

## Mary, Help of Christians Patroness of Australia

### BEHOLD YOUR MOTHER! BEHOLD YOUR SON!

The scene presented in the Gospel today is the highpoint of John's gospel. Following this scene Jesus can say, 'It is finished.' Too frequently, this scene is trivialised and presented simply as Jesus asking a disciple to look after his mother. Such an interpretation does not do justice to the rich meaning of this scene, which is unique to John and so offers John's way of understanding the meaning of Jesus' death.

By way of introducing the passage it is helpful to recall words from the Prologue, 'He came to his own (Greek: eis to idia), but his own did not receive him, but to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become the children of God.' (John 1:11-12) Here, the Prologue states the Johannine understanding of Jesus' mission – to enable believers to become God's children. I noted a particular Greek phrase, which will be repeated in the Passion account.

In John's Gospel, his mother is never named. She is only called 'woman,' and 'mother' both at Cana (John 2) and here at the foot of the Cross. These are the names given to Eve in Genesis. Adam names her 'woman' (2:23) and 'mother of all living'. (3:20) By omitting her personal name 'Mary,' the evangelist places the focus on her maternity and evokes the woman in the Garden of the original creation who was also 'woman' and 'mother'.

From the Cross Jesus speaks to his mother and the Beloved Disciple – 'Woman, behold your son'; 'Behold your mother'. These words establish a new relationship between the woman and the disciple; from now on, they are mother and son. But, in changing this relationship, Jesus also brings about a change in his relationship to the disciple. Since they now claim the same woman as 'mother,' they are now brothers/sisters. If disciples are now brothers/sisters of Jesus, then disciples are now children of God. John's theology of the Cross is that believers are drawn into Jesus' own relationship with God. The scene concludes with the phrase, 'from that hour, the disciple took her to his own' (eis ta idia). Most translations add the word 'home' but this word is not in the Greek text. This small phrase repeats what was said in the prologue and so signals that the promise given in the Prologue that believers would be given the power to become children of God (1:12), has now been fulfilled. On the morning of his Resurrection, Jesus commissions Mary Magdalene with the words, 'Go to my brothers and sisters, and say to them, I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.' These words confirm that disciples are now brothers and sisters of Jesus and children of God.

Following the scene at the Cross, Jesus declared, 'It is finished.' This word of completion echoes the word God spoke when the work of creation was finished. 'On the seventh day, God finished the work.' (Genesis 2:2) This Gospel, which opened with the first words from Genesis, 'In the beginning ...' has a strong but subtle theme that Jesus' task is to bring about the dawn of a new creation.

The Johannine passion begins and ends in a Garden. Jesus is arrested in a garden (18:1), and buried in a garden tomb (19:41). John also emphasises that Jesus' Cross is in the middle (19:18). A first-century Jewish audience would hear in these words an echo of the Garden of Eden and the tree of life, which was planted in the middle of that Garden. In the Johannine Garden, Jesus' Mother is the new Eve in this new creation and disciples are the first to be reborn as children of God. © Mary Coloe PBVM



St Mark's Catholic Church:  
Mary, Help of Christians Gothic Window.

## Mary, Help of Christians

### Entrance Antiphon

Cant 6:10

**All)** Who is this arising like the dawn, fair as the moon, resplendent as the sun, terrible as an army with banners.

### The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### First Reading

Sir 4:11-18

A reading from the book of Ecclesiasticus.

*God loves those who love wisdom.*

Wisdom brings up her own sons, and cares for those who seek her. Whoever loves her loves life, those who wait on her early will be filled with happiness. Whoever holds her close will inherit honour, and wherever he walks the Lord will bless him. Those who serve her minister to the Holy One, and the Lord loves those who love her. Whoever obeys her judges aright, and whoever pays attention to her dwells secure. If he trusts himself to her he will inherit her; and his descendants will remain in possession of her; for though she takes him at first through winding ways, bringing fear and faintness on him, plaguing him with her discipline until she can trust him, and testing him with her ordeals, in the end she will lead him back to the straight road, and reveal her secrets to him.

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 112:1-8. R. v.2

**(R.) Blessed be the name of the Lord for ever.**

1. Praise, O servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord! May the name of the Lord be blessed both now and for evermore! **(R.)**
2. From the rising of the sun to its setting praised be the name of the Lord! High above all nations is the Lord, above the heavens his glory. **(R.)**
3. Who is like the Lord, our God, who has risen on high to his throne yet stoops from the heights to look down, to look down upon heaven and earth? **(R.)**
4. From the dust he lifts up the lowly, from the dungheap he raised the poor to set him in the company of princes yes, with the princes of his people. **(R.)**

## St Mark's Parish

United in Baptism, Nourished by the Eucharist,  
Guided by the Holy Spirit,  
We Form a Vibrant and Caring Community,  
Living and Proclaiming the Gospel,  
Reaching Out to Those in Need,  
Journeying Together,  
Growing in Faith.

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### Second Reading

1 Cor 1:18-25

A reading from the first letter of St Paul to the Corinthians.

*It was because God wanted to save those who have faith through the foolishness of the message that we preach.*

The language of the cross may be illogical to those who are not on the way to salvation, but those of us who are on the way see it as God's power to save. As scripture says: I shall destroy the wisdom of the wise and bring to nothing all the learning of the learned. Where are the philosophers now? Where are the scribes? Where are any of our thinkers of today? Do you see now how God has shown up the foolishness of human wisdom? If it was God's wisdom that human wisdom should not know God, it was because God wanted to save those who have faith through the foolishness of the message we preach. And so, while the Jews demand miracles and the Greeks look for wisdom, here are we preaching a crucified Christ; to the Jews an obstacle that they cannot get over, to the pagans madness, but to those who have been called, whether they are Jews or Greeks, a Christ who is the power and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

### Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia!*

Happy are you, O blessed Virgin Mary; without dying you won the martyr's crown beside the cross of the Lord. Alleluia!

### Gospel

Jn 19:25-27

A reading from the Gospel according to John

*This is your mother.*

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala. Seeing his mother and the disciple he loved standing near her, Jesus said to his mother, "Woman, this is your son." Then to the disciple he said, 'This is your mother.' And from that moment the disciple made a place for her in his home.

### Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;  
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting.  
Amen



## Mary, Help of Christians

### Prayers of the Faithful

**Leader:** My friends, we rejoice in Mary, patroness of this nation, and we pray through her Son Jesus, for the welfare of Australia.

**Reader:** Let us pray that the Church in Australia may give witness to Jesus under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, supported by the prayer of Mary, Help of Christians. *(pause)*.

*Lord hear us:*

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** Let us pray that Mary, Help of Christians and Mother of the Church, will show us, by her faith and charity, how to resist evil and to live for her Son, Jesus. *(pause)*.

*Lord hear us:*

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** Let us pray that Mary, as the Help of Christians, on this anniversary of the founding of the World Council of Churches, will teach us to be respectful of all people, working for harmony between Churches, Ecclesial Communities and other Faiths. *(pause)*.

*Lord hear us:*

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Reader:** Let us pray that the Australian nation, with good leadership in our Federal and State Parliaments and Local Councils, she may be committed to peace and justice, with a strong concern for the poor and needy. *(pause)*.

*Lord hear us:*

**All:** Lord, hear our prayer.

**Leader:** Eternal God, we your servants praise you, and ask your blessing upon our nation so that out of our diversity you may unite us with integrity and right living. Through Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

### Communion Antiphon

*Cf. Jdt 13:18-19*

**(All)** Blessed are you, O Virgin Mary, by the Lord God Most High, above all women on the earth; for he has so exalted your name, that your praise shall be undying on our lips.

### Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,  
the Lord is with thee.

Blessed art thou among women  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners, now,  
and at the hour of our death.  
Amen.

### The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided.

Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me.

Amen.



The feast day to Mary Help of Christians has been celebrated in Australia since 1844 but the history to this day dates back to the start of the 1800's. Napoleon Bonaparte had jailed Pius VI who died in jail. When Pope Pius VII was elected he too was jailed by Bonaparte, who kept him prisoner at Fontainebleau. The Holy Father vowed to God that if he were restored to the Roman See, he would institute a special feast in honour of Mary.

The military eventually forced Bonaparte to release the Pope and on 24 May 1814, Pius VII returned in triumph to Rome. Twelve months later the Pope decreed that the feast of Mary Help of Christians be kept on 24 May.

The infant church in Australia had a special reason for turning to Mary. No priests were sent to the colony in its early days and Mass was not allowed except for one brief year until 1820. It was largely the Rosary in those early days that kept the faith alive.

Catholic Australia remained faithful to Mary and was the first nation to choose her under the title Help of Christians, as principal Patroness. St Mary's Cathedral was dedicated in her honour by the Irish pioneer priest, Fr John Therry, who arrived in Sydney in 1820 and assumed responsibility for the planning and initial construction of the Cathedral. When Australia became the first country to have Mary Help of Christians as Patroness, it became the first country to have a mother-cathedral under the same title.





The venerated image that Pope Leo XIII granted a Canonical coronation on 13 February 1903. The Basilica of Our Lady Help of Christians, Turin.

### Prayer to Our Lady Help of Christians

Most Holy Virgin Mary,  
 Help of Christian,  
 how sweet it is to come to your feet  
 imploring your perpetual help.  
 If earthly mothers cease not to remember their  
 children,  
 how can you, the most loving of all mothers  
 forget me?  
 Grant then to me, I implore you,  
 your perpetual help in all my necessities,  
 in every sorrow, and especially in all my  
 temptations.  
 I ask for your unceasing help for all who are  
 now suffering.  
 Help the weak, cure the sick, convert sinners.  
 Grant through your intercessions many  
 vocations to the religious life.  
 Obtain for us,  
 O Mary, Help of Christians,  
 that having invoked you on earth we may love  
 and eternally thank you in heaven.



### Prayer to Mary Help of Christians

Patroness of Australia and of the Military Ordinariate

Almighty God, deepen in our hearts Our love of  
 Mary Help of Christians.  
 Through her prayers and under her protection,  
 May the light of Christ shine over our land.  
 May Australia be granted harmony, justice and  
 peace. Grant wisdom to our leaders and integrity  
 to our citizens.  
 Bless especially the men and women Of the  
 Australian Defence Force and their families.  
 We ask this through Christ Our Lord.  
 Amen.  
 Our Lady Help of Christians, pray for us.  
 St Mark, pray for us.



### St Mark's Drummoyne Masses

Monday & Friday 8:00am  
 Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am  
 Wednesday 7:30am & Saturday 12 noon  
 Saturday Reconciliation 11:30am - 11:55am  
 Saturday Vigil 5:30pm & Sunday 9:00am & 6:00pm

Scan the QR code to donate to support the Ministry and Mission of our Parish.



#### St Mark's Catholic Parish

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Parish Website: [www.stmarksdrummoyne.org.au](http://www.stmarksdrummoyne.org.au)



St Mark's Church Hearing  
 Loop installed

Parish Bulletin: we ask that you take home your  
 bulletin, do not put it back for others or leave it on  
 the pew for others to pick up.

Parish Priest: Fr Michael McLean PP  
 Priest in Residence: Fr Denis Minns OP  
 Pastoral Associate: Sr Antonia Nedu ISR  
 Chair Parish Pastoral Council: Ms Celine Cheng  
 School Principal: Mrs Melissa Lentini

Masks are recommended, thank you for social distancing, please respect the sacredness of our church and remember to turn off your phone during the Mass.

St Mark's Parish, Drummoyne acknowledges the Wangal people, one of 29 tribes of the Eora nation and the traditional custodians of the land on which we stand. We pay our respects to them and for their care of the land. May we walk gently and respectfully upon the land.



**A message from the Archdiocese of Sydney:** Child sexual abuse is a crime. The appropriate people to deal with a crime are the police. If you, or anyone you know have been abused, please contact the police. Alternatively, you can contact the Safeguarding and Ministerial Integrity Office at (02) 9390 5810 [safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org](mailto:safeguardingenquiries@sydneycatholic.org). You may also want to speak to your Parish Priest who will be able to provide support and guidance. The Archdiocese has a legal obligation to report crimes to the police. **Website:** [Archdiocese of Sydney Safeguarding and Child Protection](http://Archdiocese of Sydney Safeguarding and Child Protection)