



# The Voice

16th August 2015

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Psalter Week 4

## OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**  
Catherine Warwick,  
Katarina Buturac, Sally King,  
Patricia Welsh.
- **Anniversaries:**  
Jannette Moroney,  
Isabella Dwyer,  
Andrew Flanagan, Iris McNeil,  
Ellen and David O'Regan,  
Olive Beach, Norman Wise,  
Nell and Tom Molloy,  
Noreen Connolly,  
Robert John Sharp,  
Thomas and Martin Carr.
- **Remembrances:**  
Mary and George Hilliard,  
Hilliard Brothers, Kevin Mills,  
Mills Family, Bernie Hanna,  
Leslie Denning, Valerie Price,  
Denis Mulligan.
- **And the sick:**  
June Ferry, Kate Tinson,  
Janelle Darson, Pat Bombell,  
Beryl Allen, Fr. Bill Meacham,  
Kevin Houghton, Lola Proctor,  
Rene Glaze, Jack Moulds,  
Tony Schumacher,  
Alan Harland, Tony O'Neill,  
Fr. Brian Rowland, Sara Selim,  
Mark Taylor, Irene Beck,  
Arnold Diorio, Bruce Spence,  
Mary Dolan, Joy Coleman,  
Roy Beveridge, Saxon Hall,  
Audrey Winsbury,  
Marsha Burzynski,  
Rita and John Webb,  
James Leary, Elaine Finlayson,  
Neil Cameron, Sandy Sirrell,  
Connor Cole.

## Inside this issue:

Notices and News	2
Readings for today and next Sunday	3
Directory	4

In the early 1970s there was an edition of *Readers Digest* that told how a jet crashed in the Andes. It was a good case study in moral reasoning. The issue was that some of the survivors of that crash resorted to cannibalism to survive. The question the author posed was, 'Is it ever ethical to eat another human being?'

Whatever the extreme and specific ethical arguments for cannibalism might be, the thought of eating another person is repulsive to most of us. Yet many people outside Catholicism often think that we are Christian cannibals, feasting on Jesus' flesh and blood.

The best traditions in the Church have always been very careful in the language they use about how Jesus is present in the Eucharist. We are not cannibals. We are not eating Jesus' liver, brain and bones.

In the Catechism when it speaks of the Eucharistic real presence, it never refers to 'Jesus' but always to 'Christ'. The distinction matters. The Eucharist is a Sacrament of Easter. It is the glorified, risen Christ who is wholly and truly present under the form of bread and wine at the Eucharist.

Popular piety and legends that speak too explicitly about the physicality of the Eucharist have not helped us have sensible thinking. As a Catholic I believe that Christ, raised by God from the dead, is truly and personally present to me in the Eucharist. How - is a question that misses the point of the gift.

Chapter six of John's Gospel is a discourse on the Eucharist. It is also, and at the same time, a discourse about Jesus' passion and death and our mission to

follow in his way. For Jesus, the new Moses, not only gives bread to the people, but also in his passion, death and resurrection he gives us himself. This is why the Church has always linked the events at Easter with the celebration of Eucharist.

Why have we been given this unique gift? The Eucharist is not meant to be a feast for a privileged few. It's not a private devotion. It's not meant to be something that only assures us of our own particular salvation. It is meant to be something that empowers all Christians to go out and transform the world with love and goodness for Christ's sake.

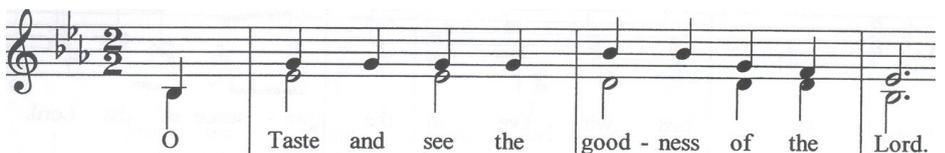
The Church has always linked what we do *away* from the Eucharist with what we celebrate at it. This doesn't mean that all of us can rush out and feed the world's poor. It does mean that most of us can assist other groups or people who do precisely that. And it does mean that when we think about who we will vote for as political leaders, we ask about their platform in relation to those in our country and world who are suffering the most. The former General of the Jesuits, Fr Pedro Arrupe once said, 'If there is hunger anywhere in the world, then our celebration of the Eucharist is somehow incomplete everywhere in the world'.

Sometimes we can think of the Eucharist as a magical act. Jesus counters such a notion in today's gospel when he tells us that he gives us himself 'for the life of the world'. The Eucharist does not turn us into cannibals; it's meant to make us radicals, radically committed to all God's people everywhere.

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## Psalm Response

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## Gospel Acclamation

*Alleluia, alleluia!* All who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me and I in them, says the Lord. *Alleluia!*



# Readings for Today and next Sunday

Bruce Janiga

## 20th Sunday in Ordinary Time, August 16

*Prv 9:1-6*

*Ps 34:2-3, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15*

*Eph 5:15-20*

*Jn 6:51-58*

The Book of Proverbs consists of material that spans many centuries of biblical Israel's history, primarily the days of the monarchy from the 11th to the 6th centuries BCE. The first nine chapters, including today's reading, are thought to be from a later century when the writings were compiled, sometime after the Exile. These texts, along with other "Wisdom" writings, give us some insight into the centuries leading up to Jesus. Wisdom is personified as a woman who is hosting a feast. She invites the naive to partake of her banquet and "advance in the way of understanding" (v 6). As an ancient textbook for young men living in Israel, the book encourages them to choose the better of the two ways: the way of life. Wisdom is offered to all, but not everyone accepts the invitation. Early Christianity came to understand Wisdom as a foreshadowing of the Word-made-flesh, Jesus Christ.

The Ephesians are warned not to live foolishly but to be wise, "making the most of the opportunity, because the days are evil" (v 15). Today's reading exhorts the community to dedicate itself to striving to grow in wisdom and acting in holiness in their relations with one another. We too need to heed these words as we are also called to be God's light to the world.

In the Gospel today, Jesus tells us that he is "the living bread that came down from heaven" (v 51). But John tells us that some had a hard time understanding this. Since Jesus has not yet instituted the Eucharist, they think that he means they must eat and drink his actual flesh and blood. John's church understands this, as their weekly celebration of the Lord's Supper is a sharing in the body and blood of Christ. Jesus says that there are two benefits in eating his flesh and drinking his blood: it

unites the believer to him, and it leads to eternal life.

**For Reflection:** What are some ways that I am tempted to follow a way contrary to that of God? How can I keep on the right path? When I receive the Eucharist, do I experience a deeper sense of unity with Christ? How can I make this feeling stronger?

## 21st Sunday in Ordinary Time, August 23

*Jos 24:1-2, 15-17, 18*

*Ps 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21, 22-23*

*Eph 5:21-32*

*Jn 6:60-69*

In the Book of Joshua the Israelites take possession of the Promised Land. In today's reading Joshua leads the people in a covenant ceremony, renewing their relationship with the Lord. After recounting all the things the Lord has done for them, Joshua invites the people to promise fidelity to God. "Fear the Lord and serve him completely and sincerely" (24:14). Otherwise, he says, choose which gods you will serve, those of Egypt "beyond the River" or the gods of the Canaanites or "Amorites" (v 15). There comes a point in life when we have to make a choice; this is the moment for the generation that has inherited the Promised Land. Their response is a positive one, "Far be it from us to forsake the Lord for the service other gods" (v 16). Though the gods of other nations will be a temptation for them over the coming centuries, they pledge fidelity to the God who gave them life.

Today's reading from Ephesians is one of the texts that gives Paul a bad name. It is also a text that leads scholars to argue that the letter was not written by him, for his view of the relationship between male and female is not the same as is found in this text. The writer of Ephesians calls for wives to "be subordinate to their hus-

(Continued on page 4)




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Even though we are told that if we seek the Lord, we shall not want, in the second reading St. Paul reminds us that, thus blessed by the Lord, the good steward should "give thanks to God the Father always and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

SEE EPHESIANS 5:20

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## Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula

Woy Woy, Umina, Ettalong, Koolewong, Tascott, 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. MSFS & Fr. Philip Thottam MSFS.  
*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.

### 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 PRIMARY SCHOOL** 21a Dulkara Rd South Woy Woy. 2256. Ph: 4341 0884. Fax 0243 445 049.

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

**CATHOLICCARE** Marriage 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 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: Louise 0427 690 626.

## Sunday Readings

(continued)

(Continued from page 3)

bands" (v 22) but goes on to say, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the church" (v 25). The union of husband and wife, rooted in the text from Genesis 2, is part of God's original blessing of humanity. It is also an analogy of the union between Christ and his church, we are told. Calling for mutual love and respect between husband and wife, our author tells us that married love mirrors God's love for us. As Christ gave his life for us, so we are to put the needs of others before our own needs.

For John, Jesus is able to read his disciples' minds. Thus he knows that they are questioning his words about eating his flesh. This Bread of Life Discourse leads many of his disciples to abandon him. But the Twelve remain. When Jesus ques-

tions them about why they are staying, Simon Peter answers for them all, "To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (v 68).

**For Reflection:** What "gods" are a temptation in my life, inviting me to put them before service of God? Does my love mirror the love of Christ? If I did not have Jesus in my life, where would I be?

**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 Church in Upper Montclair, N.J. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.



Diocese of  
Broken Bay