



**Gospel** Jn 6:41-51 A reading from the gospel according to John.

*I am the living bread come down from heaven.*

The Jews were complaining to each other about Jesus, because he had said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' 'Surely this is Jesus son of Joseph' they said. 'We know his father and mother. How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' Jesus said in reply, 'Stop complaining to each other.' No one can come to me unless he is drawn by the Father who sent me, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets: They will all be taught by God, and to hear the teaching of the Father, and learn from it, is to come to me. Not that anybody has seen the Father, except the one who comes from God: he has seen the Father. I tell

you most solemnly, everybody who believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the desert and they are dead; but this is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that a man may eat it and not die. I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, for the life of the world.'

## Reflection

The Gospel reading shows that miracles do not always guarantee faith. Even after the miracle of the loaves and fishes, the Jews had started to doubt and ask, 'Wait a minute. Who is this guy?' The people could not get beyond appearances. For them, bread was bread. They could see Jesus only with physical eyes, instead of with the eyes of faith. This is one of the few times the Gospels show Jesus talking clearly about his close relationship with the Father. He reaffirms his teaching that he is indeed the Bread of Life and speaks of the sacrifice he will make at the end of his journey here on earth – his flesh for the life of the world.

There is an obvious connection between this week's reading and the sacramental celebration of Eucharist. Jesus describes himself as living bread and then says whoever eats this living bread will live forever. These words capture the essence of the Church teaching about the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. Jesus is present in several ways at the celebration of Eucharist, particularly present in the bread and wine that become his body and blood. Through our celebration of the Eucharist, Jesus offers us his continuing, enduring presence.

## Answering Jesus' Call

Do you think God has big plans for you? Why or why not? What might God's plans be for you? What are your plans? Do you think your plans will ever get in the way of God's plans? Do you think God's plans could ever get in the way of your plans? Why or why not? How can someone figure out what plans God has in mind for their life?

## In Brief

- Jesus is food for the journey.
- Wake up or you might miss your call.
- Experience the Lord.
- Imitate Christ.
- Jesus is our Living Bread.

## The Feast of the Assumption

Our Catholic tradition teaches us that Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was taken body and soul into heaven as a reward for her faithfulness. Her life and devotion should be an example for us.

In the Western church this feast celebrates the assumption of Mary into heaven; in the East it commemorates her dormition or her falling asleep. The readings invite us to reflect on the role that she plays in the mystery of our redemption. Whatever we honour in Mary in some way points to her son.

## Sacraments of Initiation

All students who are eligible to receive the sacraments in 2016 are asked to contact one of these parishes: (Reconciliation, First Holy Communion, Confirmation)

St Patrick's Cathedral [Phone: \(02\) 8839 8460](tel:(02)88398460)  
 Holy Trinity Granville [Phone: \(02\) 9637 1904](tel:(02)96371904)  
 Holy Family Parish [Phone: \(02\) 9543 2614](tel:(02)95432614)



# Focus On Learning



## Spelling

Many parents have asked why we no longer have spelling lists and a weekly spelling test at St Oliver's. This change in spelling instruction has been a very considered decision and is based on current educational understandings.

Traditionally spelling instruction has taken place in isolation. Students have been given a list of spelling words to learn and then tested on these words for spelling accuracy. The problem with this approach is two-fold. Firstly, students often learn words for a spelling test and then forget them as new lists of words are introduced. Alternatively, words are spelt correctly when tested yet these same words are spelt incorrectly when used in the context of the child's writing.

In more recent times it has been well documented that learning a list of words for testing has little or no transfer to children's writing. At St Oliver's our teacher's experiences in working with our students in the learning spaces, supports this thinking.

Educators now understand that for spelling instruction to be most effective it needs to take place in the context of other learning. At St Oliver's we continue to teach spelling however we do so in an environment that gives meaning and purpose. Spelling skills and strategies are taught explicitly during daily:

- Shared Reading
- Guided Reading
- Modelled Writing
- Guided Writing

The NSW English Syllabus outlines the skills and strategies to be taught in each Stage. The following are the expectations for **Early Stage 1** (Kindergarten):

### *Phonetic spelling*

- Spell unknown words phonetically (as they sound), with most of the letters in the correct sequence

### *Segmenting to spell*

- Vocalise words when trying to write them
- Say and sound while writing the letter for the first sound in a word
- Say and write letters for some of the sounds in a word beyond the initial sound, identifying the sounds through stretching the word

### *Sight words*

- Write their own name using correct spelling
- Copy the sequence of letters from models of high-frequency, topic and personal words
- Write high-frequency words independently (e.g. is, I, am, the)

Over the coming weeks I will share the syllabus expectations for the remaining stages. If you have any questions or require further clarification you are most welcome to make a time to discuss this further.

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