



The Voice

8th November 2015 Thirty-Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B Psalter Week 4

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Graham Shirley, Fr. Michael Dargan, Dorrienne Moir, Irene Mahar.
- **Anniversaries:**
Patricia Cameron, John Quinn, Shirley Job, Kath Spear, Albert David Snell.
- **Remembrances:**
For all Benefactors.
- **And the sick:**
Peter Wellins, Loretta Holt, Frances Sara, Neil Cameron, June Ferry, Kate Tinson, Beryl Allen, Lola Proctor, Jack Moulds, Maryanne Diorio, Charles Knowles, Mark Taylor, Alan Harland, Connor Cole, Fr. Bill Meacham, Carol Cross, Fr. Brian Rowland, Bruce Spence, Mary Dolan, Grace Williams, Arnold Diorio, Tony O'Neill, Peter Harrison, Nathalie Rankin, Vince Zappavigna.

You can probably remember from primary school taking a sentence such as 'He sat on the rock'. By putting the emphasis on any one of the words the point of the sentence is quite changed.

Likewise with today's Gospel story, the meaning of which is almost entirely dependent on the tone of voice and emphasis.

For centuries, the Church has read this passage with a 'pat on the back' tone of voice for the poor widow, commending her generosity and praising her perhaps over against the calculated giving by the rich: '...what they had over'.

No, this passage is to be read with the same white-hot anger as Jesus displayed against the money dealers and traders in the Temple, whom he expelled in fury only a few days before.

Jesus had just warned his followers: 'Beware the Scribes'. Why? '... because they swallow the property of widows.' Widows were particularly vulnerable. Scribes would administer the deceased husband's estate, with all sorts of opportunities for embezzlement and theft.

In Jesus' view what was going on in the Temple was thinly veiled economic exploitation. Jesus is strongly disapproving of the conditioning of this poor woman, already exploited by the Scribal class, and now further impoverished by the Temple authorities.

She is rendered destitute - 'all she had to live on' by a heartless, rapacious, religious system. She was left without the means to purchase the necessities of life.

Jesus would have been aware of the writings of the prophet Jeremiah warning the Jewish people: 'Put no trust in delusive words like these: "the sanctuary of Yahweh". But if you do amend your behaviour and your actions ...if you do not exploit the stranger, the orphan and the widow ...then here in this place I will stay with you.' (Jer 7:3-7)

In Our Lord's view, in their brainwashing of such persons as the vulnerable widow, the Temple authorities would bring about the

departure of God's special presence in the Temple.

Our Lord Jesus Christ wanted to create a radically different distribution of resources amongst his followers. And we are told this happened at Pentecost: 'The faithful all lived together and owned everything in common: they sold their goods and possessions and shared out the proceeds among themselves according to what each one needed.'

A widow would find in the early Christian community the resources she needed for 'the necessities of life'. In fact, the Apostles were so overwhelmed by this task that the first Deacons were appointed with this particular service for the poor as a priority. The major message of this Gospel story is that the Church must never take advantage of the religious fervour of the poor and vulnerable in order to build up its own resources. To do so would be to risk the withdrawal of God's special presence from our midst.

At the moment, there is a major restoration project being conducted at our cathedral. We could not in good conscience undertake that if we were not at the same time conducting a refuge for homeless men from the streets.

We have recently carried out major works on a Church and the Presbytery in our parish. We could not in good conscience undertake that if we were not at the same time raising money in support of refugees and asylum seekers and supporting our own St Vincent de Paul activities in the local community.

To paraphrase Jeremiah: 'Put no trust in delusive words: "This is our parish Church." But if you do not exploit the poor and the vulnerable but, rather, help them in their need, then here in this place I will stay with you. It is the Lord Jesus who speaks.'

Let us resolve to listen to Our Lord and to the prophet Jeremiah and then to act with authenticity and integrity. © Fr Michael Tate

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! Happy the poor in spirit; the kingdom of heaven is theirs! *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish

Eighth Anniversary of the Dedication of our Church will be celebrated at all Sunday Masses next weekend.

Holy Hour—Exposition and Benediction every Thursday 7.30pm-8.30pm for the needs of the Parish.

Charitable Works Fund Appeal
Special collection at all Masses this week end.

St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Appeal next weekend 14/15 November. Bags available in gathering area.

Baptisms: We welcome into our faith community and pray for Ben Blackman, Harvey Catt and Joel Catt who were baptised last Sunday.

Children's Liturgy Roster 15/11/15: Marianne Bowyer, Frances Giunta, Jenny Riddiford

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 13/11/15: Christine French, Michael French.

Parish Christmas Hampers:

We know that there are many in our community who may be aged, widowed, single parents or disabled. They may be alone or have no close family. They may be in a nursing home or other care facility. A Hamper Gift from you, a member of our Parish family, would be appreciated and will give much joy to someone in need at Christmas. Lists of various hampers needed from you to choose from are on display. Please take notice of each hamper's code. Single items can be left in the gathering area. No cigarettes, alcohol or perishables please. Hampers will be collected on the weekend 5/6 December. Note: This is a separate collection from St. Vincent de Paul's Christmas collection. If you know of anyone in need of a hamper, please contact Susie Casey on 0403 417 639.

Of Faith and Grace Study Group: Thursday, 12th November, 11am in the Leo Mahon room.

Faith Based Conversations:

Getting good at talking about your faith to family and friends takes practice (and grace). Make a new friend you can talk with about your faith. Leo Mahon room. Saturday, 14th November, 10.30am-11.30am. Morning tea included.

Winner of the Trifecta was Pat O'Riley. Our Rosary makers thank everyone for their generous support.

First Reconciliation: Please pray for our children who are preparing to receive this Sacrament the first week in December.

Thank You to Kath Player, Mary Drinan and all the other knitters for their effort during the winter months and their ongoing support. SVdP.

November Mass Offerings:

Envelopes will be placed in a basket on the altar at all Masses during November. They will be taken to the altar during the Offertory procession.

The Just Word

Sydney Peace Prize:

From the website of the Sydney Peace Foundation: *The Sydney Peace Foundation awards Australia's only annual international prize for peace—the Sydney Peace Prize...The prize is specifically directed at peace with justice, which means the practical realization of human rights: food, health, education*

and freedoms, not just a lack of oppression. It means children can walk to school without being shot and asylum seekers seek freedom without being murdered, it means food security...the very broadest sense of human rights.

The Prize for 2014 was awarded to Julian Burnside AO QC. 'For his brave and principled advoca-

cacy for human rights and those wronged by government, for insisting that we respect our international legal obligations towards those seeking asylum, and for his unflinching defence of the rule of law as a means to achieve a more peaceful and just society.'

For more information : <http://sydneypeacefoundation.org.au>

From the Diocese and beyond

St. Patrick's Institute of Education Information Session: Enrolments are now open for our 2016 Diplomas in Business, Management and Business Administration. These 40 week courses are ideal for Year 10, 11 and 12 school leavers and provide a viable alternative pathway to career and university success. Our Job Placement Program sees up to 95% of our

graduates placed in jobs prior to the completion of the course. Our next Information Session focusing on giving students and their parents an insight into St. Patrick's Pathway to Success' will be held on Sunday, 15 November at our newly refurbished premises on Level 1, 65 York Street, Sydney at 11am. For more information visit www.spie.edu.au

Christmas High Tea: Ethica accessories not for profit organization helping women in need in Peru are holding a Christmas High Tea Thursday, 19th November, 10am - 12.30pm. Ron Dyer Centre, St. Mary's Parish grounds, Miller St. Nth. Sydney. Entry \$25. Great raffles and wine orders at discounted prices from Flinders Bay courtesy of Tom's Cellars. RSVP 15th November. Ph: 8912 2716.

Readings for Today and Sunday Week

Bruce Janiga

32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time, November 8

1 Kgs 17:10-16

Ps 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

Heb 9:24-28

Mk 12:38-44 or 12:41-44

Our first reading today narrates Elijah's encounter with the widow of Zarephath. This reading was chosen to accompany the Gospel reading because both texts present us with examples of generous widows. Elijah encounters the widow as she is preparing her last meal in the midst of a drought. After she and her son eat the meal, she tells him, "we shall die" (v 12). The prophet asks her to give him some food first and promises her that "the jar of flour shall not go empty, nor the jug of oil run dry" (v 14), until the Lord sends rain. She feeds the prophet and is rewarded for her generosity with an unending supply of food.

The writer of Hebrews continues the discussion of Christ's sacrifice, saying that his sacrifice surpassed the sacrifice of other high priests in that it was made directly to God on our behalf.

As we approach the end of the liturgical year, the tension between Jesus and his opponents increases. In today's Gospel text, Jesus warns his disciples about the example of the scribes, the interpreters of biblical law in his day. While they are perceived as pious and receive respect from the people, they also "devour the houses of widows" (v 40). Widows were considered among the most vulnerable in society. One interpretation proposes that the scribes, who were not supposed to be paid for their work, took advantage of the charity of widows. Scholars tell us that there were 13 containers at the temple for offerings; six were for free-will offerings. Pilgrims visiting would deposit their coins in these. The widow in our story offers two *lepta*, which was the equivalent of a Roman *quadrans*, the smallest denomination of coin, equal to 1/64 the

daily wage, a *denarius*. Her gift could not have been smaller, but because of her poverty, no gift was greater. She gave, as Jesus says, "all she had" (v 44).

For Reflection: There are various ways of giving: time, treasure, and talent. When I give, is it from my surplus, or does it come from my substance? Is my heart really in it?

Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, November 22

Dn 7:13-14

Ps 93:1, 1-2, 5

Rv 1:5-8

Jn 18:33-37

The solemnity of Christ the King brings our liturgical year to a close. In this celebration we acknowledge that Jesus is Lord of the universe and of our hearts. We look forward to the day when he will establish his reign in its fullness.

The words from Daniel today imagine the time of final judgment. The "One like a son of man" (v 13), understood by Christians as Jesus, receives "dominion, glory, and kingship" (v 14). His rule is everlasting. The prophet envisions a time when the world powers, represented by various images in the text, will be defeated and destroyed by God's anointed one. The Book of Daniel was a source of much consolation to the Jews during their times of trial under the Syrians, and it had similar value to the Christians undergoing persecution in the first century.

The Book of Revelation, probably the most misunderstood book in the Christian Bible, begins with a series of visions experienced by a man named John. In verse 4 he had been commissioned to write letters to "seven churches in Asia." The messages in the letters come from "Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn of the dead



Both widows in today's readings gave all they had to the work of the Lord, one using all her remaining food to feed Elijah and the other offering her two copper coins to the temple treasury. Faithful stewards give all that is asked and trust the Lord to be faithful to His promises.



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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 Ethel Cox Parish Centre
P.O. Box 264 Walter Baker Hall
54 Victoria Road 100 Blackwall Road
WOY WOY N.S.W. 2256

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.*

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

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 after 7.45am Mass 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 Sam French 042 244 9539.

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

Sunday Readings

(continued)

(Continued from page 3)

and ruler of the kings of the earth" (v 5). Today's message is one of promise: "he is coming ... and every eye will see him" (v 7). He is the one envisioned by Daniel, the one who will come to overthrow the rulers of the earth and establish his own everlasting dominion. He is Christ our King.

In John's Gospel, Pontius Pilate asks Jesus, "Are you the King of the Jews?" (v 33). Typical of John, the dialogue is on two different levels simultaneously. Pilate is asking about an earthly kingdom, but Jesus responds that his kingdom "does not belong to this world" (v 36). For John, Jesus is a king who gives his life for his servants. His leadership is evidenced by his service to others. Unlike the rulers of the world, his reign is characterized by love and humility.

For Reflection: In what way does my life declare that Christ is my king? How can Jesus' example serve to guide me when I am in a position of authority? **ML**

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.

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



Diocese of
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