



EASTER

The Voice

3rd May 2015

Fifth Sunday of Easter, Year B

Psalter Week 1

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
John Woulfe, Mary Harrison, Romero Mendoza.
- **Anniversaries:**
Geoffrey James Benson, Josephine and Jack Towell, Elizabeth Ryan, Kevin Toohey, Maggie Moreau, Madeline Cashin.
- **And the sick**
Fr. Bill Meacham, Ian Wilks, Lila Emery, Pauline White, Philip O'Neil, Renie Hunt, Grace Williams, Mary Dwyer, Evangeline Cusay, Pat Welsh, Alan Harland, Peter Crookes, Charles Knowles, Terry Curtis, Irene Beck, John Mortimore, Beryl Allen, Madge Wood, Grace McNeaney, Meli Ladd, Lola Proctor, Mary Leger, Lorna McGregor.

Until I spent time on a vineyard ten years ago, I always heard the parable of the vinedresser as a tough, 'shape up or ship out' message. I always imagined God as the vinedresser having a field day lopping and cutting my dead branches, trimming my unproductive stems and uprooting all the rot that undermines my fruitfulness. It always felt like a violent activity.

It was a pleasant surprise then, to actually see a vinedresser in action. Far from an act of violence, the care paid by the dresser to each stem is extraordinary. He or she carefully inspects the branch, delicately cutting only the smallest amount so that the vine will be healthier and more productive. A good vinedresser pores over the vines and from experience knows that to cut too much or too little will render the vine without its distinctive character.

Every cut is measured and aimed to prune back only the diseased branch, so as to bring about greater growth for the whole vine and a bigger yield for the vineyard. The vinedresser is not violent with the vine, but extremely tender. The first hearers of today's Gospel would have known that this metaphor is anything but a 'shape up or ship out' message.

This parable is a profound insight into the Christian life. We can claim to belong to the Christian family all we like. We can come to Mass every Sunday. But if the fruit we produce is bitter and poisonous, if we are unforgiving, unjust and uncaring, we cannot claim to be on the vine of Christ's love. And if that's the case we are in desperate need of the gentle hand of the vinedresser, who only wants to see us bring forth the yield we are capable of achieving.

Rev Billy Graham once said, 'Being a member of the Church no more makes you a Christian than living in a garage makes you a car.' That's the point of today's Gospel: God will not judge us by

what we say or the public face of goodness we can turn on, we will be judged by our acts of love in and through our kindness and compassion.

This metaphor also reminds us that we are connected to each other. There are moments in our life of faith when we hear or see other Christians saying or doing things we cannot countenance. We can try to disown them by retreating into our denomination, but we are all connected in Christ's vineyard. We need the courage to tell them the truth as we see it, and charitably point out the problems we have with what they think is right. And we need the humility to listen when they challenge us.

It's even harder when the diseased part of the vine is in our own Catholic section of the vineyard. Our first instinct can be to lop off the branch, just to get rid of it. But as any vinedresser knows this is the last resort. Whether we find it easy or not, Christ calls us to limited surgical interventions over amputations every time. This is tough love. Even though there are people within our community who have committed terrible crimes and betrayed our trust, the Gospel calls us to hold on to them until it's clear that no matter what intervention we make, they are dying on Christ's vine already. And even then, we hope and pray that our action towards them might see a new growth within them which could be the beginning of a possible grafting back on to us in the future.

In the face of the world's 'shape up or ship out' principle, today's Gospel challenges us to hang in there with each other, in season and out of season, because as the old folk hymn sings, 'They'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.'

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Psalm Response

response:

I will praise you, Lord, in th' - assemb - ly of your peo - - ple.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Live in me and let me live in you, says the Lord; my branches bear much fruit. *Alleluia!*

50 DAYS FOR OUR DELIGHT: FOR CHRIST IS RISEN AS ALL THINGS
TELL. GOOD CHRISTIAN, SEE YE RISE AS WELL.

Around the Parish

Thank You Celebration Dinner for Father John and Father Stephen. Friday 29th May, 6pm for 6.30pm. Everglades Country Club. Three course dinner (Drinks available for purchase only at the Club – no byo.) Bookings with Jenny on 4342 3293. Tickets are \$40 per head, exact money please, and can be left at the Parish office. Tables of 10. Make up a table and ask us to seat you at one. To secure your booking, monies must be paid by May 22; no refunds after May 25.

Dear fellow parishioners. You will be aware that over recent weeks, children of the parish have been making their First Holy Communion. (75 in total). In a couple of weeks, the Parish Sacramental Team will begin preparing more children for Confirmation in June, then later in the year for the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion at Easter 2016. I would love to hear from anyone willing to join the team who prepare our parish children for the sacraments. Time asked is not great, and the children are prepared in small groups of about 8, so please phone Dorothy Fulton for more information on 4341 7610.

Bus Trip to Manly Pier Wednesday, 6th May, leaving 9.00am. Cost: \$15 includes morning tea. To book call Susie Casey on 4344 1742 or 0403 417 639.

Morning Tea Roster 10/5/15: Parents and Friends Group.

Bus Trip: 2nd Trip to Wollombi via Cessnock. 20th May, leaving 8.30am. Lunch at club. \$15. Contact: Susie Casey 4344 1742 or 0403 417 639.

Good Friday Holy Land Comissariat Appeal has raised \$3,352.65.

Project Compassion Appeal has raised \$10,232.90. Thank you to all for your generosity to these appeals.

Cancer Support Group for those suffering from cancer or those wishing to pray for them meeting this Tuesday, 5th May 2.30pm in the Leo Mahon room.

Children's Liturgy Roster 10/5/15: Geraldine Baxter, Carol Baxter, Carol Yates.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 8/5/15: Christine French, Elena Egan, Mary McCumstie, Michael French.

Josephite Associates meet this Wednesday, 6th May, 10am in the Leo Mahon room. New members welcome! Enquiries: Betty 4341 8849.

Faith Based Conversations: Getting good at talking about your faith to family and friends takes practice (and grace). Make a new friend you can talk with about your faith. Leo Mahon room Saturday, 9th May, 10.30am-11.30am. Morning tea included.

Music Workshop: Following a very successful workshop at St. John the Baptist last year, the Royal School of Church Music will be holding another workshop here on Saturday, 30th May 2015, commencing 1.30pm. The singing of the Psalms and the various ways in which this can be done is the theme of the workshop which will be led by Oliver Brett, Assistant Director of Music at St. Mary's Cathedral with Michael Butterfield accompanist. Participants are invited to stay for the 5pm Mass afterwards. The cost of the workshop, which covers music and printing is \$30 per person (\$20 for RSCM members).

The Just Word

The Gift of Diversity
Culture, language, religion and nationality are important to us because they are the building blocks of our identity and self-confidence. They shape our relationships to one another and our world. Our language and culture give us eyes with which to see our world, words and silences with which to celebrate it with other people, and the words and rituals that open a path to God. Our culture, lan-

guage and religion are not like clothes that we can change when we travel. They are like the skin that enables us to go confidently into our world; they are not possessions, but part of our self. To expect people to give up their own culture when they enter ours is like asking them to amputate a limb. Respect for persons demands respect for their cultures. What makes us different from one another is what enriches us as

human beings and makes possible deep relationships between us. Our differences reflect the variety and inexhaustible beauty of God. If multiculturalism implies that we should not only support immigrants as individuals but should also regard their culture as an enrichment, it simply states what ought to be obvious.

A Generous Heart in the Love of Christ. Social Justice Statement, 2003.

From the Diocese and beyond

'Walking the Camino': Friday 8th May, 7.30pm. The Library, Our Lady of the Rosary School, 23 Yardley Ave. Waitara. An 80 minute audio-visual presentation by Peter Kearney about a 700 km walk through northern Spain along an ancient pilgrimage path to Santiago de Compostela. Photos, music and live commen-

tary by Peter who walked the Camino in 2012. Q&A session at conclusion. Suggested donation \$10/\$8 concession. pp at door. Limited seating. Registration essential via email to Peter. camino@peterkearneysongs.com.au
Comments: *Easily the best account of the Camino I have seen. Peter's commentary and selection of music accompany a brilliant array of photos.* (John Dawson).

"A beautifully put together 80 minutes". (Virginia Adlide).

Fashion Parade by Sarongs of Ettalong Tuesday, 26th May commencing 10.30am in the hall of Ettalong Uniting Church, Picnic Parade. Following the Parade a light luncheon will be served. Cost \$10. To assist catering, please RSVP by 15 May to June Jepson 4342 2046.

Bells and Smells

(Jonathon K. Morse – continued from last week)

Church music does not have to be confined to church. Listening to liturgical music during the week (outside of church services) reinforces the sense of worship that the community is trying to foster in its members. Listening to spiritual music – whether it be recordings of the church's own choir and musicians or of a similar group – at home or on the way to work or school is uplifting and can take the mind to a calmer place. Whenever I hear "Ave Maria," my mind immediately goes to a parishioner who sang it as a solo in church. Her voice was so crystal clear that every word was understandable. It was the "Hail, Mary" to Schubert's music. Music transports me to the Main Post Chapel at Fort Drum; it can likewise transport your parishioners to your place of worship.

As a Byzantine priest, I used to love to walk around the church on a Sunday afternoon after everyone had departed. The smell of the incense was both relaxing and spiritual.

The sense of smell is one of the most powerful and primitive. Smells go into the nose and right to the neural pathways to the brain. Smells can trigger reactions and memories. To illustrate, if you walk into a hotel room and get the faintest whiff of animal urine, you want a new room even if you can also smell cleaning and sanitising chemicals. Smells of baked apples and cinnamon can raise Christmas memories, or a scent of perfume can remind us immediately of a friend or relative.

People buy Febreze to remove undesirable smells. In our homes, we burn candles with the scent of linen for a sense of cleanliness, lavender for a calming environment, baked apple or vanilla for warm memories, and baking chocolate chip cookies to convince everyone of our cooking ability. Business travellers know that if you want to feel comfortable in a hotel room, bring along a scent that reminds you of a relaxing place or that soothes your senses.

When people enter a church, they are entering the place of the divine: church is heaven on earth. The smells of heaven, not the local smells, should fill the church, so that people may breathe in serenity and breathe out the problems of work or home. If the church's

cry room smells like dirty diapers, who will be able to concentrate on prayer?

Outside smells can be removed with regular cleaning and the instalment of an air filtration system such as air conditioning. Take caution that your cleaning solutions do not make the church smell like a hospital, which can trigger the wrong memories and distract from the service.

No environment is more suitable for candles than a church. Burning beeswax gives off a distinct aroma. When I lit a 50-percent beeswax candle in a room of catechists who had their eyes closed, they were all able to identify the smell as a candle, and the place it reminded them of was church. Lighting candles before the service and carrying lighted candles in processions trigger people's awareness that they are in a holy and special place, removed from the cares of the world.

One of the more powerful scents (which can make it controversial) is incense. Byzantines love the smells and bells; in some churches, if you can see the priest for the homily, the deacon wasn't using enough incense. But incense bothers some people, to the point where some say they cannot come to church. Some people really do have asthma and so on, but some are merely reacting out of habit. One time when I was getting ready for a service, I went to get the charcoal for the censor and found that someone had left a window open. Rain coming through the window had soaked all the charcoal, making it unusable. Nevertheless, I began the service as I normally do, moving the censor through the air and "incensing" the church. One parishioner started coughing on cue. The coughing stopped after the sermon when I apologised for the lack of actual incense in the censor.

If incense smoke is causing a legitimate problem, you could start burning it in the sanctuary about a half-hour before the service and then remove and extinguish it a few moments beforehand.

People become accustomed to the scent of their place of worship, which lends a sense of comfort in their spiritual home. Consider making votive candles or incense available

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In today's Gospel, Jesus says that God is glorified when a disciple, grafted in Christ, produces abundantly and bears much fruit. The disciple must then be a good steward of that abundance.



Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

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

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"

Fr. Jack Robson., *Parish Priest.*

Fr. Timothy Raj MSFS & Fr. Phillip Thottam MSFS, *Assistant Priests.*

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Margaret Cooper & Raelene McLenaghan.

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 7.15 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. Ph: 024341 0884 Fax:0243 445049.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP For information and events contact Sam French 042 244 9539.

CATHOLICCARE *Counselling and Family Relationships.* Ph: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 10.20pm, cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6.00pm. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries Rob: 0427 990818.

Bells and Smells

(continued)

(Continued from page 3)

for people to create a similar prayerful environment at home.

Flowers are another possible scent in the worship space. When imagining heaven, many people picture fields of blooming flowers. Flowers can have a sad effect if they remind people of funerals, so it might be best to use seasonal flowers on a regular basis. Flower arrangements in the sanctuary can provide both colour and a sense of warmth. Closing the doors and windows will allow the smell of fresh flowers to permeate your environment.

A church is not just a building but a home. All who enter your space should feel comfortable and removed from their troubles. The colours and scents of the church should not remind them of the world they have left but of the world they are going to. Even the most simple church can have a

heavenly glow coming through stained glass windows. By appealing to all of the senses, a pastor working with music directors and liturgy coordinators can raise up spirits, soothe souls, and allow worshipers to encounter the divine in your little piece of heaven on earth.

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Jonathan Morse serves as a Roman Catholic priest in the Archdiocese for Services, assigned as the Garrison Support Chaplain with the rank of U.S. Army Chaplain (Major) at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland. He is a priest of the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of St. Nicholas in Chicago. He holds master's degrees in religious education from the Catholic University of America and in theological studies from Maryknoll Seminary, and he holds a doctorate in theology from the Greenwich School of Theology in the United Kingdom. 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