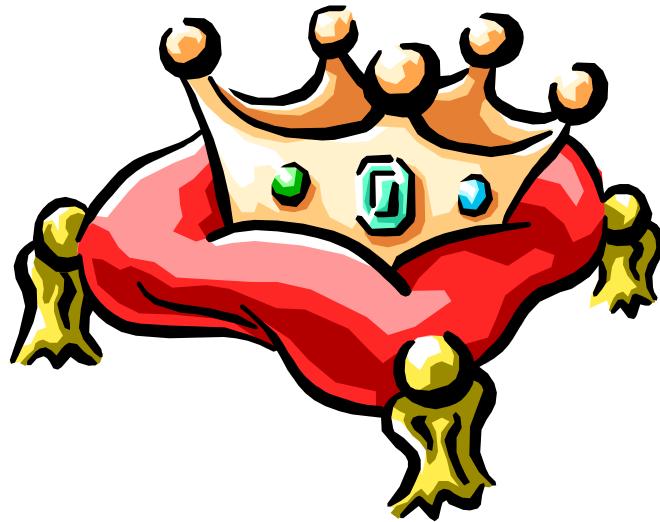


# God's Masterpiece



We are God's masterpiece\*. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

*Ephesians 2.10 [NLT]*

## **Week 2 The Call to Follow Jesus**

**A Retreat in Daily Life at Queanbeyan & District Anglican Church**

\* The word translated "masterpiece" or "work of art" is used in classical Greek for a work of superb craftsmanship such as making a crown

# You are God's work of art

## Week 2: Following Jesus

During this week we pray that we will make a loving and generous response to the invitation of Jesus to follow his way.

### **Day 1: Luke 2.1-20 The Birth of Jesus**

- Read this familiar story slowly. Imagine the joy; the wonder; the angels; shepherds; the holy family; the good tidings.
- Jesus is born in destitute poverty in order to die on Calvary for my salvation.
- Go to Bethlehem and take part in the event, speak to Mary and Joseph; nurse the baby; see the animals. Stay with the experience.

### **Day 2: Luke 2.22-38 The Presentation in the Temple**

- A great scene for contemplation. Picture the grandeur of the Temple contrasting with the simplicity of the holy family. Observe the other people and pay attention to Simeon and Anna.
- Listen to what is being said, and hear what is meant for you.

### **Day 3: Matthew 4.1-11 The Temptation of Jesus**

- These are the radical temptations that people face each day.
- Adam, who was a man, was tempted to be like a god [Genesis 3]
- Jesus, who is God, rejects the temptation to act as God.
- The three temptations are to: possessions, honour and pride. The response of Jesus is poverty, acceptance of failure and self-emptying.

### **Day 4: Matthew 5.1-16 The Teaching of Jesus**

- Go up the mountain; join the picnic and the crowds.
- Be present. Hear Jesus speaking. Read the words slowly.

- The Beatitudes are the way to true and deep happiness. They correspond to the desires of my heart. Choose them.

### **Day 5: Matthew 14.22-33 The Absence/Presence of Jesus**

- A wonderful image of faith.
- There was a headwind. There always is! Life is difficult!
- Imagine Jesus coming to you in the challenges you face. Hear him say to you, "Courage! It is I. Do not be afraid."
- Hear his invitation. Can I walk to him? What happens if I too take my eyes off Jesus? What does Jesus do?

### **Day 6: Mark 10.46-52 The Healing of Jesus**

- "What do you want me to do for you?" Meditate on this reading and allow Jesus to ask you this question.
- What is your reply? What does it cost to make my reply?
- Imagine yourself following Jesus "along the road".

## **Notes for our Prayer**

The most important part of the Retreat in Daily Life is the daily 15 minutes of prayer. The most important thing about the time of prayer is not so much what we do during that time; it is that we are *faithful* to spending that time each day in God's presence. What can I do to spend the time of prayer most fruitfully?

In week 1 we prayed for the grace to know that we are loved and cared for by God, and furthermore that through God's love in Jesus we are healed and forgiven. This week 2 builds on the first week and invites us to:

1. Remain in touch with my gratitude for the gift of forgiveness and hope given through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus
2. Pray for God to deepen my desire to respond to the call of Jesus and to follow him in all I do and say.

The style of prayer this week is a bit different to last week. It is called "imaginative reflection". You are invited to be with Jesus as you read these sections of the Gospel story.

The prayerful use of the imagination puts me in touch with the risen Lord, present in my life here and now. He is the same Lord Jesus who walked the roads of Palestine all those years ago.

Look again at the notes for our prayer in last week's leaflet. They contain valuable advice for this week as well.

### **When using Scripture**

Read the Scripture through slowly once or twice. Hold in your mind any word or phrase that speaks to you.

You are asked to imagine yourself in the story; see yourself as one of the characters in the story and reflect upon how you react and think about your response to the situation or to the invitation that is offered.

If it is hard to picture yourself in the story simply stay with God's presence - even if it feels like an absence! When we read other parts of the Gospels we discover that the disciples were not always on the same wave-length as Jesus, but it was at these times that they learnt some of their most important lessons.

#### **Two sets of values**

St Ignatius of Loyola encourages us to remember that we are at war. There is fighting all around. There are two armies: that of Satan and evil; and that of Jesus and good. This conflict between good and evil is a daily reality for each of us.

The invitation is not to choose which army I will join - we are in Christ's army! The invitation is to make the choice to be with Jesus more clear and to embrace the values of Christ without compromise.

### ***Middle of Retreat Gathering***

**Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September**

**3pm - 4.30pm**

**St Matthew's Karabar**