



CELEBRATING AT HOME  
6<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

*Excessive generosity (Matthew 5:17-37)*



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### Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church in this  
moment of prayer.**

### Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,  
**in you is the fullness of truth.**

Christ Jesus,  
**you uncover the will of God.**

Lord Jesus,  
**you call us to integrity and reconciliation.**

### Scripture Reading *(Matthew 5:17-37 - short version)*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'I tell you if your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.

You have learned how it was said to our ancestors: You must not kill; and if anyone does kill he must answer for it before the court. But I say this to you: anyone who is angry with his brother will answer for it before the court.

You have learned how it was said: you must not commit adultery. But I say this to you: if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Again, you have learned how it was said to our ancestors: You must not break your oath, but must fulfil your oaths to the Lord. But I say this to you: do not swear at all. All you need to say is "Yes" if you mean yes, "No" if you mean no; anything more than this comes from the evil one.'

### Reflection - *Excessive generosity*

In the Jewish tradition, guidance about how to be at rights with God and neighbour is found in the Torah, the teaching contained in the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament).

It is especially important for St Matthew, writing his Gospel for Jewish believers, to show that Jesus is not opposed to Jewish teachings and traditions. He has not come to abolish the Law or the Prophets, but to complete or fulfil them.

But for Jesus it is not enough to follow these teachings only in external actions. The path that Jesus is calling his disciples to is a path of thorough-going transformation from within.

The short version of this Sunday's Gospel begins with, 'I tell you, if your virtue goes no deeper than that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never get into the kingdom of heaven.' Those listening to Jesus would have been deeply shocked by these words. The scribes and Pharisees were considered the righteous ones – those who stood most chance of getting into heaven. They were expert practitioners of the Law. But Jesus is calling his disciples to a more abundant righteousness. He takes traditional interpretations of biblical teachings and corrects and extends them in a more generous interpretation.

A number of examples in today's Gospel reading serve to make the point. As always, Jesus' words go to the heart and from there address issue. For example: it is not enough to be able to say, 'I have kept the commandment not to kill'. What about the anger in your heart that gives rise to a whole raft of insults, bitterness and injury against another person?

Virtue and righteousness are about being in right relationship with God and others. It is not about looking good on the outside, fulfilling the 'letter of the Law', but about being good on the inside; having the right attitude of heart so as to be in right relationship with God and neighbour. Such an attitude of heart will manifest itself in generous life-giving actions that make the world safe for others.

True Christian virtue always goes beyond merely what is required and always mirrors the excessive generosity of God.

### Prayers of Intercession

Your love cuts through our outward actions.

**Align our hearts with your purpose.**

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You allow us such freedom.

**Free us to choose your life more deeply.**

Bless your Church with integrity

**May we be bearers of the healing, forgiveness and love of Jesus.**

### Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,  
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come.**

**Thy will be done on earth**

**as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread**

**and forgive us our trespasses**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation,**

**but deliver us from evil.**

### Closing Prayer

Loving God,

bless our hands to your service,

our feet to your path,

and our heart to your purpose.

May our spirit dwell in the depths of your Spirit  
through Christ our Lord

**Amen**

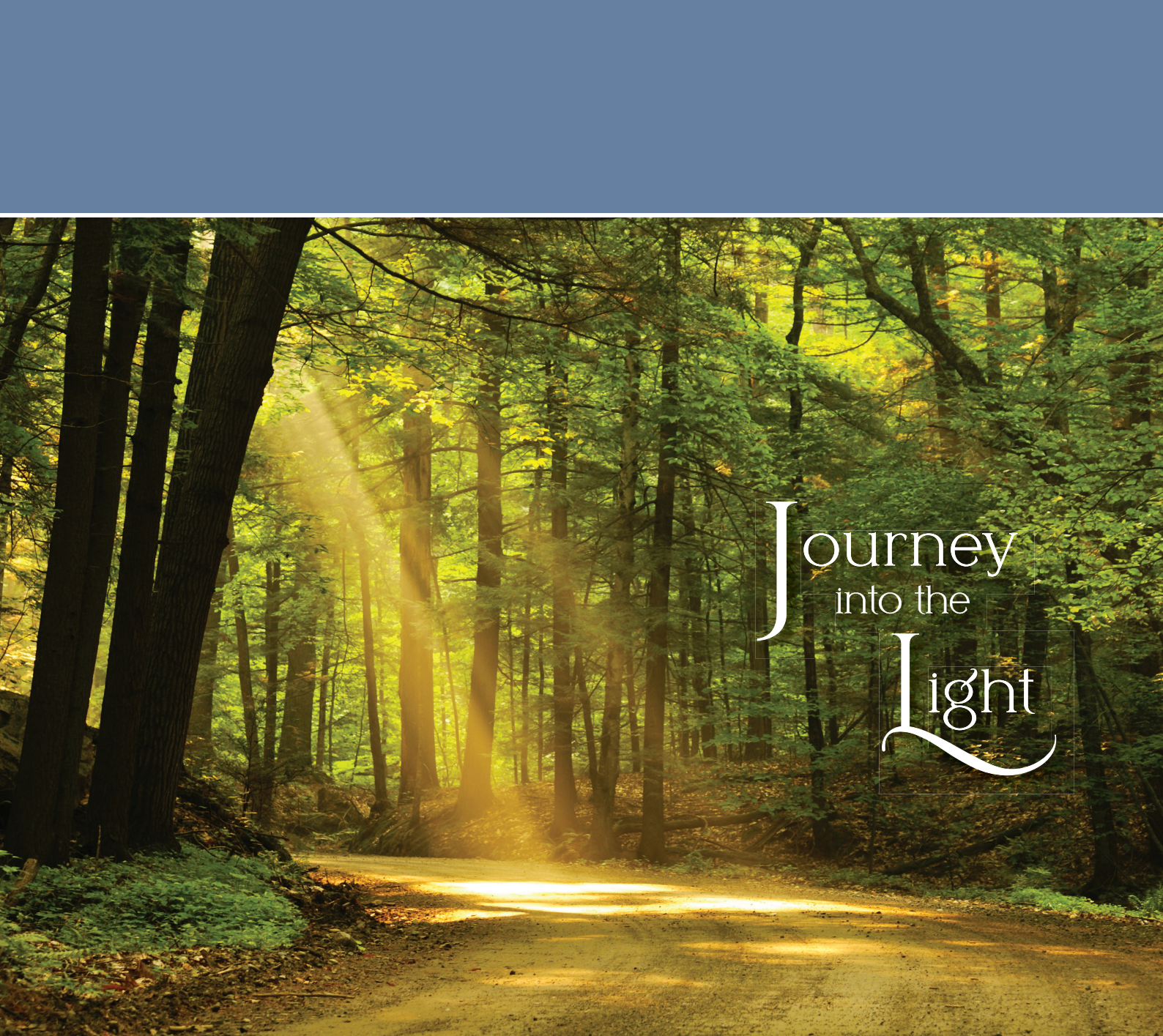
### Blessing

May your blessing be upon us, O Lord,  
as we place all our hope in you.

**Amen.**







# Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



**The Carmelites**  
Australia & Timor-Leste

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