



The Voice

22nd February 2015

First Sunday of Lent, Year B

Psalter Week 1

LENT

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Fr. Warren Wade.

- **Anniversaries:**
Teresa Corcoran, o.c.d.
Joy Keegan, Silvia Balce.
Sid Flakelar, Fatima Fouzy,
Nestor Altez.

- **Remembrances:**
Mary and George Hilliard,
Hilliard Brothers, Kevin Mills,
Mills family, Bernie Hanna,
Leslie Denning, Valerie Price.

- **And the sick:**
Fr. Bill Meacham, Lola Proctor,
Grace Williams, Alan Harland,
Ruth Fuller, Evangeline Cusay,
Peter Crookes, Mark Church,
Mary Dwyer, John Mortimore,
Charles Knowles, Lila Emery,
Irene Beck, Pat Welsh,
Beryl Allen.

Covenant

During Lent and Easter we are invited to reflect on images of Baptism. One of the most powerful images is the Flood, which is brought to our attention today.

The primary, normative Covenant is that between God and Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai. The Scriptures, however, interpret other dealings between God and us on the model of that event. Today, for example, we hear described as a Covenant the agreement between God and mankind after the Flood.

The rainbow is given as a sign that God commits himself never again to destroy the world by water. Doubtless the rainbow can be understood in a more scientific (and less poetic) way, but it surely is a good idea, when we see the rainbow, to reflect on God's faithfulness to his promises.

In the second reading, from the first letter of Peter, we hear the author develop that idea. When we remember that this letter probably started out as a baptismal homily, it makes a lot of sense to see the Flood as "a type of baptism."

When we enter a church, whether we bless ourselves directly from the Font or from a holy water stoup, we should, as when we look at the rainbow, reflect on God's faithfulness to his promises. Baptism, after all, as the second reading makes clear, is 'a

pledge made to God from a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has entered and is at God's right hand, now that he has made the angels of the Dominations and Powers his subjects.'

When we meet Jesus in the gospel, he has just been baptised by John. We celebrated that event a few weeks ago, on the Sunday which closed the Christmas season and began the first part of Ordinary Time. It has coloured our experience of the Sunday readings from St Mark's gospel since. Now we take that idea into our own preparation for Easter, when we renew our baptismal commitment and accompany those who will receive the sacraments at Easter.

We celebrate the New Covenant at every Mass, but it has a particular significance at this time of the year. We entered that covenant in Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, and each year we welcome new members of God's family as they enter into the same covenant—the one established through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Every year we renew the covenant through a faithful observance of Lent and a joyful celebration of Easter.

Let us encourage each other in persevering penance and renewal.

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

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Psalm Response

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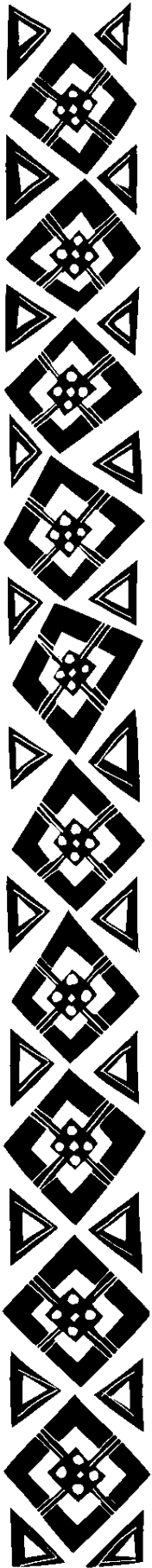


Your ways O Lord are love and truth to those who keep your cov - e - nant.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! No one lives on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God. *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!*

Around the Parish



Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Adriel Gardner, Sophie Gracie, Juliet Guastavino and Flynn Wagstaff who were baptized last Sunday.

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

Lectio Divina 10.30am every Thursday during Lent in the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

Project Compassion: Your donations to Project Compassion give expression to the Gospel imperative to pursue justice and help those vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice. Please take home a Project Compassion box and/or a set of envelopes and give generously this Lent. Envelopes and boxes available in the gathering area.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 27/2/15: Mabel Torres, Jo Salter, Kevin Glacken, Pam Hickey.

Family Ministry meeting next Thursday, 26th February, 1pm in the Riley room of the Ethel Cox Centre.

Catechists Meeting next Thursday, 26th February, 9am in the Leo Mahon room.

Liturgy Meeting Thursday 26th February, 7.30pm in Parish office.

Bus Trip – Pokolkin Hunter Valley Sausage Sizzle: Leaving 8.30am, Wednesday 25th February. \$25.

Bus Trip to Wiseman’s Ferry for morning tea and **Windsor** for lunch at a club. 4th March, leaving 8.30am. Cost: \$15. Contact: Susie Casey 4344 1742.

R.C.I.A / R.C.I.C. The Rite of Sending and Election: This Sunday we celebrate two rites of initiation for our catechumens. The Rite of Sending and The Rite of Election. Across the entire world Catholic Bishops on this First Sunday of Lent will welcome those sent by the parish to gather together with their godparents and sponsors in what is known as the Rite of Election and the call to continuing Conversion.

The Rite of Sending offers the parish community the opportunity to acknowledge the spiritual progress the catechumens and candidates have made and

them forth to our Bishop with the assurance of the parish’s care and support.

The Rite of Election marks a key moment for the catechumens. It signifies that they have been called by Christ. In this rite, those preparing for Baptism are invited to come forward and sign a book which we call the Book of the Elect as a sign of their desire to be numbered among the chosen of God. Those already baptised had their names written in the book of life at baptism.

Please keep our candidates and catechumens in your prayers.

World Day of Prayer: Prayer Service will be held here at St. John the Baptist Church, Friday, 6th March, 11am. It will be followed by refreshments in the Walter Baker Hall.

This is a world wide service held in many different Christian churches throughout the world on 6th March.

This year’s service has been written by the women of the Bahamas.

The Just Word Conversion.

The Death Sentence:

Good Friday: Jesus was executed by the State with two other criminals. As we commemorate the death of Jesus, we are sadly aware that many nations still use the death penalty.

The death penalty is incompatible with our shared belief in life as a precious gift from God. The principles from which we oppose capital punishment are

such that no exceptions should be made at home or abroad. The fundamental human right to life is not a relative concept. All humans, not just Australians, are entitled to protection from the death penalty.

Bishop C. Saunders, Foreword, Confronting the Death Penalty. ACSJCCSJS No 61.

I believe the suggestion that Amrosi and his cohorts should

be put to the firing squad is unconscionable and barbaric. What they did to my child and to hundreds of others in Bali defies description. Quite understandably it draws hatred and encouraged revenge, but it bestows no rights to repeat such a vile act.

Brian Degan, Thinking about Joshua, Confronting the Death Penalty. CSJS No 61.

From the Diocese and beyond

Torah Study for Christians: In 2015 we continue with our monthly Torah series, co-sponsored by Broken Bay Diocese and Light of Torah. This offers an opportunity for Christians to reflect on their Old Testament scriptures under the guidance of an Orthodox Jewish teacher, Rabbi Gad Krebs. Wednesday 25th February, 6pm. Topic: Exodus, Passover and liberation themes in the Torah. Venue: Caroline Chisholm Centre, 423 Pennant Hills Rd. Pennant Hills (enter City view Rd). Please note that part of this session will be filmed by the ABC’s Compass program.

“Coming Home for What Matters”: St. Joseph’s Education and Spirituality Centre, 8 Humphreys Rd. Kincumber Sth. is holding a series of faith enrichment days throughout the year. Sr. Virginia Bourke, r.s.j. will be the presenter. First session 11th

March, “Lent’s lavish larder” - Uncovering treasures in Lent’s prayers and readings. Session begins 10am, concludes 2.30pm, with breaks for morning tea/lunch. Morning tea and a sandwich lunch will be provided. Cost \$25 or donation. Bookings: bookings@stosephretreat.org.au or phone 4368 2805. See notice board for details of other topics of the series throughout the year at 2 monthly intervals.

Scripture Readings

Bruce Janiga

1st Sunday of Lent, February 22

Gn 9:8-15
Ps 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
1 Pt 3:18-22
Mk 1:12-15

In Genesis God establishes a covenant with Noah and his family and, by extension, all future humanity. It is a covenant of promise: “never again shall all bodily creatures be destroyed” (v 11). This covenant binds God and creation and is symbolised by the bow in the sky. For the ancients, this bow, reminiscent of a hunter’s bow, is a sign of God’s promise to sustain life even in the face of sin.

In First Peter we are reminded that “Christ suffered for sins ... that he might lead you to God” (v 18). Jesus’s suffering reconciles us with God. The writer goes on to say that Jesus “went to preach to the spirits in prison, who had been disobedient ... in the days of Noah” (vv 19-20). This ties in with the ancient belief that between the time of his death and resurrection, Jesus “descended into hell,” which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* interprets as “Christ went down to the realm of the dead. He opened heaven’s gates for the just who had gone before him” (637).

Mark’s presentation of Jesus’s temptation is minimal, as was his description of Jesus’s baptism (see vv 9-11). For Mark, these two episodes provide a transition to Jesus’s public ministry. He does not narrate individual temptations, as we find in Matthew and Luke, but tells us that Jesus “remained in the desert for forty days, tempted by Satan” (v 13). Perhaps Mark does not detail the temptations because his Gospel contains many other encounters between Jesus and the devil, beginning with the exorcism in the Capernaum synagogue several verses later. What Mark’s text emphasises is that though Jesus was threatened “among wild beasts,” he was protected: “angels ministered to him” (v 13). This serves as a reminder to us that God watches over us as well.

For Reflection: Do I understand Jesus’s temptation to be a once-in-a-lifetime event or something that happened more than once? How does this shape my understanding of Jesus and temptation?

2nd Sunday of Lent, March 1

Gn 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
Ps 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19
Rom 8:31b-34
Mk 9:2-10

Christians view God’s test of Abraham as a foreshadowing of the death of Jesus. God asks Abraham to take his “son Isaac, your only one, whom you love” (v 2), and offer him as a sacrifice on a designated mountain. Early Christian artists and homilists viewed this “binding of Isaac” as a parallel to the sacrifice of Jesus. The traditional place of Abraham’s sacrifice is the mountain of Jerusalem, which is also the place of Jesus’s crucifixion. Isaac is Abraham’s beloved son, and Jesus is God’s beloved son (see today’s Gospel). As Jesus carries his own cross to the place of crucifixion, so too Isaac carries “the wood for the burnt offering” (see v 6).

Paul reminds the Romans that God “did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us” (v 32). So great is God’s love for us, Paul says, that we should be confident in the face of trial or affliction; Christ, who gave his life for us, “intercedes for us” (v 34). This is the cause of our hope as Christians.

Jesus’s transfiguration anticipates his resurrection as his disciples see him transfigured in the company of two great prophetic figures, Moses and Elijah. Mark makes it clear that the disciples did not fully understand this experience. Peter’s suggestion to “make three tents” (v 5) seeks to extend the moment and is reminiscent of the tents used by the Israelites in the wilderness with Moses. Moses and Elijah are eschatological figures whose returns were anticipated in association with the Messiah. The heavenly voice first acknowledges Jesus as “my beloved Son” and then commands the disciples to “listen to him” (v 7). Significantly, the next words Jesus speaks to them are concerned with “when the Son of Man had risen from the dead” (v 10), words they fail to understand until after the resurrection.

For Reflection: What sacrifices have I been asked to make for the sake of the gospel? What is the greatest sacrifice someone has made for me? How did I benefit from that person’s sacrifice?



The waters of Baptism make us part of the new covenant in Christ. But the [U.S.] bishops’ pastoral letter on stewardship reminds us that “there is a fundamental obligation arising from the Sacrament of Baptism. . . that people place their gifts, their resources — their selves — at God’s service in and through the Church.”



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
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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.

Your Lenten Pledge Card

First Week of Lent Year B

Covenant

Genesis 9:8-15

Psalms 25:4-9

Your ways, O Lord, are love and truth to those who keep your covenant.

1 Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:12-15

God made a covenant with God's people. A covenant can be described as a solemn promise or agreement. It is a Christian understanding that Jesus is the fulfilment of this covenant in the Old Testament.

Is there someone to whom I have made a solemn promise, such as marriage? We all make promises of varying seriousness throughout our lives. Do I keep my promises? Am I true to my word? This week I will be careful about what I promise and promise only what I can deliver. I will speak so that my word can be relied on. I will also examine past promises and act as needed.



We're on the Web!
www.woywoycatholic.org.au



Diocese of
Broken Bay