

THE VOICE



5th Sunday in
ORDINARY TIME
Year A
5th February 2017
Psalter Week 1

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Shirley Quillan, Brian Fletcher,
Hazel Burke, Alberto Mieres.
- **Anniversaries:**
Peter Hope, Fr. Dennis Ryan,
Pat Dolan, Edward Luxford,
Fr. Warren Wade.
- **Remembrances:**
Nell, Tom and Molly Molloy,
Barbara Cooper.
- **And the sick:**
Kevin Houghton, Margaret Davin,
Maryanne Diorio, Alan Harland,
John Allen, Audrey Barsendich,
Maureen Carlon, Tracie Passlow,
Kevin Houghton, Maureen Cowsls,
Celeste Boonaerts, Kath Hardy,
Carren Quinn, Chev Shengi,
Steve Paino, Beryl Allen,
Colleen Giles.

Salty and Radiant

Here are two extraordinary descriptions of you as a community: 'You' is in the plural. 'You are the salt of the earth.' 'You are the light of the cosmos.'

Our Lord describes who we *are*, who we are by virtue of our being graced to be his disciples, trying to live out the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount.

'Salt of the Earth'

Salt in the ancient world was used not just for flavouring but, most importantly, as a preservative for food, preventing deterioration or decay, keeping it life-giving.

So, when Jesus says: 'You are the salt of the earth', he is saying: 'You are the ones who are to preserve the earth, to prevent its deterioration or decay, to keep it life-giving, to ensure it provides a place of habitation, hospitable to billions of living beings, including human beings.'

This is the basis for a Christian charter for ecological sensitivity of the highest order. Gross pollution in a crime against the earth and a sin against the Creator of the earth.

That is fairly obvious. But we can reflect a little more. In a hundred different ways, not just ecological, every time we do something which makes the earth more habitable, more life-giving, we retain our tang – we are the salt of the earth.

But Our Lord warns us that we can lose our saltiness, we can lose our tang, we can become useless. How do we do what salt should do?

Salt has to penetrate food to have an effect. We have to penetrate the world with our Sermon on the Mount values. Staying self-contained as a perfect little band of Christians is about as useful as salt remaining in the saltshaker. In Our Lord's scary opinion we would quite rightly be trampled underfoot.

We retain our saltiness by becoming the greatest humanitarians the world has ever seen.

'Light of the Cosmos'

The *cosmos* is the whole of the created reality ranging from the smallest fraction of your body to the swirling gases of the farthest constellation of stars.

You, we, as a Christian community trying to live according to the Gospel are 'the

light' of this cosmos. The only question is the degree of the brilliance of our light. What radiance do we bring to the cosmos?

How do we do this?

Our Lord says, 'Your light must shine in the sight of human beings so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your father in Heaven.'

'Good works.' That sounds narrowly moralistic. Isn't there a slightly pejorative tone to the expression 'he is a do gooder'? You won't be surprised to learn it is not what Our Lord meant.

The words Jesus uses for good works are 'kala erga'. In Greek, the language of the Gospels, these words mean 'beautiful works'.

These are those things we do which have grace, elegance and proportion and are therefore pleasing to observe: beautifully-good-works.

Acting in a grotesque, ugly way dims our light, darkens our humanity. When we act in a truly light-hearted way, we are more fully human and our humanity has a radiant effect on others.

On others – certainly other human beings, but Our Lord remarkably says: on the whole *cosmos*.

St Paul says in Romans that the whole cosmos is yearning to be transfigured into the same divine glory which we share, participating in the life of the Risen Lord, the cosmic Christ.

When we do beautifully good works there is a transforming impact on the whole of creation! There is a moral ecology to the universe!

Of course, the real cause of the transformation of the cosmos into divine glory is the rising of the Son on the third day. But, we can refract some of that resurrection light through the prism of our own personalities. In fact, the cosmos is yearning for that.

So, stay salty and tangy. Do good beautifully and elegantly. The earth will become more habitable. The cosmos will become more translucent with Divine Glory.

You are the Salt of the Earth. You are the Light of the Cosmos.'

© Fr Michael Tate

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; the man who follows me will have the light of life. *Alleluia!*



Around the Parish

Sick List: Names on the sick to be published stay for three months in the Newsletter and are then deleted. If a name is to remain permanently on the list please notify Parish office.

Baptism: We welcome into our Parish community and pray for Alexander Ford baptised last Sunday.

Important Notice: Woy Woy Youth Group will be starting up next Sunday, 12th February after the 6pm Mass! The first session will be held in the Leo Mahon Room, so if you have friends or family in high school (Grades 7-12) who might be interested, encourage them to come along! For more information contact Matthew French on 0411 792 587.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 10/2/2017: Pam Hickey, Kathleen Cullen, Bill Cantley, Reg Harrington.

Of Faith and Grace Study Group meet Thursday, 9th February, 11am in the Leo Mahon Room.

Catholics Returning Home: A 5 week support programme that aims at helping Catholics return to the Church. This programme is designed

- To recognise the feelings of each participant.

- To help each participant to understand that they are not alone

- To give the participant the opportunity to view things in a new light.

Programme commences on Wednesday, 15th February 7.30pm-9pm in the Leo Mahon room, providing a welcoming space in your Faith community.

Sympathy: St. John the Baptist Parish Family extend its prayerful sympathy to family and friends of Shirley Quillan who was buried from our church last week.

Children's Liturgy Roster re-commencing 9.15am Mass, 12th February: Christine French, Rebecca Beisler, Jenny Fitzgerald.

Bus Trip to Scenic Sydney and Parramatta: Wednesday, 15th February, leaving 9am.. Cost \$20. For all bookings, payments and enquiries contact Susie (Coordinator) on 0403 417 639 / 4344 1742.

Parish Transport Service: The Parish Bus has been a great blessing for many people in the parish. We have a service for the Saturday Vigil Mass and the two Masses on Sunday morning. The 9.15am service, however, is oversubscribed. It is essential, therefore, that the driver knows before the weekend if anyone intends to cancel their booking for any of the Masses for a particular weekend, Anyone cancelling is asked to advise Bernie Edwards 4341 6353. Mobile: 0422 395 392 by midday Friday (you no longer need to call the Parish Office). If phone is not answered please leave a voice or text message. Your co-operation will be deeply appreciated. Thank you to all drivers who so generously serve in the Parish Transport Service.

Social Justice

Apology to the Stolen Generations:

On 13 February 2008, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd presented an Apology to the Stolen Generations in the Australian Parliament

The Apology: Today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history. We reflect on their past mistreatment. We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were the stolen Generations—this blemished chapter in our nation's history. The time has now come for the

nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their

descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry. To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

To be continued in next week's newsletter.

From the Diocese and beyond

Christian Spirituality: Awakening the Deep:

Spirituality is central to what it means to be human.

This Encounter course will highlight the meaning of spirituality and how it is understood within the Catholic tradition. How does it animate our spirit, and how is it different, if at all, from our understanding of religion? Fr. David explores how spirituality is an "awakening" of the deeper parts of ourselves. He offers three questions as "take aways" which relate to our life in Christ, and what that means for our living. Please do not miss this wonderful formation opportunity. All welcome!

Course Duration 1x2 hours. Presenter: Fr. David Ranson,

Parish Priest, Holy Name, Wahroonga and Vicar General of Broken Bay Diocese. Wednesday, 15th February. Venue: Our Lady of the Rosary Church, 92 Glennie St. Wyoming.

RSVP: registrations@dbb.org.au or 9847 0448 / 4332 9825 by Monday 13 February.

Serra Vocations Lunch-Time Meeting: First meeting of the Central Coast Serra Club-in-Formation for 2017 will be held after 11.30am Mass, Wednesday, 15th February, St. Patrick's, East Gosford. The afternoon should be concluded around 1.30pm.

After Mass, a light lunch (please bring a plate) and refreshments provided by Serra followed by a short meeting. Fr. Leonard a

Salvatorian from Western Australia has a deep interest in the propagation of the laity to assist spiritually and corporeally with the work of the clergy and promotion of vocations.

The primary object of Serra is to encourage our fellow parishioners to pray every day for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and the consecrated life, for perseverance of existing vocations, for all seminarians/novices and to attend an extra Mass each month especially for vocations. Everyone is welcome! Please contact John Smith if you are planning to attend on 15th, Ph: 4384 1946. Email:

john.e.smith8@gmail.com
See notice board for more detail.

Homily by Richard Leonard SJ

Doctors and dietitians would have some difficulty with the first part of today's Gospel. Jesus does not seem to know that salt is bad for hypertension and cholesterol! Just as health professionals are encouraging us to be careful in using salt, Jesus is telling us to keep it up. Salt in Jesus' day, and for centuries before and after, was the primary preserving agent for food. That day-to-day usage gives us a clue as to the challenge being laid before us.

We are told that if salt has lost its taste it's good for nothing. So the challenge is to keep it fresh so it can keep doing its job. Jesus suggests that, in the same way, we have to be on guard to make sure that our faith remains fresh so it's able to do its job as well.

The fifth and sixth chapters of Matthew's Gospel are devoted to describing the elements of Christian faith. At the start of the fifth chapter we have the Beatitudes that tell us that the presence of God can be discovered in all of life's situations. It reminds us that as Christians we can find God wherever we want to. The rest of these two chapters go on to give us specific directions about the dangers and aides to faith.

Jesus tells us that a hollow attachment to the letter of the law, unbridled anger, an inability to forgive, being unfaithful in marriage, seeking revenge on our enemies, not being true to our word and being enslaved by money are all examples of bad faith. Think for a moment of people you know who are trapped by any of these vicious forces. It's sad to see the energy it takes them to remain angry, greedy, legalistic, fraudulent and unforgiving.

More positively Jesus tells us in these chapters that prayer, being generous to the poor, being discerning about whom we spend time with and what we see and hear, and going without things we often consider essential are helpful to living a faith-filled life. Think for a moment of people you know who live lives like this. Their detachment, sense of generosity and ease with others stands out in our stress-ridden world.

My professor of liturgy used to say 'Good liturgy enlivens faith and bad liturgy deadens it.' This is the same message Jesus gives us today about faith in general. It's crazy for us to keep spending time with people and doing things that deaden our faith. We know the impact of these people or activities by the bad taste they leave in our mouths. After an encounter with them or it we usually tell ourselves that we must not go back for more, but the bad spirit seduces us into repeating the entire episode with frightening frequency. St Ignatius Loyola tells us that in these situations we have to deal with the bad spirit quickly and consistently and learn a new pattern of behaviour that will lead us away from darkness into the light.

The job of faith is to enable us to live out and build Christ's reign of justice and love in this world as a foretaste of what awaits us in heaven. May this Eucharist enable us to seek out the people and places that will see the saltiness of our faith remain fresh and interesting so that we will have every chance of preserving our faith in the dryer times, and of our faith in Jesus preserving us in the face of the trials and tests that come our way.



The Gospel today reminds us that our lives and our deeds must serve as examples to others, pointing the way to the Father. Not for our own benefit do we labour, but so that others may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven.



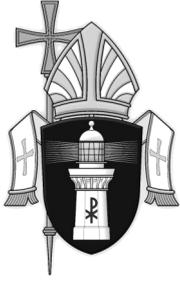
RISE UP YOUTH GROUP

7PM SUNDAYS AFTER 6PM MASS

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH, WOY WOY

- WHO?** YOUTH GROUP IS FOR BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS, HIGH SCHOOL AGES (12-17)
- WHAT?** FUN, GAMES, ACTIVITIES, TALKS, FRIENDS, FOOD, DRINK, AND MUCH MORE
- WHERE?** LEO MAHON ROOM, IN ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH, WOY WOY
- WHEN?** YOUTH GROUP IS HELD FORTNIGHTLY ON SUNDAYS AT 7PM. TERM ONE DATES:
- 12TH FEBRUARY, 2017
 - 26TH FEBRUARY, 2017
 - 12TH MARCH, 2017
 - 26TH MARCH, 2017
- FOR INFO:** CONTACT THE PARISH OFFICE AT: PARISH@WOYWOYCATHOLIC.ORG.AU

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

"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 and 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 3.30pm; 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).

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. p 024341 0884 f 0243 445049.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP For information and events contact the parish office 4341 1073.

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 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 10.20pm, cash prizes.

Ticket sales from 6pm. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries Rob: 0427 990 818.

This message is for You!

Our Parish Catechist Ministry **URGENTLY** needs a Catechist to teach on a *Friday**. Due to growing numbers, we simply don't have enough teachers to fill the demand.

- If:
- You've recently moved to the Coast and are looking to be involved in your Church community;
 - You're an empty-nester with a couple of hours to spare;
 - Your youngest child is off to school and you'd like to help out;
 - You're a former Catechist and are missing the children!

No previous experience necessary. Training is easy, free and you will be supported by a great group of people.

*The most urgent need is Friday, but if that day doesn't suit, we can juggle to accommodate you. Helpers and teachers alike are needed, as are relief teachers. We really are stretched to the limits.

Please call the Coordinator anytime.

Susie Simmons 0411 566 622

