

but we are not simply left to get on with it in our own strength. The Holy Spirit is always with us to give us power to be Christ's witnesses.

The challenge to us is: Is our witness a life changing witness. Can I leave you with a parting thought? If being a Christian were made illegal, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

The Lord be with you.

## Prayer Points

### Thanksgiving

- For God's call to relationship with him and for the blessing of salvation, peace and restoration that are ours.
- For the life of Eric Cooke.

### Petitions

- Peter, Summer, Sylvia, Helen, Lorna, Debbie, Kaye, Chris, Rita, Julia & John, Bernie, Max, June and Michael and their families.
- Those affected by COVID 19 and all those struggling with current regulations.
- For our Federal and State leaders and healthcare professionals



## The Lighter Side of Life



## *Anglican Parish of the Otways Newsletter*

### **18th Sunday after Pentecost**

4th October, 2020

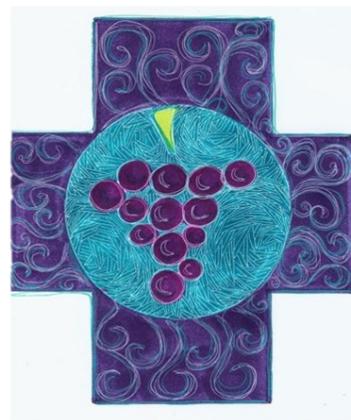
**Priest in Charge — Rev'd Jenny Brandon**

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**Anglican Parish of the  
Otways**

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

What a wild week of weather we have had! Beautiful sunshine one day and snow the next. I must admit we enjoyed the snow as we were babysitting our grandsons and they thought it was wonderful.

As some of you will know, June's brother Eric passed to his eternal reward on Sunday. A small funeral service will be held in Colac on Thursday. Please remember June, Phyllis, Wilma and Michael as they grieve the loss of their brother and Uncle.

Please also hold Kerryn's Uncle Bernie and Max Hartwick in your prayers as they face severe health challenges. At a time when we are forbidden to visit friends and loved ones, having sick family members is doubly stressful. Your prayers will bring comfort to all affected at this time.

Although our churches continue to be closed, remember we can gather in groups of 10 for outdoor religious ceremonies. If you wish to participate in such a gathering just give me a ring. I will organise these as required.

May the Lord bless you with peace and joy.  
Jenny



## Prayer of the Week

O God, you ever delight to reveal yourself to the childlike and lowly of heart: grant that, following the example of the blessed Francis, we may count the wisdom of this world as foolishness and know only Jesus Christ and him crucified, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

## Reading. John 15

## Reflection

We most associate St. Francis of Assisi with animals and the environment but there was a lot more to St Francis than a poor "Dr Doolittle". He was a man who set us an example of how we should live if we want to be effective witnesses for Christ. If we, like St Francis, desire to be true servants of the Lord, we need to excel in the three relationships referred to in John 15. i.e. our relationship to Christ; to other believers & to the world

The first and key relationship in John 15 is the relationship we have to Christ. Christ describes our relationship with Him as being as close as the branches of a vine are to the vine itself. I think the key here is the word "abide." Abide is the opposite of Hurrying, we need to take time to nurture our relationship, you can't rush it or take shortcuts. As we spend time in prayer, meditating on God's word, listening to what He would say to us, we will get to know Him. And when we "abide in Christ" we allow Him to change us for the better. It is our changed lives that are going to witness to people.

Do you know Christ intimately or is He distant? Has He an effect on your life? That's what mission is about.

The second relationship that Christ speaks of in John 15 is relationships with other Christians

The world out there is looking for something different from the negativity and self-centredness of the world at large. If they see us as nothing more than an extension of the bickering and negativity that is going on in society generally, they will not be attracted to our message or our Saviour. If they see us as loving caring people who they like to have around, we will win them for Christ. Jesus left us two simple commands; Love God and love one another. We are going to reach people for Christ by being a living testimony to Christ's love. Do your words and actions reflect the love and joy of Christ or the negativity and self-centeredness of the world around us?

The final relationship Christ speaks of in John 15 is our relationship to the world i.e. those outside the Church. Jesus calls us to testify in John 15:27 to Him. In other words, we are to be a witness to Him. If you feel this is difficult – you are not on your own. Remember St Francis' famous quote, "*Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.*" We don't need to know the answers, we just have to live what we believe and be prepared to share what we do know about Christ when required. Witnessing to Christ will require courage and strength