



CHRISTMAS TIME

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- Recently deceased:**
 Bill Hari, Joy Bastin,
 Edward Francis Coleman,
 Michael Gamble,
 Daniel McGowan.
- Anniversaries:**
 Patrick Wedesweiler,
 Robert and Catherine Davis,
 Marie Therese Stanislas,
 Nora Houghton,
- Remembrances:**
 Bruno De Souza, Sergei De Souza,
 The De Souza Family & the Menezes Family,
 Joy Keegan, Eli and Paul Houghton,
- And the sick:**
 Fr. Bill Meacham, Lola Proctor,
 Grace Williams, Alan Harland,
 Evangeline Cusay, Ruth Fuller,
 Gada Selim, Peter Crookes,
 Sr. Margaret Wall, R.S.J.
 Maureen O'Brien, Clare Wren,
 Patrick, Sophia and Elise Firman
 (Triplets born 8/11), Bruce Spence,
 Irene Beck, Betty Foster,
 Mary Dwyer, Brian Moroney,
 Victor and Wanda Grima.

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The Voice

11th January 2015

Baptism of the Lord, Year B

Psalter Week 1

The Spirit casts out fear

Today's feast, as we know, fulfils a number of functions. It marks the end of Christmastide; it looks forward to Lent, inasmuch as the gospel of the First Sunday of Lent is about the temptation of Christ, the next event after his baptism; and it introduces us to the principal theme of Ordinary Time, Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

The gospel readings this year come from Mark, and Mark gives the briefest version of Jesus' baptism. Yet, like the other evangelists, he makes the point that the Spirit does not merely come down on Jesus as he did on kings, prophets and priests in the Old Testament, and as he comes down on all God's children in the New—he comes down on Jesus in such a way as to empower him to "baptise with the Holy Spirit." (John makes this point by saying that the Spirit comes down on Jesus and rests on him.)

Saint Irenaeus (Father of the Church, 2nd century) describes the relationship between Jesus and the Spirit as being "the two hands of God." You can see what he means from today's story: Jesus is controlled by the Spirit, and yet (at the same time) he gives the Spirit (or "baptises with" the Spirit).

It is in this Spirit that Jesus faces the future: not only the years of evangelisation, but also the passion and death that will give his gospel its substance and force. He faces that future without fear. And so should we. As John says in the second reading, 'Who can overcome the world? Only the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God: Jesus Christ who came by water and blood, not with water only, but with water and blood; with the Spirit as another witness.'

There are said to be 365 occurrences in the Bible, of the phrase, 'Do not be afraid.' Evidently we need to be reminded frequently of our tendency to fear. Fear should not take up the space meant for love: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love" (1 Jn 4:18).

So our song today, as we think of Jesus' baptism and ours, is: "Truly, God is my salvation, I trust, I shall not fear. For the Lord is my strength, my song, he became my saviour. With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! John saw Jesus approaching him, and said: This is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish

Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for John Goby, James Mason, Grace Torres-Hernandez and Martin Torres-Hernandez who were baptized last **Sunday**.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 16/1/15: Warren Sparrow, Maria Wickens, Christina Thorson, Linda Potestas.

Parish Nurse: A Happy New Year to you all. Thank you to all who responded to the parish nurse survey.

I work on Wednesdays and am available for appointments and home visits. If you wish to contact me, please phone the parish office. Look out for upcoming health promotion and wellness sessions in 2015.

Ellen Bevan. Parish Nurse.

Urgent – Volunteer Drivers for Parish Bus needed to join a roster transporting parishioners to and from Mass on weekends. Must have an L.R. license. Please contact parish office 4341 1073 if you can help.

The *beyondblue* National Roadshow is coming to Mary Mac's Place! As part of *beyondblue's* 550,000km Roadshow, the big blue bus will visit Mary Mac's Place to provide free information about depression, anxiety and ways to stay well. Come and chat to *beyondblue* staff and local health service providers, find out about available supports and enjoy a FREE BBQ! Tuesday, 13th January, 11am-1pm. 100 Blackwall Rd. Woy Woy.

St. Vincent de Paul Society: The Society assists many people on the Peninsula. If you would like to learn more about this work or to join or work as a volunteer, please contact Ken Hall on 4341 2769 or Joan Murphy on 4341 0248.

Bus Trip to Pokolbin Hunter Valley and a sausage sizzle. Leaving 8.30am, Wednesday, 4th February. \$25. Morning tea and lunch provided. Contact Susie Casey on 4344 11742 or 0403 417 639.

Wedding Anniversary: Our prayers and congratulations to Margaret and Stan Donnellan, parents of Patrick, who celebrate 70 years of marriage on 12th January.

Cuppa and a Chat: A group of seniors meet in the Leo Mahon room 3rd Monday of each month due next Monday 19th January, 1.30pm-3pm. If you would like to join us please phone Bernard 4341 6343. Transport provided.

Rosary Group: All welcome! Come and join us. Tuesdays from 9am-12md in the Leo Mahon room, to make rosaries and scapulars for our Missions.

'Living Faith' booklets and Columban Calendars 2015 now available in the Piety Stall.

Ministry to the Sick: Please ring Parish office 4341 1073 if you know of a member of your family, friend or parishioner who wishes to receive the Sacrament of the Sick, Reconciliation or the Blessed Eucharist at home.

Social Justice

A Crown for Australia:

Sport is a noble thing. It introduces us to people who become life-long friends. It gives us permission to be tribal, but without guns or death or misery—though losing can be rather unpleasant. It lets us know that life doesn't revolve around 'me'. Worthwhile achievements require others as well: we are not alone; I am with others in good times and in bad. Sport builds perseverance and resilience: hard work, success and failure, honour and humiliation are constant variables in sport.

It is rare that fickleness and laziness meet success, so sport

can be a wise taskmaster and often a hard one. It tells us clearly: short cuts won't do; you've got to earn it; and 'there's more in you than you realise—take a risk'.

At its best, sport offers a safe and nurturing space where rich and poor, men and women, people of all colours and creeds can meet with a common goal; a place where human dignity is more important than winning the game.

Sport is a national obsession. At work, after church, on the bus or the train, in the street, the same questions bring people together: 'How's the cricket? The golf? The footy? The ten-

nis?'

We like to think that sport reflects the best in us, but if it does, we have to admit that it can also reflect the worst in us. It can be like a crown of thorns. Sometimes it shows things that make us ashamed. As Pope Paul II said in an address to athletes in 2000:

It can be a vehicle of high human and spiritual ideals when it is practised with full respect for its rules; but it can also fail in its true aim when it leaves room for other interests that ignore the centrality of the human person.

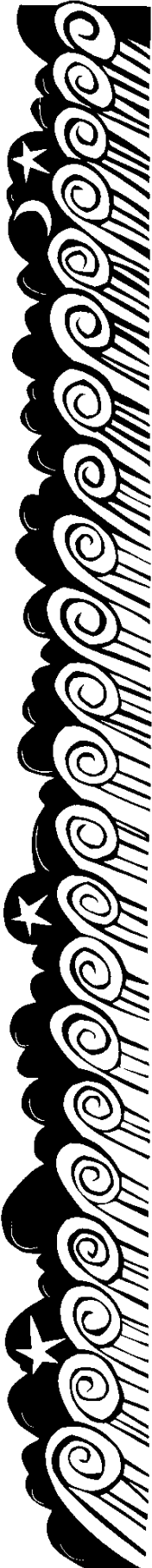
A Crown for Australia, Social Justice Statement 2014-2015.

From the Diocese and beyond

Pathways of St. Paul: Join parishioners from Holy Innocents's on a 20 day Pilgrimage to Greece and Turkey, departing Monday 20th April. Walk the footsteps of St. Paul, visit places where he lived, worked and was imprisoned. Also visit the island of Patmos, where St. John wrote the book of Revelation, Basilica of St. John built over the tomb of

"The Divine" Apostle and the "House of Mary" where it is said Mary spent the later years of her life. For Itinerary Brochure and Booking Form please contact Fr. Peter Krigovsky, admin@holytic.org.au or download from www.holyinnocentscroydon.org.au/news-and-events/parish-pilgrimage

The Wisdom of Teresa: Divine Friendship: spiritual guidance in prayer, holiness and mission from the writings of St. Teresa of Avila. Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre, 247 St. Andrews Rd. Varroville. Cost \$220 (concessions available). Presenter: Fr. Paul Maunder, OCD. Contact: 02 8795 3400. Email retreats@carmelite.com



Awakening our memory of Baptism

Donna M. Cole

I was baptised the same day I was born, so it's easy to remember the date. Born earlier than expected, I was very small. My father likes to say that at three-and-a-half pounds, I wasn't even as big as a good-sized chicken. About 50 years ago, the prognosis for such an infant was not as positive as it is today. In an abundance of caution, I was baptised within moments of being born, by a nurse in the delivery room.

My father's experience with baptism was quite different. He was old enough to remember being baptised in a country Baptist church. The minister had told him to hold his breath, which he started doing as soon as the preacher started speaking. By the time he was immersed in the water, he was just about out of air, so his baptism was nearly a drowning!

Even if most baptisms aren't particularly memorable, the sacrament is a fundamental, pivotal point in the spiritual journey. It marks the moment when we are welcomed into the community of believers, and by the love of Christ, our lives are transformed.

Pope Francis has intense insight about the memory of baptism:

We must reawaken the memory of our Baptism. We are called to live out our Baptism every day as the present reality of our lives. If we manage to follow Jesus and to remain in the Church, despite our limitations and with our weaknesses and our sins, it is precisely in the Sacrament whereby we have become new creatures and have been clothed in Christ. It is by the power of Baptism, in fact, that, freed of original sin, we are inserted into Jesus' relation to God the Father; that we are bearers of a new hope, for Baptism gives us this new hope: the hope of going on the path of salvation our whole life long. And this hope nothing and no one can extinguish, for it is a hope that does not disappoint. Remember, hope in the Lord never disappoints. Thanks to Baptism, we are capable of forgiving and of loving even those who offend us and do evil to us. By our Baptism, we recognise in the least and in the poor the face of the Lord who visits us and makes himself close. Baptism helps us to recognise in the face of the needy, the suffering, and

also of our neighbour, the face of Jesus. All this is possible thanks to the power of Baptism! (General Audience [Jan. 8, 2014], 2; See link)

When we baptise infants, and sometimes adults, we ask questions (see *Rite of Baptism*, 76). At the Easter Vigil and on other occasions, we renew our baptismal promises in a question-and-answer format (see *Roman Missal*, Easter Vigil, 55). These questions offer an opportunity to explore and reflect on the grace and new hope of following Jesus. As we approach the feast of Baptism of the Lord, such reflection can lead us to awaken the memory of our baptisms.

What name do you give ...?

- What do we name ourselves? How do others name us? "Who do you say I am?"
- How often is that name Christian? Or minister of God's people? Servant?
- What is the name God calls you? Beloved? Chosen? Stranger?

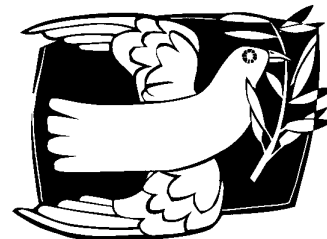
What do you ask of God's Church ...?

- As we grow in the life of the church, do we seek to be immersed in the fire of the Spirit, to be engulfed in living water, and to be renewed in our unity with the community of believers in Jesus Christ?
- Is our ministry a visible extension of the promises we make in baptism?

Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?

Do we choose to reject sin and dedicate ourselves to the rejection of sin in the world? By this we form the basis of our social conscience. We are called in baptism to be living examples of the freedom promised us when we commit willingly to lives worthy of that call.

Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?



The three wise men who came from the East to pay homage to the infant Jesus brought Him rich gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh as part of their worship. What gifts have I brought to this celebration to offer to the newborn Saviour?



(Continued on page 4)

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, 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"

Dr John Hill, *Parish Priest*

Fr Stephen Wayoyi, A.J. *Assistant Priest*

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Raelene McLenaghan & Margaret Cooper

Parish Nurse: Ellen Bevan

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 7.00 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 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 10.20 p.m., cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6.00 p.m. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries Rob: 0427 990818.

Awakening our memory of Baptism

(continued)

(Continued from page 3)

Do we willingly and publicly acknowledge that we are formed in God's image and likeness and are intimately connected to the kingdom of God?

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

Here is the challenge to profess what the world dismisses as nonsense. Do we firmly acclaim "I do" to this belief, rejecting the beliefs of this world and embracing the faith of Christ?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Do we commit our heart, mind, and soul to the faith of the church?

We serve in ministry by virtue of our baptism, where the love of God flows from the font that gives us life in Christ. That love, grace, and strength is the memory we are challenged to awaken. **ML**

Donna M. Cole is associate editor of *ML*. She holds a master's degree in pastoral ministry from Caldwell College, Caldwell, N.J., and has a passion for liturgy celebrated and lived to the fullest. With degrees in microbiology and biology, she spends her "spare" time in biomedical research, marvelling at the wonder of God revealed in the complexity of science. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.

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Diocese of
Broken Bay