



The Voice

28th December 2014

Holy Family, Year B

Special Psalter

CHRISTMAS TIME

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Matiude Uy Baguio, Domingo Umpad, Snr. Patricia Flynn.
- **Anniversaries:**
Mary Frances Madden, Dorothy Hodges, Terri Hall, Barry McKeowen.
- **Remembrances:**
Arthur, Muriel and John Brown and the Brown family, Bruno de Souza, Sergei de Souza, de Souza family, Menezes family.
- **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, John Purser, Clare Wren, Patrick, Sophia and Elise Firman (Triplets born 8/11), Bruce Spence, Irene Beck, Betty Foster, Mary Dwyer, Victor and Wanda Grima.

Family of Faith

Welcome to all our visitors, and to those who have come home for Christmas. You are at home here, as you should be at home anywhere in the Catholic world. We are a family—a family of faith.

The atmosphere of welcome also operates in another relationship—between the old, the young and the middle-aged, between grandparents, parents and children. The Christian faith is passed on and practised inter-generationally—not by quarantining one generation from another (although there are obviously times and places for this), but bringing us all together in one family of faith. We are especially conscious of this at Christmas time.

As Pope Pius XI once memorably remarked, Christians are also children of Abraham. We refer to Abraham, in Eucharistic Prayer I, as “our father in faith.” He and Sarah are given Isaac as their son because they believe. Isaac is a child of faith. They welcomed him as a gift of God, and passed on the gift of their own faith to him. *Abram put his faith in the Lord, who counted this as making him justified.*

We became his children through our Lord, himself a child of Abraham, as Our Lady puts it in her Magnificat: *He has come to the help of Israel his servant, mindful of his mercy—according to the promise made to our ancestors—of his mercy to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.*

Notice how the Letter to the Hebrews reminds us today in the second reading: *It was by faith that Abraham obeyed the call to set out ... It was equally by faith that Sarah, in spite of being past the age, was made able to conceive ... It was by faith that Abraham, when put to the test, offered up Isaac.*

It is people of this sort—children of Abraham—whom we encounter in today’s gospel, not only Mary and Joseph, but also Simeon and Anna. They belong to “the poor of Israel”, people whose only security is their faith in God. They form a family of faith. The centre of their faith is the One who fulfils God’s promises to all those who have followed Abraham and Sarah on their journey of faith.

Their mutual welcome derives from their faith. They welcome Christ, and it is because of him that they welcome each other. Voiceless as he still is, he also welcomes them.

This is the true Christmas welcome: the welcome given to fellow Christians, who share the same faith in God’s promises, and in their fulfilment in Jesus Christ.

So, locals and visitors, old and young, remember (and apply) the words of St Paul to the Romans (15:7): *Therefore welcome one another, as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

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Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! In the past God spoke to our fathers through the prophets; now he speaks to us through his Son. *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish

Most Rev. Peter A Comensoli,
Bishop of Broken Bay
Statement 16 December.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This morning our communities are coming to terms with the deep pain and loss that has come at the end of the terrorizing and tragic circumstances that have occurred at Martin Place.

My heartfelt prayer go out to the families of those who have lost their lives; to those injured; to those who have suffered unimaginable anguish; and to those who have worked selflessly to bring about the best outcome in this sad and violent situation.

I am conscious, too, of the distress this event has created for the people of Sydney, and in the wider Australian community. May I assure you that our Catholic community stands with all our neighbours at this time, and especially applauds the various displays of inter-faith solidarity.

In this Advent season, as our communities look with expectation to the coming of the Christ Child, may we hold close to our hearts those whose lives have been forever changed.

I pray that we remain committed to the cause of justice and peace, to healing and understanding, and that in the shadow of this tragedy, we may all come to know God's love holds us to Him.

Yours sincerely in Christ Jesus,
Most Rev. Peter A Comensoli,
Bishop of Broken Bay.

Bishop Peter filmed a Christmas Message for the Broken Bay community whilst visiting The Entrance over the weekend. This is available to view on the Diocesan website under "Our Bishop". Or on YouTube <http://youtu.be/079MWQcvFOo>.

New Year 2015: Fr. Hill and Fr. Stephen wish everyone God's blessing for a happy and peaceful New Year.

Fr. Stephen will be on holidays at home in Kenya. He carries your greeting and well wishes from our Woy Woy community and Australia.

We wish Father a happy reunion with his family.

New Year Vigil: There will be no Mass and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament as in previous years. Usual morning Mass for Thursday, New Year's Day public holiday will be at 9am.

Parish Office will be closed New Year's Day and re-open Friday 2nd January.

Children's Liturgy finished last Sunday and will recommence 8/2/15.

Please Pray for the soul of Marie Therese (Terri) Hall, from our Parish who passed away on the Feast of the Holy Family 30/12/12.

Thank you from Ken Hall and Family.

Bus Trip – Featherdale Wildlife Park: Wednesday, 7th January. Leaving 8:30 a.m. Bus \$15 plus park entry fee. Contact Susie 0403 417 639/4344 1742.

Cash Housie: Every Saturday night 7:30 pm. Peninsula Community Centre, 93 McMasters Rd, Woy Woy. Come along and enjoy the fun and friendly atmosphere at our own parish operated bingo night. 50 games from 7:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Prizes all \$100, some \$150 and a chance of winning the \$2000 jackpot. Celebrating 60 years continuous service. Enquiries Rob 0427 990 818.

Free e-book, for computer or e-reader: Son of God: The Daily Gospel Year B-1: This e-book, which may be downloaded free of charge to a computer or e-reader, offers the Gospel for every day of this present Liturgical Year B-1 (Sundays Year B, weekdays Year 1), together with a reflection of some 750 words on each daily Gospel. It contains the Gospel passages not only for this present year but for any B-1 Liturgical Year in the future, together with their respective reflections. It may be passed on to friends or acquaintances as desired. It carries the Imprimatur of the Archbishop of Sydney.

Son of God: The Daily Gospel Year B-1 may be accessed at the following address: www.catholic-thoughts.info/ebook/

'El Shaddai' Woy Woy Prayer Group meetings for January are 3rd, 10th and 17th. Contact: Grace Lloyd Ph: 4343 1504.

Social Justice

The Joy of the Gospel
"Before all else, the Gospel invites us to respond to the God

of love who saves us, to see God in others and to go forth from ourselves to seek the good

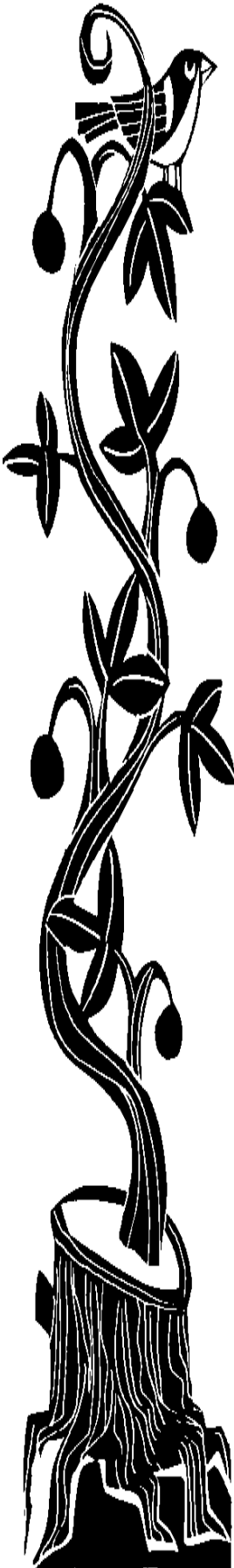
of others."
Pope Francis – Evangelii Gaudium
39.

From the Diocese and beyond

Thanksgiving to God for 2014 and welcoming 2015 with New Year Mass. Divine Mercy Centre invites you to partake in Thanksgiving Adoration and New Year Mass. Celebrated by

Fr. Michael Payyapilly VC, Director, DRC Somersby. 31st December from 10.30pm-12.30am. Divine Mercy Centre. 30 Lutana Road, Somersby. www.divineretreatcentre.org.au

Full instructions on notice board how to get to the Retreat Centre. Should be a 20 minute drive in good traffic.



Christmas Light: Go and Search

Ron Raab

Many years ago, I met Virginia, an elderly woman in our parish. She had lived her life with a vision disability. Virginia lived with Priscilla, a widow and long-time friend. The two had teamed up for years to make peanut butter sandwiches for people in poverty. With their combined efforts, they worked in many areas for the church. With their combined voices, they spoke out against many injustices against people in poverty. The two needed each other as they both became feeble.

Virginia told me stories about how they depended on each other in their old age. Priscilla drove the car because Virginia never had a license because of her disability. However, Priscilla's vision declined, as did her ability to drive. Virginia told me that when they were in the car and drove up to an intersection, she would get out her binoculars from her handbag to see if one of them could read the street sign. They were bound and determined to not let aging get in the way of going to church or the supermarket. I still cannot believe that they always made it to their destinations safely in the old car with a pair of binoculars to guide them.

I still laugh to myself as I think about the story of the binoculars and the street signs. Their journeys were definitely guided by grace and sheer determination. Virginia and Priscilla have both died now, and I am confident that their journey is complete in full vision of God's light. However, it would not surprise me if Virginia still carries her binoculars in her purse.

In this Christmas season, the liturgical Gospels compel us to search diligently for the child Jesus. Our search goes beyond our human skill to find love and purpose in our lives. The search comes from our human poverty because we do not have the full eyesight to see for ourselves or the complete knowledge of where to go on our own. We need love and faith to guide us. We need a new vision of heaven and earth.

This journey theme begins on Christmas night with Joseph and Mary making their

way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. The journey itself becomes the destination, the message of where Christ is born. There was no security or warmth outside the inn. In all of the uncertainty, an angel appeared to shepherds — people of poverty who worked diligently even in the night-time. The words of the angel still penetrate our fear, "Do not be afraid."

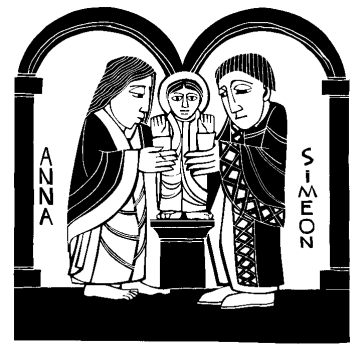
For the Christmas Mass at Dawn, Luke's Gospel tells us that these local workers went in haste to find the child with Mary and Joseph. They left the sheep untended to search diligently for the child. The shepherds risked everything, were completely amazed, and found God within them. They returned to the place of their work glorifying God. This message from an angel was so compelling that they journeyed into the unknown darkness to find this great light, a simple child lying in a manger.

In the Gospel for the Epiphany of the Lord, Herod sent the wandering magi to search diligently for the child. They were led by a great, shining star that illumined the way. They cast off fear to be led by the night-time marker of where Jesus was born. When they found him, they bowed down to pay homage with precious gifts.

In this holy season of new birth, these Scriptures help us find our way in the dark. These Scriptures become our binoculars to view our paths, to find a new faith in the truth of God-with-us. We are called to find peace on our journey without clinging to fear, anxiety, or even the past. God is leading us, and the journey itself is the destination.

Within all of our worshiping communities, we must risk everything to help others search for God. We must remain open for the poor among us to show us the way. We must believe that people who search for sobriety or a new path out of depression will be the people who reveal truth about our lives. We all may read the street signs a bit more clearly when we begin to rely on one another to show us the way. When we

(Continued on page 4)



"Whatever you do," says St. Paul to the Colossians, ". . . do it in the name of the Lord Jesus. Give thanks to God the Father through Him." And so it is that we offer our gifts in the Eucharist "through Him, with Him, and in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit."

See Colossians 3:17



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.

Christmas Light

(continued)

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think we have the path memorized or we think we can go it alone, an angel comes to us in the dark and shows us a path of great freedom and hope.

In this Christmas season, the elderly will give us sheer determination to find the path to Christ. Our children will help us stand in the dark in sheer wonder. Those living with illness will open a new path for us so that we can rely on healing being born in our midst. The unbeliever might very well show us how to leave everything and follow the light of a star to the place where the child is wrapped in swaddling clothes. We are all searching to be set free from the fear we cling to – to come to our final destination, even with binoculars in hand.

ML

Ronald Patrick Raab, CSC, serves as pastor of the Tri-Community Catholic Parish in Colorado Springs, Colo. He broadcasts a weekly Scripture commentary, *On the Margins*, on radio KBVM.fm. Learn more at www.ronaldraab.com. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.

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www.woywoycatholic.org.au



Diocese of
Broken Bay