



LENT

1st Sunday in Lent

Year A

5th March 2017

Psalter Week 1

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
James Cubis.
- **Anniversaries:**
Fr. Peter Shiel, Fr. Hugh Law,
Eve Stanislas, Irene Moroney.
- **Remembrances:**
Frank McLenaghan,
Mary and George Hilliard,
Hilliard Brothers, Kevin Mills,
Mills Family, Bernie Hanna,
Leslie Denning, Valerie Price,
Joan Fitzgerald.
- **And the sick:**
Alan Ford, Kevin Houghton,
Margaret Davin, Maryanne Diorio,
Alan Harland, Tracie Passlow,
John Allen, Audrey Barsendich,
Maureen Cowls, Celeste Boonaerts,
Kath Hardy, Chev Shengi,
Steve Paino, Beryl Allen,
Colleen Giles, John Purser,
Grace Willins, Lola de Souza,
Pat Burgmann.

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

THE VOICE

Homily © Richard Leonard SJ

Hearing the story of Adam and Eve in today's first reading reminds me of the little boy who opened the large family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible, and he picked it up and looked at it closely. It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed in between the pages. 'Mummy, look what I found', the little boy called out. 'What have you got there, dear?' his mother asked. With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered: 'I think it's Adam's suit!'

The Genesis story about the origins of sin in the world rewards very careful reading. The serpent promises Eve two things: that her eyes will be opened to know good from evil and that this will make her like God. Such a temptation was irresistible and nothing has changed.

Knowledge is a gift given us by God. I am always grateful for being a Catholic because, along with other long-standing Christian denominations, we highly value scholarship, rational thought and inquiry. As anxious as the Church has sometimes been about scientific investigations, our best traditions are to see God revealed in human thoughts and scientific achievements that ennoble our human family. It is the application of knowledge, or the way it is abused, that can be harmful.

On the domestic front, many families have a 'know-it-all', the relative who has an extraordinary ability to retain facts and figures and who seems to gain a sense of self-worth by correcting us mid-sentence when we get a number, place or fact wrong. He or she can be very irritating. On the world stage we have seen how scientific knowledge can try and seduce us into believing that all scientific achievements are good no matter how unknown the consequences of these choices might be for future generations. Every new piece of knowledge brings

with it wonderful potentialities and serious responsibilities.

As this story demonstrates, the temptation to know as much as God has never been more real than it is right now.

One day a group of scientists got together and decided that man had come a long way and no longer needed God. The scientists walk up to God and say, 'God we've decided that we no longer need you. We're to the point that we can clone people and do many miraculous things, so why don't you just go on and get lost.'

God listened patiently and after the scientists were finished, said, 'Very well! How about this? Let's have a woman-and-man-making contest.' To which they agreed. However God added, 'How about we do this just like I did back in the old days with Adam?' The scientists said, 'Sure, no problem', and bent down and grabbed some dirt. God just looked at them and said, 'No, no, no. You go and get your own dirt!'

Today's Gospel is about knowledge too. Satan knows who Jesus is. His temptations are an attempt to get Jesus to betray his humanity and not endure the limitations of his daily life. Jesus knows that the only way to be true to his divinity is allow us to see it shine in and through his human life. The rejection of the temptation to compromise his frail human frame gives us the hope that we, too, can glimpse the power of God's greatness in every moment we reject the desire to be directors of our own destiny and to see good triumph over evil in the choices we make.

It's a relief to know we don't have to be God!

May this Lent see us do what we are created for: to use all our knowledge to praise, reverence and serve the Loving One who willed us into being.

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! I am the vine and you are the branches, says the Lord; those who live in me, and I in them, will bear much fruit. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!



Around the Parish

Stations of the Cross will be followed every Wednesday at 4pm and every Friday at 7.30pm during Lent.

Sacrament of Reconciliation and Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every Wednesday evening 7.30pm-8.30pm during Lent.

The Light is On For You: There is a wonderful freedom and peace which comes from owning up to our shortcomings and sins, receiving forgiveness, and moving on unburdened. This is what the sacrament of Reconciliation offers us, but so many people have been missing out on receiving this for years. This year, throughout Lent, the light in the confessional room is on for you. Here at Woy Woy, and at our neighbouring parishes of Kincumber, Gosford, Terrigal and Wyoming the sacrament of Reconciliation will be available each Wednesday night from 7.30pm – 8.30pm. See www.thelightisonforyou.org.au for a list of churches and additional reconciliation times, and some materials which can help you reflect and prepare to receive God's forgiveness, no matter how long it has been.

Morning Tea Roster 12/3/17: 'El Shaddai' Prayer Group.

Social Justice

Ash Wednesday:

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, a time during which we are invited to prepare for Easter and the coming of the risen Jesus into our life and world. It is a time for personal conversion. Traditionally, there are three ways we can participate in this season of preparation and conversion: through prayer, fasting and giving alms. One way we can do this is by going without some activity or thing (fasting), and giving the money we save (alms giving) to Project Compassion.

Fr. Jack's Thank You

Dinner: BOOK NOW ~ Friday March 24 - 6:00pm for 6:30pm, Gosford Golf Club, in the beautiful Magnolia Room - delicious 3 course dinner. Tickets are \$50 per person (buy your own drinks at the bar). Show your gratitude and wish Fr. Jack a happy retirement. Come as a single, a couple, make up a table or leave it to us! Bookings (and monies) MUST close on Thursday March 17, so be quick! Call Susie on 0411 566 622. The Parish bus will be available to transport parishioners on the night.

A leaving collection for Fr Jack's gift will be made on the weekends of 11/12th & 18/19th March.

Parish School Dance Saturday, 29th April. \$45 Ticket. Live Band, Roast Dinner. Nibbles and champagne on arrival. Tables of 8-14. Tickets available shortly.

Bus Trip to Newcastle Wednesday, 15th March, leaving at 8.45am. Cost \$20. Morning tea included. Contact Susie Casey 0493 417 639.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 10/3/17: Cate O'Connor, Reg Harrington, Michael French, Christine French.

The Live, Pray and Love –Event: Is Jesus Really Present in the Eucharist by Ron Tesoriero.

In Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1996, a piece of bread spontaneously transformed into what looked like flesh and blood. Pope Francis, who was then Archbishop wanted a scientific investigation. Ron Tesoriero, author, lawyer and documentary film maker and journalist Mike Willesee were directly involved with the investigation, and which is now of world interest will share the research work into this Eucharistic miracle. This Sunday, 5th March, Leo Mahon room 10.30am-1.00pm. Phone Gladys 0421 312 362 if attending or if you have any questions.

Project Compassion: Your donation to Project Compassion give expression to the Gospel imperative to pursue justice and help those vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Project Compassion boxes and envelopes available in the gathering area.

Lectio Divina and Bible Study 11am-12.30pm, Thursday, 9th March, Leo Mahon room and all the Thursdays in Lent. With Lectio Divina followed by a portion of Scott Hahn's Bible Study called 'The Lamb's Supper: The Bible and the Mass'. You need to bring your Bible. Come whenever you can: each session is a separate unit that doesn't depend on the previous one.

Project Compassion is Caritas Australia's annual Lenten fundraising and awareness-raising appeal bringing thousands of Australians together in solidarity with the world's poor to help end poverty, promote justice and uphold dignity.

Project Compassion demonstrates how love for our neighbours can transform lives. Each year, Project Compassion runs during Lent, the six weeks leading up to Easter.

This appeal is an extraordinary, ongoing demonstration of the faith, love and generosity of the

Catholic congregation and caring supporters throughout Australia, all in the name of justice and peace.

In 2017 Caritas is sharing stories from people in the Philippines, Timor Leste, Indigenous Australia, Vietnam and Fiji. Their stories humble and inspire us, and show how contributions to Project Compassion help people build better lives for themselves and their families and their communities.'

More information:
www.caritas.org.au/projectcompassion

From the Diocese and beyond

St. Edward's College Open Day:

Families are invited to the College Open Day on Saturday, 11th March from 10am-2pm. Entry is via the main gate at 13 Frederick St. East Gosford and here you will be met by current students of the College who will provide families with a 20-30 minute tour. At the end of

the tour there will be time to enjoy a sausage sizzle and also tea and coffee. Enrolment enquiries and packages will be available for all year groups.

St. Edward's Christian College Year 7, 2018: Enrolments for Year 7, 2018 is now open. The closing date for applications is

Friday 28 April, 2017. Please contact the Enrolment Secretary, Mrs. Simone Bartlett on 4321 6420 for a Prospectus. Students in Year 6 in our Catholic Primary schools will receive an enrolment pack from their class.

Scripture Commentary by Brendan Byrne SJ

So rich is the scriptural offering for this First Sunday of Lent that one hardly knows where to begin. Clearly, the theme linking the First Reading and the Gospel is that of 'temptation', with the Second Reading offering Paul's densely theological contrast between Adam and Christ.

It seems to be a standard biblical pattern that when people are called by God for some purpose, they soon go through a period of test. In hearing and following the call, they may have experienced from God a great sense of affirmation and freedom. But now comes a 'desert' experience through which, within the context of God's love and acceptance, they must learn far more deeply what it is to be a human being in relationship to God. Stripped of their usual props and comforts, alone simply with that relationship, they have to feel their own powerlessness, sinfulness and utter dependence upon the grace of God. Only with this knowledge can they become God's instruments for life and for good in the world.

The classic instance of this pattern is that of Israel's forty year wandering in the Sinai desert – a period of testing, where Israel often failed. In the Synoptic tradition Jesus himself undergoes such a period of test, recapitulating the story of his People but also – still more universally – that of humankind itself summed up in the story of Adam.

Appropriately, then, the First Reading (Gen 2:7-9; 3:1-7) gives us a somewhat potted version of the second account of creation from the opening chapters of Genesis. The extract gives us this account's description of God's fashioning of the first man (Hebrew 'adam') from the clay of the earth and of the placing of the first human beings in a garden setting, where all they had to do for nourishment was to stretch out their hands to the delightful fruits surrounding them. The sense is that God's total intent in regard to human beings is to lavish life and gifts upon them. But there is an element of test: the all-important relationship with God cannot develop unless the man and the woman know God as God and themselves are creatures, immensely gifted by God but within creaturely limit. Hence, while they may eat from all the trees of the garden, including the tree of life (the source of immortality), from one tree they may not eat: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What precisely this tree symbolises has never been explained to universal satisfaction. The safest explanation seems to be that which sees it as simply a symbol of going beyond creaturely limit to grasp knowledge and status belonging to God alone.

The test comes with the serpent's suggestion. Like all temptations, it contains an element of deceit. The serpent sows a doubt about the trustworthiness and benevolence of God. Is God really loading them with gifts and favours? Or is God craftily keeping something from them so as to preserve unique divine status for Godself alone?

The lapse into disobedience that follows results in breakdown of relationships in all directions. Whereas previously the human pair enjoyed a relationship of adult intimacy and freedom with God, soon they are to run away from the divine approach like naughty children. The nakedness of which they are now conscious symbolises also the breakdown of intimacy between themselves. What has been lost, above all, is trust.

We cannot linger upon Paul's reflection upon this episode in the Second Reading (Rom 5:12-19). The essential thing to note is that, despite the Christian tradition's pre-occupation with finding here instruction about sin and its transmission to the entire race, the main reason Paul introduces Adam is to say something with greater emphasis about Christ. He compares and contrasts the two figures in order to bring out the superiority of the gift of grace and eternal life that comes to us in Christ over the legacy of sin and stemming from Adam. The passage, then, is more a paean to the triumph of grace than an instruction upon the ravages of sin.

Deuteronomy 6-8 is the essential Old Testament background to Matthew's account of the Temptation of Jesus told in the Gospel (4:1-11). As God's covenant people, Israel could expect to receive from God food (manna) and protection during the desert wandering, and eventual entrance into and possession of the promised land. Israel was not to put God to the test by trying to force God's hand in these areas.

The three temptations the devil puts to Jesus take up each area in turn: food, protection, possession of the land (understood now as involving lordship of the entire world). In regard to each, God has allowed the Son to be placed in a situation of test. Citing Deuteronomic texts, Jesus dismisses the suggestion in each case, displaying his utter trust in the goodness and providence of the Father.

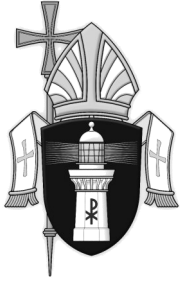
The Lenten liturgy invites Christians to enter with Christ into the "desert" experience, in order to enter more deeply into the relationship with the Father that is his.



Today's readings call us to active discipleship. It is not enough to know the commandments; we must actively obey them. It is not enough to hear the words of Jesus; we must act on them. Good stewards demonstrate their gratitude for the gift of faith by putting it into action.



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.
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).

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 For information and events contact the parish office 4341 1073.

CATECHISTS

Teach approved curriculum in 4 Primary State Schools on the Peninsula. Volunteers always needed—to teach and help. Training provided at no cost.
Details: Susie 0411 566 622. "Bring the little children unto me."

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.

A Lenten Invitation...

One of the beautiful faith traditions is the Stational Mass – a special opportunity that offers a way to greater prayer with the universal Church during particular seasons throughout the year.

Most Rev Peter A Comensoli is calling for the people of Broken Bay to join him in making the pilgrimage of Lenten Stational Masses in Broken Bay.

Across our five Deaneries during Lent, all parishioners are invited to gather and pray as one body, We particularly welcome Parish RCIA teams to bring candidates who are being received into full communion with the Church, and their families. This is a wonderful opportunity for us all to encourage and pray for one another on this graced journey to Easter.

Please join us at one or all of the following Masses celebrated by Bishop Peter:

7 March	7.30pm	Our Lady of the Rosary Church, The Entrance
14 March	7.30pm	St John the Baptist Church, Woy Woy Peninsula
21 March	7.30pm	St Kieran's Church, Manly Vale
28 March	7.30pm	Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, Waitara
4 April	7.30pm	Our Lady of Dolours Church, Chatswood