



The Voice

7th December 2014

Second Sunday of Advent, Year B

Psalter Week 2

ADVENT

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Anniversaries:**
Joyce Ragan, Patricia Hogan,
Kathleen Kay.
- **Remembrances:**
David Kay,
Geertruida Voormeulen.
- **And the sick:**
Fr. Bill Meacham, Lola Proctor,
Grace Williams, Alan Harland,
Evangeline Cusay, Gada Selim,
Peter Crookes, Ruth Fuller,
Sr. Margaret Wall, R.S.J.
Maureen O'Brien, John Purser,
Clare Wren,
Patrick, Sophia and Elise
Firman . (Triplets born 8/11.)

Diocesan Social Profile

Two "social profiles," based on the 2011 Commonwealth Census, have arrived from the Australian Catholic Council for Pastoral Research.

Next week we shall look at the data on this parish; today I want to share with you some data on the Church at the diocesan level.

The number of those who declared themselves to be Catholics rose from 213,285 in 2006 to 223,240 in 2011, a decline from 25.4% to 25.2% of the total population. (In Australia, the decline was from 25.8% to 25.3%.)

Catholic students attending Catholic schools came to 46.8% of the total, a decline from 50.8% in 1996. Those with a university degree accounted for 24%, a rise from 14.2%.

The median age of Catholics was 38 years. Those aged 65 and over went from 12.4% to 15.3%, and those aged 14 and under, from 22.6% to 22.5%.

There were 85,605 Catholic families (up from 70,870); 16,806 Catholics lived alone (13,002); 50,913 were born overseas; 3,354 did not speak English well; 9,484 (4.2%) needed assistance with core activities; 74,915 had changed address since 2001.

Catholic households owning or purchasing a dwelling had risen from 72.7% to 74.44%; Catholic males in the labour force had fallen from 72.5% to 69.5% and Catholic females had risen from 56.2% to 58.2%.

When we look at the parish data next week, it will be important to note that in many fields the parish does not conform to the diocesan data. So while there are indications in what I am reporting today that would influence diocesan pastoral strategy, they might not be relevant here at all. Our pastoral strategy must be guided by what the Census says about this area, with an eye (as it were) on the diocesan and national data.

Keep in mind, for example, the following diocesan percentages: managers and professionals: 41%; blue collar workers: 22.6%; men employed or seeking work: 69.5%; women employed or seeking work: 58.2%; unemployed at time of Census: 4.8%; youth unemployed at time of Census: 10.3%.

Also: Catholics of Australian Indigenous origin: 2,885; born in non-English speaking countries: 15.5%; born in English-speaking country: 7.3%

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

Inside this issue:

Notices and News	2
Advent Wreaths	3
Directory	4

Psalm Response

© Colin D. Smith cfc

response:

Lord, let us see your kind - ness, and grant us your sal - va - tion.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths:
All people shall see the salvation of God. *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish



Invitation to the Installation of Bishop Peter A. Comensoli as the Third Bishop of Broken Bay: All parishioners are invited to the Installation of Bishop Peter Comensoli on Friday 12th December at 11am at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, Wai-tara. A bus is available, leaving 9.30am. Please call the Parish Office to advise if attending and/or to book a seat on the bus. For those of you unable to attend, note that the installation will be streamed live 12th December, 11am. www.dbb.org.au

Bishop Comensoli will be celebrating 9.15am Mass in our parish on Sunday, 14th December. He is looking forward to meeting as many parishioners as possible.

Fr. Stephen's Special Morning Tea after 9.15am Mass Sunday 28/12/14: Father is leaving for overseas 29/12. Please bring a plate of food to share.

Baptism: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Billie Christine Harris who was baptized at Mass last Sunday.

Second Rite of Reconciliation will be on Thursday, 18th December at 7.30pm.

Volunteer Church Cleaning 12/12/14: Judy French. Elena Egan. Brian Jordan. Veronica Jordan.

St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Cash Appeal: A special leaving collection at all Masses this weekend. The need is great and your support is sought in giving what you are able to. All monies are used to support local families on the Peninsula.

Anniversary: Our prayerful congratulations to Phyllis and Tom Hunter celebrating 70 years of happily married life.

Parish Nurse: We seek your feedback about the parish nurse project by completing the survey that can be found on the table in the gathering area.

Children's Liturgy 14/12/14: Brenda Sweet (L) Kylie Spicer (L) Ted Meyer (H).

Cake and Jam Stall raised \$600 at the recent sale. Thank you all for your support. Proceeds go towards the maintenance of our parish bus.

Wardens, Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion: Please indicate on roster available on table in gathering area if you wish to serve at one of the Christmas Masses.

Merry Christmas – You're Invited! We kindly invite you to a musical performance being held by the music groups of St. John the Baptist Primary School on Wednesday, 10th December at

10am in the school hall. Please come along and enjoy the musical repertoire we have built up, as well as some Christmas carols to get you in the mood for this Holiday Season from school groups such as the School Band and Choir. There will be tea and coffee served with a little Christmas treat at the end of the performance. St. John the Baptist School, 21a Dulkara Road. Woy Woy South.

School Appointments 2015 The new principal joining our Parish School will be Nicole Cumming, currently principal at St Patrick's, East Gosford. The new deputy principal will be Fran Kane, currently deputy principal at OLOR, The Entrance. We welcome them both to our Parish community.

Feast of the Immaculate Conception: Monday 8th December, 12 noon-1pm, Woy Woy Church. Special intention: that God provide priests for our parish.

Of Grace and Faith Study Group: Thursday 11 December, 11am, Leo Mahon room.

Faith Base Conversations: Getting good at talking about your faith to family and friends takes practice (and grace). Leo Mahon room. Saturday 13 December, 10.30am-11.30am. Morning tea included.

The Just Word

Human Rights Day 10th December:

Following are the first ten articles of the Declaration of Human Rights:

1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.
2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of

- the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.
3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.
4. No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.
5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.
6. Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.
7. All are equal before the law.

All are entitled without any discrimination.

8. Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.
9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.
10. Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Australian Catholic Social Justice Statement.

From the Diocese and beyond

iWitness 2014: Looking to get more out of summer? Why not come along to the annual iWitness Conference? As the year draws to a close, hundreds of young Catholics

come together for a weekend of fun, relaxation and enrichment—all while soaking up the sun by the beautiful Collaroy beach! There's talks, perpetual adoration, a range of outdoor

activities and hundreds of joyful, exuberant young adults. Be inspired. Be challenged. Go to www.lifetothefull.com.au for more details and to register. December 11th-14th.

Advent Wreaths

David E. Fedor

One of the most popular symbols used by Christians to prepare for Christmas is the Advent wreath. Many have the impression that this wreath has been around for centuries and is a part of the liturgical symbolism of Advent. Relatively speaking, the Advent wreath as we know it today is rather recent.

A wreath of some sort has been part of European cultures for thousands of years. For example, the use of a wreath of laurel goes back to the Greco-Roman world, where it was worn on the head as an adornment representing status, achievement, and victory. As centuries passed and civilizations came and went, the use of wreaths remained, but their meaning changed depending on how different cultures interpreted this ancient symbol.

As to how a wreath became associated with Advent, we find conflicting opinions. Some research finds the use of a wreath in northern Europe before the arrival of Christianity. Germanic peoples would construct them during the winter when the days were short and the weather was often bitter cold. Evergreen branches were woven together and decorated with lighted fires as a symbol of hope that the earth would soon again be green and warm.

As Christianity spread throughout Europe, folk or pagan customs began to take on a religious significance. To some, the evergreens represented the everlasting life promised to us through Jesus. The circle represented God's love, which has no beginning or end. The progressive lighting of candles marked the time until the celebration of the coming of Christ. As the wreath took on religious significance, it became a way of teaching the common folk about the mysteries of faith.

There are indications that a type of Advent wreath may have existed during the Middle Ages. However, the earliest known usage of a wreath imbued with the Christian symbolism we have today was in 16th-century Germany, where Lutherans used these wreaths as part of their Advent celebrations. The existence of Advent wreaths seems to have been basically confined to the Germanic peoples at this time.

So how did the Advent wreath gain the universal popularity we experience today? According to research by history professor Dr. Mary Jane Haemig of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota, Pastor Johann Hinrich Wichern (1808-1881) invented the modern Advent wreath. A pioneer in urban missionary work among the poor, he founded a children's mission school (Rauhes Haus) in Hamburg, Germany, in 1833 and was considered a fine and loving teacher. As the story goes, when the children would daily ask how far it was until Christmas, he devised a teaching tool to help them. In 1839, using a discarded cartwheel, he built a large wooden ring and covered it with evergreens. Attached to it were 20 small red candles and 4 large white candles. A small candle was lit every weekday during Advent. Each Sunday, a large white candle was lit. With a daily devotion and his Advent wreath, Wichern was able to teach the children about Advent as it leads to the celebration of the birth of Christ. Word of the pastor's successful teaching tool spread throughout Germany, as did the use of the Advent wreath in Lutheran schools and churches. These symbols soon evolved into the smaller wreath with four or five candles, giving us the Advent wreath we have today. Roman Catholics in Germany started using this popular symbol in the 1920s. According to Haemig, the custom did not reach the United States until the 1930s. Since then, its use has spread to many Christian denominations.

Today we can find the Advent wreath in just about every church. Although it is not a liturgical symbol, it derives its meaning from the liturgy and theology of Advent.

Using an Advent wreath at family meals is a simple way to bring Advent home. Lighting a wreath with a devotional prayer before a meal can help the family grow in faith. The wreath is a way of remembering the story of the people's longing for a Messiah and the fulfillment of the prophecies of Jesus's birth.

Some parishes have fostered the use of Advent wreaths in the home with great success. For example, about 15 years ago, the youth group in a parish decided to sponsor an Advent wreath-making party. They settled on

(Continued on page 4)



John the Baptist's call to repentance is echoed in the U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on stewardship: "Christians must beg God for the grace of conversion: the grace to know who they are, to whom they belong, how they are to live — the grace to repent and change and grow, the grace to become good disciples and stewards."



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
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"

Dr John Hill, *Parish Priest*

Fr Stephen Wayoyi, A.J. *Assistant Priest*

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

Parish 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.

Advent Wreaths

(continued)

(Continued from page 3)

the Sunday evening before the First Sunday of Advent for their event. The group purchased Advent wreath kits and got some evergreens from a local florist. They set a nominal fee to cover the cost of the materials and offered pizza and beverages as part of the package. Then they publicized the event. The first year, about 15 families came. Each family constructed its own Advent wreath, and the symbolism of its various components was explained. There was singing and food and fun. As the years went by, the number of families doubled and tripled. The efforts of the youth group helped families celebrate an Advent ritual in their homes.

This simple ritual can help form the Christian heart. Given how busy and draining the month of December can be, introducing this home custom can remind families that

Advent is a time to prepare to receive Christ at Christmas.

ML

David Fedor holds a master's degree in music and liturgical studies from the University of Notre Dame. In 1986 he was appointed director of music and organist for the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, N.J., and since 1998 he has been parish musician for St Cassian Church in Upper Montclair, N.J. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.

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



Diocese of
Broken Bay