



The Voice

6th December 2015

Second Sunday of Advent, Year C

Psalter Week 2



OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Siobhan O'Connor, Mary Cashell.
- **Anniversaries:**
Kathleen Field, Kathleen Kay,
- **Remembrances:**
David Kay,
- **And the sick:**
Loretta Holt, Frances Sara, Neil Cameron, June Ferry, Kate Tinson, Beryl Allen, Lola Proctor, Jack Moulds, Alan Harland, Maryanne Diorio, Arnold Diorio, Grace Williams, Mary Taylor, Carol Cross, Fr. Bill Meacham, Vince Zappavigna, Audrey Barsenbach, Bruce Spence, Nathalie Rankin, Ted Meyer, Ibrahim Selim.

In today's Gospel, John the Baptist encourages his followers to be patient, as the wait for salvation will soon be over. The Israelites longed to see the day when the Messiah would come. Each generation hoped and prayed that they would be the one to witness the appearance of God's anointed. The Jewish people still hope and pray for this event in every generation.

But Jesus did not come as many expected. Some thought he would arrive in a dramatic event and the end of the world would occur. Others expected a regal entrance or a political overthrow of the Romans. Luke's Gospel repeatedly points out that the very people who longed for the day to see the Messiah missed out because they were looking for the wrong signs.

John the Baptist is the first to see Jesus for who he really is for the world. He recognises that Jesus' sacrificial love can fill our valleys, lay mountains low, make crooked paths straight and rough ways smooth.

Advent is not a season where we have to pretend that we do not know Jesus is coming and then put on mock surprise at Christmas. Advent is the season which celebrates a 'patient yes'. Every year all of us in the Church stand in a queue and remind ourselves of how blessed we are to have seen our salvation in Jesus. We remember the faith of those who longed to see what we see and to know what we know. And we cultivate our patience for life's valleys,

mountains and crooked paths where sometimes we can feel Jesus' absence more than his presence, where only when we look back we can see he was with us all the way.

So, as we all wait together in line this Advent let's say yes to all that salvation holds for us: yes to God's personal love; yes to Jesus' kingdom of justice and peace; yes to every opportunity to serve the Gospel and yes to knowing that our God is a companion to us at every step of our journey, even in the most unexpected ways.

Scottish poet John Bell expresses it this way:

'Light looked down and saw the darkness.

"I will go there", said light.

Peace looked down and saw war.

"I will go there", said peace.

Love looked down and saw hatred.

"I will go there", said love.

So he,

the Lord of Light,

the Prince of Peace,

the King of Love,

came down and crept in beside us.'

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Psalm Response

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The Lord has done great things for us and we are filled with joy.

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

St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Cash Appeal: A special leaving collection at all Masses this week-end. The need is great and your support is sought in giving what you are able to. Please give generously to help the poor and disadvantaged.

2nd Rite of Reconciliation: will be administered on Tuesday, 15th December at 7.30pm.

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

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 11/12/15: Elena Egan, Brian Jordan, Veronica Jordan.

Children's Liturgy Roster 13/12/15: Therese Carroll, Mary Wood, Mimi Lambert.

Bus Fund Christmas Raffle:
First Prize: Zugler and Brown Twin Grill and B.B.Q. and Trolley cover. Twin Grill Mobile Cart. Value approx. \$700 plus prizes on display. Tickets on sale next week-end 12th-13th December. Raffle will be drawn on 14th December. Winner will be notified. Enquiries: Mary Scarf 4344 2288.

Feast of The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary: Start the Year of Mercy with Personal Prayer. Hour of Grace. Tuesday, 8th December. 12 noon-1pm. Woy Woy Church.

Coffee and Chat: Meeting next Monday, 14th December. The group normally gathers on 3rd Monday of each month for sandwiches, cakes, tea and coffee. This gathering will have an Advent Christmas tone. All welcome! Let us know if you need transport. Phone Bernard 4341 6343.

Study Group: Thursday, 10th December, 11am in the Leo Mahon room.

Faith Conversation Group: Saturday, 12th December. 10.30am in the Leo Mahon room.

Movie night raising money for the Jan Vikas Society in Navi Mumbai where Fr Timothy used to live. St. Joseph's Catholic College invites you to the Avoca Beach Picture Theatre on Monday, 14th Dec at 6 pm for a night of Indian themed festivities. There will be light refreshments, an Indian themed photo booth, henna tattoos and the Coast's only screening of the Australian original 'Unindian' film. Tickets are \$20 and students from St Joseph's will be selling tickets after 5pm Mass, Dec 12 and after 6pm Mass, Dec 13
o r e m a i l
olivia.daly@dbb.catholic.edu.au with your name, phone number and number of tickets required.

The Just Word

Pope Francis' Encyclical *Laudato Si*

It is enormously important that as stewards of creation, we look at the global environmental challenge as a moral issue, more than an environmental and political issue. Sitting at the heart of the environmental crisis is a myriad of dysfunctions—economic, ecological, social, political. But most importantly, the glaring dysfunction is spiritual. It is therefore a great source of strength for us that our spiritual leader has offered us a guide, both in words and through his example. Pope Francis, in his role as the head of the Church, has become the epitome of spiritual strength, solidarity with other faiths, and hope for the exploited. As he strongly speaks as caring for our earth, his words have become a

powerful indictment of the economic world order that has exploited the poor and the planet. What Francis offers is a message of great hope—that the current unethical and dysfunctional world order can be transformed. The Encyclical urges us to answer the question 'what is possible?' While we draw lessons from history, including the triumphs of many social movements and spiritual awakenings, we need to avoid being limited by what history has allowed us to achieve and we must not be daunted by the kind of aspiration we envision for the future. We can and must build this promise of a better world now.. The leaders, movers, and caretakers who have put forward their reflections in this book can help us build this dream. *Laudato Si* comes as a crucial

point in our common journey as a human family. This year we see many political moments that aim to confront the planetary crisis. In the later part of 2015 world leaders gathered in Paris, to attempt to forge a new climate agreement. We will journey by foot from Rome to Paris carrying the Encyclical and every morsel of inspiration we have drawn from our encounters along the way. As pilgrims, we embark on this journey, yet akin to Pope Francis our ultimate destination is not Paris. Our mission is to reach the hearts and minds of all people. Mr. Yeb Sano. *Leader, The People's Pilgrimage Spiritual Ambassador, Our Voices. Former Climate Change Commissioner, Phillipines.*

From the Diocese and beyond

The Jubilee Year of Mercy: Bishop Peter will open the door of Holy Cross Church, 10 Humphreys Rd. Kincumber as a *Holy Door* at a special Mass on Saturday, 19th December at 9.15am. Holy Cross with its historic significance is one of the five churches in the diocese with a Holy Door for the Jubilee year, and this is the holy door of our deanery. Passing through the Holy Door is a sign of repentance and a desire for renewal, that we will take up Pope Francis' challenge to be "merciful like the Father". For those who are able, we will begin with a procession from the wharf at the bottom of Humphreys Road at 9am, tracing the steps of Saint Mary of the Cross once walked and others can join in the procession at the door of the church. Parishioners from all our local

parishes are invited to take part. Holy Cross Church is also open every day throughout the year as a place of quiet prayer to which anyone is welcome to make a pilgrimage.

CatholicCare Disabilities: CatholicCare is reframing the way people access our disability suite of programs and options. The future is exciting if a little uncertain. You may currently receive funding for accommodation, personal care, respite, recreation, community participation or transition to work. Or you may already be managing your funding yourself. Whatever funding you are currently accessing to support your personal goals and needs we can match programs to suit, or tailor entirely new bundles of services. Either way, ring us or come and see us! We'll sit down and chat

about what you'd like to do. Do some blue-sky thinking. Phone 4356 2600.

Position vacant part-time (16hrs per week) parish secretary proficient with Microsoft Office – Word, Excel, Publisher, Outlook, PowerPoint as well as PACS (Parish Data System). A good knowledge of the Catholic Faith, the Sacraments and the Liturgy are all necessary elements of the position. We would like a brief resume outlining any relevant experience with referees included either email to info@ourladyoftherosary.org.au or mailed to Our Lady of the Rosary Parish PO Box 189 The Entrance NSW 2261 or hand delivered to 239 The Entrance Rd The Entrance.



Advent: A Season Rich in Symbols

6th December 2015

David E. Fedor

The Christmas shopping season is well underway, with Christmas parties, school plays, concerts, and other related events turning December into a month of stress and exhaustion. When Christmas Day arrives, we often feel a sense of relief. But in the midst of this chaos, a new liturgical year quietly begins with a message of hope, joy, peace, and promise. The season of Advent often gets buried under our frenzy of holiday preparations, but it calls us to enter into a different kind of preparation for the Christmas feasts.

Like many other things in the liturgical life of the church, the celebration of Advent developed over several centuries. While its origins are not clear, we know it was modelled after the season of Lent, with its emphasis on prayer and fasting. The celebration of the Nativity of the Lord had been established around 350 AD. Church documents refer to a time of preparation for Christmas–Epiphany that could be as brief as three weeks or as long as 40 days, depending on local customs. By the 11th century, the length of Advent was fixed to four Sundays, and the season was declared the beginning of the liturgical year.

Over time, Advent evolved into a season that was no longer intended for penance but preparation. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* reminds us that "when the Church celebrates the *liturgy of Advent* each year, she makes present this ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming" (524). In the lectionary's Advent readings for any given year, we find multiple references to the longing of the chosen people for a Messiah, the birth of Christ Jesus as the fulfilment of God's promise, and the second coming of Christ, when the dead shall rise and be joined with him in the life of the world to come. Along with the readings assigned for the season, specific symbols are associated with Advent.

Vestments. Although the colour is the same violet or purple used during Lent, vestments for Advent should not refer to the Passion of Christ: no images of the crucified Christ, no nails, no crown of thorns.

Environment. The decoration of the worship space should be modest during Advent, but it should not mimic the starkness of Lent.

Music. The music for Advent is filled with hope, responding to our longing, expectant joy, and waiting.

Advent wreath. Each lighted candle on the Advent wreath marks the Sundays of the season.

Jesse tree. Becoming more popular in recent years, the Jesse tree can be a great tool for teaching about the lineage of Jesus. For more about the Jesse Tree, including an idea for how to use it in the liturgy, see my September 2011 column (ML 38:7).

Third (Gaudete) Sunday. The Third Sunday of Advent is popularly called *Gaudete* Sunday; the name comes from the first word of the entrance chant for that Mass: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say rejoice. / Indeed, the Lord is near" (Phi 4:4–5). Up to now during Advent, the readings have focused on preparing for the Lord's coming, looking to a future time. On the Third Sunday, the readings talk of the Lord being near; indeed, the Gospels tell of John the Baptist pointing to the one in our midst. For the remainder of the season, we will hear prophecies about a virgin giving birth to a child of David's lineage according to the flesh; we will hear the angel's message to Joseph to take Mary as his wife; and we will wonder with Mary about the annunciation that she is to bear a son. These and other readings create a sense of anticipation, confidence, and joy that the promised Messiah is among us. On the Third Sunday, the liturgical colour may change from violet to rose, a colour between violet and the white of Christmas. The third candle of the Advent wreath may also be rose-colored, and our songs should speak of Christ being near.

The season of Advent is filled with rich images and the promise of hope and fulfilment. But too often, all of our energy and attention is absorbed by our preparations for Christmas as we shop for gifts and plan and attend parties. Including these symbols of Advent (plus an Advent calendar) in our home preparations for Christmas can help put our secular seasonal activities into better perspective. Taking time to reflect on and enter into this marvellous, peaceful season of promise will nourish us and give us a renewed sense of what Christmas is really about. **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 has been the parish musician for St. Caspian Church in Upper Montclair, N.J. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.



Good stewards believe that God, who has begun this good work in them, will carry it through to completion. In words and deeds, they can sing with the psalmist, "The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!"

SEE PSALM 126



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.

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

Psalm 125

The responsorial psalm forms part of a collection in which each psalm bears the title 'A Song of Ascent' (from Psalm 119 to 133 or in the MT numbering from 120 to 134). It is thought that this collection was part of a pilgrim's manual or prayer book, for those making the pilgrimage from various parts of the Diaspora to Jerusalem. The collection begins with the psalmist lamenting being an alien in a foreign land, but the next psalm counters this with the hope of help from God in Zion. Then there is the good news of a pilgrimage and the commitment to keep one's focus on God in Zion no matter what happens. As psalm 124/125 states, 'Whoever trusts in the Lord is like Mount Zion, unshakeable, it stands for ever'.

The next psalm in the collection, our responsorial psalm, commences with thanksgiving for God's restoration of Zion, for without this there would be no pilgrimage. Even more important than this however is the response of the nations to the restoration of Zion – they are amazed and acknowledge 'What marvels the Lord worked for them'.

There is a hint here of the hope expressed in Isaiah 2:1-4 that in the days to come all the nations will make their pilgrimage to Zion to worship the Lord and learn God's ways. On the basis of God's deliverance of Zion from its imprisonment during the exile, the pilgrims (note how the lone pilgrim is now part of a group) feel confident to pray for deliverance from 'our bondage'. The power and often surprising nature of God's deliverance – from whatever affliction – is likened to farmers going out to sow their crops in 'dry land' with no hope of a harvest. But what from a human point of view looks hopeless is transformed by God into bounty; the ones who went out weeping to sow return rejoicing with their arms full of food. This highly rhetorical flourish fuels the faith of pilgrims to bear the trials and tribulations they will no doubt encounter when they return to their places in the Diaspora.

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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. Ph: 4341 0884 Fax: 02 743 44 5049.

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

CATHOLIC CARE Counselling and Family Relationships. Ph: 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 HOUSE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre. Cnr. Ocean Beach Rd and McMasters Rd. 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



Diocese of Broken Bay