



18 October 2020 – 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A

## Pastor's Desk

*Last week's Pastor's Desk started a conversation with a parishioner about choice.*

**Dear Fr Joe,**

Your letter this week is a bit abstruse for me. I suspect others may find it that as well. Can you bring it down a level for us? Michael.

**Dear Michael,**

Thanks for the feedback I will take it on board! This might explain a little more.

The point is the concept of choice. Individual choice and my right to choose are the key planks of the argument for abortion and euthanasia. My right to choose defines the modern sense of freedom and my inability not to choose the modern sense of discrimination. But choice is an illusion because it is based on the primacy of my choice to the exclusion of yours. Where my choice is the defining quality of a moral decision what happens to your choices?

For example, we can't watch two different TV shows at the same time on the same TV. We either agree to watch my show or we agree to buy another TV for you. If you want, you could buy another TV on your own without asking me. For my individual choice to work you must either choose to accept my choice (give in) or choose to go it alone or start a fight over the remote.

Where my choice is sovereign over yours, we are more divided than unified. If my individual right to choose is the key to the social moral code because it shows me to be an authentic, free human being then our moral code is essentially conflictual.

Where my right to choose is absolute the notion of a moral absolute, greater than me is hard to defend, because it looks like I am giving away my true freedom to a divine myth. For you and me, our moral absolute is God (Trinity) who is one-with-us in Christ (Incarnation). This is our truth. We make our choices based on what is of value to Jesus.

Our choices, formed by Gospel values, are never choices for ourselves alone. Christian choices are made, firstly, for the good of another person. My choice is not based on my ability to choose, but on God's prior choice of me. The "first choice" is God's, to which you and I respond. Thus, I am Joe, and you are Michael, and we belong, by God's choice, to the community of God.

In New Zealand, the debate over life issues will always be conflictual. In secular individualistic societies, like ours, the argument for God has long since been lost. Would appreciate any feedback and comments. Regards, Joe.

**Dear Father Joe,**

I was not criticising the content of your Pastor's note. My critique is simply directed at the ability of your readers to comprehend and digest what you were saying. I think that much of it was phrased in a way that could have been well above our heads and not easily understood. I did not have any issue in what you said.

I like to think, that if asked, I could summarise, and if I agreed, defend what had been said. In this case, had I been asked by someone who had also read your Pastor's Desk, I would have had difficulty.

Thank you for your offer for me to review and comment on your next missive. I see no need to even attempt to do this, even had I the ability to do so. God bless you, Michael. (*conversation after Mass*)

**Dear Joe,**

Thank you for your comments at Mass this morning. I will now comment! I must also now say that I still lack the capacity to take in and properly digest what you are saying.

For example, is it right to say that choice is illusory simply because it is based on the validity of an individual's choice and the exclusion of another's? Are things illusory because they are conflicting? I think I would also emphasise more that you are writing about "moral" choices, not other forms of choices.

I think I follow and agree with your argument up to the paragraph that starts "In this scenario...". What does "unitary basis" mean to the person in the street? I think you are saying that the freedom to choose on moral issues has the potential to be highly divisive and that nothing exists to prevent this? If so, I would agree, but does this make abortion wrong? Are you saying that there is no way of resolving the issue of abortion and other moral issues involving choice where one does not accede to their existing a higher being i.e. God, who is absolute on all moral issues?

Joe, can I not "choose" to punch you in the nose without asking you? I may be willing to accept the consequences, if any. Is my "choice" to punch you still illusory or false in this instance? And if you believe it is illusory, is this because the modern definition of the word choice has changed or is being used in a different context?

**Dear Michael,**

Yes, you can choose to punch me and that is your choice for which you must take responsibility, however the choice to punch, rather than talk, is based on your need not mine!!

**Dear Joe,**

Perhaps then, I am confusing free-will with freedom of choice? They are not the same things? Can I impose my free-will on you and it remains my free-will, but cannot exercise free choice if it is imposed on you? Do free-will and choice relate to each other? If so, it might be useful to point this out.

**Dear Michael,**

There is a significant difference between free-will and choice, though they are related. Free-will is a characteristic of authentic humanity, given by God is gives us the freedom to accept or reject God. Free-will is the capacity to choose between a variety of actions and act with moral responsibility. It requires a conscience informed by many things, not just one's individual needs. The basis of choice is key.

Individual choice is based on my desire for something I want. Euthanasia and abortion are an exercise of individual choice. While free-will includes choice, it is choice that accepts responsibility for others and for me. Individual choice is the great deception because it is at best a compromise or a dictatorship. Morally right choice is ultimately dependent upon the knowledge of those ends that are truly good for others and for me.

**Dear Joe,**

Would I be right in concluding that you are saying, if summed up, for the modern, authentic person, choice has become their God in place of the real God? And that for Christians, this is not possible because they have surrendered their rights to "choice" to follow Jesus?

Regards, Michael.

Fr Joe Grayland

## Special Notices

Please Note: **Memorial Acclamation said during Masses in October:**

So parishioners can respond in unison each month we will alternate these responses starting with:  
"We proclaim your Death O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again!"

## Prayer Intentions

**We Pray for Our Deceased: RIP:** Ben Herden (Sheena Mason's Son-In-Law), Brother Tony Brown (Kopua), Dorothy McCrone (OLOL), & Irma Kennedy (Cathedral)

**Mass intentions:** Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. **May the souls** of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, **rest in peace.**

**Special Prayers:** For those suffering with psychological illnesses and their families.



**We pray for:** Barbara & Graeme Younger, Bernadette Conlon, Catherine Walsh, Chris Kleinsman, David Maeguard, Diane Stubbs, Deborah Green, Fiona Hurly, Evie Feierabend, Fr Damian Caccioppoli SM, Ian Sutherland, Josie Conlon, Bernice OBeirne, John Pepperell, June MacMillan, Kathleen Butturini, Kia Reyes, Malia Mavaega, Marian Carey, Maureen Murphy, Maureen Watts, Maria Pascoe, Mike Manson, Mikulas Oros, Melva Widdowson, Michael Quirk, Pat Kauri, Nicola Burmeister, Paul McRae, Peter Morrison-Story, Pippa Richards, Raymond Jones, Romuald Rudzki, Rebecca Lauvi, Rose Waldvogel, Steve Horgan, Stephen Caccioppoli, Tony Murphy, Tony Winchcombe, Vinnie Carroll, William Lemmon, Anna & John Feldberg, Mick Spring, Mike Spring, Margaret & John Maskill, Tyler, Allan and Wayne.



### Reflection – 29<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

**1<sup>st</sup> Reading:** Isaiah 45.1, 4-6, **2<sup>nd</sup> Reading:** Thessalonians 1.1-5ab, **Gospel Reading:** Matthew 22.15-21  
**Responsorial Psalm:** *Give the Lord glory and honour.*

What great scripture for the day after a national election!  
After the weeks of political campaign, perhaps we can relate a little to Jesus' sense of being trapped by flattery and false words. And perhaps like me, you wonder whatever the election results might be - who has the answers, what is the best way forward, who should have authority and what authority should they have?

We are reminded in the first and second readings of two important points. In Isaiah, pagan emperor Cyrus, earns his authority because he is, unknowingly, God's instrument in the restoration of the exiled Judeans to their homeland. *God has the authority.*

In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, we are reminded of *the power of the spirit to mould communities of love, faith and hope.*

Jesus tells us to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. An argument for the complete separation of temporal and spiritual, state and religion? At times, our own secular climate leans heavily in this direction....

Rather I think, an argument for recognising that, held under God and responsible to God, the state performs its proper functions in maintaining law and order and promoting the welfare of its citizens. But when it oversteps the mark and puts itself in the place of God, Christians in the last resort are absolved from obedience. In the final analysis, we are responsible to God.

Kathleen Field.

## NOTICES:

For more in-depth news see our [Online Newsletter](#) or the Parishes Noticeboard.

† <b>St Vincent de Paul:</b> We still need children's toys - please remember us when you are having a spring clean	
† <b>OLOL: Encyclical Letter, FRATELLI TUTTI</b> – Pope FRANCIS ON FRATERNITY & SOCIAL FRIENDSHIP reading & discussion group. Thursdays in November (5 <sup>th</sup> , 12 <sup>th</sup> , 19, 26 <sup>th</sup> ) 7pm to 8pm. Lead by Fr Joe Grayland. Purpose: to read & discuss the letter. All welcome.	
† <b>Let us get to know the bible.</b> Come and join us over a cuppa and enjoying the Word and being encouraged at 540 Albert Street, 1:15pm each Tuesday till school pickup. <b>Enquires:</b> Basia McIntosh 02108203750 <a href="mailto:BMcintosh@pndiocese.org.nz">BMcintosh@pndiocese.org.nz</a>	
18 October	6:00pm <b>Cathedral</b> - As we celebrate the month of rosary, <b>Blessed Virgin Mary</b> will be visiting our homes. Please RSVP to Maricar Dongon 021 149 5700. <b>Rosary</b> after 6pm <b>Mass</b>
20 October	1:30pm <b>Cathedral</b> - Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month – <b>Ladies Movie Afternoon</b> – “Sweet Inspirations” – All welcome!
21 October	5:30pm Hey all! Due to Labour weekend, there is a <b>CHANGE IN DAYS</b> for <b>Junior Youth Group</b> . Instead of being Friday the 23 <sup>rd</sup> , youth group will be on <b>WEDNESDAY 21 October</b> . Kicking off at the Dio Centre from 5.30 until 7pm. See you all there for some awesome fun! Bridget Kelly, Junior Youth minister. <a href="mailto:bkelly@pndiocese.org.nz">bkelly@pndiocese.org.nz</a>
22 October	9:30am <b>Cathedral Lounge Shining Stars</b> – all welcome!
23 October	12:05pm <b>Cathedral</b> – <b>Hospitality</b> after Friday Mass
23 October	1:30pm <b>Cathedral</b> – <b>Praying the Sunday Gospel</b>
23 October	1:00pm <b>St. Mary's Foxton</b> – <b>Rosary</b> every Friday afternoon at 1pm
27 October	10:30am <b>Cathedral</b> Every 4 <sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the Month – <b>Brokes Morning Tea</b> – All welcome!
28 October	5:30pm <b>OLOL First Holy Communion Information Evening</b> in the OLOL church Gathering Area. Preparation Sessions will be each Sunday (1, 8 & 15 November) after 9:30am.
31 October	3:30pm <b>Rosary Culmination</b> for October in the Cathedral – Please note: There will be <b>NO Mass</b> at 6:00pm
1 November	11:30am <b>Sacred Heart (Rongotea) is Celebrating their 125<sup>th</sup> Jubilee.</b> There is <b>NO Mass</b> at 9:00am. This will be followed by lunch at the Rongotea Tavern. All Welcome! For catering purposes, please indicate numbers by 25 October to Tim Hehir <a href="mailto:tim.hehir@xtra.co.nz">tim.hehir@xtra.co.nz</a> or ph 0275839317
4 November	7:00pm <b>OLOL</b> – <b>Bereavement Mass</b> – <b>Everyone Welcome!</b>
7 November	<b>PILGRIMAGE TO JERUSALEM.</b> Phone St Mary's office 358 5614 to register your interest.
8 November	9:30am <b>Cathedral First Holy Communion Celebration</b>
22 November	9:30am <b>OLOL First Holy Communion Celebration</b> – <b>Feast of Christ the King.</b>

*Notices for the Newsletter: Email [info@lourdesparish.nz](mailto:info@lourdesparish.nz) by 9am Thursdays. Newsletter Items that are received after 9am on Thursdays will be included the following week.*