



8th Sunday in  
ORDINARY TIME  
Year A

26th February 2017  
Psalter Week 4

OF YOUR  
CHARITY  
PRAY FOR THE  
SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**  
Noel Carson, Sr. Rita Doyle PBVM,  
Sr. Theresa Mary. O.C.D.  
Angela Briggs,  
Saviour "Sam" Grima.
- **Anniversaries:**  
Christina de Rooy, Sid Flakelar,  
Paul Hogan, Zleljko Mravinac,  
Kenneth McDonnell.
- **Remembrances:**  
Patricia and Reg Hogan,  
Members of the Carr family.
- **And the sick:**  
Alan Ford, Kevin Houghton,  
Margaret Davin, Maryanne Diorio,  
Alan Harland, Tracie Passlow,  
John Allen, Audrey Barsendich,  
Maureen Cowsls, Celeste Boonaerts,  
Kath Hardy, Chev Shengi,  
Steve Paino, Beryl Allen,  
Colleen Giles, John Purser,  
Grace Willins, Lola de Souza.

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula  
**THE VOICE**

**Get Clucking!**

'Don't worry about your life, your food, your clothing.'

This passage can sound very heartless if directed to the destitute, those without the necessities of life – 'Don't worry, be happy.' Yet, we know that Our Lord was filled with compassion for hungry crowds and provided abundant food for them.

So, where is the emphasis to be sounded? Our Lord is telling us: 'Do not be worried about *your* life and ordinary food *you* are to eat, nor about *your* body and ordinary clothes *you* will wear. But you are to worry about *others*, others without adequate food or clothing.'

And we know from later in this gospel that this will have eternal consequences: 'I was hungry and you gave me (or didn't give me!) food to eat. I was naked and you gave me (or didn't give me!) clothes to wear.' Our eternal destiny depends on our provision of the necessities of life for *others*.

The Sermon on the Mount is a constitution for a new society. Basically, we are to direct our energies to, be absorbed in, the needs of others. Set your hearts on this first. The priority is to create this sort of society: the Kingdom of God on earth. Within that social structure you will find that you will be looked after. Within that way of human beings relating to each other, you will not need to worry about your basic situation.

But, do we, do I, *really* believe that I can rest secure knowing that my 'Heavenly Father' (the name Jesus uses), that this Heavenly Father knows what my basic needs are and will prompt others to provide for me if I can't manage myself?

To be frank, this is hard, or perhaps it is

just that I would hate that dependence on others. But then the Church gives us a first reading which brilliantly correlates with this passage and teaches us another way of thinking about dependence – dependence on a mother's love.

The prophet Isaiah gives us a *maternal* image of God.

'Zion was saying, The Lord has abandoned me,

the Lord has forgotten me.

Does a woman forget her baby at the breast,

or fail to cherish the son of her womb?

Yet even if these forget,

I will never forget you.'

God is more motherly than the most maternal of mothers. I have watched mothers quite unselfconsciously (but discreetly) feeding their baby at the breast during Mass. It is impossible to think that that mother would ever forget her baby. God is more mindful of us than that mother is of her baby.

It is not to be an ultra-feminist to suggest that we should really assimilate that metaphor for God into our lives. We could then break the exclusively myopic hold of a patriarchal portrayal of God.

If we are made in the image of God, then perhaps it is the maternal side of our nature which needs to be acknowledged and expressed in our care for others. If each of us adopted the maternal traits of God vis a vis others then *they* would not need to be anxious about food or clothing.

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**Psalm Response**

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**Gospel Acclamation**

*Alleluia, alleluia!* The word of God is living and active; it probes the thoughts and motives of our heart. *Alleluia!*



## Around the Parish

**Lent begins—Ash Wednesday** this Wednesday, 1st March. Masses will be 7.45am and 7.30pm. A School Mass will be held at SJB school, 21a Dulkara Rd., Sth. Woy Woy at 12 midday.

**Fast and Abstinence:** There are two days that we are obliged to fast and abstain: Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation and Exposition** will be available every Wednesday evening 7:30pm–8:30pm during Lent (time changed from last week's bulletin).

**Stations of the Cross** will be followed every Wednesday at 4pm and every Friday at 7.30pm.

**Volunteer Church Cleaning 3.3.2017:** Mary McCumstie, Maria Wickens, Linda Potestas, Warren Sparrow.

**Baptisms:** We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Patrick Drury, Alexandria Millers, Oliver Millers, who were baptized last Sunday

**World Day of Prayer** this Friday 3rd March, 10.30am. St. Luke's Anglican Church, 147 Blackwall Rd. Woy Woy. Refreshments after Service. All welcome!

**Parish School Dinner Dance** Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> April. \$45 ticket, live band, roast dinner, nibbles and champagne on arrival, tables of 8-14. Tickets available shortly.

**Up from the Waters:** For the Season of Lent you are invited to join us to hear, reflect and share the Gospel, commencing Friday 3rd March at 9.30am in the Leo Mahon room. For further information contact Parish Office 4341 1073.

**Sympathy:** St. John the Baptist Parish family would like to extend its prayerful sympathy to the family, relatives and friends of Noel Carson and Sam Grima who were buried from our church last week. May they experience the fullness of Christ's peace.

**Project Compassion:** Your donations to Project Compassion give expression to the Gospel imperative to pursue justice and help those vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Project Compassion boxes and envelopes are available in the gathering area.

**Lectio Divina and Bible Study** 11am-12.30pm, Thursday, 2nd March, Leo Mahon room and all Thursdays in Lent. Lectio Divina for the first 30 minutes followed by a portion of Scott Hahn's online Bible Study called 'The Lamb's Supper: The Bible and the Mass'. You need to bring your bible. We will resume where we left off at the last Lent.

**Anointing of the Sick** will be administered during 4pm Mass,

Friday, 3rd February.

**The Live, Pray and Love –Event: Is Jesus Really Present in the Eucharist** by Ron Tesoriero.

In Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1996, a piece of bread spontaneously transformed into what looked like flesh and blood. Pope Francis, who was then Archbishop wanted a scientific investigation. Ron Tesoriero, author, lawyer and documentary film maker and journalist Mike Willesee were directly involved with the investigation, and which is now of world interest will share the research work into this Eucharistic miracle. Sunday, 5th March, Leo Mahon room 10.30am-1.00pm. Phone Gladys 0421 312 362 if attending or if you have any questions.

**Fr. Jack Robson's Farewell:** Father has now sufficiently recovered from his operations, so the time is right for us to give him a proper "Thank You, Farewell & Happy Retirement" send-off. We definitely owe him a debt of gratitude for jumping into the breach when Father John retired and Father Steve was transferred; he stepped into very big shoes and did an exemplary job of filling them. So please "Keep the Date" for his Official Dinner at the Gosford Golf Club on Friday March 24. There is a list in the gathering space where you can indicate if you would like to attend.

## Social Justice

### The Fight Against Slavery:

To many people, slavery is an unpleasant page of history, something that existed in the ancient world, the United States before the Civil War or in the Caribbean of the 18th and 19th centuries; something that does not exist in the modern world. Sadly, that belief is far from the truth: slavery continues to evolve in new forms and exists in the modern world today. Modern day slavery include people who are sexually exploited or enslaved and exploited as domestic workers, or

forced into unwanted marriage. Others are trafficked into situations of forced labour in industries such as agriculture, hospitality, construction, mining and fishing. In some cases, people are made the victims of illegal organ harvesting. People are especially vulnerable to being trafficked in times of conflict and following natural disasters. In modern-day slavery, people are usually restrained by psychological rather than physical chains. They are often told that their families will be harmed if

they try to escape. Their passports and visas are taken from them, restricting their freedom of movement. They are forced to live in substandard conditions, treated harshly and often told they are bound by a debt. Human trafficking and similar forms of exploitation affect every country on earth. They flourish because of society's greed for cheap goods and services and because it is so easy to forget that those who meet these needs are human beings with their own innate God-given dignity."

[www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au](http://www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au)

## From the Diocese and beyond

**Lenten Reflection Day—Seeking God who keeps looking for us:**

Lent calls us to renew and deepen our Christian call to the faithful seeking God. We seek God because God has first sought us. On this day of reflection we will explore biblical passages to discover more about God's desire for us and our response. Format of the

day will include input, conversation and quiet reflection. Saturday, 11th March. 10am-3.30pm. Bookings by Monday 6th March. Ph: 9484 6208 or Email: [mtsbenedict@goodsams.org.au](mailto:mtsbenedict@goodsams.org.au) Cost: \$30 pp. BYO lunch. Morning tea provided. Mt. St. Benedict Centre, 449 Pennant Hills Rd. Pennant Hills. (Entry off

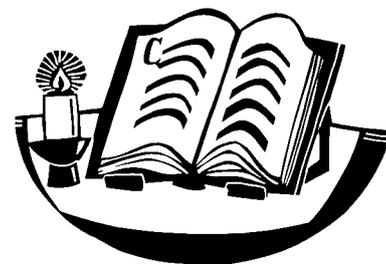
Hull Road).

**St. Edward's Christian Brothers College Year 7, 2018:**

Enrolments for Year 7 2018 is now open. The closing date for applications is Friday 28 April, 2017. Please contact the Enrolment Secretary, Mrs. Simone Bartlett on 4321 6420 for a Prospectus. Students in Year 6 in our Catholic primary

# Scripture Readings

Bruce Janiga



## 8th Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 26

Is 49:14-15  
Ps 62:2-3, 6-9  
1 Cor 4:1-5  
Mt 6:24-34

Today's text from Isaiah is addressed to the exiles. Their experience has led some of them to believe that God has abandoned them: "The Lord has forsaken me" (v 14). Half a century in exile has broken their spirit, but the prophet tells us that God never forgets. In a tender image, Isaiah speaks for God, "Can a mother forget her infant?"; the thought was unimaginable to our prophet, but "even should she forget, / I will never forget you" (v 15). God's love for us is greater than we can imagine. In the next verse after our reading, the Lord says, "Upon the palms of my hands I have engraved you" (v 16).

Paul cautions the Corinthians against judging each other. He reminds them that at "the appointed time" (v 5), we will be judged by God. His task as Christ's servant requires fidelity to the gospel, and he believes that nothing can be held against him. Judgment will occur when the Lord comes, bringing "to light what is hidden in darkness" (v 5). As "stewards of the mysteries of God" (v 1) like Paul, we too are called to fulfill our tasks with clear consciences as we await his coming. Instead of judging others, we should focus on living our own faith worthily.

In the Gospel today Jesus calls us to trust God. We spend too much time worrying about things we cannot change, and that worry cannot "add a single moment to [our] life-span" (v 27). Using the examples of nature around him, Jesus explains that God cares for "the birds in the sky" (v 26) and "the grass of the field" (v 30). If God provides for them, then he will also provide for us, who are "more important than they" (v 26). Our focus should be to seek "the kingdom of God and his righteousness" (v 33).

**For reflection:** How can experiencing God's absence make me appreciate God's presence in my life? How can I learn to worry less and trust God more?

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.

## Ash Wednesday, March 1

Jl 2:12-18  
Ps 50:3-6, 12-14, 17  
2 Cor 5:20-6:2  
Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

The season of Lent is an invitation to holiness. On Ash Wednesday we mark ourselves with ashes made from the palms used last Palm Sunday. These ashes are a biblical symbol of contrition, but they also remind us of our own mortality.

The words of the prophet Joel, from the fifth century BC, address a complacent people. In the verses prior to our reading, Joel calls them to prepare for the "day of the Lord" that will bring great destruction. Yet even with destruction imminent, there is cause for hope, for the "gracious and merciful" Lord forgives the repentant sinner (v 13). Joel calls for a national act of repentance: "Blow the trumpet in Zion! / proclaim a fast, call an assembly" (v 15). Everyone — "the elders ... the children ... the infants ... the bridegroom ... the bride ... the priests" — is called to cry out for forgiveness. And in response to their cries, the Lord "took pity on his people" (v 18).

Paul writes as an ambassador for Christ, imploring the Corinthians to "be reconciled to God" (5:20). Through Christ's death, we have been reconciled to God; therefore, we should not "receive the grace of God in vain" (6:1) but live with the awareness that we are "a new creation" (as mentioned prior to our reading in 5:17). "Now is the day of salvation" (6:2); let us walk in God's light.

In the Gospel Jesus warns about doing the right thing for the wrong reason. Piety and sanctity are not the same thing. Our good deeds should not be performed "in order that people may see them" (v 1). Nor should our prayers be said to impress others. And when we fast we should not make a show of it. Our actions should be motivated by our love of God and a desire to reject sin and embrace the holiness to which we are called.

**For reflection:** The road to holiness is a lifelong journey; what particular area am I determined to focus on this Lent? When I pray, is there a healthy balance between speaking to God and listening for a response?

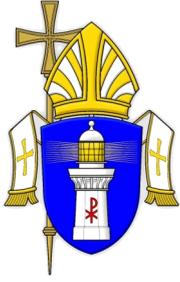
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Stewards of the mysteries of God — that's what St. Paul says we are in today's second reading. And the first requirement, he says, is that we be trustworthy. Entrusted with the gift of faith, do I share it as gratefully and as generously as I do my time, my talent, and my treasure?

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# 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

**"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).

## EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Thursday 7.30pm-8.30pm for the needs of the Parish.

**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** For information and events contact the parish office 4341 1073.

## 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 Ken 0400 335 351 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.

## Get Clucking!

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*(Continued from page 1)*

And perhaps we could hear with astonished delight Our Lord's description of His love for Jerusalem and its inhabitants: 'How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings ... (Matthew 23:37)

How maternal is that? Jesus seeing himself as a clucky, broody hen. We believe that, humanly speaking, Jesus of Nazareth was the perfect image of God in human history. And one way Jesus thought of imaging God was as a broody hen, clucking away.

We are also meant to be, destined to be, images of God. We need to imitate Our Lord. Get clucking!