

The Voice

14th February 2016

First Sunday of Lent Year C

Psalter Week I



LENT

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Venerando Guarde,
Sr. Justin Simonds. s.g.s.
- **Anniversaries:**
Net and Josephine Borg,
Fr. John Wakeling.
- **Remembrances:**
The Souls in Purgatory.
- **And the sick:**
Loretta Holt, Frances Sara,
Neil Cameron, June Ferry,
Kate Tinson, Beryl Allen,
Lola Proctor, Jack Moulds,
Alan Harland, Lindsay Hardy,
Arnold Diorio, Maryanne Diorio,
Ibrahim Selim, Carol Cross,
Fr. Bill Meacham, Bill Hunt,
Bruce Spence, Irene Beck,
Natalie Rankin, Dian Balce,
Audrey Barsenbach, May Leger,
Vince Zappavigna, Pat Quinn,
Keith Maiden, Mary Dolan,
Pat Fitzgerald, Bryan Moroney.

(The preacher can use this personal story by beginning, 'I came across this story the other day which seems to be appropriate for the First Sunday of Lent'.)

In the second year of the Jesuit novitiate, the Jesuit novices are dropped around 140km from their first house in Australia at Sevenhill in South Australia. He has eight days to walk the distance and beg for food and accommodation. He cannot tell anyone who he is or what he is doing.

One Jesuit writes, 'It's the only time in my life I've been remotely in what we could call a wilderness and I have known hunger. There were many knockbacks, but there were a few occasions when people were extraordinarily generous. We are told that we cannot trade off being a Jesuit, but if we are invited into someone's home we can tell them who we are, so that they will not be frightened that they have welcomed Jack the Ripper to stay the night. If the person has offered the garage and a sandwich, however, we cannot use our being a Jesuit to get an upgrade from economy to first class!

'One woman who welcomed me into her home questioned me at length about where was I from, where was I going and how I got here. Then she declared, "I think I can trust ya". So she ushered me into her home, offered a meal that night, breakfast the next day and her guest room.

'I told this woman who I was and complimented her on her extraordinary generosity. "Well listen sunshine", she said, "let's face it, I knew you were OK, 'cause you're the most beautifully spoken, articulate beggar I've ever met."

In today's Gospel we are told that Jesus was tempted in the wilderness for 40 days. Numbers are never randomly used in the Bible. 1, 3, 7, 12 and 40 all have specific meanings. 40 indicates a time of formation. Luke tells us that Jesus confronts evil head-on and is tempted in every way that we are.

We often feel alone when faced with difficult choices and temptations, but, especially at these moments, there are four things we need to remember:

Temptation is not sin. Only when we freely and knowingly choose to act on temptation is sin involved. Though one may like to talk about the temptations one has in Reconciliation, we never have to 'confess' them as though they are sinful actions.

When we look at our temptations they often appear as good things, but often they have a sting in the tail which is destructive. We need to be very alert to all the consequences of what we do and say, and learn from our experiences.

The more we give into temptation, the more immune we become to seeing that there's anything wrong with what we are doing. We can develop whole habits in our living, deceiving ourselves that what we are doing is 'not that bad'.

St Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, tells us in *The Spiritual Exercises* that the worst temptations are greed, pride and riches. This comes as a surprise to Catholics who have been told for too long that sex is number one. Ignatius says that we should be wise in how we deal with temptations: name what's going on, and attend to the pattern of the temptation quickly and consistently. As John B. Metz, says, 'We can say that the three temptations in the desert are three assaults on the poverty of Jesus ... What Satan fears most is the powerlessness of God in the humanity he assumed ... so he appeals to Jesus' divinity, he wants God to remain God ...ut Jesus subjected himself to our plight and opted for us as we are.'

We should take great comfort from this: there is no path of temptation along which Jesus has not gone ahead of us to show us we can choose life ahead of death.

That's what Lent is always about – a yearly season where we are encouraged to keep embracing life and live it to the full.

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Psalms Response

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Be with me Lord, when I am in trouble.

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

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

A Pilgrimage to the door of Mercy at Holy Cross Church, Kincumber South, will take place every Monday during Lent. Those interested should meet Fr. Philip in our church carpark at 9.30am. Upon arrival at Sth. Kincumber church he will lead you in the Way of the Cross.

Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available after Wednesday morning Mass in addition to regular times during Lent.

Opening School Mass will be held Friday, 19th February at 12md in the school hall for parishioners who may wish to attend.

R.C.I.A / R.C.I.C. The Rite of Election will be celebrated this Sunday at the Waitara Cathedral. Please keep our 9 candidates and catechumens in your prayers.

Sympathy: St. John the Baptist Parish family would like to extend its prayerful sympathy to family, relatives and friends of Patricia Wilmott and Barbara Haddock who were buried from our church last week. May they experience the fullness of God's peace.

Liturgy Meeting Thursday, 18th February, 7.30pm in the Parish office.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 19/2/16: Christine French, Brian Jordan, Veronica Jordan, Michael French.

Children's Liturgy Roster 21/2/16: Therese Carroll, Christine French, Anthea Haugan.

Multicultural Choir sing once every month at 5pm Mass on the third Saturday. New members are warmly welcomed and encouraged. Rehearsal is 3.30pm on the third Saturday before 5pm Mass. Please come and join us to help provide uplifting music for our liturgy. Next rehearsal 3.30pm, Saturday 20th February. Enquiries: Del 4341 4160 or Tess 0420 481 293.

Bus Trip to the Hunter Valley Wednesday, 24th February. Leaving at 8.45am. Cost \$15. Morning tea supplied. Stopping for lunch at Cessnock RSL Club. All enquiries, bookings and payments for bus trips need to be made with the Coordinator Susie 0403 417 639 or 4344 1742.

Attention all Children's Liturgy Leaders (only): Labora notes for the year are available for collection from Leo Mahon room.

Junior Server Ministry: Primary school students in Years 5 and 6 are invited to join our wonderful and dedicated team of junior servers who assist at Sunday Masses. Your child will find it spiritually rewarding as they learn more about their faith and play an active role in their parish. Training will be provided and parents are asked to contact the Parish office on 4341 1073 and leave their details.

Bus Trip to St. Mary of the Cross. Nth. Sydney Healing Mass. Tuesday, 23rd February, leaving at 9.00am. Cost: \$15. All enquiries, bookings and payments to be made with the Coordinator, Susie on 0403 417 639 or phone 4344 1742.

Lectio Divina and Bible Study 11am-12.30pm, Leo Mahon room, all Thursdays in Lent. Lectio Divina for the first 30 minutes followed by a portion of Scott Hahn's online Bible Study called 'The Lamb's Supper: The Bible and the Mass'. You need to bring your Bible.

Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Amy Moss, George Moss, Audrey Newell and Kaiden Rickit who were baptised last Sunday.

The Just Word

Caritas Australia's Project Compassion Begins:

The theme for Project Compassion 2016 is: **Learning more, creating change.**

As Pope Francis says 'Education is an act of hope', so this year Project Compassion celebrates the power of learning, and the many ways in which Caritas Australia is working with local partners

around the world to provide vital learning and renewed hope to children, women and men most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice.

Throughout Project Compassion 2016, inspiring stories from Malawi, Laos, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Cambodia and India will show how education, training and sharing knowledge can empower

individual communities to transform their futures and create lasting change.

For more information: www.caritas.org.au/compassion/about St. Columban's Mission Society has also published a Lenten resource titled *The Grace of Place*; www.columban.org.au

From the Diocese and beyond

Josephite Associates: We would like to establish a Kincumber Josephite Associates Group. A meeting is planned for 10am on Thursday, 18th February. A guest speaker from Sydney will be addressing the group.

The group will be meeting at St. Joseph's Spirituality Centre, 8 Humphreys Rd. Kincumber Sth. All interested people, male and female will be most welcome.

There has also been interest from people who work wanting a night meeting. Contact Kath Evans 0468 563 100. or Sr. Ellen 4368 2805.

Jesus Christ is the face of Mercy, as Pope Francis writes in *Misericordiae Vultus*. "Encounter the Face of Mercy", This Lent,

through a guided silent retreat given by the Verbum Dei Missionaries. Saturday, 12th March (9am) - Sunday, March 13th (2pm finish). For more information contact Kylie 0403 453 620 or verbumdeisydney@gmail.com

St. Peter's Catholic College Enrolment for Year 7 2017:

Applications are currently open to commence Year 7 in 2017. Families are invited to an Information Afternoon on Tuesday 15th March 2016 where tours of the beautiful campus and extensive facilities will be provided. Enrolment Application Packs will be provided. Information sessions run at 4.00pm, 4.30pm, 5.00pm, 5.30pm and 6.00pm in the College Hall. Bookings are not required.

We look forward to meeting your family and welcoming you to St. Peter's community.

St. Peter's Catholic College, 84 Gavenlock Road, Tuggerah. 2259. Phone 4351 2344. www.stpetersdbb.catholic.edu.au

Walk the Camino! 20 day Pilgrimage Leon to Santiago de Compostela (15 May-3 June 2016 OR 15 September-4 October 2016) *Catholic Mission's* pilgrimage balances walking and simple hospitality with silence, personal reflection-prayer. Small group led by experienced guide, Sr. Veronica Rosier O.P. +61 451 387 901. See catholicmission.org.au



Readings Today and Next Sunday

14th February 2016

Bruce Janiga

1st Sunday of Lent, February 14

Dt 26:4-10
Ps 90:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
Rom 10:8-13
Lk 4:1-13

The Book of Deuteronomy is presented as a collection of sermons delivered by Moses just before his death and the people's entrance into the promised land. Moses exhorts the people to fidelity in light of God's care for them. Today's text provides instruction for the proper way to offer first fruits to the Lord. Reciting the "historical credo," the person offering the sacrifice is to acknowledge that his people were once "a small household" in Egypt but grew to become "a nation great, strong, and numerous" (v 5). Oppressed by the Egyptians, they "cried to the Lord," who "brought us out of Egypt ... into this country" (vv 7-9). In other words, everything they are and have is because of God's gracious action on their behalf.

Writing to the church in Rome, Paul tells us that God no longer distinguishes "between Jew and Greek" (v 12). Faith in the risen Christ is what leads to salvation. What is in the heart is professed on the lips and expressed in our lives. Paul's words encourage us to externalize our faith so that we will live it more fully.

In today's Gospel Luke presents us with the story of Jesus' temptation. It is noteworthy that this happens immediately after Jesus' baptism. After Jesus has been pronounced God's Son at the baptism, the devil challenges his identity with the words, "If you are the Son of God" (4:3, 9). It is as though the evangelist is saying that the more we attempt to embrace God's will, the more we run into temptation. During these first days of Lent, many of us are tempted to break our Lenten resolutions. Why does a steak always look tastier on Ash Wednesday? Jesus' response to the devil is to quote the Scripture. It shows that he both knows and lives God's word.

For Reflection: Do I live with an awareness of God's blessings in my life? Is my life an act of gratitude? Have I internalized the Scriptures well enough that I can draw strength from them when I am tempted to sin?

2nd Sunday of Lent, February 21

Gn 15:5-12, 17-18
Ps 26:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14
Phil 3:17-4:1 or 3:20-4:1
Lk 9:28-36

In Genesis the Lord enters into a covenant with Abram. He is to become the father of a great nation, even though so far he and his wife have been childless. Abram's trust in God's promise makes him a model of faith for all of us. The mysterious "smoking fire pot and a flaming torch" (v 17) represent God's presence to Abram. God is frequently associated with fire and smoke in the Hebrew Scriptures. It is by this ancient covenant-making ritual that the Lord promises Abram both many descendants and possession of the land. This story will unfold in many of the following books of the Old Testament, as Israel learns what it means to be the chosen people of God.

Writing to the Philippians, Paul encourages them to follow his example in following the way of Christ. "Many," he tells them, "conduct themselves as enemies of the cross of Christ" (3:18). But we, whose "citizenship is in heaven" (v 20), must live by God's standards. "Stand firm in the Lord," he encourages (4:1), for the glory that is Christ's will be ours when he changes "our lowly body to conform with his glorified body" (3:21).

Jesus' transfiguration is a foreshadowing of the resurrection. For a brief moment his companions see him as God's "chosen Son" (v 35) appearing in "his glory" (v 32). Moses and Elijah, two great prophetic figures of biblical Israel, confirm Jesus' status as an important individual. They were speaking with him about "his exodus" (v 31) — that is, his impending going forth in death. The response of the disciples is one of misunderstanding. Peter's suggestion to build three tents implies that he wants to prolong the moment; they should remain on the mountain. But the Father has something else in mind, and so he commands them to "listen to him" (v 35). Though they will come down from the mountain, this moment is meant to prepare them for the suffering that is to come.

For Reflection: Do I live my life with an awareness that I am a citizen of heaven? Do I have any "transfiguration moments" when I have felt God's presence? Do I draw strength from them when things are not going well?

Bruce Janiga, a priest of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., teaches Scripture studies at Seton Hall Prep in West Orange, N.J. He is the Sunday assistant at St. Cassian's Church in Upper Montclair, N.J. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216



Today's first reading describes the offering of first fruits the people of Israel were to present to the Lord in thanksgiving for their deliverance from Egypt and the gift of the promised land. Is my offering at today's Mass an appropriate response to the many blessings the Lord has given me?



Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy, 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 and Phegan's Bay.

St John the Baptist Church, corner of Blackwall and Victoria Roads, Woy Woy

Parish Office
P.O. Box 264
39 Victoria Road
WOY WOY N.S.W. 2256

Ethel Cox Parish Centre
Walter Baker Hall
100 Blackwall Road

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

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Fr. Jack Robson. *Parish Priest.*

Fr. Timothy Raj. M.S.F.S. Fr. Philip Thottam. M.S.F. S.
Assistant Priests.

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Raelene Spithill,,
Margaret Cooper.

Office Hours: 9.30 a.m.—4.00 p.m., Monday to Friday

Deadline for The Voice: 3.30 p.m. Wednesday

The Parish Office has received many phone calls & cards of thanks over the last month from appreciative recipients of the Christmas hampers...here is an example of a card received this week.

To the Parishioners of St John the Baptist,

I would like to send my thanks for the Christmas Hamper that was delivered to my home the week before Christmas. It was very much appreciated and a complete surprise. Thanking you once again.

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).

HOLY HOUR-EXPOSITION & BENEDICTION

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

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 Parish office 4341 1073.

CENTACARE Marriage & Family Counselling, Pregnancy help—20 Watt St, Gosford. Phone: 4324 6403.

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 HOUSE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre, Cnr Ocean Beach Rd & McMasters Rd, Woy Woy. Games start at 7.30 p.m. and finish approx 10.20 p.m. Cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6.00 p.m. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries: Rob 0427 990 818.



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

St Patrick's Day Organ Recital

by the incomparable Daniel Moulton

7.30 pm, 17 March 2016.

More details next week.



Diocese of Broken Bay