

**St Matthew's Holland Park Weekly
Bulletin 17th November 2024**



This week's Revd. Morris' message:

Let's take our fears and challenges to Jesus right now ..

In today's Gospel, known as the '*Olivet Discourse*' due to its location, Jesus pulls back the curtain of history and provides an insight into His return in Glory and Judgement at the '*end times*'.



Notice how the Disciples are enamoured of the beauty of the Temple in verses 1 and 2. And well they may be .. it was a marvel covering over 35 acres with walls up to 150 feet tall. Some columns' girth was such that it took 3 men to reach around them. Ancient sources tell us

that as from the Disciples vantage point from the Mount of Olives, as seen across the Kidron Valley, the Temple resembled a *mountain of marble decorated with gold*.

Undeterred, Jesus predicts the Temple's utter destruction in AD70 by the Romans after the Jewish revolt. However, after a further questioning by some of the leading Disciples, Jesus then goes on to describe 'the End Times' or 'Apocalypse' [literally meaning '*to reveal or uncover*'] involving wars, earthquakes, famines, persecution of the faithful and destruction of families of the faithful ...and further dreadful events are described later in the discourse after v13.

However, Jesus also promises that '*all who endure to the end without renouncing me shall be saved*'. But also warns later that '*no one knows when these things will happen- only the Father*' [v32]

Well, what does this mean for us today?

I wonder if sometimes we, like the Disciples, may get caught up in the beauty of our churches and start working mainly for their preservation and maintenance .. and forget that without Jesus they are just nice art and architecture? Jesus left the Temple for the last time in v1 and thereafter stressed to His followers that He was now the living temple. He himself was both the High Priest and sacrifice. He himself embodied the very place where sacrifice and mercy meet in eternity. His death upon the Cross inaugurated the New Covenant of Love replacing the Old Covenant of Temple sacrifice. So, whilst we can

marvel at our church's beauty, let's not forget that without His presence and Shekinah Glory, these places are spiritually empty, hopeless and desolate [literally in Hebrew 'Ichabod' - the Glory has departed. 1 Samuel 4: 21 +22]



Jesus never promises a smooth ride through life. In fact, as we see from this reading, he predicts the opposite for the faithful. But he also promises to always walk with us through the valley of the shadow of death and asks us to cast all our worries and fears at His feet. Jesus reminds us that God is in control [even if sometimes it certainly doesn't look that way to us] and to 'endure to the end' - where all things are put to rights at His coming. In the meantime, Jesus encourages us to 'stay alert', and 'be on watch' [13:33]

I wonder what struggles or challenges you may be enduring at the moment? Look at the struggles and challenges we face as a parish family, as a nation and those facing the world ... it could be easy to simply despair. Rather, let us take them to the only One who can bear them ... and He can also strengthen us to endure in His name and for His Glory.

Gospel reading: Mark 13:1-11 **Some resources to dig deeper:** <https://prestonhighlands.org/2020/01/26/the-end-is-coming-stay-the-course/> ; <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revise-common-lectionary/ordinary-33-2/commentary-on-mark-131-8>

Upcoming Parish Activities: Midweek service : Wednesday 10:30 a.m; 13:1-11 **Every Sunday Guitars and Ukulele lessons** at 3 p.m; **Bible Study** Wednesday at 7 pm and Friday at 10:30 am; **Readings for Next Sunday:** 2 Samuel 23:1-7; Psalm:93; Revelation 1:4b- 8; John 18:33-37 **NB AGM Part 1 will be held after service on 1st December. Please prayerfully consider if you are being called to be a part of the leadership team at St Matt's - see Revd Morris or the Wardens for more details.**

Parish Directory:

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Wardens: Heather Walker: 0411556 279; hezzie16@gmail.com [NB She is on leave from 13/11/24 until the 30/11/24].

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Bank Details: Holland Park Anglican Church Anfin BSB 704 901; Acct: 00000760.

Parish website : <https://www.stmatthewshollandpark.com/>

Parish Private Facebook site : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/292308270851142> ; **Public Site:** <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61556418523933> ;

Tipper's Treasure's Facebook site: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61559040358754>

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF COUNTRY:

We acknowledge and pay respect to the Turrbal and Jagera Peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we gather today. We acknowledge their continued spiritual connection to country and surrounding land, sky and water. We pay our respect to their Elders, past present and emerging and pray that we may continue to learn from and nurture one another in the spirit of Reconciliation.