



6th Sunday in
ORDINARY TIME

Year A

12th February 2017

Psalter Week 2

OF YOUR
CHARITY
PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Barry Brooker, Lilia Gonzales,
Mary Dwyer, Fr. Timothy Crowley,
Major Sir Fergus John Matheson,
Fr Paul Cahill.
- **Anniversaries:**
Marie Myer, Fr. John Wakeling,
Monsignor Ian Burns,
Jack Booth, Carlton Tavares.
- **Remembrances:**
Arthur, Muriel and John Brown, Brown
Family, Hilliard Brothers,
Mary and George Hilliard,
Kevin Mills, Mills Family,
Bernie Hanna, Leslie Denning,
Valerie Price, Peter John Grima
Patricia Cameron.
- **And the sick:**
Kevin Houghton, Margaret Davin,
Maryanne Diorio, Alan Harland,
John Allen, Audrey Barsendich,
Maureen Carlon, Tracie Passlow,
Kevin Houghton, Maureen Cowsl,
Celeste Boonaerts, Kath Hardy,
Carren Quinn, Chev Shengi,
Steve Paino, Beryl Allen,
Colleen Giles, John Purser.

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

THE VOICE

Truth-Telling

I seem to remember some lines from a poem I learnt at school: 'Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practise to deceive.'

To guard against deceptions, many societies and organisations, including the Church, require a person to swear an oath to bolster their assertion that they are telling 'the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth'.

But, we have just heard the least observed command of Our Lord in the Sermon on the Mount. Referring to oaths he taught, 'Do not swear at all ...instead let your "yes" mean *yes* and your "no" mean *no*. Whatever goes beyond these simple words is from the Evil One.'

The early Church took this prohibition extremely seriously. It was only when the Church and State became entwined three hundred years later that that policy changed. The Church preferred to avoid tension with the political authority which required oaths as a supposed guarantee of truthful speaking.

The Church was weak, whereas Our Lord was strong. When He was challenged by the High Priest to swear by the Living God whether He was the Christ, Jesus simply replied: 'The words are yours', refusing to invoke the Living God. (Matt 26:63-64). Aren't we meant to imitate Jesus?

'Yes or No.' Our Lord tells us: '...anything more than this comes from the Evil One.' This is strong language. Why does Our Lord say this?

In the same Sermon on the Mount, he teaches us the proper use of God's name: 'Our Father'. It is the beginning of the prayer which is Jesus' gift to his community. It is our privilege and right as adopted children of God to use God's name in that way. That is the way in which Our Lord wants us to *use* the name of God. The use of God's name for oath-swearing is an *abuse*.

It is clear that Our Lord was trying to establish a new sort of society (The Kingdom) within which truth-telling was of paramount importance, where there is

no two tiered way of speaking the truth. Anything more by way of pious veneer devalues plain speaking. Straightforward, unadorned language will do.

Truth telling should issue simply from the character of the person – the truthful person truths.

We know this at the very private level of intimate relationships. Such relationships are easily fractured or soured by lying. At the community level, a society will soon break down if the words of its members cannot be relied on.

It is shocking, but true, to realise that in this respect, secular society is more in conformity with the Sermon on the Mount! At least it allows for observance of Our Lord's injunction. For example, Parliamentarians are offered the choice of an oath or an affirmation in taking up their duties in the Chamber. The Courts offer the same choice, and if the accused makes the affirmation, no adverse inference can be drawn by Judge or jury. And the Church? The Church needs to listen to the epistle of St James. It was written within living memory of the Sermon on the Mount and is astonishing in recalling this passage almost verbatim, urging it on to a new generation of disciples.

St James, a relative of Our Lord and leader of the Church in Jerusalem, writes, 'Above all, my beloved, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no so that you may not fall under condemnation.' (James 5:12-13)

The Church needs to put itself under the authority of the Sermon on the Mount, or rather under the authority of the Divine Teacher. Then perhaps it will find itself able to teach the rest of the Sermon with greater credibility, a greater chance of being heard.

The Church needs to hear for itself the final great imperative in this Gospel: 'Teach them to keep *all* that I have commanded you.' (Matthew 28:20)

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Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Blessed are you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth; you have revealed to little ones the mysteries of the kingdom. *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish

Farewell Margaret: Sadly for us, Margaret (reception Mon/Tue) will be leaving us to commence as the Parish Secretary at Ku-ring-gai Parish on 20 February. A Mass will be offered at 7.45am on her last day, Tuesday, 14 February followed by a morning tea in the Leo Mahon room. All welcome. We thank Margaret for her hard work & dedicated service to our parish for the last approx. 4 years. We will miss her greatly. A farewell card is in the gathering area for those wishing to write a few words.

Woy Woy Youth Group will be starting up *this* Sunday after 6pm Mass. The first session will be held in the Leo Mahon room, so if you have friends or family in high school (Grades 7-12) who might be interested, encourage them to come along! More information contact Matthew French 0411 792 587.

Sympathy: St. John the Baptist Parish Family would like to extend its prayerful sympathy to family and friends of Shirley Quillam and Mary Dwyer buried from our church last week.

Baptism: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Ivy Scicluna who was baptised last Sunday.

Fr Jack's Farewell will be held on Friday night, 24 March 2017. A venue is still to be confirmed as approx. numbers are needed. For those interested in attending please place your contact details on the list on the gathering area table or call the Parish Office. More details will be in next week's bulletin.

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. Sunday, 5th March, Leo Mahon room 10.30am-1.00pm. Phone Gladys 0421 312 362 if you wish to attend or have any questions.

Children's Liturgy Roster 19/2/17: Anne-Marie Tonkin, Hanna El-Khatib, Gerri O'Keefe.

Children's Liturgy of the Word Meeting: Thursday, 16th February, 7pm in the Leo Mahon room.

Children's Liturgy of the Word rosters 2017 now available for collection in the Leo Mahon room.

Parish Pastoral Council meeting Monday, 20th February, 7pm in the Parish Office.

Bus Trip to Scenic Sydney and Parramatta: Wednesday, 15th February, leaving 9am. Cost: \$20. For all bookings, payments and enquiries contact Susie (Co-ordinator) on 0403 417 639 or 4344 1742.

Morning Tea, this weekend will be jointly hosted by the Parish Pastoral Council and the Catechists after 9.15am Mass. Stop by for a cuppa and meet these active members of your Parish community.

Parish Transport Service: The Parish Bus has been a great blessing for many people in the parish. We have a service for the Saturday Vigil Mass and the two Masses on Sunday morning. The 9.15am service, however, is oversubscribed. It is essential, therefore, that the driver knows before the weekend if anyone intends to cancel their booking for any of the Masses for a particular weekend. Anyone cancelling is asked to advise Bernie Edwards 4341 6353. Mobile: 0422 395 392 by midday Friday (you no longer need to call the Parish Office). If phone is not answered please leave a voice or text message. Your co-operation will be deeply appreciated. Thank you to all drivers who so generously serve in the Parish Transport Service.

Lenten Discussion Groups: During Lent our Parish encourages parishioners to come together in groups to pray and reflect on the significance of the season. We are calling on you to consider hosting a group. You only need to lead (not teach) others through a prepared programme of prayers, readings and reflections over 6 weeks, so we can deepen our understanding and journey spiritually towards Easter. Please contact the Parish office 4341 1073 if you can lead a group or if you wish to participate in a group. *Please Note:* Deadline for notification is Wednesday, 15 February so as we can order the necessary resources.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 17/2/17: Jo Salter, Warren Sparrow, Tom French, Emma Baker.

Social Justice

Apology to the Stolen Generation:

Continued from last week's Newsletter.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written.

We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians. A

future where this Parliament resolves that the injustices of the past must never, never happen again. A future where we harness the determination of all Australians, indigenous and non-indigenous, to close the gap that lies between us in life expectancy, educational achievement and economic opportunity. A future based on mutual respect, mutual resolve

and mutual responsibility. A future where all Australians, whatever their origins, are truly equal partners, with equal opportunities and with an equal stake in shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.

13th February, 2008. Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

From the Diocese and beyond

Invitation for all Parishioners: All women and men who are interested in supporting the Diaconate for Women in the Catholic Church are invited to attend 'A Conversation with Prayer on the Diaconate for Women' at St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop Parish, Warnervale.

This evening is an event held to support Pope Francis and those engaged in the current Commission into the study of the Diaconate for Women. By attending this event we will be uniting in global solidarity and prayer with Pope Francis and others who are seeking to

respond to the call of the Holy Spirit for the world today. 16 February, 7pm-8.30pm. St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop Church, 91 Sparks Rd. Warnervale. Further information or if you would like to RSVP (not compulsory) contact kay.taylor@dbb.catholic.edu.au



Scripture Readings

6th Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 12

Sir 15:16-21
Ps 119:1-34
1 Cor 2:6-10
Mt 5:17-37

The Book of Sirach dates to the second century BC. In today's text, Sirach deals with the topic of free will. This theme of "the two ways" is common in many Old Testament texts; we can choose God's way, the way of life, or we can choose to reject God and go our own way. "If you choose," we are told, "you can keep the commandments" (v 15). Sin is our choice, not God's plan, for God commands no one "to act unjustly" (v 20) but offers us the way of life.

Paul tells the Corinthians that God's wisdom is "mysterious, hidden" (v 7). It is not like the wisdom of the Greek philosophers or Jewish sages. It is not acquired through human reasoning; it has been "revealed to us through the Spirit" (v 10).

For Matthew, Jesus is a prophet like Moses was. Surrounded by a large crowd of people, Jesus delivers a set of teachings concerned with how we should live. He tells us that he has come "to fulfill" (v 17) the law and the prophets, a term used to refer to the Hebrew Scriptures. He tells us that not even "the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter / will pass from the law" (v 18). Jesus shows us that living the law is about more than just our actions; it is also about our thoughts and attitudes. It is not enough to refrain from killing; we must also avoid angry thoughts and words, for "whoever is angry ... / will be liable to judgment" (v 22). We must not only avoid committing adultery; we must also refrain from inappropriate thoughts, for otherwise we commit adultery in our hearts. He is telling us that in order to avoid sinful actions we must keep away from thoughts and attitudes that can lead us to sin.

For reflection: Do I view free will as a blessing or a burden? What are some ways I find effective to avoid temptation?

7th Sunday in Ordinary Time, February 19

Lv 19:1-18
Ps 103:1-13
1 Cor 3:16-23
Mt 5:38-48

The Book of Leviticus is filled with laws, primarily for the priests (who are from the tribe of "Levi") but also for all of the people. As the third of five books of the Torah, its message to the people is concerned with establishing a way of life based on God's commands: "Be holy, for I, the Lord, your God, am holy" (v 2). Because they will be spending 40 years together in the wilderness, God also gives them guidance concerning how to live with each other: "Take no revenge and cherish no grudge. ... / You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (v 18).

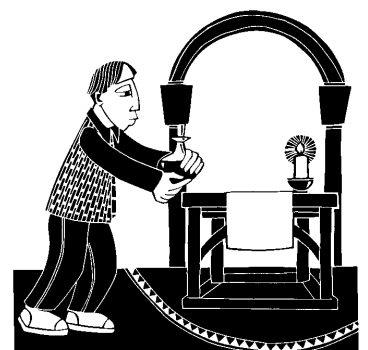
Paul reminds the Corinthians that "the Spirit of God dwells in you" (v 16). This means that we live in this world, but we belong to God. Because we are each a "temple of God," we are holy. We are called to live lives guided by God's Spirit. Therefore we should not view ourselves in terms of the wisdom of this world, which is "foolishness in the eyes of God" (v 19).

In the Gospel today Jesus continues his exposition on the commandments, offering his interpretation of how they should be lived. Though Moses said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," Jesus' command is to "offer no resistance to one who is evil" (vv 38-39). The command to "hate your enemy" that Jesus refers to (v 43) is not found in the teaching of Moses, but it has been found in the Dead Sea Scrolls and would have been known to Jesus' contemporaries. Jesus calls us to not only love our neighbour but also "love your enemies / and pray for those who persecute you" (v 44). We are children of God, who sends the sun and rain to both "the bad and the good" (v 45), so we should follow this example.

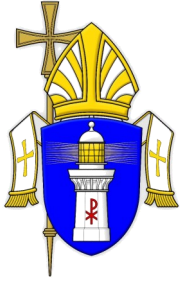
For reflection: What does it mean to me to be called to be holy? How does loving my enemy change my attitude toward that person?



Stewardship involves more than just the gift we bring to the altar. Today's readings say clearly that it is fidelity to God's law that makes our offering acceptable.



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
and Margaret Cooper.
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).

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Thursday 7.30pm-8.30pm for the needs of the Parish.

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. Ph: 024341 0884. www.sjbwoywoy.org.au

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP For information and events contact the parish office 4341 1073.

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.

Scripture Classes.....

resume the week of 20 February & we are still in need of CLASSROOM HELPERS.

You don't need to prepare the lessons, but by assisting the teacher the children will have a greater opportunity to understand Jesus' message.

Former catechists, grandparents, retirees—you need not attend every week, but your help will be of enormous value.

Please call the Coordinator anytime.

Susie Simmons 0411 566 622

