



ORDINARY TIME

16th Sunday in
ORDINARY TIME
Year A
23rd July 2017
Psalter Week 4

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
John Webb, Betty Fawkner.
- **Anniversaries:**
Eileen Floor, Terry Curtis, Jack Busby,
Milagros Farthing, Florencia Potestas.
- **Remembrances:**
Margaret McQuillan,
Raymond McQuillan,
Bugeja Family, Catania Family,
Grima Family, Fr. Claude Borg.
- **And the sick:**
Kevin Houghton, John Allen,
Maryanne Diorio, Audrey Barsenbach,
Kath Hardy, Pat Burgmann,
Mary Scarf, Jorge Villasanti,
Teresita Villasanti, Margarita Gomez,
Anne Singleton, Judy Neal,
June Towson, Therese Corner,
Peter Wellis, Diane Gillett,
Rene Glase, Margaret Davin, Patricia
Dwyer, Edie Trovato, Roy Beverage,
Laura Krauss, Janet Dean,
Brian Finlayson, Brooke Simmons,
Nola McKeowen, John Purser,
Tim McNamara.

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

THE VOICE

When words fail

One of the most moving and beautiful moments one has as a priest visiting people who are dying is that, despite apparently losing most ability to converse, invariably they are easily able to recite with you the Hail Mary.

My mother who, to my knowledge, never recited the Rosary as such, in the last month or so of her life would constantly exclaim the words 'Hail Mary' and I would finish the prayer for and with her.

Of course, what is especially moving in these instances is the concluding petition: 'Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now *and at the hour of our death.* Amen.'

Facing death, facing the ultimate encounter with Divine Love, facing the unimaginable transformation of our existence, we abandon our own words and seek the intercession of one who already shares in Christ's divine glory. In the 'Hail Mary' we ask the one who is 'blessed among women' to pray for us as our own words fail.

But there is an even deeper intercession below the articulate level, available to us at any time. In writing to the Romans St Paul tells us,

'When we cannot choose words to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words, and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means.'

We have all been in various situations.

One loves someone so much – a child, a parent, a spouse or partner – yet when one tries to pray for that person the words seem only a pale shadow of the intensity of feeling and total love one feels. Stop! Simply put the person or situation before God and say nothing. The Holy Spirit will express our heartfelt prayer for us.

One's heart is breaking with grief for

someone close who is very ill or dying. Or one feels a terrible anxiety or anguish. Words don't come easily even though one wants to pray. Stop! Put the person or situation before God and say nothing. The Holy Spirit will express our heartfelt prayer for us.

Sometimes we have the idea that God has to be assaulted with a torrent of words to get the message we are trying to convey into his loving presence. But when Our Lord was teaching his disciples how to pray he said 'In your prayers do not babble as the pagans do, for they think that by using many words they will make themselves heard.' (Matt 6:7)

Perhaps it is accentuated by the constant messaging of 'social media'. So that, when trying to pray we can get anxious when there is a lull in the noise and no words come. We fear that God will think we have given up praying. We should fall back on tried and tested, short and simple prayers such as the 'Our Father' or the 'Hail Mary' – the little mustard seeds which we sow in faith.

These are good, but there can be occasions when we are faced with situations where St Paul encourages us to relax beyond even these wonderful short prayers.

We can relax with the wordless confidence that comes from what we learnt from St Paul two weeks ago, that the Holy Spirit makes a dwelling place in our hearts. It is little wonder then that,

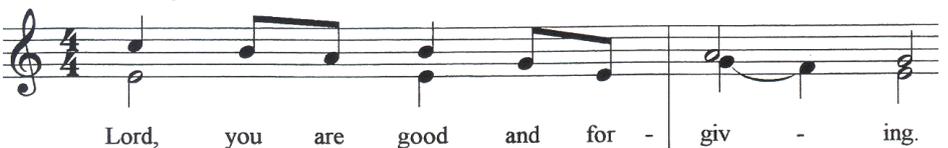
'When we cannot choose words to pray properly, the Spirit himself expresses our plea in a way which could never be put into words and God who knows everything in our hearts knows perfectly well what he means.'

Holy Spirit, divine companion dwelling in our hearts, pray for us. Amen.

© Fr Michael Tate

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish

Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Hudson Daley and Fletcher Wagstaff who were baptized last Sunday.

Catechists Meeting Thursday, 27th July, 9am in the Leo Mahon room.

Liturgy Meeting Thursday, 27th July, 7.30pm in the Parish Office.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 28/7/17: Kevin Glacken, Laurie Jarvis, Cate O'Connor, Pamela Burton.

Children's Liturgy Roster 30/7/17: Frances Giunta, Lisa Hutchison, Emma Baker.

Ministry of Intercession: Anyone who would like to pray for any intention, for your loved ones, family and friends, for the needs of the Parish and the world. Please join us in this Ministry of Intercession, Thursday nights from 7.30pm-8.30pm. We pray earnestly before the exposed Blessed Sacrament.

The Frantastics Choir Fundraising Event for Mary Macs Place: Thursday, 27th July, 2.00 pm. Walter Baker Hall. Entry: \$5 *Afternoon Tea: Gold Coin*

Peter's Pence Appeal The recent appeal raised \$1161. Thank you for your generosity.

Rosary Group: Come and join us Tuesdays from 9am-12md, Walter Baker Hall to make rosary beads and scapulars for the missions. All welcome!

Due to recent health issues and a fall, Phil Gleeson has moved into Peninsula Village for respite care, with the view of permanent care. Phil has been a parishioner here for many years and has been an active member in parish life. By all means, go and visit Phil at Peninsula Village. On behalf of Phil, Jeff Freeman wishes to thank you for your friendship, support and prayers for Phil over the years, and for many years to come.

Social Justice

Campaigns for Economic Justice:

Jubilee Australia, among other focus areas, shines a light on the Australian government's role in financing and supporting Australian extractive industries overseas through its Export Credit Agency, EFIC. Read more at In focusing on the Asia-Pacific region, Jubilee produces quality research to show the

effects of some mining projects on the poor and the environment e.g. In Papua, New Guinea and currently in Bougainville, Rio Tinto and Bougainville Copper, with the support of the government, want to re-open the disastrous Panguna mine. In order to allow the voices of the affected people to be heard, Jubilee will soon be releasing the results of on-the-ground research. Jubilee is also hosting a

speaker's tour by two Bougainvilleans to educate, inform and urge us to actions of solidarity. The tour is from September 12-25. More information about the tour or to read more please visit the website www.jubileeaustralia.org

Please support this by:

1. Giving financial assistance
2. Spreading the word
3. Lobbying.

From the Diocese and beyond

Celebrating Sacraments: Acts of the Spirit, Work of the Church. Explore what the rituals, prayers and symbols of Catholic sacraments teach us about how to live out our faith with Most Rev Peter Comensoli, Msgr Peter Williams, Prof Clare Johnson and Dr Jason McFarland. Held over 4 weeks—2, 9, 16 & 23 August. 6pm-8pm, Catholic Institute of Sydney, 99 Albert Rd, Strathfield. Cost \$50. Registration by Monday, 31 July 2017. www.acu.edu.au/theology/shortcourses

Ecumenical Service: In conjunction with the Australian Church Women a "Fellowship Day Service" subtitled "Women empowered to lead" will be held at the Salvation Army, Sydney Ave., Umina Beach. Friday, 28th July, 10am. All welcome!

Contemplation with Thomas Merton: The Cistercian monk, Thomas Merton, gave us an unique view of contemplation in a world of action. His teaching can unite us in our deepest desire for communion with God, each other and our world. This retreat will give participants the opportunity to immerse themselves in silence and Merton's way of prayer. Mt. St. Benedict Centre, 449d Pennant Hills Rd. Pennant Hills. Arrive Friday, 11th August prior to 6pm. Departure: after lunch Sunday. Cost: \$300.(Includes all meals, program materials and accommodation for 2 nights). Bookings by 4th August. Phone: 9484 6208. mtstbenedict@goodsams.org.au

Spirituality in the Pub: Tuesday, 1st August, 7.30pm-9.00pm. Theme 2017; "My Spirituality: Influence on the Way". SIP Central Coast is an Ecumenical & Interfaith Forum with Q's and A's. The focus is on developing understanding and encouraging dialogue about Spirituality through sharing one's life journey. We meet every 1st Tuesday in the month from March to October and 2nd Tuesday in November. The Grange Hotel Function Room, Cnr: Renwick St. & Pacific Hwy. Wyoming. See notice board for details of both speakers. Enquiries: Maryke 4328 2596 or 0498 588 261.



Scripture Readings

Bruce Janiga

16th Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 23

Wis 12:13, 16–19
Ps 85:5–6, 9–10, 15–16 R. v.5
Rom 8:26–27
Mt 13:24–43 or 13:24–30

The Book of Wisdom, dated to the century before Christ, served as a text to enlighten and encourage the Jewish people in Jesus's day. Today's reading emphasizes God's mercy and supremacy. God, who is "master of might," judges "with clemency" (v 18). We are called to learn from God's example of leniency that "those who are just must be kind" (v 19). Master over all, God is also "lenient to all" (v 16), giving us reason to hope that you would allow repentance (v 19). As the maker of all, God does not desire us to perish but to share in eternal life.

Matthew presents us with another of Jesus's agricultural parables today, though the message is quite different from last week's. In the parable of the weeds among the wheat, we encounter the notion of God's judgment. In the Old Testament, the image of a harvest is employed as a metaphor for divine judgment; this imagery is familiar to Jesus's disciples. Although we might look to pull up the weeds sown among the wheat, God allows the good and the bad to exist side by side, "until harvest" (v 30). This is a sign of God's mercy, for there is a possibility that the sinner will repent — that the "weed" will become "wheat." God's patience anticipates the conversion of sinners.

Paul writes that in our weakness we experience the assistance of the Spirit who intercedes for us. On our own we are inadequate; "we do not know how to pray as we ought" (v 26). Our salvation depends on God. This is why we are a people of hope, called to live lives of righteousness and to entrust ourselves to God's mercy.

For reflection: Have I experienced God's patience in my life? What does it teach me? What is my approach to the "weeds" I encounter in life: judgment or mercy?

Bruce Janiga, a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., teaches Scripture studies at Seton Hall Prep in West Orange, N.J. . From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.

17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, July 30

1 Kgs 3:5, 7–12
Ps 118:57, 72, 76–77, 127–130 R. v.97
Rom 8:28–30
Mt 13:44–52 or 13:44–46

In 1 Kings, Solomon, Israel's new king, reveals his wisdom by asking God for "an understanding heart / to judge your people and to distinguish right from wrong" (v 9). The king's wisdom would enable him to discern what is truly valuable, and we are told, "The Lord was pleased that Solomon made this request" (v 10). This led the Lord to bless Solomon so that "there has never been anyone like you ..., and after you there will come no one to equal you" (v 12). We are called to seek a similar wisdom in our own lives.

Paul tells the Romans that "all things work for good for those who love God" (v 28). He calls them to trust in God, who has "justified" (v 30) us through the blood of Christ. In a subsequent verse he reminds us that "if God is for us" (v 31), we have nothing to fear. As members of God's household, we are called to have confidence in God's love for us.

It was not uncommon in Jesus's day to bury wealth in a field in order to protect it from theft before going on a long journey or in the face of an attack. Should the owner of the treasure not return to retrieve it, the treasure becomes the property of the next owner. Jesus compares "the kingdom of heaven" — Matthew's usual substitute for "the kingdom of God" — with a buried treasure; because it is of such great value, the one who finds it "goes and sells all that he has and buys that field" (v 44). In the parallel image of the "pearl of great price," the merchant also "sells all that he has and buys it" (v 46). The message is that we should seek to "acquire" the kingdom, no matter the price.

For reflection: How can I grow in wisdom? Am I willing to "sell everything" to acquire God's treasure?



Good stewards in a parish are like the yeast in today's Gospel. Their selfless gifts of time and talent help the parish grow and thrive, and their example inspires others to become good stewards, too.



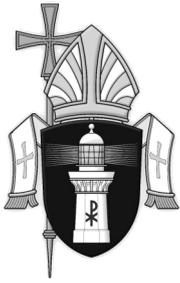
Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy,

Woy Woy South, Umina, Umina Beach, Ettalong, Ettalong Beach, Koolewong, Blackwall,

Booker Bay,

St Hubert's Island, Empire Bay, Horsfield Bay, Pearl Beach, Patonga, Woy Woy Bay, Daley's Point, Phegan's Bay and Wondabyne.



St John the Baptist Church,

Cnr Blackwall and Victoria Roads, Woy Woy

Parish Office Ethel Cox Parish Centre
P.O. Box 264 100 Blackwall Road.
54 Victoria Road
WOY WOY N.S.W. 2256

Phone: (02) 4341 1073
Fax: (02) 4341 0214
Email: parish@woywoycatholic.org.au
Website: www.woywoycatholic.org.au
Out of hours **medical emergency**
0438 631 327.

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Administrator: Fr. Timothy Raj. M.S.F.S.

Assistant Priest: Fr. Philip Thottam. M.S.F.S.

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Raelene Spithill.

Office Hours:

9.30 a.m.—4.00 p.m., Monday to Friday

Deadline for The Voice:

3.30 p.m. Wednesday

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Vigil Saturday 5pm; Sunday 7.30am, 9.15am, 6pm.

WEEKDAY MASS TIMES

Monday-Friday 7.45am (Monday & Tuesday with Lauds);
Saturday and Public Holidays 9am; First Friday 4pm (with Anointing of the Sick).

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Friday after morning Mass; First Friday 3.30pm; Saturday 11.30am & 4.30pm;
Sunday 7.00am.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1st & 3rd Sundays, 11am; (5th Sunday during 9.15am Mass by arrangement only).
Godparents are examples of faith to the child. They must be confirmed and practising Catholics, at least sixteen years old. If there is at least one godparent, a non-Catholic may act as a Christian witness. Parents and godparents must attend a pre-baptismal instruction, held on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month at 9.30am.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Saturday after 9am Mass until 10am; every Monday until 9am (Public Holidays 10.15am). Every Thursday 7.30pm-8.30pm for the needs of the Parish.

MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION

Every Thursday night, 7.30pm-8.30 pm.

PARISH CHOIR—Practice Wednesday nights in the church, 7pm. Enquiries: 4341 3367.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,

21a Dulkara Rd South Woy Woy 2256. p 024341 0884 www.sjbwoywoy.org.au

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP Held once a fortnight in the Leo Mahon Room. Term 3 dates: 16th July, 30th July, 13th August and 27th August. High school (Years 7-12). For more information, contact Matthew French on 0411 792 587.

CATECHISTS Teach approved curriculum in 4 Primary State Schools on the Peninsula. Volunteers always needed—to teach and help. Training provided at no cost. Details: Susie 0411 566 622. "Bring the little children unto me."

CATHOLIC CARE Counselling and Family Relationships 4356 2600.

MARY MAC'S PLACE Volunteers provide nutritious, freshly cooked meals and information and referrals to appropriate community services. Open Monday to Friday, 11am-1pm, at the Ethel Cox Parish Centre. For more information, please contact Christine on 4341 0584.

ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY on the Peninsula assist and give a hand up to people in need. We have two Conferences with volunteers sharing the visiting or office work. We always welcome new Volunteers to our Conference.

Please ring Peter 0425 358 376 or Joan 0422 272 339.

CASH HOUSIE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre, Cnr Ocean Beach Rd & McMasters Rd, Woy Woy.

Games start at 7.30pm and finish 10.20pm, cash prizes.

Ticket sales from 6pm. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries Rob: 0427 990 818.

Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSS

Today we hear how the Spirit of God dwells in all of us, helping us in our weakness. The first disciples had Jesus to explain the parables; we have the Spirit to enlighten us. It is the Spirit who helps us to interpret the teaching of Jesus and to be receptive to the challenges that they pose. The presence of sinners in the kingdom of God is often a stumbling block to good people. There will be a time for separation and judgment, but the time is not now. This means that the righteous will have to live with the sinner and, even more challengingly, show them the same kind of concern that they show to others. The presence of sinners does not necessarily erode the quality of the

kingdom. Rather, it provides disciples an opportunity to rise to the occasion of generosity and forgiveness.

There are two images of judgment in the readings. The one in the gospel is terrifying and decisive. The wicked are bound together into bundles and readied for burning. We must remember that this is a parable. In the first reading and in the psalm response the justice of God is said to be lenient, clement and kind. The power of God is demonstrated not in retribution but in mercy. God is said to be 'merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in kindness and fidelity', and repentance is a very real possibility. This is the image that gives us hope.