

The Voice

21st August 2016 Twenty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C Psalter Week I



OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Kevin Cavanagh, Geoffrey Dougty, Marcia Griffioen, Gai Jackson, Billie Daniel, Lorna Rimmer.
- **Anniversaries:**
Fr. Darcy O'Keeffe, Cornelio Balce, Silvina Balce, Wenceslao Balce, Umiliano Menezes, Paulina Menezes, Safaa El-Khatib, Wanda Grima, Sabastian Lee Hae-Chang.
- **And the sick:**
Rene Glase, Beryl Allen, Peter John Grima, Jack Moulds, Tracie Passlow, Cheryl Douglas, Rosemary Anderson, Bruce Spence, Maryanne Diorio, John Allen, Coral Williams, Tony Schumacher, Irene Beck, Alan Harland, Keith Oakes, Elaine Finlayson, Vince Zappavigna, Don Boland, Albie Curtis, Celeste Boonaerts, Louise Dunn, Jannelle Dawson, Nola Davies, Margaret Thoms, Baby Winter, Baby Blake, Ian Wilks, Helen McKeon, Audrey Barsendich, Frank Schmidt, Nicola (Nick) Bubici, John Simmons, Brooke Simmons, Maureen Cows. Bryan Moroney, Jason Wellin.

Jesus and Satan have an argument as to who is the better computer programmer. This goes on for a few hours until they agree to hold a contest with God as the judge.

They set themselves before their computers and begin. They type furiously for several hours, lines of code streaming up and down the screen.

Seconds before the end of the competition, a bolt of lightning strikes, taking out the electricity. Moments later, the power is restored, and God announces that the contest is over. He asks Satan to show what he has come up with.

Satan is visibly upset, and cries, 'I have nothing! I lost it all when the power went out.'

'Very well, then,' says God, 'let us see if Jesus fared any better.'

Jesus enters a command, and the screen comes to life in vivid display, the voices of an angelic choir pour forth from the speakers.

Satan is astonished. He stutters, 'But how? I lost everything, yet Jesus' program is intact! How did he do it?'

God looks up over his glasses and chuckles, 'Ah you see, Jesus saves.'

Salvation has, rightly, always been the big issue. Who was going to make it, how it was going to happen and when would Christ return in glory have captured the imagination of each generation of believers.

The roots of this thinking can be found in today's Gospel. The earliest Christians, especially the Gentiles, saw that the Jews had been given every opportunity for salvation. They were the Chosen people. They had the Law and the Prophets. They were looking for the Messiah. Jesus, however, did not come as they expected or act as they hoped, so they rejected him and his followers. Within a generation after Jesus' death the Jews were persecuting the Christians and expelling them from the synagogues. The Christians took comfort

from saying that in the salvation race the Jews might have started as the favourites, but they had missed the start and were now coming last.

This way of thinking had a strong effect on the Church. While we have always believed in the mercy and love of God, at different times we have been hostile to other religions, other denominations and the secular world. We have often needed to express this in absolute terms about who was going to be saved and, more importantly, who was not!

The Second Vatican Council, however, reflected on the Church's experience of working side by side with religious people and secular humanists throughout the world who were as committed as we are to justice, love and freedom. In the 'Declaration on the relationship of the Church to non-Christian religions', the bishops thought more generously about how God has a relationship with all people who in turn relate to God, even if they do not name it in the same way we are able to. The Council did not resile from believing that Jesus is the way to the Father, but they also affirmed that God can work in an infinite number of ways to assist people to salvation. It is Church teaching now that our relationship to all people who share the best of our values must be characterised by acceptance, collaboration, dialogue and charity.

This does not make salvation any less important. It just clarifies for us that it is God, not us, who does the saving and the judging. Christian salvation marks us out as people who know who we are following, where we are going, how we are getting there and why this world, and the next, matters to us. Salvation gives our lives meaning, direction and purpose.

The way we live out this salvation should be irresistible to others. As the folk hymn sings, 'They will know we are Christians by our love, by our love. Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.'

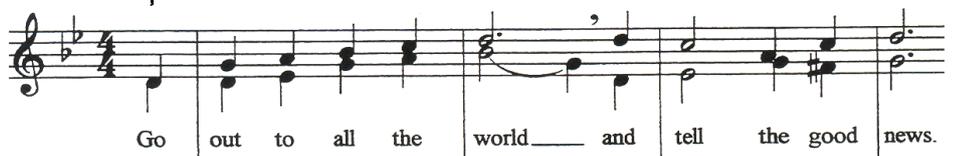
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Inside this issue:

Notices and News	2
Will I be Saved? by Mary Coloe	3
Directory	4

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! I am the way, the truth and the life, says the Lord; no one comes to the Father, except through me. *Alleluia!*

Around the Parish

Catholics Returning Home 5 Week Program continues next Wednesday, 24th August. 7.30pm-9pm, Leo Mahon room. The Church Today; Changes since Vatican II and Discussion.

Sympathy: St. John the Baptist Family Parish would like to extend our prayerful sympathy to the family, relatives and friends of Marcia Griffioen and Gai Jackson who were buried from our church last week.

Liturgy Meeting Thursday, 25th August, 7.30pm in the Parish office.

Catechists Meeting Thursday 25th August, 9.00am in the Leo Mahon room.

Children's Liturgy Roster 28/8/16: Kylie Spicer, Therese Carroll, Marina Mondal.

Volunteer Church Cleaning 26/8/16: Maria Wickens, Jo Salter, Mary McCumstie, Pam Hickey.

C.W.F. Appeal held last weekend has raised \$5,672. Thank you for your generosity.

Planned Giving Envelopes available in the gathering area. Please note your envelope number may have changed.

Ecumenical Progressive Luncheon: The Annual Ecumenical progressive luncheon will be held on Saturday, 3rd September.

1st Course commencing 12 midday at the Uniting Church, 246 Ocean Beach Rd. Umina.

2nd Course commencing 12.45pm Walter Baker Hall, 100 Blackwall Road.

3rd Course commencing 1.45pm St. Luke's Anglican Church, 147-149 Blackwall Road.

Admission: There will be a gold coin donation for 1st and 3rd course. \$5 for the main course.

Everyone is welcome! Please put your name on the list in the gathering area if you plan to come to the luncheon.

Bus Fund Fathers Day Raffle and Cake Stall: Tickets on sale 20th & 21st and 27th & 28th August at all Sunday Masses. Drawn 29th August.

1st Prize: Ryobi Lawn Mower.

Cake Stall 27th and 28th August. Enquiries 4344 2288.

Bus Trip to Rooty Hill, Wednesday 24th August, leaving at 9am. Morning tea at Nurragingy Reserve, lunch at Rooty Hill RSL. Contact Susie Casey 0403 417 639 for all enquiries, payments and reservations.

Bus Trip—Gathering of the Clans Saturday 3rd September. Bus will leave the church 8.15am for a full day of Scottish fun. Cost: \$5 per person (pay on the day). Please leave your name and phone number in the folder on the table in the gathering area. An information flyer with all details is in the folder for you to take.

Morning Tea Roster 28/8/16 will be the Pastoral Council

Trivia Night for Mary Mac's Place, Patonga Beach Hotel, Saturday, 10th September 7pm. Quiz Master Brad Storey from ABC 92.5. Tickets \$35 include wood fired Pizza Dinner from 'A Piazza Italia' and entry plus huge range of Prizes, Silent Auctions, activities and Big Yellow Moon Band.

The Just Word

August 16 Daguragu (Wave Hill Station) returned to the Gurindji people in 1975

From the fact sheet of the National Archives of Australia: Wave Hill Station is located approximately 600 kilometres south of Darwin in the Northern Territory. Vestey's, a British pastoral company which ran the cattle station, employed local Aboriginal people, mostly Gurindji. Working and living conditions for Aboriginal people were very poor. The wages of the Aboriginal generally were controlled and not equal to those paid to non-Aboriginal employees. An attempt to introduce equal wages for Aboriginal workers was made in 1965, but in March 1966 the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission decided to delay until 1968 the payment of award wages to male Aboriginal workers in the cattle industry.

In August 1966, Vincent Lingiari, a Gurindji spokesman, led a walk off of 200 Aboriginal stockmen, house servants, and their families from Wave Hill as a protest against the work and pay conditions. The strike was part of a widespread campaign begun by workers on Brunette Downs, Station and support by non-indigenous people, including unionists and the author Frank Hardy.

The protesters camped at Wattie Creek (Daguragu) and sought the return of some of their traditional lands to develop a cattle station. They petitioned the Governor-General in 1967, Prime Minister Whitlam announced that funds would be made available for the purchase of properties that were not on the reserves and Lord Vestey offered to surrender 90 square kilometres to the Gurindji people.

Daguragu was acquired by the Aboriginal Land Fund Commission

and, on 16 August 1975 at Daguragu, Prime Minister Whitlam transferred leasehold title to the Gurindji, symbolically handing soil to Vincent Lingiari.

The Gurindji campaign was an important influence on the events leading to the passing of the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976.

The Central Land Council applied on behalf of the Gurindji under the Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976 for traditional land comprising the Daguragu pastoral lease and some adjacent un-alienated Crown Land. In 1981 the Aboriginal Land Commissioner recommended that the land claim should be granted. The claim relating to the South West Corner was granted in 1985. See www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs224.aspx

From the Diocese and beyond

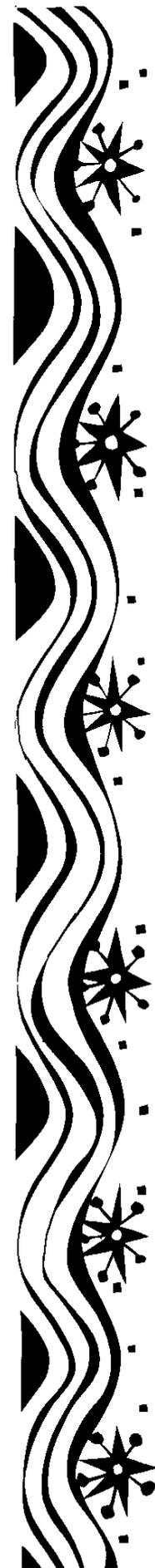
'Sara's Place: A much needed pregnancy crisis centre has opened in Gosford for women with unplanned pregnancies to receive counselling, support and practical assistance to continue with their pregnancies. The centre also will be a place of

understanding and counselling for those women suffering as a result of pregnancy loss including abortion and miscarriage.

We are calling for volunteers to be trained and to devote some of their time to share in this great work on

behalf of pregnant women in need. Full training will be provided.

Can you help? Please call Linda on 1300 851 592 or Paul Sheeran 0408 677 432.



Will I be saved?

As the Letter to the Hebrews draws to a close, the writer's aim to encourage the faith of the community becomes very clear.

The entire letter has often been compared to a homily, exhorting the congregation to keep faith. The exact date and location of the letter is not known, but from the clues in the letter the community is undergoing difficulty, perhaps even persecution.

Such suffering is likened to the instructive training of a child who may need punishment and reprimands. Earlier in this letter the author had stated that even Jesus was taught in this way:

Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.
(Hebrews 5:8).

So too the Christian, whose life is modelled on that of Jesus, must also expect to suffer trials. This type of theological thinking reflects the Wisdom tradition where we find:

My child, do not despise the
Lord's discipline
or be weary of his reproof,
for the Lord reproves the
one he loves,
as a father the son in whom he
delights.
(Proverbs 3:11-12)

Rather than see suffering and difficulties as a sign of God's absence, the believer is exhorted to receive these as signs of God love.

In the Gospel, Jesus is now on a journey south to Jerusalem and a question is asked,

'will there be only a few saved?'

Hear the urgency of the question put to him as he preaches about the reign of God:

'How many will get in?'

In other words,

'What about me, will I be saved?'

I suspect that sometimes we all ask such a question – 'will I go to heaven?'

Jesus does not give a direct number, but replies with a parable. Not for him are those religions that promise salvation to a predetermined finite number. God's hospitality is expansive, all are invited, and yet the caution is given that the opportunity to respond to God's invitation is not going to be available forever. Like the person who shuts down for the night, there will come a time when the invitation expires.

Have you ever had the experience of issuing an invitation and getting the reply, 'Can I let you know later?' In other words, I'm interested if nothing better comes along.

The reign of God asks more than such a half-hearted response. It calls for a clear commitment, 'Yes' or 'No'.

In Jesus' presence, God is inviting all to participate in God's desire for a world of wholeness, justice and peace. The offer is being made and it is modelled in Jesus' lifestyle. Now is the time to make the choice and don't think you can put this off till later.

While the initial question asks,

'Will I be saved?'

which places the responsibility for salvation on Jesus, his reply turns this question back on each individual.

Do you want to be?

If so, there are things you need to do about it.

The parable leaves the choice of salvation to each person not to Jesus. It is as if Jesus is saying to us,

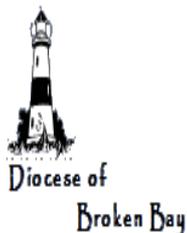
**'You have the invitation,
do you want it?'**



Today's reading from Isaiah describes the Israelites bringing their offering to the Lord "in clean vessels." The gift of myself – my patient endurance and fidelity to the will of God – is as important as the monetary gift I offer.
See Isaiah 66:20



Catholic Parish of Woy Woy Peninsula



Woy Woy, Woy Woy South,
Umina, Umina Beach,
Ettalong, Ettalong Beach,
Koolewong, Blackwall,
Booker Bay, Pearl Beach,
St Hubert's Island,
Empire Bay, Horsfield Bay,
Patonga, Woy Woy Bay, Daley's Point,
Phegan's Bay and Wondabyne.

St John the Baptist Church,

(Corner) Blackwall & Victoria Rds, Woy Woy

Parish Office *Ethel Cox Parish Centre*
PO Box 264 *Walter Baker Hall*
54 Victoria Road *100 Blackwall Rd*
WOY WOY NSW 2256 *Woy Woy*

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

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Parish Priest: Fr. Jack Robson.
Assistant Priests: Fr. Timothy Raj. MSFS.
 Fr. Philip Thottam. MSFS.
Office Staff: Helen Cameron,
 Raelene Spithill and Margaret Cooper.

Office Hours:
9.30am—4pm, Monday to Friday.

Deadline for The Voice:
3.30pm 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, 3.30pm; Saturday 11.30am; & 4.30pm; Sunday 7am.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1st & 3rd Sundays, 11am; 5th Sunday, during 9.15am 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 9.30am.

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Saturday after 9am Mass until 10am; every Monday until 9am (Public Holidays 10.15am).

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Every Thursday 7.30pm-8.30pm for the needs of the Parish.

PARISH CHOIR — Practice Wednesday nights in the church, 7pm.
Enquiries: 4341 3367.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL,

21a Dulkara Rd South Woy Woy 2256. ph: 4341 0884 fax: 4344 5049.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP

For information and events contact Parish office 4341 1073.

CATHOLICCARE Marriage & Family Relationships.
Phone: 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.

ST VINCENT de PAUL SOCIETY on the Peninsula assist and give a hand up to people in need. We have two Conferences with Volunteers sharing the visiting or office work. We always welcome new Volunteers to our Conference. Please ring Ken 0400 335 351 or Joan 0422 272 339.

CASH HOUSIE every Saturday night at Peninsula Community Centre, Cnr Ocean Beach Rd & McMasters Rd, Woy Woy. Games start at 7.30pm and finish approx 10.20pm. Cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6pm. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries: Rob 0427 990 818.

"A message from the Catechists, in this Year of Mercy."

**ALWAYS HELP SOMEONE.
YOU MIGHT BE THE
ONLY ONE THAT DOES.**

THEGOODVIBE.CO