



ORDINARY TIME

TRANSFIGURATION

of the LORD

Year A

6th August 2017

Psalter Week 2

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Garry Martin, Roy Shirvington.

- **Anniversaries:**
Mary Gatt, Noel Palmer,
Pasquale and Giuseppina, Sergei,
Enrico and Caterina Zappavigna,
Jules Stanislas, Sergei de Souza.

- **And the sick:**
Maryanne Diorio, Audrey Barsenbach,
Pat Burgmann, Mary Scarf,
Margarita Gomez, June Towson,
Therese Corner, Peter Wellis,
Diane Gillett, Rene Glase,
Margaret Davin, Patricia Dwyer,
Roy Beverage, Laura Krauss,
Janet Dean, Brian Finlayson,
Edie Trovato, Nola McKeown,
Tim McNamara, Peter Crookes,
Marylou Tafilagi, Matilda Tawake,
Mick Mino, Mary Drinan
Marie Carter.

Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

THE VOICE

'Comfort in Times of Crisis'

This episode in the Gospel records a major change in the direction of Jesus' life. Up until now Jesus has been involved in a ministry in Galilee, where he has generally been accepted. Then in Matthew 16 there is the event at Caesarea Philippi where Peter confesses Jesus as, 'the Christ,' but this leads to Jesus beginning to explain that he must go to Jerusalem and there he will suffer and be killed (Matt 16:13-23). Peter refuses to accept this teaching and so the one Jesus has just named, 'the Rock' on which he will build his Church is rebuked and even called 'Satan' for standing in the way of Jesus and his mission. So the time has now come for Jesus to leave Galilee and set out for Jerusalem. The transfiguration comes at the time – it is almost the last time we see Jesus in Galilee.

Moses and Elijah are two of Israel's great prophets who experienced the close presence of God at a time in their lives when they were called to take a difficult path. Both men also experienced the comforting presence of God on Mt Sinai. Moses was called to lead the children of Israel through the wilderness to the land of Canaan. In Exodus 33 Moses begs God for some assurance that God will be with him in this task. Moses says, 'If your presence will not go with me, do not carry us up from here' (33:15). God then places Moses in the cleft of the rock of Sinai while God's glory passes.

Elijah and King Ahab were contesting about who the people would worship. Elijah set up a great contest between himself and the priests of Baal on Mt Carmel (1 Kings 18:20-46). This puts Elijah in great danger from Ahab's wife, Jezebel. Elijah flees in fear of his life and arrives at the holy Mountain of Sinai (in this tradition it is called Horeb). There Elijah encounters God in the still small voice and is commissioned to anoint another man as King (1 Kings 19:9-18).

Both Moses and Elijah felt fear and weakness at the thought of their tasks but both received strength from God to continue.

In its symbols of the high mountain, clouds, light, Moses and Elijah, the evangelist presents this as a time when Jesus seeks and receives assurance from God. The voice from heaven repeats the words of Jesus' baptism experience, 'This is my Beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased' (Matt 17:5; 3:17). It is as if Jesus, as he turns towards this new phase of his mission, is once again confirmed in his relationship with God. The journey south to Jerusalem will lead him into conflict with the Jewish and Roman authorities. If he stayed in Galilee he may have lived much longer. To go to Jerusalem means certain death. Common sense tells him this. On the Mount of Transfiguration he prays for strength and guidance to take this journey.

In this scene, while in one way it presents Jesus in his divine glory, we also glimpse his genuine humanity, as he pauses to face the consequences of the decision to go to Jerusalem. He takes time out. Calls aside his friends and enters into prayer. I consider that this was the historical experience of Jesus of Nazareth. There would have been many times in his ministry when he stepped aside to pray and seek guidance from God and the courage to respond. I suggest that the way the evangelist records this experience with light, and the presence of Elijah and Moses, in fact may be symbolising the inner spiritual experience of Jesus in prayer. Prayer is transformative. Jesus is able to say to his disciples at the end of this episode, 'Have no fear'. I suspect that this is something Jesus has come to himself, within his times of prayer with God. In the presence of God there need be no fear. In my own life, as I have grown older, I have come to recognise that fear is never of God. I have had to learn to tell the difference between wise prudence, and crippling fear. Listening to fear has never been, for me, the right way forward. When we struggle with our decisions, when we feel afraid and weak, may we too seek and know the comforting presence of God. © Mary Coloe PBVM

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Psalm Response

The Lord is King, the most high ov - er all the earth.

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

Parish Pastoral Council: The council members will be Pat Baxter, Celeste Boonaerts, Barbara Cardwell, Louise Degeling, Jeff Freeman, Bernie French, Gladys Leger, Tony O'Neill, Malcolm Sequeira, Pat Slattery, Willie Woods, Helen & Nicole Cumming (Ex-officio). The first meeting of all new members will be Thursday, 10 August at 7.30pm in the Boardroom.

The Commissioning of the Parish Pastoral Council will take place at 9:15am Mass on Sunday, 13th August.

A Formation Programme for the members will be held on Tuesday, 15th August in the Leo Mahon room.

Daniel Ang from the office of Evangelisation will be facilitating the meeting.

Solemnity of St. Mary of the Cross (MacKillop) - Our National Patron's Feast Day celebrated this Tuesday, 8th August, 7.45am Mass.

Morning Tea Roster 13/8/17: Live, Pray, Love Group.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 11/8/17: Veronica Jordan, Brian Jordan, Christine French, Emma Baker.

Bus Trip to Convent of Mercy, Singleton leaving Wed. 16th August, 8.30am. Cost for trip \$20, tour cost \$11. Enquiries: Susie Casey 0403 417 639.

Social Justice

The anti-social trend of lower wages and conditions:

Pope John Paul II emphasised that a 'just wage' is the concrete means of verifying the justice of the whole socioeconomic system and, in any case, of checking that it is functioning justly'. Over recent decades, low-paid and vulnerable workers have suffered significant losses in terms of lower wages and conditions and job insecurity.

The wage was always regarded as the primary means workers could provide for their families and stay out of poverty. Now,

Charitable Works Fund Appeal will be held next weekend 12th/13th August. The five charities that benefit from your donations are:

- The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) - training catechists developing authorised curriculum materials for up to 21,000 Catholic students in public schools in the parishes of the Diocese.

- CatholicCare Hospital Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care Practitioner program - providing lay Pastoral Care Practitioners to support parishioners in hospital.

- St Lucy's School where children with special needs are given additional resources and support.

- St Edmund's School where children with disabilities are provided with additional resources to prepare them for the future.

- Ephpheta Centre - where deaf and hard of hearing people across Sydney can seek support, advocacy and sacramental programs.

Our focus of the CWF August Appeal will be on the catechists in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. We acknowledge the work of the catechists in our Parish and support them with our donations to the Charitable Works Fund. Please give generously and support these

incredible people who minister to 21,000 Catholic students in public schools in our Diocese.

Of Grace and Faith Study Group: Due to 10 August econference, the next study group will be Thursday, 17th August, 11am in the Leo Mahon room. All welcome.

Children's Liturgy Roster 13/8/17: Anne Maree Tonkin, Rebecca Beisler, Gerri O'Keefe.

Save the Date: Sunday 24 September 2017: Healing:

When a person seeks healing because of a particular need—be it physical, spiritual, mental or emotional—one tends to focus on **that** particular need. Healing, however, has to do with the **whole person**, not just one area. To be cured of something does not mean one is healed. The question is, "What is the **root cause** of the problem?" and with help, learn how to deal with it, not only for the 'now', but also for 'the future'. Because **Jesus is the Healer**, he is the one who sets us free. What do I understand "Healing" ... "Inner Healing" to mean? What within me, within my life, needs to be **healed**?

"Ancestral Healing" or "The Healing of the Family Tree".....

What does this mean for me in the 'now'? General prayer for Healing. Guest Speaker: Sr. Margaret Scully, RSC. Leo Mahon Room. 10.30am-1pm. Sunday 24/9/17.

however, around eight per cent of full-time workers and up to 25 per cent of part-time workers experience poverty.

Australia's minimum wages are falling further behind average wages and household disposable income. The annual minimum wage reviews are failing to protect hundreds of thousands of low-paid and insecure workers and their families from poverty.

The recent decision of the Fair Work Commission to cut back Sunday and Public holiday penalty rates in the retail, hospitality and fast-food sectors

is another blow for vulnerable workers. It will have a big impact on women, young people and immigrants, who have a higher level of participation in these sectors. Some could suffer reductions of \$10 an hour. Many will need to work additional irregular hours away from their families or suffer the loss.

Australian Council of Social Service (2016), Poverty in Australia 2016, ACOSS & SPRCm p.13

Australian Catholic Social Justice Council.

From the Diocese and beyond

Christians in the Middle East and Interreligious Dialogue: Past and Present Situations. There has been much reporting on the difficult situation in the Middle East. In this presentation by Archbishop Michael Fitzgerald, he will consider the

present situation and the importance of religious freedom as a fundamental human right. Archbishop Fitzgerald will also consider the plight of other faiths, emphasising the importance of peace and understanding in

our world.

Saturday, 19th August. 10am-12pm. Caroline Chisholm Centre, Bldg. 2. 423 Pennant Hills.(Vehicle access via City view Road). RSVP Thursday 17th. Ph:4332 9825/ 9847 0448. Registrations@DBB.org.au

THE TRANSFIGURATION MONOLOGUE

I remember it well – the day, that is. We had spent it walking toward Jerusalem and talking with the people who were following us. The crowds had dropped off; of late Jesus had been saying some pretty hard things about what it means to follow him.

Most of the crowds were there to see miracles and wanted nothing to do with this new stuff. Even we, his closest friends, had problems with what he was saying.

I couldn't understand why he was heading toward Jerusalem. Everyone knew that the Chief Priest, the Scribe and the Pharisees had it in for him.

But he simply ignored our protest, turned his face toward Jerusalem and kept on walking. We were all a bit scared. But what could we do? He wouldn't even listen to Peter!

Normally as we settled down for the night, Jesus would go off alone and pray. But this night he invited three of us to go with him. Everyone was a bit puzzled by this, but, without a word of explanation, he simply led us off toward a small hill.

The night was still and not a sound could be heard, except for the crunch of gravel under our feet. I remember thinking it was like the whole world was holding its breath in anticipation of some great event. It was dark by now, but Jesus led us confidently up the slight slope toward the summit.

My confusion increased with every step. I was angry with him. The idiot. Why was he throwing his life away by going to Jerusalem? It made no sense.

Once we reached the top of the hill, Jesus sat down wearily. The others found a place on a warm rock nearby. I simply stood there and watched him.

Here was a man who could unite the people. A man who taught with authority. A man who could change the world. But all he was doing was walking calmly toward death and humiliation. Did he not have eyes to see?

As I stood there a full moon rose over the horizon. I watched it as it rose still higher into the sky and looking back toward Jesus I saw for the first time the bone-deep weariness that showed on his face.

Nothing moved. No-one said a word. I held my breath. I wanted to help him; I wanted to take his pain away.

But as he sat there, eyes close and hands clasped tight, I began to see something more.

It's hard to describe.

But what I saw was a man who was so full of love and compassion that it hurt. A man who felt the pain of others more acutely than his own.

I saw a man who loved his Father beyond all things and who felt so loved and cherished that death itself had no power over him.

Indeed, this was a man who deserved to

stand beside Moses and Elijah.

This man who silently cried, seated in the dust, on top of a mere bump in Judea, was translucent with the divine love that he offered to all.

My mind was awash with pride, and grief and pain, and hope for the future.

I don't know how long I stood there, watching him silently pray. But suddenly he stood and without a word we started down the hill. We didn't speak, but I knew the others had sensed something as well. I, and I believe the other two, saw Jesus in new way.

When we reached the bottom, the others wanted to know what had happened on the hilltop, but none of us felt right saying anything. So we shrugged them off.

And as the following weeks came to pass, I held this secret in my heart. It was only when it was all over, you know, in Jerusalem, that I began to understand what had happened on that night.

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Reflection

by Dianne Bergant CSS

In the midst of Ordinary Time we are invited to behold the transfiguration of Christ. By some horrible coincidence, we recall Christ's brilliance on the day that the world marks another cosmic event, its birth into the atomic age at Hiroshima. The paradox of these events should not be lost on us. The white light that shone from Christ was a mere suggestion of the divine splendour that is beyond human comprehension; the flashing light from the atomic explosion was an omen of the destructive force that is within human grasp. It is imperative that the horror of the latter be brought under the control of the glory of the former.

The transfiguration was a moment in time when Jesus' divine glory broke through his humanity and shone with a brilliance that was blinding. We sing of this glory time and again in the psalms. Yet when it really appears we can hardly believe it ourselves. The readings outline three different moments when this glory was revealed. The first was reported by the visionary in the book of Daniel. The second moment was the scene of the transfiguration. The third is hidden in the resurrection testimony of the author of the Letter of Peter.

We are the ones who today possess the prophetic message; we are the present day eyewitnesses of Christ's majesty. We too have moments when we might behold his glory and hear the voice proclaiming his identity, but we need eyes of faith and ears that are open.



St Mary of The Cross MacKillop
Tuesday August 8, 2017
Solemnity (Australia)
Feast (New Zealand)

