Liturgy of the Word

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY:

*NAME OF SCHOOL*….and those here present, acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land where we gather today.

We pay respect to Elders past and present for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. We recognize the cultural heritage, beliefs and deep spiritual relationship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to the land, waters and seas of this country - upon which they have lived for thousands of years. We value their rich contribution to our society and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

WE GATHER:

#### Gathering Hymn: 'Faith in the Future' National Song

(Fr Rob Galea)

<https://200years.catholic.edu.au/resources-2/>

Leader**:** And so we pray.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Gathering Prayer:**

**LEADER:** Almighty ever-living God,

who placed the love of Our Lady, Help of Christians

in the hearts of those who brought the Catholic faith to these shores,

grant, through her intercession,

wisdom to our leaders and integrity to our citizens,

so that, under her protection,

Australia may know harmony, justice and peace.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

God, for ever and ever.

**Penitential Rite:**

**LEADER:** Before listening to the Word of God

let us pray to the Lord Jesus Christ (pause)

Lord Jesus, you are the word who dwells among us: Lord have mercy

**ALL**: Lord have mercy

**LEADER:** Christ Jesus, you call us to follow you: Christ have mercy

**ALL:** Christ have mercy.

**LEADER:** Lord Jesus, you are the way, the truth and the life: Lord have mercy

**ALL:** Lord have mercy.

**Leader:** May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,

and bring us to everlasting life.

**All**: Amen.

**WE LISTEN:**

**First Reading:** James 3:13, 17-18

A reading from the letter of St James

If there are any wise or learned among you, let them show it by their good lives, with humility and wisdom in their actions. The wisdom that comes down from above is essentially something pure; it also makes for peace, and is kindly and considerate; it is full of compassion and shows itself by doing good; nor is there any trace of partiality or hypocrisy in it. Peacemakers, when they work for peace, sow the seeds which will bear fruit in holiness.

**Psalm:** Recommended for Primary schools: Michael Mangan ‘Sing out with Joy,’ (Psalm 66)

Recommended for Secondary schools: Michael Herry ‘The Just will live in the presence of the Lord,’ (Psalm 14). This is located on Marist Music website [maristmusic.org.au/responsorial-psalms-yr-b/](#_top)

**GOSPEL:** Luke 1:39-56

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, ‘Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.’ Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months and then went back home.

**WE RESPOND:**

**Litany of Praise**

*Symbols are brought forward as each Reader prays.*

**READER 1:** For Mary, who, as our Patroness, shows love and care towards our land and its multicultural people. (Symbol: Flags of different countries including Australian Indigenous Flags to represent diversity).

**ALL:** We praise you God.

**READER 2:** For Mary, who is a sign of hope and source of unity in Christ for all Australians. (Symbol: Wheel which represents the circle of life).

**ALL:** We praise you God.

**READER 3:** For Mary, who is model and bearer of the Truth and Light of the Gospel

**ALL:** We praise you God. (Symbol: Candle which represents the light of Christ).

**READER 4:** For Mary, who is woman, wife, mother, a person for us today.

**ALL:** We praise you God. (Symbol: Protea which is a floral representation of courage)

**LEADER:** Trusting in God who cares for all our needs we pray together… Our Father………

**Prayer of Faithful:**

LEADER: Loving God, look upon the prayers of your faithful,

presented in commemoration of Blessed Mary, the Mother of God,

that they may be pleasing to you and may confer on us your help and forgiveness.

READER: For peace in our country (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For caring for the beauty of our country and its weather (Pause) Lord hear us. ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For sharing our standard of living (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For freedom of religion (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For our youth (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For the parents and families and the values we inherited (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For our school communities (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For our multicultural nation (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

READER: For our indigenous brothers and sisters (Pause) Lord hear us.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

LEADER: May we continue to journey with Mary and all those who love God and seek truth.

**ALL:** Amen.

**WE GO FORTH**:

**Final Prayer:**

LEADER: Loving God, who chose the Virgin Mary to be the Mother of your Only Begotten Son, the light of the world, grant, through her intercession, that the light of Christ may shine over this land, guiding us in the way of justice and love.

We pray for Australia, our earthly home, with the help of Mary, may we become a new creation in Jesus Christ who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

Amen.

**HYMN:** For Secondary Schools:

Help of Christians, Guard our Nation

(Tune: Ode to Joy – Beethoven)

Help of Christians, guard our nation,

That it be a place of peace,

Where the love of Christ unites us

And all racial tensions cease.

Help of Christians, lead us forward,

With this dream in ev’ry heart:

To create a place of welcome

Where injustice has no part.

Help of Christians, chosen patron,

Of this fair Australian land,

You have shown a way to follow,

True to all that God has planned.

May our lives like yours be faithful,

May our loving be as true,

Till we see our God for ever,

Who has done great things for you.

(Author unknown).

For Primary Schools: ‘Mary, Help of Christians’ by John Burland.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GmBBRQUf2_g>