



The Voice

23rd March 2014

Third Sunday of Lent, Year A

Psalter Week 3

“Poured into our hearts”

LENT

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- ◆ **Recently deceased:**
Moirá O'Connor, Colin Munsie.
- ◆ **Anniversaries:**
Bishop Patrick Murphy, Cardinal James Freeman, Archbishop Guilford Young, Fr. Noel Hughes, Fr. Pat Ryan, Josie Hush, Marie Lise Goetz, Keith Booth, Thomas Boylan, Brendan Dwyer, Bruno de Souza, Dudley Juratowitch.
- ◆ **Remembrances:**
Hilda Rudgley.
- ◆ **And the sick:**
Helen and David Hopkins, Anne Unger, Anne de Graaff, Michael Cox, Susie Simmons, John and Patricia Welsh, John Osborne, Grace Williams, Sara Selim, Ken McLean, Lola Proctor, Maureen Wardrop, Fr. John O'Connor, m.s.c. Fr. Geoffrey Bugden, Johnny Feillafe, Alan Harland, Hanaa El-Khatib, Therese Payne, Pat Robbie.

The readings of today's Mass, like those of the next two Sundays, are designed to prepare the elect for their initiation. (The “elect” are those catechumens who are chosen by the Bishop for those sacraments, at a ceremony at the cathedral on the First Sunday of Lent.) There is a strong emphasis on “water and the Spirit” – the phrase used by our Lord in John 3:5, when he declares that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, one cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Of course, they also prepare the rest of us for the renewal of our baptism promises at the Easter Vigil and other Masses of Easter Sunday.

What is “initiation”? *A:* the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion. These are the sacraments by which we are “initiated” into the Body of Christ. For most of us, this initiation is spaced out over a few years, but a person who enters the Church as an adult or just over the age of reason (when the sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion are received anyway) receives all three at the one ceremony.

So what do today's readings do for us, whether we are preparing for initiation or for its renewal?

The first thing we notice is that, although Baptism is about *being washed in water*, the theme today is about *drinking water*. The second is that there is an emphasis

on *living water*, as opposed to the water that one might find in a well or other container. Living water is *flowing* water, and is taken as a symbol of the Spirit.

The first reading (confirmed by the responsorial psalm) is about the human “temptation” of God – “putting him to the test”, “trying” him. They have no water to drink – what is God going to do about it? God's response is that Moses should strike the rock at Horeb (or Sinai) *and water will flow from it for the people to drink*.

Turn to the gospel. Jesus sits down at the well in the town of Sychar (they still show it to you) at the hottest time of the day and asks a Samaritan woman for a drink. As St Augustine says, what he is really thirsting for is her faith or rather, the faith of the Samaritan people. In return he promises her “living” water, *a spring welling up to eternal life*, i.e. the Holy Spirit. She and many other Samaritans come to believe in him.

Now to the second reading. St Paul once again argues in a Father/Son/Spirit and faith/hope/charity model, and he teaches that our faith and hope do not deceive, *because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us*. The Spirit is thus

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Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world; give me living water, that I may never thirst again. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

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Around the Parish

Working with Children Check: The Diocese and our Parish is committed to keeping children safe and complying with all legislation. Recently, The Working with Children Check (WWCC) legislation changed. As a result, our generous volunteers in child-related ministries will be required by law to obtain a WWCC. The WWCC is free for volunteers. All new volunteers in child-related ministries need to obtain a WWCC before they begin their ministry. All existing volunteers in *child-related ministries* need to obtain a WWCC before 31 March 2015. Please contact the Parish office for the information Sheet for Volunteers in child-related Ministry on how to obtain your WWCC. If you already have a WWCC, you can use that number in our Parish.

Children's Liturgy Roster 30/3/14: Anne M Tonkin (L). Alecia Amaral (L). Philippa Tonkin (H).

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 28/3/14: Pam Hickey. Warren Sparrow. Gary Martin. Don Anderson.

Liturgy Team meeting Thursday, 27th March, 7.30pm in the Parish office.

Morning Tea/Coffee Roster 30.3.14 after 9.15am Mass: Catechists Group — one off.

Catechist's please note no meeting this Thursday, 27th March.

This weekend, Jan Henderson, a devoted catechetical teacher, will be addressing us at the conclusion of all Masses. Please welcome her to our Parish and give

some prayerful thought to her message.

Family Ministry meeting Thursday, 27th March, 1pm in the Riley room of the Ethel Cox Centre.

Living Faith Booklets now available in the Piety Stall. \$2 each.

Parish Pastoral Council: A number of current members are coming to the end of their terms. Would you like to be part of the new Council? A meeting of the current council and interested parishioners will shortly be held so that you can learn more. If you are interested (no obligation!) send a short note or email to the Parish Priest or to the Council Chairman (Bernard Edwards) c/o the Parish Office.

Bus Trip — St. Mary MacKillop Place. North Sydney. Healing Mass 1st April. Bus leaving at 8:30 am. \$15. BYO lunch or buy. Ph: Susie Casey 0403 417 639.

Caritas Australia: Your donation to Project Compassion means vulnerable people can live in safe, supportive communities and have hope for the future. For most of Archie's life, he lived with his family beside the Plaridel River in the Philippines, an area prone to flooding and typhoons. An emergency resettlement program supported by Caritas Australia helped the family resettle into permanent and secure housing away from the flood prone river.

Sincere Thank you: Kate O'Connor would like to extend to each of you her heartfelt thanks for your prayers following her injury. The neck brace is off at last and Kate is well on the way to a full recovery.

The Return of the Prodigal Son: Nouwen's reflection on Rembrandt's painting of the parable found in chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel, evokes a powerful drama homecoming, affirmation and reconciliation. This reading experience will explore these rich themes with the reflective aid of a copy of Rembrandt's masterpiece, and an exploration of the parable. Please join us for a good, friendly discussion. Books and refreshments supplied. Tuesdays 1, 8, 22 and 29th April, 7.00 pm - 8.30 pm in the Leo Mahon room. To register, phone the Parish Office 4341 1073 or write your name on the list in the gathering area. RSVP 25th March.

From the Parish Nurse:
Glaucoma—The Sneak Thief of Sight: Approximately 300,000 Australians have Glaucoma. Generally there are no warning signs and the loss of sight is usually gradual with peripheral (side) vision being lost before there is any awareness of any problem. Glaucoma can affect anyone, at any age, with the risk increasing from about the age of 40. For more information about Glaucoma see the display on the table in the gathering area.

Feast of the Annunciation: Prayers. Tuesday, 25th March, 1.15pm-2pm in Lady Chapel.

Resources for Family Celebration of Lent are available on the table in the gathering space.

Paschal Lambs now available in Piety Stall. Cost \$8

Parish Office will close at 3pm on Fridays (until Raelene returns at the end of May).

Social Justice

Pope Benedict XVI commented in 2006:

People from different religions and cultures throughout the world are convinced that achieving the goal of eradicating extreme poverty by the year 2015 is one of the most important

tasks in today's world. Moreover, they hold that such an objective is indissolubly linked to world peace and security.

Lazarus at Our Gate, Social Justice Statement 2013–14, p 4.

In 2014 Australia reduced its con-

tribution to Aus/Aid by hundreds of thousands of dollars. Let us here try to increase our donations to Caritas in 2014, where we know the money will go directly to help the world's poor and needy.

From the Diocese and beyond

Position Vacant: Administrative Assistant, Office of the Bishop, Diocese of Broken Bay, Pennant Hills: Full-time (1 year contract). The Office of the Bishop is seeking a person to assist with a varied role in a small team situation. The position would suit someone proficient in MS Office products with excellent administration, interpersonal, communication and organizational skills. For an information package and application details, please contact Jackie Hanson 9847 0226. jackie.hanson@dbb.org.au Applications close 1st April,

Serra Vocations Mass and Dinner: Fr. Paul Durkin, Parish Priest of Pennant Hills Parish and Diocesan Vocations Director celebrating Mass for Serra, Thursday, 27th March, 6.30pm, followed by a light meal, a short meeting with Father about Diocesan plans for promotion of vocations. Please pray daily for vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life, and for perseverance of existing vocations and all seminarians. Ph: Terry Scanlan 0438 887 295 or email terry_scanlan@bigpond.com

If you would like to join us.

Harvest Tours is offering an 18-20 day Marian Schoenstatt Pilgrimage for the 100 yrs Jubilee Celebrations. Details and contact numbers on table in gathering area.

The Prodigal Son— A presentation of sin, shame and divine mercy in the Gospel of St. Luke. Fr. Paul Maunder. o.c.d. Mt. Carmel Retreat Centre, 247 St. Andrews Rd. Varroville. April 5–9. Donation: \$20. Enquiries: John Ransom 0435 857 690.

Bruce Janiga

3rd Sunday of Lent, March 23

Ex 17:3-7
Ps 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9
Rom 5:1-2, 5-8
Jn 4:5-42 or 4:5-15, 19-26, 39, 40-42

A popular theme during Israel's time in the wilderness is the people's grumbling against Moses and God. Today's reading from Exodus tells us they "grumbled against Moses" (v 3) because they had no water to drink. Today's psalm tells how "they tested me though they had seen my works" (95:9). They seem to be a people with short memories. But God is ever faithful and provides them with water from the rock. As a testament to their hard-heartedness, the place is called Massah (the place of testing) and Meribah (the place of quarrelling).

Paul tells the Romans that having "been justified by faith, / we have peace with God" (v 1). This grace is ours through Jesus, who "died at the appointed time for the ungodly" (v 6). One would not expect someone to die for sinners, but "God proves his love for us / in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us" (v 8). This is the cause of our hope: God loved us first.

Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman extends his ministry beyond Israel. In his day, Samaritans and Jews avoided each other, despite the fact that they had a common ancestry. In our Gospel reading, the woman comes to the well for water at mid-day, which is unusual because that is when the sun is hottest. Her presence here at this hour may indicate that she wishes to avoid her neighbours, perhaps because of her marital status. This well is associated with "our father Jacob, / who ... drank from it himself" (v 12). In his conversation with this woman, Jesus reveals himself as the source of "living water" (v 10), which leads to "eternal life" (v 14). Among other points of revelation we can find in this passage, John tells us that Jesus is "a prophet" (v 19), "the Messiah" (vv 25-26), and "the saviour of the world" (v 42).

For reflection: Despite God's goodness to me, do I grumble sometimes like the Israelites did? Do I truly thirst for the living water Jesus offers?

4th Sunday of Lent, March 30

1 Sm 16:1, 6-7, 10-13
Ps 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6
Eph 5:8-14
Jn 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

The story of David's selection to be Israel's second king shows us that God does not see as mortals see: "the Lord looks into the heart" (v 7). The prophet Samuel is sent to Bethlehem to find a new king for Israel, for God's favour no longer rests on Saul. David is selected only after Samuel has been presented with Jesse's seven other sons. David, the youngest, is "tending the sheep" (v 11). He is the one chosen by the Lord, so Samuel anoints him, and "the spirit of the Lord rushed upon David" (v 13). u

"Live as children of light," Paul encourages the Ephesians (v 8). He is using imagery familiar to the Greek world: the dualism of light and darkness. "You were once darkness," he says, referring to their former lives without Christ, "but now you are light in the Lord." Since we belong to the Lord, we should strive to do "what is pleasing to the Lord" (v 10).

Jesus' encounter with the man born blind employs the dualism of light and darkness we saw in Ephesians. In the Gospel, darkness is associated with blindness and sin, while light is associated with truth and God. In the previous chapter, Jesus declared, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me ... will have the light of life" (8:12). The man born blind has his eyes opened by Jesus and comes to believe in him, expressed by his act of worship (9:38). But the Pharisees, who can physically see, refuse to believe in Jesus and so stand in judgment. They condemn Jesus for violating the Sabbath by making clay and healing, actions forbidden by their interpretation of the Law. They have become blind, but this blindness is spiritual and perhaps harder to cure.

For reflection: Am I satisfied to see with my eyes, or do I try to see with my heart? Do I keep the light of Christ, given to me at baptism, burning brightly?

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When Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink of water, He opened the door for a life-changing relationship with Him. Scripture says her testimony drew many others to Him as well. We, too, must be ready to respond whenever and wherever the Lord speaks to us and be prepared for it to change our lives!



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, corner of Blackwall and Victoria Roads, Woy Woy

Parish Office Ethel Cox Parish Centre
P.O. Box 264 100 Blackwall Road.
54 Victoria Road

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

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Dr John Hill, *Parish Priest*

Fr Stephen Wayoyi, A.J. *Assistant Priest*

Office Staff: Helen Cameron & Margaret Cooper

Parish Nurse: Ellen Bevan

Office Hours: 9.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m., Monday to Thursday
9.30 a.m. – 3.00 p.m., 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, 3.30 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).

PARISH CHOIR – Practice Wednesday nights in the church, 7 p.m. Enquiries: 4341 3367.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, 21a Dulakara Rd South Woy Woy 2256. p 024341 0884 f 0243 445049.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP For information and events contact Sam French 042 244 9539.

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.

CASH HOUSIE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre, Cnr Ocean Beach Rd & McMasters Rd, Woy Woy. Games start at 7.30 p.m. and finish 10.20 p.m., cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6.00 p.m. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries Rob: 0427 990818.

"Poured into our hearts"

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seen as something that we drink, as in the other readings: it is "poured into our hearts".

Taken together, the readings and responsorial psalm remind us of Psalm 63: *O God, you are my God, for you I long; for you my soul is thirsting. My body pines for you like a dry, weary land without water;* or of Psalm 42: *Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God. My soul is thirsting for God, the God of my life; when can I enter and see the face of God?*

Baptism + Confirmation + First Communion, then, certainly include the idea of washing, but they also come together as the way in which God satisfies this thirst for himself: he pours the Holy Spirit into our hearts. A good host in Jesus' time would do three things: wash the feet of his guest; anoint his head with oil; lead him to

the table. Christian initiation thus consists of a *washing* (Baptism), an *anointing* (Confirmation) and a sacrificial *meal* in which we are fed with the Body and Blood of Christ. Put them all together, and the Holy Spirit is "poured into our hearts".

The process by which we become conscious of this thirst within us is called "conversion". Initiation is the slaking of that thirst. But, just as the new Christian approaches God for the satisfaction of this thirst, so all of us are brought to this consciousness by our observance of Lent: denying ourselves in some way makes space for the God who longs to pour his Spirit into our hearts; prayer enlarges that space; and our thirst for God moves us to be generous to the poor through Project Compassion. When we renew our baptismal commitment at Easter, we not only renew our purification from sin; God pours his Spirit into our hearts.

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

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



Diocese of Broken Bay