

# The Voice

13th November 2016

Dedication of the Parish Church

Psalter Week 1



## OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**  
Phillip Gill, Peter John Grima.
- **Anniversaries:**  
Frank Panos, Deidre Smith,  
Fr. John Harcombe, Albert David Snell,  
Sr. Patricia Snell, R.S.J.  
John Anthony Snell.
- **And the sick:**  
Maryanne Diorio, Alan Harland,  
John Allen, Audrey Barsendich,  
Keith Oakes, Margaret Thoms,  
Baby Winter, Helen McKeon,  
Margaret Jackson, Lorna Russom,  
Nicola (Nick) Bubici, Jason Wellin,  
Maureen Cowsls, Sr. Margaret Wall. R.S.J.  
Olive O'Brien and grandchild Sharon,  
Maureen Carlon, Keith Carlon,  
Kevin and Sheila Houghton,  
Elizabeth Anne Kenney, Irudaya Mary,  
Beryl Allen, Rene Glaze, Les Spiteri.  
Peter John Grima, Ian Wilks,  
Steve Paino, Mary Wood.

Have you ever prayed for a parking spot? Which reminds me of the Irishman who went around the block twice looking for a spot, and in his frustration lifted his eyes towards Heaven and prayed 'Almighty God, if you find me a spot I'll go to Mass every Sunday and give up the Guinness.' Just then, a parking spot opened up and he dashed in to the space, raised his eyes to heaven and said 'Almighty God, disregard the previous conversation, I just found a spot by myself.'

Our prayers can tell us a lot about the image of God we really have. For some it is of a Divine Parking Attendant in the sky. For others a sort of weather God who with sufficient entreaty can stop the rain during the second day of the Test Match.

But if you were in Syria and your town was being strafed and bombed by government and rebel forces, with innocent people being wantonly killed, then your prayer would be very different.

Your image of God would be of a Liberator from warfare, of a Saviour from crimes against humanity, and if it came to it, a Strengthener in time of torture and impending death.

In today's Gospel, Jesus was preparing his followers for what he knew would be times of persecution in the immediate and ongoing futures for the Christian community.

Imagine hearing these readings in a Catholic church in Syria, as the congregation fearfully gathers in the wake of murderous violence by some Muslim extremists against Christians, or in a church in a village in China with the Catholic community trying to keep its ties with the Pope, fearful of denunciation and betrayal by family and friends, as predicted by Jesus in today's gospel.

There would be a yearning and heartfelt hope which would be a real prayer by those Syrian and Chinese disciples. They would be looking for vindication of their perseverance in persecution.

They would cling to Our Lord's assurance: 'Your endurance will win you your lives.'

They would listen to the prophet Malachi: 'The day is coming now ...evildoers will be like stubble ...But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will shine out with healing in its rays.'

What a wonderful image of God, putting our rather pathetic parking spot attendant and weather God images to shame.

'The sun of righteousness will shine out with healing in its rays.'

This is the image for God which would mean something very heartening in the midst of the seemingly endless darkness of persecution. God will do what the sun does, flooding the world with light and warmth, making our fragile planet habitable for human beings.

It is our faith that out of the inky blackness of the cold tomb carved out of a hill near Calvary, the Son of righteousness did rise, shining out with healing in His rays.

That is what the early church believed during those early centuries of persecution. They believed that Son when he had said: 'Your endurance will win you your lives.'

This belief is what sustains the martyrs of our present era.

The word 'martyr' is the Greek word for witness. It simply means somebody who witnesses to something.

A Christian martyr witnesses to Our Lord Jesus Christ, the pre-eminent martyr. Their blood is shed, as was His. They do so with the faith that for them, the Son of righteousness will shine out with healing.

That is our faith, that is the faith of the church. What was in the future tense for Malachi, is a present reality for those in parts of Nigeria, of Indonesia, of China, of Syria and elsewhere. This is what sustains them. There will be vindication. Justice will be done.

Because the Son of Righteousness rose with healing in His rays.

© Fr Michael Tate

### Psalms Response

© Colin D. Smith cfc



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### Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia!* I have chosen and sanctified this house, says the Lord, that my name may remain in it for all time. *Alleluia!*

## Around the Parish

**Sunday 27th November (9:15am)** will be Fr Jack's last Mass as Parish Priest as his resignation has now been accepted by the Bishop. Due to health issues, Fr Jack will be leaving the Parish after returning from rehab. following his surgery. He will be moving out of the Parish in the New Year.

**Anniversary of the Dedication of St. John the Baptist Church 2007** occurs this coming Friday, 18th November and will be celebrated at all Masses this Sunday 13th.

**Baptisms:** We welcome into our Faith community and pray for, Christian Collins, Elizabeth Fanning, James Gibson and Max Mowbray, who were baptised last Sunday.

**Live, Pray, Love Project: St. John the Baptist Parish and School Picnic** Sunday, 4th December, 11am-4.30pm. St. John the Baptist Primary School, 21a Dulkara Rd. Woy Woy Stn. BYO food and drinks. Enquiries: Phone Gladys 0421 312 362.

**Piety Stall** has **Christmas card packs** containing 4 various designs. \$5 a pack.

**Children's Liturgy of the Word:** Come and join us at 9.15am Mass, St. John the Baptist Parish. Children ages 5-12 yrs. Operates most 2nd, 3rd, 4th Sundays of the month. Enquiries: Christine French 4342 4548.

**Children's Liturgy Roster 20/11/16:** Therese Carroll, Marianne Bowyer, Isaak Giunta.

**Volunteer Church Cleaning 18/11/16:** Maria Wickens, Warren Sparrow, Veronica Jordan, Brian Jordan.

**Helpers needed:** Children's liturgy of the Word helpers (Sunday 9:15am Mass) and Church cleaners for 2017 required. Please contact Christine French 4342 4548.

**Thank You:** Mary Mac's Co-ordinator, Christine Burge thank the Woy Woy Parish for their generosity for Mary Mac's Collection on Sunday, 6th November. The parish was very generous giving a total of \$446.45, which enables Mary Mac's to continue the good work of supporting people in our society who are struggling. Again, thanks.

**Seasons for Growth's Loss and Grief Workshop** to be held at Mary MacKillop Place 5th December. Interested parishioners are most welcome. To register: [mmpevent.bookings@sosj.org.au](mailto:mmpevent.bookings@sosj.org.au)

**St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Appeal** will be held 26/27 November. The need is great and we appreciate your generosity.

**Parish Family Ministry Christmas Hampers.** Over the past 10 years our Parish has been extremely generous to those in the community who may be widowed, single parents, disabled or in need. Lists for various types of hampers are on display this weekend. Please take note of each hamper's code. All hampers need to be returned by the weekend of 10th/11th December. Single items can be left in the gathering area. No cigarettes, alcohol or perishables please. Note: This is a separate collection from St. Vincent de Paul's Christmas collection. If you know of anyone in need of a hamper, Ph: Susie Casey 0403 417 639.

**Bus Trip—Hunter Valley** via Cessnock. Wednesday, 23 November. Leaving 9am. Cost \$20. Contact Susie Casey 0403 417 639.

**National Church Life Survey 2016** available in gathering area. See back page of this newsletter for details. Surveys to be returned by 28 November 2016. Our Church Code is TA229101.

**Annual Financial Report to the Parish 2015-2016:** copies available on the gathering area table.

## The Just Word

### A Feast of Love:

A family meal is more than a physical feed. It is time when we, as family members of whatever age or state of life, **deepen our love** for each other by...

- Spending time together.
- Listening to each other's stories
- Saying a prayer for thanksgiving.
- Sharing mealtime tasks.

In doing so we welcome the presence of Jesus in our midst and

recognise ourselves to be **the body of Christ**.

A family meal doesn't have to be flash. It doesn't have to be 'perfect'. It doesn't have to be 'done' a certain way. Things like

**I love you.  
We belong.  
We believe.**

Above all family meals need to be a **priority**.

Not just for families with young children, but for all of us.

Not just on special occasions but on 'ordinary' days as well. Without prioritising, planning and effort, this precious part of our family life can easily be swamped by work, studies, sport, television shows, computer games and a host of other activities that fill our lives.

*Bishops' Committee for Family and Life.*

## From the Diocese and beyond

**Feast of Christ the King** next Sunday, 20th November.

To witness that Jesus is our King, a Central Coast Pilgrim Walk. Stating location Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, 165 Serpentine Rd. Terrigal.

1pm Holy Hour at Terrigal.

2pm-2.20pm Break.

2.30pm Prayer at Our Lady's Grotto and start Pilgrim Walk.

30 minutes stop for a rest.

5.00pm. Arrive at St. Patrick's Church, East Gosford.

5.00pm-5.30pm Break (Please BYO Snacks and Drinks).

5.30pm-5.50pm Prayer.

6.00pm Sunday Mass.

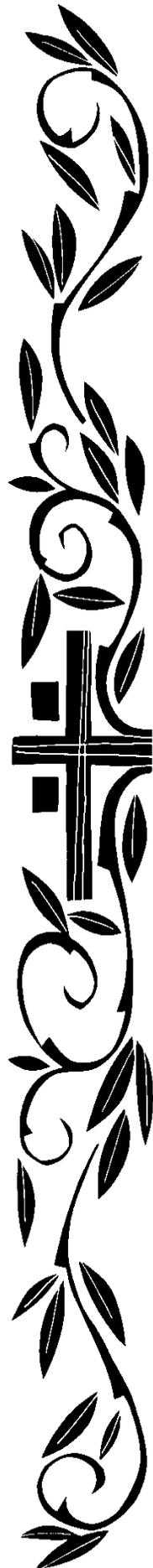
Contact: Dawn:4367 6665 / 0404 214 459. Connie: 0404 844 300. Blossom:4334 4843/0405 676 414.

**iWitness Conference 2016** is a Catholic Youth three-day conference run every year. This 3 day conference is a chance to meet like minded people and return to families, parishes and communities renewed in faith. iWitness features talks led by various prominent speakers. The conference also includes opportunities for prayer, sports and team activities. Young adults 18-35 yrs. old.

iWitness Conference will be held 8th-11th December, arrival 5pm 8th December. Collaroy Centre,

22 Homestead Ave. Collaroy. Notable Speakers: Bishop Richard Umbers and Dr. Robert Tilley. The conference is run on a not-for-profit basis and so attendees are charged amounts that cover cost of their accommodation and food. Details of accommodation costs and further information see notice board.

If you wish to sponsor a parishioner, registrations can be processed online via the website. Alternatively, and if you have any questions please email [iwitness.conference@gmail.com](mailto:iwitness.conference@gmail.com) or contact Clare Bonner on 0401 458 946.



# Instructions on Eating Elephants

Mary Testin

Most of us have heard the answer to the old question: 'How do you eat an elephant. One bite at a time.' I am often asked by a variety of people if I ever get bored at Mass—after all, I do attend a lot of liturgies! Yet truthfully it is a rare occasion when I am dying to get out of church. Perhaps I need to get a life? Maybe, but I am hoping it has more to do with the way I have learnt to present myself for worship and how I am encouraging others to take my approach.

I believe that trying to take everything in at every Mass is asking too much. It is a lot like trying to sample 100 wines and remember how each one tasted. Drinking that much wine not only can cause intoxication; it also overwhelms the taste and smell sensors that help us distinguish one wine from another. (As you can see, I got more than a theological education during my graduate studies in California.) So now I am inviting people to simply be present at each liturgy to watch and listen for one small moment or word that will speak to them and let go of all the rest. It is God's gift for the week.

For example, I was present at a rather ordinary Sunday Mass a few weeks ago, practising my attentiveness method. Nothing particular struck me until the closing procession at the end of Mass. The acolyte was an older man who was clearly suffering from some kind of hip displacement. His walk was laboured but very dignified as he carried the processional cross of Christ to lead us back into the world. I was deeply moved by this image, thinking of how each of us struggles in our own way to follow Jesus and that his struggle to get down the aisle is a living icon of the church struggling to follow her Lord.

At other liturgies a sentence from the Scriptures might become my mantra for the week. Sometimes it is a phrase from the eucharistic prayer, such as, 'When we were lost and could not find the way to you, you loved us more than ever ...,' but often it is a movement or symbol that catches any heart. At one Mass I recall being stunned to a quiet stillness when the priest simply stopped after the memorial acclamation and placed his hands quietly on the edge of the altar for about thirty seconds, contemplating the real presence.

It wasn't a pious or showy thing—he simply stopped talking and invited us into the mystery of transubstantiation by his example.

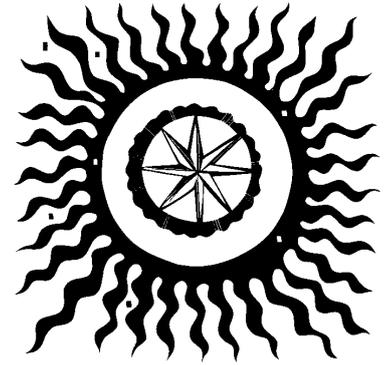
Recently I was reading a biography of Thomas Merton, which described how part of his conversion process was simply coming into churches and observing people praying quietly to God. Such an image set up a hunger for God inside him, which eventually led to his adult baptism and entry into the Trappists. What if Merton never saw anyone praying? Wouldn't our world be less for it? What if every presider and minister moved with a "holy intention" of helping people perceive the presence of God among them?

This rapt attentiveness also shows me things I'd rather not see. As I watched a man take the host and pop it into his mouth like a tic tac, I had to wonder if he really knew Whom he was receiving. I saw two brothers kick one another in the ankles all the way up to the communion station. I saw a teenage girl putting on makeup during the eucharistic prayer, and I saw older people reading the bulletin during the homily. I wonder what has happened to us. We have ten-second bytes for news, internet connections that take us round the world with a few keystrokes, and 100+ cable channels on our TVs. Catholic liturgy cannot and should not compete with such a world.

We have to ask ourselves continually if the manner in which we celebrate liturgy offers an alternative to such a frenetic culture. In our worship, are we teaching people by word and example how to find God within such a world so that God, 'the simplest of all,' as Leonard Bernstein so eloquently named the Divine, will not be overlooked? Only by seeking God from moment to moment—one bite at a time—will people learn to find God everywhere.

**ML**

Mary Testin has a master's degree in theology from the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley. She was associate director of the Seattle archdiocesan worship office and has experience as a campus minister, liturgist, lay preacher and catechumenate director. *From Ministry & Liturgy, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 6744.*




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Today's readings paint a somewhat frightening picture of the end of time. But the Gospel ends with the assurance to faithful stewards that those who persevere will be saved.

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# Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula



Diocese of  
Broken Bay

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

## St John the Baptist Church,

(Corner) Blackwall & Victoria Rds, Woy Woy

**Parish Office**      *Ethel Cox Parish Centre*  
**PO Box 264**              *Walter Baker Hall*  
**54 Victoria Road**      *100 Blackwall Rd*  
**WOY WOY NSW 2256**      *Woy Woy*

**Phone:** (02) 4341 1073    **Fax:** (02) 4341 0214  
**Email:** parish@woywoycatholic.org.au  
**Website:** www.woywoycatholic.org.au

“He must increase, I must decrease”

**Parish Priest:**      Fr. Jack Robson.  
**Assistant Priests:** Fr. Timothy Raj. MSFS.  
                                 Fr. Philip Thottam. MSFS.  
**Office Staff:**      Helen Cameron,  
                                 Raelene Spithill and Margaret Cooper.

**Office Hours:**  
9.30am—4pm, Monday to Friday.

**Deadline for The Voice:**  
3.30pm 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 7am.

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1st & 3rd Sundays, 11am; 5th Sunday, during 9.15am 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 9.30am.

## 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. ph: 4341 0884 fax: 4344 5049.

## ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP

For information and events contact Parish office 4341 1073.

**CATHOLICCARE** Marriage & Family Relationships.  
Phone: 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 approx 10.20pm. Cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6pm. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries: Rob 0427 990 818.

## 2016 National Church Life Survey.

Our church will be amongst thousands of churches that complete the 2016 National Church Life Survey (NCLS) in October and November this year.

The purpose of the NCLS is to help churches to be more vital and effective. Through the survey our churchgoers will be able to give their thoughts, opinions and experiences of church life.

The survey provides valuable feedback that enables leaders at local, regional and national levels to evaluate and plan for the future.

After 25 years of experience you can be assured that this Christian mission research with proven academic credibility will lead to practical application in churches.

Our church's contribution will form an important part of the national snapshot of the whole Australian Church.

Surveys take 20 minutes to complete. A box is available in the gathering area for completed surveys. You may prefer to complete the survey online at [www.surveys.ncls.org.au](http://www.surveys.ncls.org.au)

**Our Church Code is TA229101.**