



## LENT

4th Sunday in Lent

Year A

26th March 2017

Psalter Week 4

### OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**  
Roma Russ, Robin Norling,  
Francine Karskens, Jeannette Bryant,  
Kim McDonald, Noel John Carson.
- **Anniversaries:**  
Fr. Henry (Harry) Davis,  
Mitchell Powell, Eleuteria Alejaga,  
Ireneo Alejaga, Dudley Juratowitch,  
Frank Savage, Bob Scholte.
- **Remembrances:**  
Nora and Paul Houghton,  
Elizabeth and Bill Hari, Mary Justic,  
William and Mary Ryan,  
Carmen Catania,  
Joseph and Margherita Bugeja.
- **And the sick:**  
Alan Ford, Kevin Houghton,  
Margaret Davin, Maryanne Diorio,  
Alan Harland, Tracie Passlow,  
John Allen, Audrey Barsendich,  
Maureen Cowsls, Kath Hardy,  
Chev Shengi, Beryl Allen,  
Colleen Giles, John Purser,  
Grace Willins, Lola de Souza,  
Pat Burgmann, Gwen Strickson,  
Mary Scarfe, Jorge Villasanti,  
Teresita Villasanti, Margarita Gomez,  
Anne Singleton, Cathrine Spratt.

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

# THE VOICE

I have never been able to reconcile the long faces some of us put on in Lent with the prayers of the Church that describe this as 'a joyful season'. The following story takes seriously that laughter is an essential element of our Lenten observance.

Once upon a time in a nice little forest, there lived an orphaned bunny and an orphaned snake. By surprising coincidence, both were blind from birth.

One day, the bunny was hopping through the forest while the snake was slithering along the same path. The bunny tripped over the snake and fell down. 'Oh, my,' said the bunny, 'I'm terribly sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you. I've been blind since birth, so, I can't see where I'm going. In fact, I'm also an orphan, so I don't even know what I am.' 'It's quite okay,' replied the snake, 'my story is much the same as yours. I've been blind since birth and never knew my mother. Tell you what, I could slither over you, and figure out what you are.'

'Oh, that would be wonderful,' replied the bunny. So the snake slithered all over the bunny, and said, 'Well, you're covered with soft fur; you have really long ears; your nose twitches; and you have a soft cottony tail. I'd say that you must be a bunny.'

'Oh, thank you! Thank you,' cried the bunny in obvious excitement. The bunny then suggested to the snake, 'Maybe I could feel you with my paw, and help you in the same way you've helped me.' So the bunny felt the snake all over, and remarked, 'Well, you're scaly and smooth, you have a forked tongue, you're impossible to pin down and you have no backbone at all. I'd say you must be either a contractor, a consultant or possibly someone in senior management.'

On reflection the Gospel of the man born blind is a joyful one too. Imagine this

man's elation at having his sight restored. As the story develops the all-seeing Pharisees move to spiritual blindness by putting on the blinkers of the law. They cannot recognise Jesus or his works of mercy because of their tunnel vision. Jesus doesn't fit their worldview. Meanwhile the blind beggar, who has sight restored, goes on to gain insight about who Jesus is and the way that God works in the world; he begins to see how shallow and pathetic the Pharisees really are.

This Gospel also contains a critical theological lesson: disability and illness do not come from personal sinfulness. It's surprising that we need to keep saying this, but too readily we hear otherwise intelligent and good Christians, for example, telling us that some illnesses have been 'sent' by God as punishment for sins or they wonder what their families have 'done' to deserve disabled children. It's true that God permits us to live in an imperfect world where we are prone to illness and disability. But that same world gives us the freedom to be creative in the face of adversity, to be compassionate with those who are sick or disabled and free to believe that there is a purpose for each human life.

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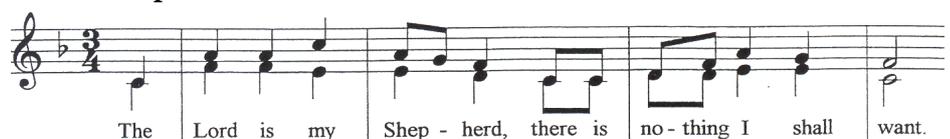
God, the source of all love, does not actively send bad things to us, instead, he is our constant companion in dealing with them; giving us the courage and strength to cope with, and sometimes overcome, them.

The task of this joyful season is to bring our good humour and compassion to bear on the blind spots in our own lives and be on our guard for the times when we are too confident about who God is, how he works or what he can or cannot do. May it never be said of us that we were so consumed by our own religious vision that we missed God's woods for the trees.

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### Psalms Response

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### Gospel Acclamation

*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!* I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!*



## Around the Parish

**Fr. Jack's Final Mass** will be celebrated at 9.15am Mass, Sunday, 2nd April. Our best wishes for a happy, healthy and peaceful retirement.

**Second Rite of Reconciliation** will be held this Tuesday, 28th March at 7.30pm.

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

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

**Sympathy:** St. John the Baptist Parish family extend its prayerful sympathy to family, relatives and friends of Roma Russ buried from our church the past week.

**Second Trip to Morpeth** Thursday, 20th April. Leaving 9.00 am. Contact Susie Casey 0403 417 639/4344 1742.

**Sacrament of Confirmation 2017:** A Parent Information night will be held on Monday, 3rd April in the Walter Baker Hall, 100 Blackwall Rd. Woy Woy at 7.30pm. Children aged 7 years and over are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**Daylight Saving** ends next Sunday 2nd April. Clocks are turned back one hour.

**Readers and Extra-ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion;** please indicate on the form in the Servers sacristy if you are available to serve during Holy Week and Easter.

**Central Coast Philharmonia** in its first concert for 2017 season will be held Saturday, 8th April, 7.30pm in the Walter Baker Hall, 100 Blackwall Rd. Woy Woy. Adults:\$30 Concession:\$27. Child/School Student Free. Details of the programme on leaflets in the gathering area.

**'El Shaddai' Prayer Group Meetings** 1st and 8th April.

**St. John the Baptist Catholic School:** Enrol now for 2018. Open Days: Enrolment information night Tuesday, 4th April, 7pm.

Under 6 Fun Morning, 9.30am-11am. Wednesday 5th April, 9.30am-11am.

A place of learning, united in faith, which integrates a community that supports diversity and is accepting of the individual's strengths and differences in our contemporary world.

Come and see what a Catholic education can offer your child. School tours can also be arranged by appointment.

St. John the Baptist School, 21 Dulkara Rd. Woy Woy. Ph: 4341 0884. Email: [sjbww@dbb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:sjbww@dbb.catholic.edu.au)

**Lectio Divina and Bible Study** 11am-12.30pm, Thursday 30th March, Leo Mahon room and all Thursdays in Lent. You need to bring your Bible. In Eastertide we will study the Acts of the Apostles.

## Social Justice

### Rising Poverty 'a national shame';

The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) has described as a "National shame" the continuing rise in the number of Australians living in poverty, particularly children.

ACOSS's *Poverty in Australia Report 2016* shows that 731,300 children, or 17.4 per cent of all children in Australia, are living in poverty, an increase of 2 percentage points over the past 10 years (from 2004-2014). The report states that nearly three million people were living in poverty in Australia in 2014, 13.3 per cent of the general population.

"The overall picture from the last decade is one of persistent and entrenched poverty across the community with an increase in child poverty," said ACOSS chief executive Cassandra Goldie.

"It is a national shame that after 25 years of economic growth,

We have not done better at changing this trajectory and ensuring our most precious national resource, our children, are given the best possible start in life.

Those most at risk are children in lone parent families, who are more than three times more likely to be living in poverty (40.6%) than those from couple families (12.5%). Since 2012, the poverty rate for children in lone parent families has gone up from 38.6 per cent to 40.6 per cent."

Dr. Goldie said the housing profile of people living in poverty highlights the concentration of disadvantaged in the rental market.

"The vast majority of people below the poverty line are in rental housing (44.2%). Only 15.5 per cent of people living below the poverty line were homeowners," Dr. Goldie said, ACOSS measures poverty as the

number of people living below the poverty line of 50 per cent of median household income. This is the poverty line used by OECD, and in 2014 (the latest year for which figures are available) equated to a disposable income of less than \$400 a week for a single adult.

"The report confirms that people who are unemployed are at greatest risk of poverty, with a 63.2 per cent living in poverty, Dr. Goldie said.

"Unsurprisingly, the majority of people below the poverty line relied on social security as their main source of income (57.3%), but a significant proportion received wages as their main income (32%). This indicates that having a job is no guarantee of keeping people above the breadline, especially if the job is low paying and insecure.

**Australian Catholic Social Justice Council.**

To be continued in next newsletter.

## From the Diocese and beyond

**Dr. Pavel Kohout:** Parishioners who attended the recital given by renowned Czech organist Dr. Pavel Kohout in our parish church last year will know what a superb artist he is and will be glad to know he is returning on Thursday evening 30th March to give another recital on the piano and organ from 8pm-9pm. The programme features works by well-known Czech composers as

well as by J.S. Bach and Theodore Dubois. Tickets (at the door) are very reasonably priced for a concert by such a distinguished musician and parishioners are warmly invited to attend. There are details of the concert programme in the gathering area.

**St. Joseph's High School, East Gosford. Class of '67:** Searching for Class of '67 (including

secretarial course) students who attended St. Joseph's. You are invited to a get together at Breakers Country Club, Dover Rd. Wamberal on 3rd June, 11.30am. We extend a warm welcome to the students of Classes '66 and '68 to join us on this occasion. Seeking photos/memorabilia. Contact Denise (nee Crawford) [denisem385@gmail.com](mailto:denisem385@gmail.com)

# A word from the Pope

10th February 2014

One does not attend Mass looking at his or her watch, as if they were at some performance, counting the minutes. One goes to participate in the mystery of God. This was the theme of Pope Francis' homily at the Mass he celebrated in the Chapel of *Domus Sanctae Marthae*. This "is not a tourist excursion. No! You came here, we are gathered here, to enter into the mystery. And this is the liturgy".

To explain the meaning of this encounter with the mystery, Pope Francis said that the Lord has spoken to his people not only with words. "The prophets", he said "recounted the Lord's words. The prophets proclaimed them. The great prophet Moses gave the commandments, which is the Word of God. Many other prophets too have told the people what the Lord wanted". However, "the Lord", he added, "also spoke in another way and in another form to his people: with theophanies. That is, when he comes close to his people and makes them feel, makes them feel his presence among them". The Pope referred to the First Reading (1 Kgs 8:1-7, 9-13) which speaks of other prophets.

"The same thing happens in the Church", the Pope said. He does this through his Word which is recounted in the Gospels and in the Bible; he speaks through catechesis, through homilies. He not only speaks to us but "he makes himself present", the Pope said, "in the midst of his people, in the midst of his Church. The Lord's presence is there. The Lord draws close to his people; he is present with his people and shares his time with them". This is what is taking place during this liturgical celebration, which is certainly "not a social affair", he said, "nor a gathering for the faithful to pray together. It is something else", because "in the Eucharistic liturgy God is present" and, if possible, he makes himself present in "the closest way". His presence, the Pope said, "is a real presence". "When I speak of liturgy",

the Pope explained, "I am mainly referring to the Holy Mass. When we celebrate the Mass, we are not representing the Last Supper". The Mass "is not a representation; it is something else. It truly is the Last Supper; it is truly living again the redemptive passion and death of Our Lord. It is a visible manifestation: the Lord makes himself present on the altar to be offered to the Father for the salvation of the world".

Pope Francis then gave examples, as he usually does, of actions that are common among the faithful: "We hear and we say, 'I cannot now, I have to go to Mass, I have to go to listen to Mass'. But you do not listen to Mass, you participate in it. And you are participating in a visible manifestation, in the mystery of the Lord's presence among us". It is something that is different from all other forms of our devotion, he pointed out, using the example of the living nativity scenes "that are organised by parishes at Christmas time, or the Way of the Cross that we do during Holy Week". These, he explained, are representations; the Eucharist is "a real commemoration, a theophany. God draws near and is with us as we participate in the mystery of redemption".

The Pope then referred to another very common behaviour among Christians: "How many times", he noted "do we count the minutes... 'I only have a half an hour, I have to go to Mass...'". This "is not the right attitude that the liturgy asks of us: the liturgy is God's time and space, and we must put ourselves there in God's time, in God's space, without looking at our watches. The liturgy is precisely entering into the mystery of God; bringing ourselves to the mystery and being present in the mystery".

The Holy Father continued, looking at the faithful who were gathered there for the celebration, saying: "For example, I am sure that all of you have

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The blind man was willing to let Jesus minister to him and willingly did all Jesus asked of him. The Pharisees were more resistant to His message, spending their time and energy to disprove the miracle. Which am I more like, the man born blind or the Pharisees?

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# 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 word from the Pope

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come here to enter into the mystery. But perhaps someone has said 'I have to go to Mass at Santa Marta, because it is one of Rome's tourist excursions, to go and visit the Pope at Santa Marta every morning... No! You came here, we are gathered here, to enter into the mystery. And this is the liturgy, God's time, God's space, the cloud of God that surrounds all of us'.

Pope Francis went on to share some childhood memories: "I remember as a child, when we were preparing for our First Holy Communion, they made us sing 'O holy altar guarded by angels', and this made us realise that the altar is guarded by angels, and it gave us a sense of God's glory, of God's space, and of his time. Then, when we were practising for our First Communion, we brought forward the hosts and said 'these are not the hosts which you will receive; they are not worth anything, because the consecration comes later'. It was good for us to distinguish one from the other: it is a memory of the commemoration". Therefore to celebrate the liturgy means "to be willing to enter into the mystery of God", in his space and his time.

Concluding his homily, the Pope invited those present to "ask the Lord today to give us all this sense of what is sacred, to understand that it is one thing to pray at home, to pray in Church, to pray the rosary, to pray many beautiful prayers, to do the Way of the Cross, and to read the Bible; but it is quite another to celebrate the Eucharist. In this celebration we enter into the mystery of God, on that path which we cannot control: he is the only one, he is the glory, he is in power. We ask for this grace, that the Lord may teach us to enter into the mystery of God".