

“Christ Lives in Me”



Reflections for  
'The Year of Paul'  
and Beyond

With DVD/Audio  
Presented by Archbishop Mark Coleridge  
Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

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# Introduction



Archbishop Mark Coleridge began his letter to the People of God in the Canberra and Goulburn Archdiocese in June 2008 as follows: "Pope Benedict XVI has proclaimed a Year of Jubilee to celebrate the two thousandth anniversary of the birth of Saint Paul, which historians have placed between the years 7 and 10 A.D. The Jubilee will run from 28 June 2008 to 29 June 2009."

At a prayer service in Rome in July 2008, Pope Benedict XVI said, "Paul is not a figure of the past that we remember with veneration. He is also our teacher, an apostle and a herald of Jesus Christ for us, too." Continuing with his theme, he noted, "We are not gathered here to reflect on a past history that is irretrievably surpassed. Paul wants to speak to us – today. His faith is not a theory, an opinion about God and the world. His faith is the impact of God's love on his heart. And so this same faith is love for Jesus Christ." The Pope encouraged every Christian to be a missionary of the gospel, as Paul was.

The Jubilee Year is a great opportunity for ecumenism too. St Paul understood the essential value of Christian unity because he understood the Church as the 'Body of Christ'. "In St. Paul's time and in every age, repairing divisions is an urgent task,"

Benedict reflected.

The four sessions here are designed to provide a broad background to the man, Paul, his life and missionary activity and encourage participants to engage with the reality of his life and vision. Each session is surrounded by prayer; contains some of Paul's writings mentioned in Archbishop Coleridge's lecture, with opportunity for personal or group response; two snapshots of missionary activity from residents of the archdiocese; and possible discussion or reflection questions. The centrepiece allows participants a glimpse of some places along the Pauline journey as they appear today.

St Paul understood the essential value of Christian unity because he understood the Church as the 'Body of Christ'.

May our hope for the Booklet, Christ lives in Us, echo the prayer of Pope Benedict: "The Pauline year, evangelisation, communion in the Church and full unity among Christians: let us now pray for these great intentions, entrusting them to the celestial intercession of Mary Most Holy, Mother of the Church and Queen of the Apostles."

You might choose to study the Booklet ecumenically.

# Leader's Notes

Thank you for agreeing to be the group leader. You may have the role throughout the program or perhaps the group has decided to rotate the leading. Your role will be one of preparation:

- By reading through each session before the meeting.
- Welcoming — setting a hospitable tone for the meeting; ensuring that each person has the opportunity and encouragement to contribute to the vitality of the group. Introduce new members. If possible, organise for the seats to be in a circle.
- Chairing/facilitating the meeting — encourage an attentiveness, openness and listening to each person and participation by each person to the extent that they wish to be involved; and help keep the discussion on track.
- Use your judgement regarding timing. The material offered is designed as a way for people to reflect on the aspects of the life and missionary activity of Paul and explore ways of being a follower of Jesus and Paul for today. The major resource is the faith and life experiences of those attending.
- There may well be some weeks where you choose not to attempt all sections, or where fruitful reflection/discussion takes longer than the suggested time. It is important to dwell on issues that are significant to those in the group.
- Have a bible handy. Sometimes only part of the nominated reading has been presented, and you might like to read the whole section.



## Timing Guidelines (very flexible)

Gathering and Opening prayer	5 mins
Reading	10 mins
Listening to the Word	10 mins
Commentary (on the DVD)	1 hr approx
Followers of Paul	5 mins
Reflecting	25 mins
Closing prayer	5 mins

# Session 1



## Who was Paul really?

### Readings

Acts 18: 1-3; 23: 6

Romans 7: 15 -25

2 Corinthians 11: 21b – 33

Philippians 3: 4b-5

## Opening Prayer

God of Love, we humbly seek the strength of your Spirit living within us. May our understanding of Christ deepen within each of us. May we become “rooted and grounded in love”. St Paul, we ask that you would intercede for us, that we may truly discover the breadth and length, the height and depth of Christ’s love.

*amen*

## Reading

Acts 18: 1-3.

After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them, and, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them, and they worked together--by trade they were tentmakers.

Acts 23: 6

When Paul noticed that some were Sadducees and others were Pharisees, he called out in the council, “Brothers, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees. I am on trial concerning the hope of the resurrection of the dead.”

Romans 7: 15 – 25

I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good. But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin.

2 Corinthians 11: 21b – 33

But whatever anyone dares to boast of--I am speaking as a fool--I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? I am talking like a madman--I am a better one: with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death. Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches.

Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?

If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. The God and Father of the Lord Jesus (blessed be he forever!) knows that I do not lie. In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

Philippians 3: 4b – 6

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

## Listening to the Word

- What did you hear that was interesting, provocative, stimulating or challenging in these texts?
- What moved you or spoke to your heart?
- What current attitude or behaviour might you need to reflect on?

## Commentary

Listen to Archbishop Mark Coleridge, on DVD (Video/ Audio 1).

### Followers of Paul

#### (1) Marie Therese Boroczky

After studying Information Technology at UTS, Sydney, and working for a couple of years in a software company, PALMS sent me to the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa in Saipan in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (in the Pacific). As the Diocesan computer specialist, I produced and edited the free Catholic weekly called 'The North Star'. The paper was funded through commercial advertisements which had strong support from the island businesses.

I admired the clergy in the Diocese who were very dedicated and supportive. The Bishop, Tomas A. Camacho, was born on the island and translated the bible into the local language, Chamorron, celebrated daily Masses and recorded weekly TV programs for the faithful. I appreciated the beauty of the Catholic Churches in Saipan and the regular island fiestas held at the parishes to celebrate the patron saints.

I appreciated the many missionary priests from the Philippines and four Dominican nuns, the Sisters of Mercy, who worked in the local school and assisted the Bishop. There was also a large Spanish convent which attracted many vocations from islands around the North Pacific.

I did enjoy the experience and I learned a lot. I am very grateful for being sent to Saipan and for the opportunity to share my skills.

#### (2) Marita Schlager

While I was at Uni, I undertook three short term missions in the Tiwi Islands, Darwin and Fiji with the Disciples of Jesus community because I love to share with others everyday, enjoy working with different people and being exposed to

different cultures. I went with members of the Missionaries of God's Love, both 'first timers' to the mission and more experienced members, both younger and older. Once, my mother and I went together.

I have fond memories of sharing everyday life activities, ranging from fishing, hunting, gathering foods and bushwalking, to teaching and learning different dance cultures such as 'hip hop'; from watching the local boys play football, or driving back in the truck munching on pink finger buns and icy poles, to giving each other high 5's.

Very quickly, I learned the importance of walking in others' shoes (e.g. talking to and working with people from different stages of life in the community, all of whom were united in faith and efforts to overcome poverty), of acknowledging the integrity of other people's lives and spirituality and noticing the differences from our cultural experience. I realised that 'mission work' is on for the long haul, and does not rely on 'bandaid' responses.

We volunteers were often overwhelmed by the generosity and gratitude of the people we met. When we were given sleeping spaces, and were told the family members would sleep in the lounge room, we sometimes later discovered that the family members were in the pantry or tiny, cramped spaces. In such circumstances, it was easy to become fully involved in the community life.

Preparing for mission is a full time commitment, and in many instances, you can never truly prepare yourself for what you will experience. Prior to going on mission - there are lots to organise including fundraising, travel itinerary, preparation meetings and even packing your bag for the unknown! Whilst on mission, the team needs to support each other through everyday challenges as they arise such as sickness, missing home extreme weather and the and the hectic timetable. The number one priority to make the mission experience work is to stick together.

The mission had benefits for my parish too. Those who weren't able to be physically part of the mission were involved in prayer support, encouraged those who did go, and came together to fundraise and support those going on mission. It was truly a rewarding experience all round.

## Reflecting

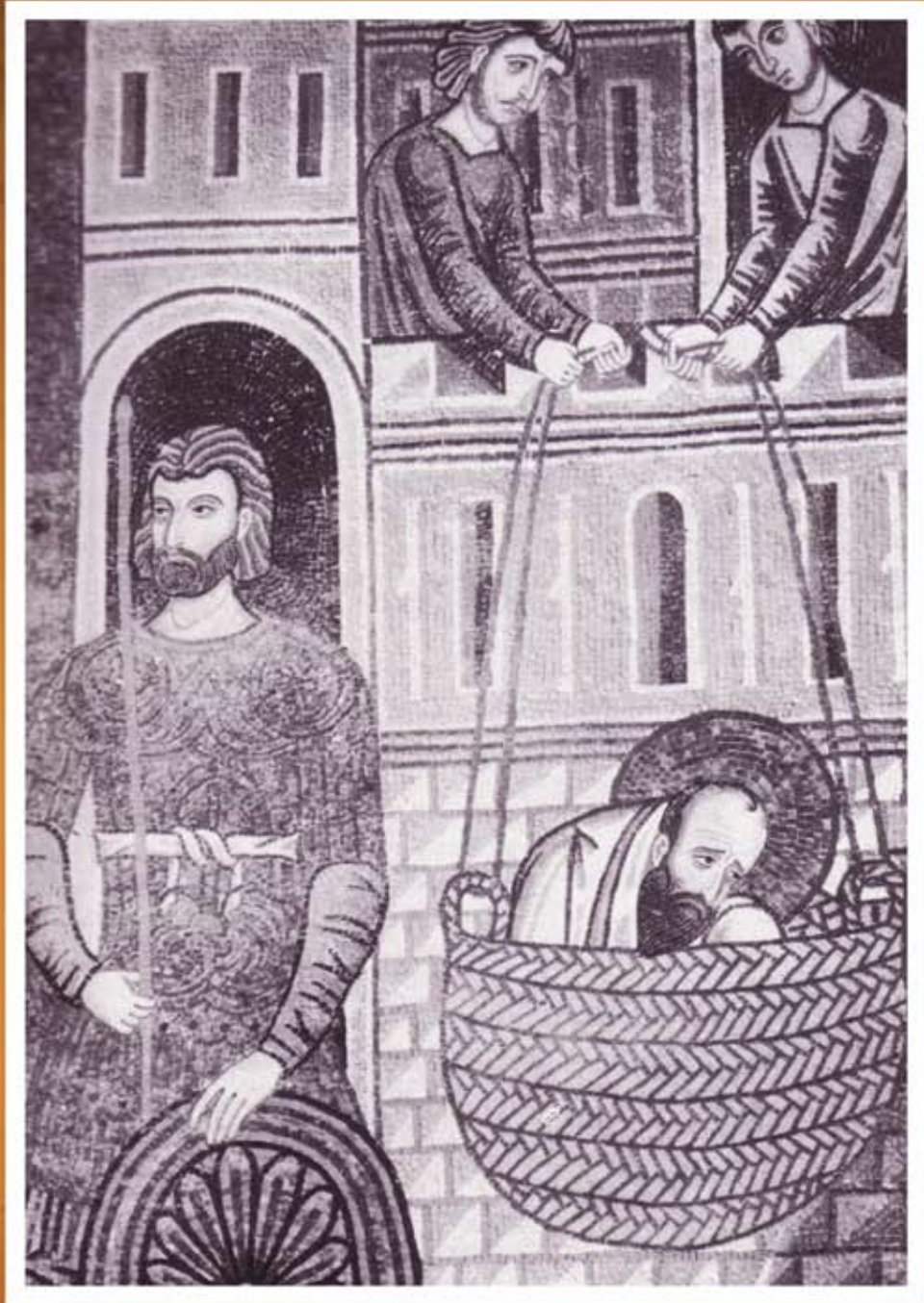
- What did you know about Paul (his personality, background, writings) before you came to this reflection group? How has listening to Archbishop Mark Coleridge changed or deepened your understanding of Paul so far?
- To what extent do you think Paul was 'well-equipped' for his missionary work? Is being 'well-equipped' for a mission necessary for success? Why?
- Paul grew up with many Jewish influences, yet is known as the 'Apostle to the Gentiles'. What does this tell us about God's use of our talents for (what we think are) unlikely purposes?
- Paul's life and writings speak not to relate just to topics of his time, but to the issues of today, the nature of "Church":
  - How important is the Law (the Commandments, Church laws) in Christian life and the Church?
  - How is the image of the Church as 'the Body of Christ' both empowering and challenging?
- What is my goal for this week as a disciple of Christ?

## Closing Prayer

God of love, you chose Paul to be your servant and gave him a specific mission. May this study of Paul deepen our own conviction of the mission you have in mind for us. May we be encouraged by his example. Although Paul lacked much that the world thought was necessary for success, his mission, through your grace, was abundantly fruitful. Grant to us, too, a deeper understanding of your purpose for each of our lives. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

*amen*

# Session 2



## The road to Damascus

### Readings

Acts 22: 6-16

Galatians 1: 15-24

Philippians 3: 7-8

## Opening Prayer

God of Love, we humbly seek the strength of your Spirit living within us. May our understanding of Christ deepen within each of us. May we become “rooted and grounded in love”. St Paul, we ask that you would intercede for us, that we may truly discover the breadth and length, the height and depth of Christ’s love.

*amen*

## Reading

Acts 22: 6-16

“While I was on my way and approaching Damascus, about noon a great light from heaven suddenly shone about me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?’ I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ Then he said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting.’ Now those who were with me saw the light but did not hear the voice of the one who was speaking to me. I asked, ‘What am I to do, Lord?’ The Lord said to me, ‘Get up and go to Damascus; there you will be told everything that has been assigned to you to do.’”

Since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, those who were with me took my hand and led me to Damascus.

“A certain Ananias, who was a devout man according to the law and well spoken of by all the Jews living there, came to me; and standing beside me, he said, ‘Brother Saul, regain your sight!’ In that very hour I regained my sight and saw him. Then he said, ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear his own voice; for you will be his witness to all the world of what you have seen and heard. And now why do you delay? Get up, be baptized, and have your sins washed away, calling on his name.’”

Galatians 1: 15 – 24

But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were already apostles before me, but I went away at once into Arabia, and afterwards I returned to Damascus.

Then after three years I did go up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and stayed with him fifteen days; but I did not see any other apostle except James the Lord’s brother. In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie! Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia, and I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea that are in Christ; they only heard it said, “The one who formerly was persecuting us is now proclaiming the faith he once tried to destroy.” And they glorified God because of me.

Philippians 3: 7-8

Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.

## Listening to the Word

- What did you hear that was interesting, provocative, stimulating or challenging in these texts?
- What moved you or spoke to your heart?
- What current attitude or behaviour might you need to reflect on?

## Commentary

Listen to Archbishop Mark Coleridge, on DVD (Video/ Audio 2).

### Followers of Paul

#### (1) Sr Jean Westblade, LCM

There was no blinding flash of light to knock me from my horse but my conversion was nonetheless significant. I arrived in Dili in 1997 when I saw “the light” and my eyes were opened to the utter poverty, oppression and suffering of the Timorese people. From that time I felt called to accompany the people in their suffering, no matter what this might entail. The reality of the situation soon revealed itself when I too was caught up in the devastation. This time marked the beginning of the crucifixion of the people and their land.

What inspired me amidst this devastation was my awareness of the deep faith of the people expressed in their “obedience in his name” and their unconditional trust in their God and their devotion to holy Mother Mary.

Another positive experience was joining with others who gave their all in solidarity with the people’s struggle for freedom.

What I and others gained during this time of struggle was a personal enrichment flowing from the love the people showed us and their appreciation of the ways we shared in their struggles.

#### (2) Samuel Mullins

For three years I have had the privilege and honour of being involved in youth ministry to high schools, here in Canberra/Goulburn, in Sydney and Melbourne. These missions are about meeting young people in their schools and

proposing to them that their lives can be so much more when they encounter the person of Jesus Christ.

This mission is not about beating students over the head with a bible, but about meeting them where they are and inviting them into the vast and beautiful world of faith. In today’s modern culture, many young people get short changed when they are told about values and faith. I took up this call because the young people of our nation deserve better. Jesus isn’t about telling us what not to do. He is about helping us to be as good and amazing as we can possibly be. He came that we may have life and have it to the full. Students deserve to hear that Jesus can be a part of their lives.

Obviously, this mission is not without its challenges. Students are often wary of anyone telling them how to think, but I am constantly amazed and inspired by the depth of young people’s spirituality and knowledge. I once read that the real challenge in ministry is not to be Christ to those you are ministering to, but to allow them to be Christ to you. More often than not it is not I who am changing the students, but I who am being changed by them.

## Reflecting

You might like to reflect on one or more questions here.

- What does it mean 'to encounter God'? How do we 'encounter God'? Have you had 'a Damascus experience'?
- Was life a smooth journey for Paul, after his encounter and commissioning? How might life be, how has it been, for us after our 'encounter with God'?
- God revealed God's own self in Paul, so Paul became the message. Given the nature of our 'Jesus encounter', how can we be messengers/revelations?
- Paul's life and writings speak of the issues of today, the nature of 'Church':
  - Is the Church really 'for everyone'?
  - Does the Church, do Christians, whatever their role/vocation take time out to reflect on the enormity of Christ and the Christian life?
  - How well does the Church practice discernment, and empower the People of God for their specific ministries or tasks?
- What is my goal for this week as a disciple of Christ?

## Closing Prayer

God of love, you chose Paul to be your servant and gave him a specific mission. May this study of Paul deepen our own conviction of the mission you have in mind for us. May we be encouraged by his example. Although Paul lacked much that the world thought was necessary for success, his mission, through your grace, was abundantly fruitful. Grant to us, too, a deeper understanding of your purpose for each of our lives. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

*amen*

# Scenes from Paul's Journeys



# Session 3



## The birth of Paul's mission

### Readings

Acts 14: 27 – 15: 32; 15: 35-41

Galatians 2: 14 – 20

Philemon 1: 10 – 17

## Opening Prayer

God of Love, we humbly seek the strength of your Spirit living within us. May our understanding of Christ deepen within each of us. May we become “rooted and grounded in love”. St Paul, we ask that you would intercede for us, that we may truly discover the breadth and length, the height and depth of Christ’s love.

*amen*

## Reading

Acts 14: 27 – 15: 32

When they arrived [in Antioch], they called the church together and related all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith for the Gentiles. And they stayed there with the disciples for some time.

Then certain individuals came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.” And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to discuss this question with the apostles and the elders... When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. But some believers who belonged to the sect of the Pharisees stood up and said, “It is necessary for them to be circumcised and ordered to keep the law of Moses.” The apostles and the elders met together to consider this matter...

The whole assembly kept silence, and listened to Barnabas and Paul as they told of all the signs and wonders that God had done through them among the Gentiles. After they finished speaking, James replied... “Therefore I have reached the decision that we should not trouble those Gentiles who are turning to God, but we should write to them

to abstain only from things polluted by idols and from fornication and from whatever has been strangled and from blood. For in every city, for generations past, Moses has had those who proclaim him, for he has been read aloud every sabbath in the synagogues.”

Then the apostles and the elders, with the consent of the whole church, decided to choose men from among their members and to send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leaders among the brothers, with the following letter: “The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the believers of Gentile origin in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings. Since we have heard that certain persons who have gone out from us, though with no instructions from us, have said things to disturb you and have unsettled your minds, we have decided unanimously to choose representatives and send them to you, along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth. For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials: that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.”

So they were sent off and went down to Antioch. When they gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. When its members read it, they rejoiced at the exhortation. Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the believers. See also Acts 15: 35-41

Galatians 2: 14 – 20

But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?”

We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is justified not by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have come to believe in Christ Jesus, so that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the law, because no one will be justified by the works of the law. But if, in our effort

to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have been found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not!

But if I build up again the very things that I once tore down, then I demonstrate that I am a transgressor. For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. See also Philemon 1: 10 – 17

## Listening to the Word

- What did you hear that was interesting, provocative, stimulating or challenging in these texts?
- What moved you or spoke to your heart?
- What current attitude or behaviour might you need to reflect on?

## Commentary

Listen to Archbishop Mark Coleridge, on DVD (Video/ Audio 3).

Followers of Paul

### (1) Fr Mietek Markowicz

In my twenties, I visited the monastery and the museum of the Divine Word Missionaries. I developed the desire to preach the Word of God in a foreign country, to share Catholicism with those who did not know Christ and with young church communities. I joined the Missionaries and worked for seventeen years in the mission field.

My main aims were to bring the good news to indigenous people and support their growth in faith in the Basic Christian Communities (partly by organising celebrations in the parish); to help them to live the values of the gospel in daily life, and support their education and health.

Some of the challenges included the lack of a written indigenous language, the need for my inculturation into the lifestyles, social systems and complex web of relationships operating in and between the tribes; the lack of security; the

government's pragmatic and speedy action to try to solve major political and social problems; and the difficulties of being an ex-pat.

This was compensated for by the joy of co-operatively working together with the people over the years to build up confidence, trust and friendship through social gatherings and various celebrations. This led to deeper understanding of each other and the faith and to a sense of belonging to the universal Catholic Church.

### (2) Bernadette Coman, Sally Fitzgerald and Sr Elizabeth Haywood

We joined Night Patrol (the St Vinnies van that tours some Canberra suburban shopping centres from about 7pm to midnight several nights of the week) to reach out to people that the St Vincent de Paul visitation program doesn't reach; because our lives have been blessed, and in challenging times we have had family and friends there to support us, or others who have given us inspiration and inner strength; and because we identify and feel comfortable with those we meet. Some groups also take clothes and blankets along from parishioners to pass out during cold weather.

The evenings 'on the road' give us time to listen to people's stories, to hear about ill-health, overdoses, suicides and sometimes small triumphs. We listen to what's really being said, and learn to be more non-judgemental, tolerant, and patient. We experience the joy and support of working with a team and being energised by those we meet. It is a privilege to share in others' journeys, especially of those who may be shunned by some members of our society. Some of us have to move out of our comfort zones. We have also come to a deeper appreciation of and gratitude for who and what we have.

It's not always a picnic. On cold, wet miserable nights, it's preferable to be indoors in a comfortable environment. When the weather keeps many visitors away from the van, it can become boring. It's frustrating not to be able to offer emergency accommodation for the homeless and a wider variety of food. Getting to bed late before a working day is a challenge!

What keeps us going is our contribution to a real caring for 'the regulars' and one-off visitors, and a desire to help build a sense of community with the visitors and among the Vinnies team members.

## Reflecting

You might like to reflect on one or more questions here.

- St Paul led and was led during his ministry. In what ways can I be a better leader and a better follower?
- It can be easy to compromise as Christians and accept people in our 'heads' but not in our action. Are there people I know who are outside of the Church? What are some ways I can better welcome outsiders into the Body of Christ?
- St Paul was left out on his own because he was convinced of the integrity of God's call to him 'on the road to Damascus', and so of the integrity of his mission. How can I better hear God's call in my life? What is my mission?
- St Paul did not go out to spread the good news on his own. Who are some people who can support, encourage and empower me in my mission? Who can I support in their mission?
- Paul's life and writings speak of the issues of today, the nature of "Church":
  - Conflict and divisions have dogged the church since its foundation. Are there current tensions/ conflicts in the church? How might these be resolved?
  - What new 'land'/focus beckons Christians today as 'missionary territory'?
  - How important is faith today as a 'doorway to enter the church'?
- What is my goal for this week as a disciple of Christ?

## Closing Prayer

God of love, you chose Paul to be your servant and gave him a specific mission. May this study of Paul deepen our own conviction of the mission you have in mind for us. May we be encouraged by his example. Although Paul lacked much that the world thought was necessary for success, his mission, through your grace, was abundantly fruitful. Grant to us, too, a deeper understanding of your purpose for each of our lives. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

*amen*

# Session 4



## Why the Loser Won

### Readings

Acts 16: 1 – 17: 34  
2 Corinthians 11: 24 – 28a  
Philippians 2: 5-11  
Galatians 6: 17

## Opening Prayer

God of Love, we humbly seek the strength of your Spirit living within us. May our understanding of Christ deepen within each of us. May we become "rooted and grounded in love". St Paul, we ask that you would intercede for us, that we may truly discover the breadth and length, the height and depth of Christ's love.

*amen*

## Reading

Acts 16: 1 – 17: 34

Paul went on also to Derbe and to Lystra, where there was a disciple named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer; but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the believers in Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him; and he took him and had him circumcised because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. As they went from town to town, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily...

After they had given [Paul and Silas] a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and

was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" They answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptised without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

After Paul and Silas had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you." Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. But the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the marketplaces they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar...

While Paul was waiting for [Silas and Timothy] in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there...

Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things..."

“While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, “We will hear you again about this.” At that point Paul left them. But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

### 2 Corinthians 11: 24 – 28a

Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches.

### Philippians 2: 5-11

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,  
who, though he was in the form of God,  
did not regard equality with God  
as something to be exploited,  
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave,  
being born in human likeness.  
And being found in human form,  
he humbled himself and became obedient to the  
point of death  
-- even death on a cross.  
Therefore God also highly exalted him  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
so that at the name of Jesus every knee should  
bend,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue should confess  
that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.

### Galatians 6: 17

From now on, let no one make trouble for me; for I carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body.

## Listening to the Word

- What did you hear that was interesting, provocative, stimulating or challenging in these texts?
- What moved you or spoke to your heart?
- What current attitude or behaviour might you need to reflect on?

## Commentary

Listen to Archbishop Mark Coleridge, on DVD (Video/ Audio 4).

### Followers of Paul

#### (1) Fr Frank Fuchs

As an Anglican, I spent almost twelve months in Papua New Guinea, in the jungles of the Oro Province, with the Society of St Francis, an Anglican Franciscan religious order. After some years in Australia teaching with the Marist Brothers, I was later invited by Archbishop Virgil Copas MSC to teach local children at Hanuabada Village on the outskirts of the capital.

We lay missionaries were volunteers and so received \$10 a month plus keep and board. Money wasn't any big deal and all in all we were happy and contented with our lives and situation. I taught from 1966 to 1978 when I was appointed Director of Religious Education for the diocese until I went to Rome in 1980 to study for the priesthood.

After ordination in Rome, I returned to Port Moresby, was appointed to a parish, became the Director of Vocations, continued the Religious Education work and taught Catechesis part time in the major seminary for several years.

Being a missionary is a challenging and humbling experience. It has its ups and downs. Personalities can clash, and do. Holidays were taken every three years for a period of three months and with no funds, one had to work on holiday. Then there is malaria with which, on one occasion, I very nearly lost the battle; I do still suffer from slight attacks. There was sometimes frustration on mission because we could do so little and there was much to be done.

On the other hand, what satisfaction we received from the people: more than we gave. There has been the great

privilege of friendships and relationships made across the different cultures and the honour of being accepted into a culture so different from our own. There has been great delight in seeing two of my candidates for holy orders being ordained and others becoming more involved in their local church.

Few jobs are as fulfilling as missionary work. But few are so demanding.

## (2) Gillian Belcher

In 2002, I participated in an evangelisation school where I spent four months being educated in the Catholic faith and means of evangelisation. At the end of the four months, each participant was assigned a location to evangelise. I, along with seven others, was sent to Darwin in the Northern Territory to minister to Indigenous Australians. We ran programs using drama, faith sharing, games and music in schools, parishes and remote Aboriginal communities. It was an incredible experience watching young people giving their hearts to Jesus.

One of the most incredible experiences I encountered during this time was when we spent a couple of days in a Juvenile Detention Centre, where ninety percent of the inmates are Indigenous Australians. They knew before we arrived that we were a Christian group and were not looking forward to the predictable preaching. But we did not go in to the Detention Centre with this intention. Instead, we played sport with them; we played pool and shared a meal as we wanted to share the Good News of Jesus through our lives and by taking an interest in each inmate. They were taken aback by our silent message of Jesus' love. They could not understand why eight young people would choose to spend a couple of days with them with no reason except to get to know them. They felt free to question us on our faith and questions on God's actions in their lives. It was intense and I felt inadequate to answer some of the questions; I realised that it was only with the power of the Holy Spirit being brought into these situations that I could answer. On our last day, some of the inmates shared with us that our visits were the first time in their lives that they felt that they were worthy of respect and love. They encountered Jesus through our wanting to be there and spend time with them, not seeing them as delinquents or dangerous, but as Jesus does: worthy of His love.

## Reflecting

You might like to reflect on one or more of these questions.

- When have you experienced, or do you know of others who have experienced, joy that is not dependent on circumstances?
- When have you experienced, or seen others experience, energy from suffering and difficulty?
- Do we believe ourselves to be, like Fr Frank and Gill, truly sons and daughters of Paul's mission, called to live 'death' and 'resurrection'?
- Paul's life and writings speak of issues of today, for example, the nature of 'Church':
- "The fullness of divine liberation is to be experienced in the communities" (via encounter/s with the risen Christ). To what extent is that your experience? How can I contribute to my community?
- Most of Paul's churches were countercultural. To what extent is that my experience of our contemporary church? Who/what might need to change?
- Paul took many risks for Christ. To what extent do churches today take risks and in what context/s? When have I taken risks for Christ?
- What is my goal for this week as disciple of Christ?

## Closing Prayer

God of love, you chose Paul to be your servant and gave him a specific mission. May this study of Paul deepen our own conviction of the mission you have in mind for us. May we be encouraged by his example. Although Paul lacked much that the world thought was necessary for success, his mission, through your grace, was abundantly fruitful. Grant to us, too, a deeper understanding of your purpose for each of our lives. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord.

*amen*

# Acknowledgements

The Booklet was compiled by:

Michelle Hung

Samuel Mullins

Daniela Kesina

Margaret Ryan (Editor)

Consultant: Sr Barbara Murray, RSM.

## Readings

The readings from Scripture are taken from: The New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (1989), Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used with permission. All rights reserved.

## Commentary

Most Reverend Mark Coleridge, DD, BA, DSS,  
Archbishop of Canberra and Goulburn.

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## Paintings/Icons

Contents page: St Paul by Andrei Rublev

Session 1 Title page: St Paul by Giotto di Bondone

Session 2 Title page: St Paul being lowered in a basket from the walls of Damascus. 12C Mosaic.

Session 3 Title page: The Apostles Paul, Andrew and Peter. 13-14C.

Session 4 Title page: Self-portrait of Rembrandt van Rijn as Apostle Paul.

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# Evaluation

After you or your group complete Christ Lives in Me, would you please complete the evaluation and return it to the address below? The writing team values your comments and uses them as a guide when preparing further programs.

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Are you completing a personal response?

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Are you completing a group response?

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What worked well for you/the group? Why?

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What worked well for you/the group? Why?

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What did not work so well? Why?

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Have you some suggestions or recommendations for further booklets?

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Please return your comments on this sheet or by email, to:

Margaret Ryan, catholicLIFE, P.O. Box 7174, Yarralumla A.C.T. 2600  
or email: [margaret.ryan@catholiclife.org.au](mailto:margaret.ryan@catholiclife.org.au)



Perhaps you are now keen to learn some more about St Paul's letters!

Father Michael Fallon msc was also involved in 'The Year of Paul' series of talks in the Archdiocese.

He offered seven talks, presenting seven of Paul's letters in the order in which they were written, offering the context for each letter, and choosing as central theme:

1. Galatians: 'Christ gave himself to set us free' (1:4).
2. 1 Corinthians: 'To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for a good purpose' (1:27).
3. Colossians: 'Clothe yourself with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony' (3:14)
4. Romans: 'Be transformed by the renewing of your minds' (12:2).
5. Ephesians: 'To gather up all things in Christ' (1:10).
6. Philippians: 'Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus' (2:5).
7. Titus: 'Appoint presbyters in every town as I directed you' (1:5).

The slides used in presenting these talks (including maps) can be accessed by going to Michael's website ([michaelfallonmsc.com](http://michaelfallonmsc.com)) and going to the link 'PAUL'. Instructions are given there describing how you can download and listen to the talks. If you do not have access to a computer, CDs of each of the talks can be obtained from the author ([mbfallon@gmail.com](mailto:mbfallon@gmail.com)), or you can obtain 1 CD with all seven talks with compressed (mp3) files. A donation of \$5.00 is recommended for each CD. If you want only 1 CD, postage will need to be extra.

Fr Michael's address is: Cnr Chave and Blackham Sts, Kippax ACT 2615, Phone (02) 6254 3236

OR

Margaret Ryan, CatholicLIFE, The Rheinberger Centre, P.O. Box 7174, Yarralumla ACT 2600. Margaret may be reached at (02) 6163 4302, [margaret.ryan@catholiclife.org.au](mailto:margaret.ryan@catholiclife.org.au), or [learning@catholiclife.org.au](mailto:learning@catholiclife.org.au), (02) 6163 4333.

Each of Fr Michael's sessions is on one CD. Each CD can be posted to you for \$10, for ACT and NSW residents, though the cost may be slightly higher for those in other states.

“What’s my mission?”

