

I'd like to start the homily today with prayer. If you're comfortable, I invite you to close your eyes and open your palms with your hands on your knees in a posture of reception. *“Lord God, you became human so that we could **know** you through your Son, Jesus. What do you want to say to us here this (evening/morning)? Open the ears of our hearts to hear your voice, for we, your servants, are listening.”* Amen. ***Which means so-be-it, or I agree!***

There is a beautiful gap between where each of us – myself included – are at in our Christian journey ***right now***, and ***where*** God is inviting us to be. The gap is filled when we freely respond to what God is inviting of us at ***this*** time in our lives – not in the past and not in the future. For many it will be ***learning how to pray***, or to pray more often or more faithfully. For others, it will be to ***say yes to the invitation to serve***, or to simply be a part of parish life outside of Mass. While for others, still, it will be to ***share what they have received from God with others***. There's often a natural progression – particularly for those who've been Catholic their whole lives – from being a Mass-goer to experiencing God's love so personally and powerfully that they can no longer keep the ***Good News*** of Jesus' living and active presence in their life to themselves.

I can remember a specific time about 20 years ago when I was an attending Mass-goer. I knew that I should arrive before Mass started and ask God to prepare my heart. I knew to say thank you afterwards. But beyond that, I really didn't know how to pray other than memorised prayers. I wasn't involved in parish life. I wasn't

serving. And I certainly wasn't sharing my faith with anyone else – partly because I didn't know that was even something Christians were supposed to do, and partly because, in the culture I had grown up in, you simply didn't talk about those things. Faith was private.

Today's Gospel challenges that understanding. At Mass last weekend Jesus instructed his disciples – those who choose to follow him – to “*proclaim that the Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand*” and today he continues to unpack what that means and how to do it. Alongside his repeated command, “Do not be afraid,” which we heard **three** times, he says – and it bears repeating – “*What I say to you in the **dark**, tell in the **daylight**. What you hear in **whispers**, proclaim from the **housetops**.*” Jesus is speaking about a faith that cannot remain private. He’s speaking about a relationship with God that overflows. He's speaking about disciples who are attentive to God's voice and courageous enough to share what they have received with others.

I’ve got some Good News that I need to proclaim in the daylight and from housetops right now: “The Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand” because God is doing something in our parish right now. In my personal, private prayer over the last few months, I’ve had a sense that God is about to do something big. Now, full disclosure, I was kind of hoping that whatever it was, it would be in **me**. But over the last 18/19 days, three people have experienced miraculous healings in our parish through prayer ministry. One was on Tuesday, 2nd June at a discussion night in the parish centre Egan Room,

another was in OLR church during Open House on Saturday, 6th June, and the third was on Friday evening at the Encounter Night. All three people had significant physical challenges with pain. One with both knees, the next with one knee, and the third with a spinal scoliosis issue. All three experienced something powerful as regular parishioners prayed for them, and all were able to do physical things they had not been previously able to do. God is doing something in our parish right now because people are responding to the sound of God's voice in their lives and are discovering that their faith isn't just one-way traffic, but a joyful response to Jesus' risen, active and living presence.

What is God revealing to **you** at this time? What's he **uncovering**, making **clear**, or sharing in a **whisper**?... If nothing immediately comes to mind, it's not because God isn't speaking – love always reaches out. Perhaps the Lord is inviting you simply to begin listening. To create some space in your day for prayer in stillness, silence and solitude. To ask him, "*Lord, what do you want to say to me – what are you asking of me?*"

Because the same Jesus who instructed his disciples and the saints is still speaking today. And he is speaking to you personally, in a whisper, and asking for your Yes. The beautiful gap between where we are and where God is calling us to be is crossed one faithful response at a time. One prayer. One act of service. One conversation. One act of courage. And one yes. So, as we continue this Eucharist, let's literally **ask** the Lord for the grace to hear his voice and the **courage** to respond.