



St Matthew's Holland Park Weekly Bulletin 4th August 2024
A Big St Matt's welcome to Revd Mike Upton for our parish's 2024 BCA Sunday Celebration!

*This week's Revd. Morris' message: **What are you hungering for today?***

In today's Gospel, we see a continuation of the interactions between Jesus and the crowd following on from the feeding of the 5000 in last week's Gospel. Remember the context - It's coming up to Passover, Jesus, in his miraculous feeding, has shown that He is truly the Messiah foretold by Moses ...and so the crowd moves to make Him King. However, Jesus withdraws, like Moses, further 'up the mountain'. The crowd want another Moses / King / Messiah to arise at this Passover time to miraculously free them from Roman oppression - just as Moses freed Israel after the first Passover. The crowd are picking up part of Jesus' message concerning His Messianic destiny **but they want Jesus to be their type of Messiah**, miraculously meet all their bodily needs .. oh, and by the way, also pick up a sword and rout the Roman oppressors.

This week's Gospel continues the dialogue with Jesus pointedly not answering the crowd's questions which are based upon their desires for Divine deliverance from their current daily grind. Jesus tries to point them away from their current desires and to go behind those desires to a **deeper desire within them** [perhaps not even consciously known to them?] ...namely, a desire to establish an intimate relationship with God. Jesus is trying to move them on from simply projecting upon Him their needs and their demand that, as their own national miracle worker, He fulfil them.

In this Gospel reading, Jesus deliberately invites the crowd to 'stretch' their current desire for bread for their bellies to encompass a wholistic satisfaction of humanity's deepest hunger - a hunger for an intimate relationship with God. Only by being in that relationship can humanity find eternal life, peace, purpose and fulfilment. Jesus alone can satisfy this deeper hunger and only through Him can we be in relationship with God. Thus, Jesus is indeed the true 'Bread of Life'. Later we see in Chapter 6 how the crowd ultimately responds to Jesus' invitation.



So what does this Gospel reading mean for us today?

How easy it is for us to disparage the crowd's misunderstanding of Jesus' Messiahship and His invitations to them. Surely, if we had been in their position we would have 'got the message'. Right? They were in the very physical presence of Jesus, asking Him questions and receiving His answers in real time. What wouldn't we give now to have that privilege!

Yet how different are our circumstances really? I wonder what we are hungering for at the moment? As individuals, families, a congregation, as Anglicans or as a nation? Where are

we placing our priorities and efforts? Are we striving to deepen our relationship with God and more closely discern and obey His will for us? What are we praying for? Our agenda or His? We may not be in Jesus' physical presence ... but isn't He always with us - closer than hands and feet? I'm wondering if we may be reminded this Sunday to stop and ask ourselves: ***What am I hungering for today?***



Today, we give thanks for all the faithful workers of the BCA who have so hungered; and, following their Master's call, have served those in the Australian Bush for over 105 years. They lived their motto : ***“Never too far - Never too few”***. On this our parish BCA Sunday, It is fitting that we give thanks to God for this ministry and also that we remember and uphold the pioneers of that ministry. One of which was a feisty 20 something Canadian woman Madeline Rose Delacour who joined the BCA in 1926 and went on to minister to outback NSW for many years in her trusty BCA Mission Van. Her

application to join the BCA is a featured story in the book published to celebrate BCA's Centenary. Her application contained a description of her deep personal faith and her belief that she had been called to perform her ministry of outback outreach with the BCA. Her application closed with a testimony of her hunger for Jesus and her certainty that He is indeed *“the bread of life ...and that they who come to him shall never hunger.”*

May we today likewise hunger and dedicate ourselves to faithfully answering His calling.

Gospel reading: John 6:24-35. Some resources to dig deeper: <https://www.workingpreacher.org/commentaries/revise-common-lectionary/ordinary-18-2/commentary-on-john-624-35> ; BCA Centennial Book “Never to far, never too few”

Upcoming Parish Activities: Wednesday 10:30 a.m service; **Every Sunday** Guitars and Ukulele lessons at 3 p.m; **Bible Study** Wednesday at 7 pm and Friday at 10:30 am
Next Sunday's Readings: 2 Samuel 18:5-9;14,31-33; Ps 130; Ephesians 4:17-5:2; John 6:35,41-51

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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.