



The Voice

16th March 2014

Second Sunday of Lent, Year A

Psalter Week 2

Silence and the Mystery

LENT

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Anniversaries:**
Eli Houghton, Edna Follett, Terry Ayres John Wahlin, John Snell.
- **Remembrances:**
Nora and Paul Houghton. All Souls in Purgatory.
- **And the sick:**
Helen and David Hopkins, Anne Unger, Anne de Graaff, Michael Cox, Susie Simmons, John and Patricia Welsh, John Osborne, Grace Williams, Ken McLean, Lola Proctor, Maureen Wardrop, Fr. John O'Connor, m.s.c. Fr. Geoffrey Bugden, Johnny Feillafe, Alan Harland, Hanaa El-Khatib, Dorothy and David Fulton.

Pope Francis, as you may know, preaches every morning at Mass at the *Domus Sanctae Marthae*, the building erected inside the Vatican by John Paul II to accommodate the cardinals during conclaves, but used outside those times for employees of the Vatican and bishops etc. visiting Rome - and where he now lives, instead of in the Apostolic Palace itself.

On 14th February he gave a homily on the Eucharist, which we will reprint in full (as reported by *L'Osservatore Romano*) a fortnight from today. Meanwhile, I would like to draw a link between what the Pope says about the Eucharist and what we said last week about *silence*.

The Pope, in his homily, lays great stress on our participation in Mass and entering into the "mystery".

He first of all emphasises that we do not merely "attend" or "hear" Mass - we *participate* in Mass; that our presence at the Eucharist must be active rather than passive. He makes the point that we cannot really participate if we have put only so much time apart for Mass - if we, as he puts it, are checking our watches through Mass.

To participate means entering into the mystery. The Mass is not just another prayer; it is the prayer *par excellence*, because we are joining in Christ's self-offering to the Father. As Pope Pius XII, drawing on the teaching of the Fathers of the Church, put it in his encyclical, *Mediator Dei*, the Mass is offered by the Whole Christ, i.e. by Christ the Head of the Mystical Body and by the members of that Body who

join themselves with him - they enter with him into the mystery of his Death and Resurrection. In the Mass we die and rise with him; that is why, in the Eucharistic Prayer, the priest recalls on our behalf that dying and rising, and thus directs our attention to what we are actually doing.

That is why we do our best to concentrate on what we are doing and do our best to avoid distractions. What we are doing is far too important to allow ourselves to have our attention be drawn away to trivial matters (including our watches).

And that is where silence comes in. When we call to mind our sins at the beginning; when we pause with the priest at the opening and concluding prayers; when we take a few moments to take in what we have just heard in the readings and the homily; when the reader pauses after announcing each intention during the Universal Prayer, so that each of us can pray briefly; and when we pause for a while after Communion - in all these cases we are taking time to "enter into the mystery", so that we can more consciously be one with Christ in his Sacrifice.

This is a habit we all need to develop - even if the constant noise of the world around us makes it hard. Participating in Mass is more than mere activity; participation is interior, and it is not achieved (and the Mass will not change us) unless we proceed reflectively. We shall all be the better for it if we can enter into the silence.

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

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Psalm Response

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Lord, let your mer-cy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! From the shining cloud the Father's voice is heard: this is my beloved Son, hear him. *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!*

Around the Parish

Farewell & best wishes to Pamela Burton who resigned from the Parish Office last week. We thank her for over 6 years service and dedication. Thankfully Pamela will still be involved in her other ministries for the Parish.

We celebrate Catechist Subday this weekend. "How wonderful is the coming of messengers who bring good news!" said Isaiah in Romans 10:18. Join us in praying for their continuing work bringing Christ to the children in our State Schools. Please pray that more parishioners are inspired to join their Ministry.

Caritas Australia: Your donation to Project Compassion helps Caritas Australia pursue justice and assist those who are the most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice.

This week we meet Deng who is blind and had to flee his village during the civil war, returning to his home village in 2005. Thanks to Caritas Australia partner, *Hope Agency for Relief and Development*, Deng and his family have received goats, chickens, fishing nets and a selection of seeds to plant. With your support, families like Deng's can be confident of a more secure future and can rebuild their lives.

Sympathy: St. John the Baptist Parish extends its prayerful sym-

pathy to family, relatives and friends of Kenneth McDonnell-buried from our church last week.

Volunteer Church Cleaning 21/3/14: Pam Hickey. Warren Sparrow. Gary Martin. Don Anderson.

Parish Pastoral Council: A number of current members are coming to the end of their terms. Would you like to be part of the new Council? A meeting of the current council and interested parishioners will shortly be held so that you can learn more. If you are interested (no obligation!) send a short note or email to the Parish Priest or to the Council Chairman (Bernard Edwards) c/o the Parish Office.

Resources for Family Celebration of Lent are available on the table in the gathering space.

Bus Trip — St. Mary MacKillop Place. North Sydney. Healing Mass 1st April. Bus leaving at 8:30 am. \$15. BYO lunch or buy. Ph: Susie Casey 0403 417 639.

Coffee/Cake and Chat afternoon for those living alone will meet this Monday 17th March, 1.30pm-3pm, in the Leo Mahon room. Transport available. Ph: Bernard 4341 6343

Children's Liturgy Roster 23/3/14: Leif Spicer (L). Alecia Amaral (L). Philippa Tonkin (H)

St. Joseph: Prayers. Wed. 19th March. 1.15pm-2pm. Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

The Return of the Prodigal Son[®]: Nouwen's reflection on Rembrandt's painting of the parable found in chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel, evokes a powerful drama homecoming, affirmation and reconciliation. This reading experience will explore these rich themes with the reflective aid of a copy of Rembrandt's masterpiece, and an exploration of the parable. Please join us for a good, friendly discussion. Books and refreshments supplied. Tuesdays 1,8,22 and 29th April, 7.00 pm-8.30 pm in the Leo Mahon room. To register, phone the Parish Office 4341 1073 or write your name on the list in the gathering area. RSVP 25th March.

Morning Tea/Coffee Roster for March 23 has been cancelled, and replaced with a special one off by the Catechists on the following Sunday, 30th March.

St. Vincent De Paul - West Gosford Furniture Workshop is having an open day Monday, 17th March, Wednesday 19th and Friday 21st between 9 am-12pm at 18 Dignity Crescent, West Gosford. All welcome to come and look around. Any questions, phone 4323 9013.

Social Justice

Principles of Catholic Social Teaching: The Dignity of the Human Person: God has imprinted his own image and likeness on human beings (cf. Gen 1:26), conferring on them an incomparable dignity...In effect, beyond the rights which one acquires by one's own work, there exist rights which do not correspond to any work performed, but which flow

from one's essential dignity as a person.

John Paul II, Centesimus Annus, 1991, #11

Human dignity:

- Recognises the sacredness of life and dignity of each human person
- Ensures that every person has reasonable access to more than

just the basic necessities of life

- Promotes the human rights especially of those who lack access to services and those who cannot participate or are refused the opportunity to participate in significant national, state or community activities and discussions
- Brings with it natural rights and duties. *Australian Catholic Social Justice Council.*

From the Diocese and beyond

Zoe's Law: Advocating on behalf of the unborn and their parents: This is before the Legislative Council in NSW and seeks to enshrine a protection under the law for those unborn children who are at least 20 weeks gestation and for their parents. It would recognize an offence of grievous bodily harm, towards an unborn child when a foetus of at least 20 weeks is harmed or killed, but does not apply to anything done by way of a medical procedure with the consent of the woman resulting in the destruction of a foetus (e.g. abortion). This is a very sad limitation of the legislation. However, it is important for all those of good will to seek to come together in common cause where they can.

You are encouraged to write to the Upper House MLC's to:

- State you support for Zoe's Law;
- Affirm the value of acknowledging than an injured unborn child is entitled to legal protection and
- Express your support for parents who have lost a child through an injustice in their efforts to obtain legal recognition of that child's life.

Email the Parish Office on parish@woywoycatholic.org.au to obtain more information and links on where to forward your submissions.

Position Vacant: Administrative Assistant, Office of the Bishop, Diocese of Broken Bay, Pennant Hills: Full-time (1 year contract).

The Office of the Bishop is seeking a person to assist with a varied role in a small team situation. The position would suit someone proficient in MS Office products

with excellent administration, interpersonal, communication and organizational skills.

For an information package and application details, please contact Jackie Hanson 9847 0226. jackie.hanson@dbb.org.au Applications close 1st April,

Day of the Unborn Child—Sunday 23 March: All invited to attend the celebration of the *Day of the Unborn Child on Sunday, 23rd March* beginning with 10.30 am Mass at St. Mary's Cathedral. Following the Angelus at 12 noon, a procession will be led through the CBD by the Maronite Bishop in Australia, Afternoon tea will follow in the Cathedral College Hall. More information Ph: 9519 9111 or www.fli.org.au



From the souls of the forgotten: Lenten preaching

Ron Raab

Shortly after I was ordained a deacon, the mother of a mentally disabled man approached me after Sunday Mass. She told me that her son was not allowed to share in communion because he had not yet been able to celebrate the sacrament of first communion. She begged me to work with him, finally grabbing my attention when she told me that he was my age. This frantic yet strong mother's grey hair was pulled back off her face, her shoulders tight from exhaustion and concern. She introduced me to her son, Dennis. He was extremely polite and seemed so interested in our conversation.

During the next few months, with catechists and his mother, Dennis and I discerned his readiness for the Eucharist. After getting to know him, I realised the teacher-student relationship was blurring – Dennis was teaching me more than what I was offering him. He taught me to really need God, not in an intellectual way but from the gut. He companioned me during those formative months as I learned how to preach and how to lead public prayer. He walked with me through Lent and through those last-minute preparations for priesthood ordination after Easter.

I learned immediately from Dennis that ministry is about people. I learned to form my words as a preacher around the delicate situations people face in life. Dennis taught me to listen to the Scriptures in an entirely new way, especially during the Lenten season of personal conversion and encounters with God. Dennis was marginalised only because his mind could not capture the intricacies of church doctrine. However, Dennis believed with his entire heart.

I reflect on Dennis's influence on me as we enter into the Lenten season. These classic Gospels of conversion teach me still to be careful how I connect the healing touch of Christ to the vulnerability of people. Jesus did not reach out to concepts, to institutions, to doctrine, or to ideas or rules or notions about the

church. He reached out to people who were lost, forgotten, sinful, or hurting. The grace of his gospel life is still alive in our proclamation and preaching.

Jesus entered the desert and was confronted with evil. The journey brought him into the green pastures of authenticity and genuine power. The 40-day desert is a reminder for all of us that renewal is grounded in the grit of sin, division, and hardship. The journey toward Easter is not easy for any of us who long for new life.

As preachers, we all need to sit by the well in the story of Jesus' encounter with the woman. We need to hear with our own hearts Jesus telling us everything we have done. We must listen so that we can interpret the power of Christ's love among people who come to sit in our pews, waiting for the same love and affirmation.

We also need to proclaim the Gospel of the blind man realising our own blindness, our own inability to recognise the beauty of peoples' struggles. The darkness of denial is overwhelming for all of us who preach. Really seeing how our preaching can be formative for our own lives often eludes us. Jesus' spittle, the clay of earth, the mudpacks on our eyes and hearts is for us. If we claim to have authority to proclaim Jesus' words, his actions, and his forgiveness, then we must begin in our own dirty uncertainties and the messiness of our lives.

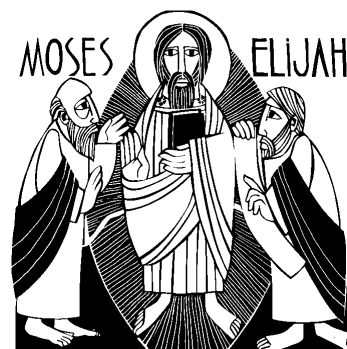
Lazarus was bound by death. Martha and Mary knew Jesus could free him. Jesus arrived, unbound his friend's ties to death, gave him new breath, and renewed his family's belief. We so often preach the miracles without ourselves knowing this new life for our own brittle ways. As preachers of Lazarus's new freedom, we must walk with people whose voices have been bound by hatred, whose lives are confined with prejudice, and whose futures will be pet-

(Continued on page 4)



"Bear your share of the hardship for the Gospel," St. Paul tells Timothy in today's second reading. What sacrifice is asked of me for the sake of the Gospel? How willing am I to bear my share?

See 2 Timothy 1:8b



Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy, Woy Woy South, Umina, Umina Beach, 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 264 100 Blackwall Road.
54 Victoria Road
WOY WOY N.S.W. 2256

Phone: (02) 4341 1073
Fax: (02) 4341 0214
Email: parish@woywoycatholic.org.au

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Dr John Hill, *Parish Priest*

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

Office Staff: Helen Cameron & 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 Dul-kara 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.

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.

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.

From the souls of the forgotten

(continued)

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rified by isolation and violence. The freedom of Lazarus is a profound reality for us who preach the magnificence of forgiveness, of new life and healing for people.

My Lenten journey with Dennis in my deacon year led me to hear the echoes of suffering in so many confused voices. I preach now from the profound understanding that I cannot change people's pain or hardship. I can offer words of hope only by confronting my own pain. The Lenten Scriptures must be proclaimed and lived from the souls and voices of preachers who know and believe in Christ Jesus.

Dennis's mother and I discussed when the appropriate time would be for him to share in communion for the first

time. I invited the two of them to consider celebrating Dennis's first communion during the Eucharist in which I would preside for the first time. Dennis was the first person to share in communion at my first Mass: the Second Sunday of Easter, April 10, 1983.

As a seasoned preacher now, I carve a place in my Lenten prayer to remember all the people who have shaped my ideas about the Gospels. I carry with me to the pulpit and to the altar all the voices that remind me that Eucharist is food and grace for real people's lives.

ML

Rev. Ronald Patrick Raab, CSC, serves as associate pastor at St. Andre Bessette Church in Old Town, Portland, Ore. He broadcasts *On the Margins*, a weekly Scripture commentary on radio KBVM.fm. Learn more at www.ronaldraab.com. 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