



Pius News

The Ascension of the Lord Year A

28th May 2017

WHEN DOES FAITH DISAPPEAR?

When Friedrich Nietzsche declared that “God is dead” he added a question: *What kind of a sponge does it take to wipe away a whole horizon?*

I often ask that question because just in my own lifetime there has been an unprecedented decline in the number of people who go to church regularly and, more recently, an equally unprecedented spike in the number of people who claim to have lost their faith completely and are now classified under a religious category called, “None”.

This latter group (persons who when asked about their religious affiliation on a census form answer with the word, *None*) has essentially doubled in the last twenty years and today in Canada and the USA make up over 30% of the population. The numbers are much the same for Western Europe and other secularized parts of the world.

But have these individuals really lost their faith? When they use the word “None” to refer to their religious beliefs they generally explain that with phrases to this effect: *I just no longer believe! It doesn't make sense to me anymore! I've lost faith in religion and the church! I can't pretend any longer! I've lost my faith in those beliefs! I'm not sure whether or not I believe in God!*

What's common among all these phrases is the concept of “believing” or “belief”: *“I just don't believe it anymore!”* But is ceasing to believe in something the same thing as losing one's faith? Not necessarily. It can be one thing to no longer believe in something, but it can be something quite different to lose one's faith. To cease believing in a set of faith propositions doesn't necessarily equate with losing one's faith. Indeed, the loss of one's belief system is often the condition for a purified faith.

How is belief different from faith? In normal, everyday parlance to say that we believe something to be true means that we are able to square that truth with our imagination, that is, we are able to somehow circumscribe it imaginatively so that it makes sense to us. Conversely, if we cannot picture how something might make sense then it is a short step to say that it isn't true. Our beliefs are predicated on what we can square with our imagination and our thinking.

But many of the objects of our faith are, in essence and by definition, unimaginable, ineffable, and beyond conceptualization. Hence in the area of faith, to say that I can't believe this or that is generally more an indication of the limitation of our imagination and our rational powers than it is indicative of the loss of faith. I believe that we are much more agnostic about our beliefs than we are agnostic about God, and this isn't a loss of faith.

Faith is deeper than belief, and it is not always something we can picture imaginatively inside our minds. Take, for instance, a number of articles in the *Apostles' Creed*: It is impossible to imagine them as true in terms of picturing them as real.

(Continued over page)

Catholic Church Dernancourt— PO Box 85 Dernancourt 5075 Telephone: 08 8261 2428

Fr Mathew Raj OMI Parish Priest, Fr O'Doherty OMI Assistant Priest

Email: dernancourt@oblates.com.au

ABN 21465985101 Web: www.oblates.com.au/dernancourt

(Ron Rolheiser continued)

They are real, but our images of them are only icons. That is true too of many articles within our Christian creed and many of our written doctrines of faith. As expressed, they are merely images and words that point us towards something which we cannot imagine because it is beyond imagination.

For example: The first thing, always, that needs to be said about God is that God is ineffable, that is, God is beyond all conceptualization, beyond all imaginings, beyond being pictured, and beyond being captured in any adequate way by language. This is also true for our understanding of Christ as the Second Person in the Trinity. Jesus was God's son, but how can that to be imagined or pictured? It can't be. How can God, who is one, be three? This isn't mathematics; it's mystery, something that cannot be imaginatively circumscribed. Yet, we believe it and millions and millions of people for two thousand years have risked their lives and their souls on its truth without being able to picture it imaginatively. Faith is a knowing of something which, because of its magnitude and infinity, cannot be adequately pictured in terms of an imaginative construct. Our words about it express our beliefs and those words point to the reality, but they are not the reality.

To reject a specific piece of art does not mean we reject beauty. So when someone says, *I can no longer believe this*, he is in effect rejecting a set of propositions, a set of particular icons and a theory of art (a theology), rather than actually rejecting belief in God, and he is rejecting it precisely because he cannot imaginatively picture something which in fact cannot be pictured.

It has been said that atheist is just another name for someone who cannot get metaphor. Perhaps that's too simple, but it does suggest that rejecting a set of theological propositions is not the same thing as losing one's faith. (The front page with Ron Rolheiser will not be a regular feature as from 1st weekend of June. If you would like to continue reading Ron he can be found on <http://ronrolheiser.com/>)

Mass Counts

we continue to have our yearly Mass counts during the month of May. This will happen during the 1st collection, all those under 16 will be asked to stand while the counters move through the church.

Last week's count: adults 480; children 87.
This time last year: adults 448; children 84

Oblate Gathering:- Thank you for your prayers for the Gathering of the Australian Province this past week. It was great to catch up with other priests you don't get to see very often. A number of Oblates who have previously Ministered here in the past have asked to be remembered to the parishioners of St Pius X.



Soup Sunday Vinnies invite you to join them next Sunday 4th June after the 9.30am Mass in the hall for a cup of soup. The Dernancourt Vinnies would welcome new members to help with their work in our local area. If you can give an hour or so of your time each week, please contact Annette Stone on 8266 0773 or Margaret Roberts 0411 097 562

Call to Ministry

26 of our current parishioners on rosters have not indicated their preference for attendance at the June meetings. It is important for all ministers to gather to bring ourselves up to date. Following these meetings installations will take place at a date to be set. Clipboards are in the main foyer for your preference.

Call to Ministry

Thank you to all the parishioners who over the last few months have volunteered for various Ministries within our parish community. Training will commence in June. Extraordinary Ministers of Communion training either Tuesday 13th or Thursday 15th at 7pm – 8pm, Readers training either Tuesday 20th June & Thursday 22nd 7pm – 8pm. Training for Computer operators for power points at Masses will be advised at a later date. **For Extraordinary Ministers and readers please indicate which session you are attending on the clipboard in the foyer.**



St Vincent de Paul Food Bank

This week—**WEETBIX, BREAKFAST CEREAL, RICE, FULL CREAM LONG LIFE MILK, PASTA, PASTA SAUCE,** Cans of Tomatoes, Jam, Milo, Vegemite.

Items for baby layettes: cotton vests, socks or booties, nappies, nappy pins, disposable nappies, cotton blankets, cotton sheets, towels, soap, wipes, wash cloths, baby shampoo, bibs, onesies, wool. Items can be left in foyer.

Are you between the ages of 16 –29?

2018 Synod of Bishops, which is to be held in Rome on ‘Youth, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment’. The Holy Father has asked that the voices of young people be evident in the Synod conversations, and so every Diocese through out the world has been asked to provide information about their young people.

To accomplish this, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference has created an online survey for young people between the ages of 16-29. This survey is for all young people, whether practising or non-practising Catholics, and whether deeply committed or those on the margins. It is very important that we get a wide range of responses from as many young people as possible.

This survey is only available online and the link is <https://www.catholic.org.au/youthsurvey> .

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

PLEASE REMEMBER THE SICK OF OUR PARISH IN YOUR PRAYERS

Charlie Bell, Cynthia Edwards, Elisabeth Burns, Graham Smith, Helen Durkin, Ian Wallace, Margaret Vaughn, Marie Kelly, Marj Ryan—Honorary OMI, Mary Meatheringham, Tony Petrie.

Please Note:

The parish sick list has recently been updated. Names will now be left on for a maximum of 6 weeks. If you would like to be added some one from the parish please contact the parish office on 82612428 or dernancourt@oblates.com.au

Mass times at St Pius X

Saturday vigil	6.30pm
Sunday	9.30am & 5.30pm
Tue & Wed	9.15am
Thurs	9.30am
Fri	9.15am

Daily Morning Prayer:

Tues, Wed, Fri 8.40am
Thurs 8.55am

Rosary: Tues, Wed & Fri 8.55am
Thurs 9.10am

Reconciliation: Sat 11.30am—12 noon



Next Week's Readings Pentecost

Year A: Acts 2:1-11;
1 Cor 12:3-7, 12-13; Jn 20:19-23

Marist Brothers and Mt Carmel Girls School Old Scholars Annual Reunion

Marist Brothers of Alberton and Thebarton and Mt Carmel Girls School (Sisters of St Joseph) Old Scholars Annual Reunion Lunch at the Alberton Hotel. Tuesday June 6, 2017 at 12noon at the Alberton Hotel, Port Road Alberton. Bookings can be made direct to the Alberton Hotel on 8447 1069.

Parish Prayer Network:

Prayers for any need.



All you need to do is call one of the following:
Marie 8264 9569, Maureen 8261 6906
or Beth 8396 2079

MINISTRY ROSTER 3/4/June 2017	6.30pm	9.30am	5.30pm
Ministers Please Note:	C Patricia Beaven	C Dorothy Nappa	C Terry Roberts
This roster follows the original	R1 Jean Canil	R1 Bernadette Davies	R1 Philip Matthews
roster. If you have made any changes	R2 Keith Collins	R2 Roderick Essery	R2 Amy Bartjes
they will not be reflected here. Please	EM1 David Lloyd	Em1 Annette Stone	Em1 Judith Mohan
check the notice board at the back of	Em2 Jim Kelly	Em2 Jos Hensing	Em2 Stuart Fericlough
the church for updates.	Em3 Roman Szczepanik	Em3 Joe Colangelo	Em3 Michael Wright
	Em4 Anna Szczepanik	Em4 Brigitte Colangelo	Em4 Jijimol Poulouse
	M James Lloyd	M Anne Alilio	M Michael & Tim Carter

Church Cleaners: Team D: Griffith/Fameli/Laping/Winkler

Altar Linen: 4th June: Bernadette

First Reading Acts 1:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

In my earlier work, *Theophilus*, I dealt with everything Jesus had done and taught from the beginning until the day he gave his instructions to the apostles he had chosen through the Holy Spirit, and was taken up to heaven. He had shown himself alive to them after his Passion by many demonstrations: for forty days he had continued to appear to them and tell them about the kingdom of God. When he had been at table with them, he had told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for what the Father had promised. 'It is' he had said, 'what you have heard me speak about: John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit.'

Now having met together, they asked him, 'Lord, has the time come? Are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to the ends of the earth.'

As he said this he was lifted up while they looked on, and a cloud took him from their sight. They were still staring into the sky when suddenly two men in white were standing near them and they said, 'Why are you men from Galilee standing here looking into the sky? Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven, this same Jesus will come back in the same way as you have seen him go there.'

Responsorial Psalm Ps 46:2-3. 6-9.

(R.) God mounts his throne to shouts of joy: a blare of trumpets for the Lord.

1. All peoples, clap your hands, cry to God with shouts of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, we must fear, great king over all the earth. (R.)

2. God goes up with shouts of joy; the Lord goes up with trumpet blast. Sing praise for God, sing praise, sing praise to our king, sing praise. (R.)

3. God is king of all the earth. Sing praise with all your skill. God is king over the nations; God reigns on his holy throne. (R.)

Second Reading Eph 1:17-23

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Ephesians

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give you a spirit of wisdom and perception of what is revealed, to bring you to full knowledge of him. May he enlighten the eyes of your mind so that you can see what hope his call holds for you, what rich glories he has promised the saints will inherit and how infinitely great is the power that he has exercised for us believers. This you can tell from the strength of his power at work in Christ, when he used it to raise him from the dead and to make him sit at his right hand, in heaven, far above every Sovereignty, Authority, Power, or Domination, or any other name that can be named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come. He has put all things under his feet, and made him, as the ruler of everything, the head of the Church; which is his body, the fullness of him who fills the whole creation.

Gospel Acclamation Mt 28:19. 20

Alleluia, alleluia! Go and teach all people my gospel. I am with you always, until the end of the world. Alleluia!

Gospel Mt 28:16-20

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

The eleven disciples set out for Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had arranged to meet them. When they saw him they fell down before him, though some hesitated. Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave to you. And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.'