



# The Voice

## ORDINARY TIME

**Our Lord Jesus Christ,  
King of the Universe  
Year A  
26th November 2017**

### OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**  
William Mortimore.
- **Anniversaries:**  
Reina Donnelly, Charles Gatt,  
Thomas and Annie Peachey,  
Shirley McDonald, Clesio Tremonti,  
Paul Houghton, Zenon Berlinski  
Arthur Samuel Johnson.
- **Remembrances:**  
Nora and Eli Houghton,  
Fr. John Harcombe,  
Fr. Patrick Gillic.
- **And the sick:**  
Pat Burgmann, Mary Drinan,  
Margarita Gomez, June Towson,  
Therese Corner, Patricia Dwyer,  
Margaret Davin, Helen Taylor,  
Roy Beverage, Brian Finlayson,  
Laura Krauss, Ken Thorson,  
Marylou Tafilagi, Matilda Tawake,  
Mick Nino, Nellie Brown,  
Janet Dean, Bobby Sutherland,  
Diane Briemer, Grace Wellins,  
Tom Thorton, Olive Brittliff,  
Audrey Kirkman, Malina Tugaga,  
Abigale Tugaga, Maria Wise,  
Elizabeth Skinner, Beryl Reynolds,  
Terry Wilkinson, Helen Tiltins,  
Teresita and Jorge Villasanti,  
Victor Gauci, Marta Panczyna.

The Roman Emperor Constantine was baptised in 337. He put it off for years. In the early Church Christians could only confess their sins once in their lives, so Constantine remained a catechumen until he was nearing the end. When he thought his death was imminent, and that he could probably sin no more, he asked for baptism, received Holy Communion and later confessed his sins. It was a watershed moment for the Church.

In 313 Constantine declared that Christianity was to be the new state religion. No one could hold any other belief. It was meant to unify the Empire as trade, law, taxation and Roman culture had done. I think we should admit that this move has been a mixed blessing for the Church ever since.

On the positive side of the ledger it finally sealed the end of the persecution of the earliest Christians. The blood of the martyrs had been so eloquent that their witness caused even a few emperors to ask what sort of love would see so many followers be prepared to die for their beliefs. It also saw the Church become a significant player in shaping the values of society, especially in the West. There is no question that Christianity moderated, cultivated and humanised some of the worst Roman excesses.

On the cost side, the Church became very powerful very quickly. Bishops started to wear the purple robes of the senators. Churches took on the shape of the Roman basilicas, while the government of the Church mirrored that of the Empire. Our liturgy imported all sorts of practices that were popular in the Roman temples. Tragically, for the next few hundred years, conversions were demanded at the end of a sword. No religious dissent or pluralism was tolerated. It's in

this context that Islam arises against Imperial Christianity in the 6th Century.

It cannot surprise us that after Constantine's conversion the image of Christ the King becomes one of the most popular ones used in religious art. Up to this time the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd was the most represented. After 313, however, Jesus is dressed in royal robes, with a crown, sceptre and orb. Mary is often presented in similar dress and starts to be called the Queen of Heaven.

The problem with all this is not that imperial language was now being used in reference to Jesus. He described himself as a King. The problem comes in how Christianity starts to forget that Jesus also pointed out that his kingdom was 'not of this world' and that his courtiers could be recognised by how they feed the hungry, water the thirsty, welcome strangers, clothe the naked, care for the sick and visit prisoners. Jesus' reign, and his courtiers, are of an altogether different order to that usually prized in worldly kingdoms.

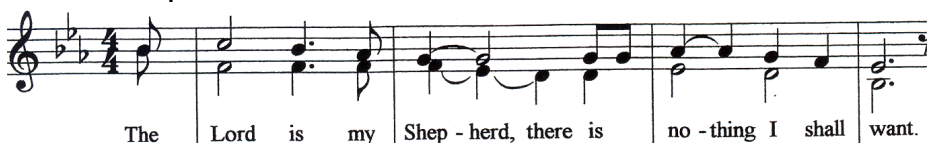
That's why today's feast is so important. On the last day of the Church's year we are challenged by Christ our King to give our true allegiance to what really matters. Not ambition, greed, status and power, but the quiet revolutionary work of making the world a more just and peaceful place for everyone to live.

To the degree that we do this we are co-heirs to the Kingdom Jesus lived, died and was raised for, and we are witnesses to the real meaning of Christ's reign in our lives.

Richard Leonard SJ

### Psalm Response

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### Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia!* Blessings on him who comes in the name of the Lord!  
Blessings on the coming kingdom of our father David! *Alleluia!*

## Around the Parish

**The Season of Advent** begins next Sunday and has a twofold character—as a season to prepare for Christmas when Christ's first coming to us is remembered: as a season when remembrance directs the mind and heart to await Christ's second coming at the end of time.

Advent is thus a period of devout and joyful expectation. **New liturgical year begins: Sunday Cycle B and weekday Cycle 2.**

**Anointing of the Sick** will be administered during Mass this Friday, 1st December at 4pm.

**Blessing of the Jesse Tree** Sunday, 3 December, after 9.15am Mass in the Leo Mahon room.

**The Live Pray Love Project** - On Sunday 3rd December (1st Sunday of Advent) Fr Philip will speak on: "*Understanding the mystery of Christ's Incarnation through scriptures and traditions focusing on Jesus and Mary*". Immediately following the 9.15 Mass in the Leo Mahon room 10.45 - 11.30am. Please phone Gladys Leger 0421 312 362 if you have any questions

'**El Shaddai**' Monthly meetings for December are 2nd, 9th and 16th.

**Baptisms:** We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Aleeia Brack, Sorcha Finegan, Ivie Oswald and Kylah Oswald, who were baptized last Sunday.

**St. Vincent de Paul Cash Appeal:** will be next weekend 2/3 December. Envelopes in the church this weekend. Your generosity would be appreciated. The need is great and support is sought in giving what we are able to give. All monies are used to support local families on the Peninsula.

**St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Toy Appeal** focusing on children up to the age of 12 years are appealing for donations of children toys, new if possible. Over 100 families are visited by SVDP members each week on the Peninsula, many with children. A toy box will be placed in the gathering area for your donation of toys. Your generosity will be appreciated.

**Immaculate Conception:** Personal Prayer. Hour of Grace. Friday, 8th December, 12 noon-1pm, Woy Woy Church. We will especially pray for the young people gathered for the Australian Catholic Youth Festival.

**Parish Family Ministry Christmas Hampers:** List of various types of hampers needed are on display in the gathering area. Hampers to be returned by the weekend of 9/10 December. Single items may be left in boxes at the back of the church. For more information contact Susie Casey 4344 1742 or 0403 417 639 or Mary Dolan 4343 1401 or 0407 431 401.

**Frantastics Choir Family and Friends Christmas Concert** will be held Thursday, 7th December at 2pm in the Walter Baker Hall. This event is a fundraiser for Mary Mac's Place. Doors open 1pm. Tickets at the door. Entry \$5.00. Gold coin donation for afternoon tea. Information: Ph: 02 4343 1995.

**Columban Calendars 2018** \$9.00 each. **Christmas Cards** \$5 a packet, now on sale in the Piety Stall.

**Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster for 1/12/17:** Pam Hickey, Veronica Jordan, Brian Jordan and Mary McCumstie.

## Social Justice

### A Prayer for all Ages

God of all creation, you are timeless and beyond all ages. *We who are growing old* give thanks for the years you have given us—for family, friends and all those who have enriched our lives.

*We who are not yet old* give thanks for the older people in our lives: for grandparents, loved ones, friends and all who generously offer the wise counsel of their years.

*We who are growing old* pray that we may be patient with our ageing limbs and difficulties in everyday tasks we once did much more easily.

*We who are not yet old* pray for patience and kindness towards those who do not move as quickly as we would sometimes like.

*We who are growing old* pray for good health in our later years, and forbearance when our health fails us.

*We who are not yet old* pray for good health for those we love and compassion towards those who suffer ill health.

*We who are growing old* pray for prudence and sweet timing, in offering our wisdom to the next generation, while respecting their energy and creativity.

*We who are not yet old* pray for

openness and humility in receiving the advice and guidance of our elders.

*We who are growing old* pray that we may face our death with serenity and dignity.

*We who are not yet old* pray that we affirm the sacredness of each person's life and accompany those who are dying with gentleness and deep respect.

God of endless love, help us to understand that we share a common life journey, a call to live life to the full and to strive to enable all creation to come to the fullness of the Cosmic Christ. Amen.

## From the Diocese and beyond

**Advent Women's Retreat at Notre Dame, Sydney:** Monday 4th December from 9am to 4.30pm, all women are invited to spend a day around the theme of "The Mystery of His Nativity". There will be Mass, Adoration, opportunities for Confession and inspiring talks. Morning tea, lunch and after-

noon tea will be provided. The retreat is taking place at the Broadway Campus of the University of Notre Dame Australia. It is free, but registration is essential: 02 8204 4189 or [www.trybooking.com/SPJK](http://www.trybooking.com/SPJK).

**Pre-Christmas Reflections** on different Gospels' lenses of Je-

sus' 'blood-line' will be held this Wednesday, 29th November, South Kincumber. Session begins 10am and concludes around 2.45pm. Presenter: Sr. Virginia Bourke.+ BYO own lunch. Morning tea provided. Cost: \$15. If attending phone 4368 2805 or [bookings@stjosephsretreat.org.au](mailto:bookings@stjosephsretreat.org.au)



# Necessities of [Eternal] Life

By Fr Michael Tate

Today's Gospel portrays the culmination of human history. Its focus is on the fate of every human being who ever lived.

What is revealed in this passage is momentous, and astonishing for some Christians.

The eternal destiny of every human being – certainly of every human being of a certain maturity – is determined by the decisions made in relation to food and drink for the famished, clothing and hospitality for those without decent clothing or shelter, visiting those in circumstances which cut them off from life-giving contact with others (the sick and prisoners).

Those who provide such assistance, even to one least significant person, do so to Christ! Those who provide the necessities of life, physical or social, will hear: 'Amen I tell you, whatever you did to one of these brothers and sisters of mine, [even] the least of them, you did it to me.'

A Christian can be fully conscious of the fact that this is what he or she is doing. It explains much of the tremendous works of relief of the poor and sick which has characterised Christianity from the start.

In fact, Pope Francis emphasises that the test of authenticity for a Christian is the willingness to personally bend over and touch the wounds of Christ in those who need healing and comfort.

But, for non Christians, it is possible to do so without any of our awareness or belief. Christ is incognito to them: 'When did we ever see you hungry and feed you ...'

The fact is that the Indian villager or the Chinese factory worker who has never heard the Gospel but, prompted unawares by the Holy Spirit, decides to alleviate suffering, can hear the invitation: 'Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.'

Conversely, those human beings who deliberately refuse to alleviate the suffering of the least are the ones who will find themselves continuing in a hellish self-absorbed existence for all eternity.

The Church forbids us to imagine any particular person as being in this never-ending self-centredness. But the Church does insist that such a hellish state of existence is possible. It is frighteningly possible for we who, as Christians, know this doctrine of the Real Presence in the poor and marginalised. And it is possible for those who come across Jesus Christ Incognito in those without the necessities of life.

But it is graciously also possible for a Hindu Indian villager or a Taoist Chinese factory worker to hear the words, 'Come you blessed of my Father'. This raises the question, what is the point in being a Christian?

The simple answer is that all human beings yearn to know the truth, in every field, about everything: personal relationships, a field of study or passionate interest, the political life of our community. It is inherent in our makeup.

Christianity is the bearer of the ultimate truth about our being *loved* into existence, *why* we were loved into existence, and that *we can share* Christ's victory over death which threatens that existence.

And Christianity gives us all the aid we need to prepare ourselves for that Last Judgment: the Gospels and the sacraments to show us the way and to nourish us on the journey.

But it should not stop us rejoicing that many others will, at the end of human history, hear the invitation: 'Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'



# 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 . Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament**

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 during school terms for high school students (Years 7-12), in the Leo Mahon Room. . For more information, contact Matthew French on 0411 792 587.

**CATECHISTS** conduct special religious education classes at the four Primary State Schools in our Parish. Experience isn't necessary—but Volunteers are always needed—to teach and help. Details: Susie 0411 566 622 without any obligation.

**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.

## For Sale

## Parish Car

2012 Mazda 3 Maxx Sport Sedan

BL Series 2 Auto MY13

4 Cyl, 2 litre engine.

79 000 km's. Black.

Rego until 1.9.18.

Great condition. \$14,300.

Please call the Parish Office,  
4341 1073 if interested.

## **Christmas Mass Times 2017**

**St John the Baptist Parish, Woy Woy Peninsula**

### **December 24: Christmas Eve**

6:00 p.m. (Carols from 5:30 p.m.)

8:00 p.m. (Carols from 7:30 p.m.)

10:00 p.m. (Carols from 9:30 p.m.)

### **December 25: Christmas Day**

7:30 a.m.

9:15 a.m.

(No evening Mass)

**December 26: Boxing Day 9:00 a.m.**

**December 31: Sunday 7:30 a.m., 9:15 a.m.**

**Vigil Mass 6:00 p.m.**

**January 1: New Year's Day 9:00 a.m.**