckland Catholic Tertiary Chaplaincy will be watching My Sister's Keeper, followed by some discussion about the film.

<https://www.facebook.com/TheChaplains>

LIGHT OF HOPE - ONLINE CONCERT WITH FR. CHRIS SKINNER

Saturday 11/09 at 7pm

Join us for an evening of spirit-filled worship, led by the fantastic Fr. Chris Skinner. Video available on Bishop Pat's Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/bishoppatrick>