

# The Voice

21st February 2016

Second Sunday of Lent Year C

Psalter Week 2



## Lent

### OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**  
Aileen Gudgeon, Pat Willmot, Milton, Robert Harvey, Barbara Haddock.
- **Anniversaries:**  
Bill Finlayson, Sid Flakelar, Zeljko (Mick) & Robin Mravinac, Noel Collis, Nestor Altez, Fatima Fozy.
- **Remembrances:**  
Sara Selim.
- **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, Carol Cross, Mary Dolan, Fr. Bill Meacham, Bill Hunt, Bruce Spence, Irene Beck, Natalie Rankin, Dian Balce, Vince Zappavigna, May Leger, Audrey Barsenbach, Pat Quinn, Keith Maiden, Brian Moloney, Pat Fitzgerald, Patricia Dwyer.

An American Jesuit theologian, John Powell, tells the story of a young man named Tommy who was the resident atheist during one of his courses in the Philosophy of God at Loyola University in Chicago.

At the end of the course while he was turning in his final paper, Tommy said to Fr Powell, 'Do you think I will ever find God?' 'No', Powell replied bluntly, but as he walked away he continued, 'But I think God will find you'. Tommy kept walking.

Years later, Tommy returned to see John Powell to tell him that he had been diagnosed as having terminal cancer. More than ever, Tommy said, he wanted to find God or to be in the right place at the right time to be found by God. John Powell told Tommy to go and tell the people that he most loved in the world that he loved them.

Within a week Tommy reported to John Powell that in the midst of doing this he had a genuine and significant encounter with God. They had found each other. Tommy died three months later. John Powell reports that the only way to describe the final three months of Tommy's life was to say that, whatever happened to him in the process of telling others he loved them, he was transfigured by God.

The Transfiguration is no mountaintop light show. In borrowing heavily from similar stories in the Old Testament, it describes, in a dramatic way, how loved Jesus was by God and how this experience was seen and known by his disciples.

So often we hear people say they have not, or cannot, experience the presence of God, and therefore deny that God exists. These readings show us that if you want to encounter God then you have to experience love. This is not an optional extra for the Christian life. As St John says, 'The one who says they love God, yet they hate their brother or sister, is a liar.'

The Transfiguration is not a once off event for Jesus alone. It is a moveable feast for all of us who have become God's sons and daughters in Christ.

The problem with love is that we have devalued the currency. We say it too often about things we don't or can't love, like our car, a bottle of wine or our holiday. We say 'I love you' to people we don't love and because we have learnt that actions are more telling than words we don't easily believe others when they tell us they love us.

We can feel unlovable and cynical about the whole experience. But there are three things of which we can be sure: If we feel distant from God, we only have to guess who has moved away from whom. Nothing we do stops God from loving us. God loves us as we are, not as we like to be. As the old saying goes, 'you don't have to get good to get God. You have to get God to get good.'

Finally, as the song runs, 'You ain't nobody until somebody loves you.'

And so for a Christian, being vulnerable enough to tell those we love that we love them is no sentimental exercise but a participation in the heart of God. By taking the risk of doing this, others may clearly hear the voice of God through us and we may discover ourselves transfigured by the personal love of God for us too.

In the process God may move from being an idea, an abstraction, even an object of curiosity to the focus of a loving experience that can give our lives meaning, purpose and hope.

In this Eucharist then, let's ascend the mountaintop and let's listen to Jesus say, 'You are my son. You are my daughter. And I love you.'

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### Psalms Response

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The Lord is my light, my light and my sal - va - tion.

### 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

**Stations of the Cross** are followed every Wednesday, 4pm, and every Friday 7.30pm, throughout Lent.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** is available after Wednesday morning Mass during Lent in addition to the regular times.

**St. John the Baptist School Mass** at the school, Friday, 26th February, 12md for those who may wish to attend.

**Children's Liturgy Roster 28/2/16:** Geraldine Baxter, Joanna Baxter, Jenny Fitzgerald.

**Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 26/2/16:** Lisa Ann Rae, Jo Salter, Kevin Glacken, Christina Thorson.

**Morning Tea Roster 13/3/16:** Parish Pastoral Council.

**St. Vincent de Paul Members and Volunteers** monthly Mass due Saturday, 9am, 27th February.

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

**St. Patrick's Day Concert:** For a little break from Lenten observance, come to a grand recital at our church on St. Patrick's Day, 17th March at 7.30pm.

Daniel Moulton (Organ) and Paul Goodchild (Trumpet) will give a recital of organ and trumpet music with some Irish surprises. Both artists are renowned musicians and a memorable concert is assured. Admission is free with a leaving collection to cover costs.

**Catechists** will meet in the Leo Mahon room on Thursday, 25th February at 9.00am to discuss and finalise the Easter Assemblies at all schools. We need a full attendance please.

**Liturgy Meeting** Thursday, 25th February, 7.30pm in the Parish office.

**Thank You** from Jeff Freeman on behalf of 'Soldier On' to Jane and Paul Rutherford and Ed Foster for volunteering some time on Australia Day at the Woy Woy waterfront. Also a special thank you to Fr. Philip who also gave his time to be with us. The money raised from the sale of merchan-

dise and donations will go into services and programs to help wounded service men and women and their families in a number of ways.

**Bus Trip to St. Mary of the Cross. Nth. Sydney Healing Mass.** Tuesday, 23rd February, leaving at 9.00am. Cost: \$15.

**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 to be made with the Coordinator, Susie on 0403 417 639 or phone 4344 1742.

**St. Vincent de Paul, Woy Woy** require donations of single beds. (Mattresses and frames) urgently. We have some families who require assistance and your help would be appreciated. We can organize pick ups on the Peninsula. Phone Joan 0422 272 339.

**Reader & Extra-Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion:** New Rosters now available in Servers Sacristy.

## The Just Word

**St. Josephine Bakhita:** The International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking was observed for the first time on the Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita on this day in 2015. Each year, around 2.5 million people are victims of trafficking and slavery. Sixty per cent of them are women and children. Pope Francis has strongly denounced trafficking of human beings, calling it 'a crime against humanity' and calling on all to fight and care for its victims, St. Josephine Bakhita was born into slavery but was brought to Italy, where she lived most of her life with the Canossian Sisters. She was canonised in 2000, and her feast day has been named as the

World Day of Prayer, Reflection and Action Against Human Trafficking.

Born in Southern Sudan in 1869, kidnapped from her large family and village, sold into slavery, tortured mercilessly, she was resold several times. Bought in 1883 by the Italian consul in Khartoum...she returned with his family to Italy where she became nanny to the daughter of one of his colleagues. It was in this capacity that she made the acquaintance of the Canossian Sisters who were instrumental in having an Italian Court establish her status as a person free to determine her own destiny...(She) joined the Canossian Sisters in 1893 and ...was

noted for her life of contemplative intimacy with God, the warmth of her connection with many people and her resolve to free girls and women from oppression and violence. In the latter part of her life she was asked to write her memoirs and her life was powerful testimony to so many of her contemporaries of the reality of her human and spiritual transformation.

St. Josephine's life is an inspiration, particularly, for women who have been trafficked or enslaved and for those who work with them in the often long, slow, painful journey of healing and rehabilitation.

Anne Tormey rsm.

## From the Diocese and beyond

**Monthly Holy Hour for Vocations:** Last Wednesday of the month (from February-November) 24th February, 7.00pm-9.00pm. St. Agatha Parish, 17 Trebor Road (enter through car park), Pennant Hills. Adoration, Reflection on Scripture, Evening Prayer of the Church. After prayer a social gathering will be held and a meal provided. Booklets with prayers will be provided. Cost Free.

**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](mailto: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](http://www.stpetersdbb.catholic.edu.au)



# Transfigured Bodysouls

One often hears the conventional wisdom: 'All religions are the same.' Somewhat different packaging but, really, they all believe in the same things.

But, do they, even about the human person?

What if you believed that the most vital part of a person was 'the soul', more or less trapped or imprisoned in the body? The best thing would be for the soul to be freed from the body, leaving the old carcass behind, and enjoying heaven as a soul.

Well, that may put you in an ancient Greek tradition, but it is certainly not Christian.

What do we believe?

There is a hint in the pictures of the Stations of the Cross. Notice the haloes of light, a golden glow, around the head of our Lord Jesus Christ. Artists down through the centuries have tried to portray the Divine Light which suffuses the body of Christ (and of the Saints).

These portrayals hark back to today's Gospel.

Jesus' *body* was transfigured. This was no out-of-the-body experience of religious ecstasy. This was an utterly bodily experience with Jesus' *body* totally translucent, totally radiant with Divine Light. Every molecule of his materiality was reverberating in the halo of divine glory.

That is the destiny which God desires for us also. When we are really in harmony with God, when we really participate in the life of God, then that Divine Life envelops and permeates our whole person, bodysoul. That is our *ultimate* destiny, but can it be anticipated in the lives of those close to God?

We have all heard of St Francis of Assisi or Padre Pio. Both saints exhibited the stigmata. Their devotion to the crucified Lord was so intense that they exhibited the wounds of the Cross in their bodies.

But, what if a saint, what if you or I, was intensely devoted to the transfigured Christ? Could one share in that transfigured experience?

Here is a story from the Russian mystical tradition.\* It is a passage taken from 'The Revelations' of Saint Seraphim of Sarov, written at the beginning of the 19th Century. One of his followers was conversing with him on a winter morning when the Saint appeared to his follower to be as dazzling as the sun. Saint Seraphim whispered to him:

'Why then, my friend, do you not look me straight in the face? Look freely and without fear; the Lord is with us.'

The story goes on in the words of the follower:

'Encouraged by these words, I looked and was seized by holy fear. Imagine in the middle of the sun, dazzling in the brilliance of its noontide rays, the face of the man who is speaking to you. You can see the movements of his lips, the changing expression of his eyes, you can hear his voice, you can feel his hands holding you by the shoulders, but you can see neither his hands nor his body – nothing except the blaze of light which shines around, lighting up with its brilliance the snow-covered meadow, and the snowflakes which continue to fall unceasingly.'

"What do you feel?" asked Father Seraphim.

"An immeasurable well-being," I replied.

"But what sort of well-being? What exactly?"

"I feel", I replied, "such calm, such peace in my soul, that I can find no words to express it."

"My friend, it is the peace our Lord spoke of when he said to his disciples: 'My peace I give unto you,' the peace which the world cannot give; 'the peace which passeth all understanding.' What else do you feel?"

"Infinite joy in my heart."

My friends, that is the promise our Heavenly Father gives to you and to me personally and individually.

You and I can be, with God's grace will be, radiant with Divine Light, our bodies immersed in translucent glory, filled with 'immeasurable well-being', 'infinite joy in our hearts.'

\* I took this story from 'The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church' by Vladimir Lossky, St Vladimir's Seminary Press, Crestwood, New York 10707, 1976, pages 227-229.

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Peter, James, and John wanted to build a "booth" for Jesus and just stay on the mountain where His transfiguration took place. But the Son of God, the Chosen One, knew that He must instead keep moving toward His crucifixion. We, too, must rise from worship and do what we can to hasten the coming of the kingdom.

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## Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy, 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 and Phegan's Bay.

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

Parish Office  
P.O. Box 264  
54 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](mailto: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

## Sara's Place

Introducing you to "Sara's Place" a non-denominational foundation providing free, confidential, non-judgmental and personalised care for teens, women and couples who discover they are expecting a child. At Sara's Place they can provide information about your options if you are trying to decide what to do. They can also provide support and help for you during your pregnancy and beyond. At Sara's Place they value life from conception, we do not recommend abortion as the answer. However, support for women after an abortion is a vital part of our service. Contact 1300 851 592 for an appointment on the Central Coast or visit online at [WWW.SARASPLACE.ORG.AU](http://WWW.SARASPLACE.ORG.AU)

## 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 AND 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.

## CATHOLICCARE Marriage & Family Relationships.

Phone: 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 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 10.15 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](http://www.woywoycatholic.org.au)



Diocese of Broken Bay