



EASTER

The Voice

17th May 2015

Ascension of the Lord, Year B

Psalter Week 3

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently Deceased:**

Anne Leonard.

- **Anniversaries:**

James McDevitt, Molly Molloy, Kevin Bemrose and Trevor Spears.

- **Remembrances:**

Arthur, Muriel and John Brown and the Brown Family, Dario, Caterina and Robert Burla.

- **And the sick:**

Fr. Bill Meacham, Lila Emery, Philip O'Neil, Renie Hunt, Lorna McGregor, Lola Proctor, Grace Williams, Mary Dwyer, Evangeline Cusay, Pat Welsh, Alan Harland, Peter Crookes, Charles Knowles, Terry Curtis, Grace McNeaney, Meli Ladd, Irene Beck, John Mortimore, Beryl Allen, Madge Wood, Roy Beveridge.

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Aren't we lucky we don't take the Scriptures literally? If we did it would appear from today's Gospel that only multilingual, snake-wrangling, poison-drinking exorcists, with a gift for healing, would be seen as the genuine Christian article. That would leave most of us out in the cold.

This passage, however, is a dramatic addition to Mark's Gospel to show that even though Jesus is now at the right hand of God, he sends his disciples out to the whole world to carry on his ministry, and that he will protect us when trials come. And even though there have been tragic and shocking chapters in our 2,000 year history, it's good for us to remember what God has done in and through us as we have gone out and proclaimed the saving love of Christ. Today 33% of the world's population are, at least nominally, Christian, numbering 2.1 billion people, making us the largest religion in the world. Our Catholic family accounts for just over half this group. We have around 1.1 billion Catholic brothers and sisters worldwide. Many Christians continue to be persecuted or discriminated for their faith, and some continue to die for their love of Christ which impels them to seek justice for all.

But the feast of the Ascension is not just an opportunity for us to look back on how we have tried to fulfil the command of the Lord to go out to the world. Indeed, this feast is primarily focused on where we are going from here on in. The Ascension promises us that just as the Father raised Jesus from the dead, so too the Father, Son and Spirit will welcome us into heaven as well, to be at Christ's right hand for eternity. This parable demonstrates the point. In 1939 a father and son were famous art collectors. When World War II broke out, the son volunteered. In 1944 the son died

in battle while rescuing another soldier. A year later, a young man came to see the father. 'Sir, you don't know me but I was with your son when he died. I want you to know he didn't suffer.'

'I know you both loved art, and though this isn't much, I want you to have it.' He gave the father a package. Inside was a portrait of the son. It was rough work, but the father welled up with tears. 'It was the least I could do for your son because he saved my life.'

A few months later, the father died. At the art auction which followed, investors gathered from around the world. The first item up for bid was the portrait of the son. The auctioneer tried to start the bidding, '\$200 ... \$100 ... Any bids? Any at all?' The investors called out, 'Skip this one. Where are the Rembrandts?' Just then a man spoke up from the back. 'I'll give you ten dollars for the painting. It's all the money I have.' It was the gardener at the father's estate. So the auctioneer brought down his gavel. 'Sold for ten dollars!' An investor called back, 'Can we now get on with it?'

But the auctioneer continued, 'The auction is over. According to the will, whoever bought this painting would inherit the estate, including all the art.'

No matter what they said the wealthy investors couldn't buy their way into the inheritance. Only the one who had the eyes of love, and knew what he was looking at, inherited everything the Father and Son had to offer.

May we go out from this Feast of the Ascension so confident of our spiritual inheritance to come, that we lavish its riches on all we meet right now. Because when it comes to Christ's kingdom, there's plenty for everyone. © Richard Leonard SJ.

Psalm Response

God mounts his throne to shouts of joy; a blare of trum-pets for the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Go and teach all people my gospel.

I am with you always, until the end of the world. *Alleluia!*

50 DAYS FOR OUR DELIGHT: FOR CHRIST IS RISEN AS ALL THINGS
TELL. GOOD CHRISTIAN, SEE YE RISE AS WELL.

Around the Parish

Thank You Celebration Dinner for Father John and Father Stephen. Friday 29th May, 6pm for 6.30pm. Everglades Country Club. Three course dinner (Drinks available for purchase only at the Club – no byo.)

Bookings with Jenny on 4342 3293. Tickets are \$40 per head, exact money please, and can be left at the Parish office A.S.A.P. Tables of 10. Make up a table or ask us to seat you at one. Bookings **must** close Tuesday 19th May; no refunds after May 25.

A Leaving Collection for Fr. John and Fr. Stephen will be at all Masses this weekend. 16th/17th of May.

C. W. F. Appeal will be collection next weekend 23rd/24th May. Envelopes in the church for your convenience.

Bus Trip to Wollombi via Cessnock. 20th May, leaving 8.30am. Lunch at the club. \$15. Contact Susie Casey 4344 1742 or 03 417 639.

Liturgy Meeting cancelled for this month.

Children's Liturgy 24/5/15: Frances Giunta, Gerri O'Keefe.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 22/5/15: Brian Jordan, Julie Vanderputt, Veronica Jordan, Warren Sparrow.

Morning Tea Roster 24/5/15: Parents and Friends Group.

Cuppa and a Chat: A group of seniors meet every third Monday in the Leo Mahon room due this Monday 17th May, 1.30pm-3pm. If you would like to join us phone Bernard 4341 6343. Transport provided.

Music Workshop: Following a very successful workshop at St. John the Baptist last year, the Royal School of Church Music will be holding another music workshop here on Saturday, 30th May, commencing 1.30pm. The singing of the psalms and the various ways in which this can be done is the theme of the workshop which will be led by Oliver Brett, Assistant Director of Music at St. Mary Cathedral with Michael Butterfield accompanist. Participants are invited to stay for the 5pm Mass afterwards. The cost of the workshop, which covers music and printing is \$30 per person (\$20 for RSCM members).

St. Vincent de Paul Conference Members and Volunteers

monthly Mass due Saturday, 23rd May, 9am.

Catechists' Meeting: Monthly meeting to be held THIS Thursday, 21st May starting at 9.00am sharp. Please try to attend as there are a number of issues which will be tabled and matters which need to be shared and discussed.

Craft Group Morning Tea: On Thursday, 28th May, the Craft Group will be having a soup day to raise money for *The Biggest Morning Tea* for Breast Cancer; from 10am until 12 Midday. Cost will be \$8 members, \$10 visitors. This will include morning tea and a variety of soups with bread. Please come and support this special day for a worthy cause. We will also have a raffle with some great prizes. For further information contact Pat Savage 4344 2064.

Infant Baptism Preparation Team—One hour, 5 times a year: Anyone interested in joining the team is asked to please call the Parish Office. The one hour preparation classes are held on the 2nd & 4th Sunday morning from 9.30am. Training will be provided for this rewarding role.

The Just Word

International Day of Families:

15 May 1961 Pope John XXIII's Encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (On Christianity and Social Progress)

...Work, inasmuch as it is an expression of the human person, can by no means be regarded as a mere commodity.

For the great majority of mankind, work is the only source from which the means of livelihood are drawn. Hence, its remuneration is not to be thought of in terms of merchandise but rather according to the laws of justice and equity. (#18)

Economic progress must be

accompanied but a corresponding social progress...the economic prosperity of a nation is not so much its total assets in terms of wealth and property, as the equitable division and distribution of this wealth. (#73-74)

From the Diocese and beyond

Fashion Parade at Uniting Church advertised for Tuesday, 26th May has been cancelled.

Ecumenical Service for the Renewal of the Tri-Diocesan Covenant. Wednesday 27th May, 7.45pm in Sacred Heart Catholic Cathedral, Hamilton, 841 Hunter St. Newcastle West. A free bus to this event will depart 76 York St. East Gosford (outside St. Patrick's Church) at 5.45pm 'sharp' (no need to book) and will commence return journey at 9.15pm

"Easter Flavours in Australia's

Story" Praying a 100 years since Anzac and 48 years since the referendum to include Australia's first peoples in the national census. St. Joseph's Education and Spirituality Centre, 8 Humphreys Rd., Kincumber Sth. 27th May 10am-2.30pm, Presenter: Sr. Virginia Bourke, R.S.J. with breaks for morning tea/lunch. Morning tea and a sandwich lunch will be provided. Cost \$25 or donation. Come along, enjoy the beautiful surroundings, friendly company, taste our new chef's creations, learn and share with like minded

people. Bookings: bookings@stjosephsretreat.org.au or phone 4368 2805.

Nepal: Caritas Australia staff are in Kathmandu working with Caritas Nepal, said Fr. Perumana. "We are overwhelmed with rescue assistance requests and assistance requests from all over the country." Donations to Caritas Australia's Nepalese disaster response can be made at www.caritas.org.au/donate or by calling 1800 024 413.

The Titanic's Forgotten Priest

Ian Hunter

One week after Easter, to be precise on April 14, 2012, in ways solemn and sometimes frankly macabre, the world observed the centenary of a tragic event in maritime history, the sinking of the RMS Titanic. Cruise ships retraced the Titanic's first (and last) voyage from Southampton in England to a watery grave off the Grand Banks; revelers in period costumes dined on a menu based on the last dinner aboard the White Star Line ship; memorial services were conducted on land and sea to commemorate the 1,500 souls who perished on that night.

The CBC even dispatched a landlubber, Peter Mansbridge, and the whole crew of *The National*, to stand before a Halifax backdrop (Halifax had played a crucial role in the rescue efforts and in the recovery of bodies) to deliver the nightly news (including, ironically, cuts to the CBC's Halifax bureau). And almost forgotten in all this hoopla was one obscure Catholic priest and his heroism.

The priest's name was Thomas Byles, a 42-year-old convert to the Catholic Church, sailing second class to New York in order to conduct the wedding for his brother, William. News reports at the time said that Byles was wearing his priestly vestments and had been reciting his breviary on the upper deck at the moment when the Titanic struck the iceberg.

According to witnesses, as the ship went down, the priest helped women and children into lifeboats, heard confessions, gave absolution and led passengers in reciting the Rosary.

Born in England in 1870, Byles was the son of a Congregational minister; he studied mathematics and theology at Oxford University where he fell under the influence of the "Oxford Movement," part of the legacy of one of the greatest of all Catholic converts, Cardinal John Henry Newman. Byles graduated from Oxford in 1894 and the same year became a Roman Catholic. In 1899 he went to Rome for further study; he was ordained a priest in 1902.

Father Byles set out on his fateful journey on April 10, 1912, travelling by train from his parish (St. Helen's in Ongar, Essex) to Liverpool Street station, thence to Waterloo Station, then by boat train to the pier at Southampton where the unsinkable (or so it was boasted) ship awaited him. He carried his

second class trans-Atlantic ticket (#244310). The cost of the ticket – £13.

Miss Mary Helen Mocklare was a third-class passenger who survived; she later wrote:

"One sailor ... warned the priest of his danger and begged him to board a boat. Father Byles refused. The same seaman spoke to him again and he seemed anxious to help him, but he refused again. Father Byles could have been saved, but he would not leave while one was left and the sailor's entreaties were not heeded. After I got in the boat, which was the last one to leave, and we were slowly going further away from the ship, I could hear distinctly the voice of the priest and the responses to his prayers."

Another passenger, Agnes McCoy, travelling second class, had similar recollections; she wrote:

"I first saw Father Byles in the steerage. There were many Catholics there, and he eased their minds by praying for them, hearing confessions and giving them his blessing. I later saw him on the upper deck reading from his priest's book of hours. Survivors, especially a young English lad, told me later that he pocketed the book, gathered the men about him and, while they knelt, offered up prayer for their salvation."

We have lived into a time when Catholic priests are almost universally ridiculed, caricatured and belittled. The next time I hear such talk I shall call to my mind the image of Father Thomas Byles kneeling on the sloping deck of the Titanic.

Father Byles went down with the ship. His body was never recovered.

National Post

Ian Hunter is professor emeritus in the Faculty of Law at Western University.

P.S. According to *The Tablet* (21st April), there were three priests on board, all of whom went down with the ship. Fr Joseph Peruschitz, of Scheyern Abbey in Germany, and Fr Juozas Montvila from Latvia, were also seen kneeling on the deck and saying the Rosary with 100 fellow passengers, as the last lifeboat pulled away. **JH**



Jesus is the perfect steward – watching carefully over all who have been entrusted to Him by the Father and then sending them all out into the world in service. May I similarly protect and wisely use the gifts entrusted to me!



Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy, Umina, Ettalong, Koolewong, Tascott, Blackwall, Booker Bay, St Hubert's Island, Empire Bay, Horsfield Bay, Pearl Beach, Patonga, Woy Woy Bay, Daley's Point and Phegan's Bay.

St John the Baptist Church, corner of Blackwall and Victoria Roads, Woy Woy

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

Phone: (02) 4341 1073

Fax: (02) 4341 0214

Email: parish@woywoycatholic.org.au

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Fr. Jack Robson, *Parish Priest*.

Fr. Timothy Raj MSFS & Fr. Phillip Thottam MSFS. *Assistant Priests*.

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Raelene Spithill & Margaret Cooper.

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, 3.30 p.m.; Saturday 11.30am; & 4.30pm; Sunday 7.15 a.m.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1st & 3rd Sundays, 11am; 5th Sunday, during 9.15 a.m. Mass.

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 9.30 a.m.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Saturday after 9am Mass until 10am; every Monday until 9am (Public Holidays 10.15am).

PARISH CHOIR – Practice Wednesday nights in the church, 7 p.m.

Enquiries: 4341 3367.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, 21a Dulkara Rd South Woy Woy 2256. p 024341 0884 f 0243 445049.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP For information and events contact Sam French 042 244 9539.

CATHOLICCARE Counselling and Family Relationships. Ph. 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.

CASH HOUSIE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre, Cnr Ocean Beach Rd & McMasters Rd., Woy Woy. Games start at 7.30 p.m. and finish approx 10.20 p.m., cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6.00 p.m. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries Rob 0427 990 818.

St John the Baptist Church Artwork

(Jan Aspinall)

Within the Glass and Timber artwork, in this contemporary Church, are layers of meaning, which grow independent of us here today.

The artwork is neither literal nor pictorial. Instead, you the viewer are asked to experience both the mood and atmosphere which is created by the work.

Your journey begins at the entry doors, were a ripple is depicted.

The ripple motif came to me while I was researching and creating the concept designs. I had an intimate and special moment, were a vision of a single drop of water falling from the hand of **John the Baptist** to the head of **Jesus** and then to the water below, creating a ripple. That first ripple, that spread Christianity throughout the community, then, now and always.

The ripple motif progresses around the walls, until it is united and linked with a weave. The weave depicts and connects the fabric of the community within as well as the community outside the church.

Weaving and connecting us to those who came before, those in the church community today and those who will follow, 'the communion of saints'.

Once inside the Church, I wanted to bring you a feeling of drama, of warmth, and yet a feeling of intimacy, one of closeness (not an easy task in a Church of this size) I also wanted the viewer to feel as though they were being embraced.

The corpus which is suspended above the altar presents **Jesus** in a profound and dynamic way. The corpus is also a visual link to the old original site for the church, across the road from this new and dramatic space.

I truly believe this is a Church to be profoundly impressed by, it has national significance as well as an international profile to be proud of.

Jan Aspinall, of Architectural Stained Glass Studio, Adelaide, designed and installed the stained glass and wall panels in our church.

We're on the Web!
www.woywoycatholic.org.au



Diocese of
Broken Bay