



The Voice

18th March 2018

Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year B

Psalter Week 4

LENT

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Colleen McLaine, Kenneth Willins, Gwen Toohey.
- **Anniversaries:**
Fr. Henry (Harry) Davis, Marcelline Comensoli,
Fr. Patrick Ryan, Emmie Carkeek, John Charles & Carley Carkeek, John Snell, Margaret Kelly, Ken Steinman, Pat & Keith Wilmott.
- **Remembrances:**
Arthur, Muriel and John Brown and Brown Family, Alfred Bugeja, Alberto Peralta.
- **And the sick:**
Laura Krauss, Vince Ryan, Patricia Dwyer, Nellie Brown, Donna Vella, Oscar James Morreti, Donna Briemer, Joy Ball, Betty Fraser, Luis Emilio Garrido, Audrey Kirkman, Malin Tugaga, Beryl Reynolds, Rene Glase, Pamela Power, Mary Scarf, Teresita and Jorge Villansati, Louis Aloisio, Olive Brittliff, Kevin Houghton, Fr Jack Robson, Darcy Green, Frank McLenaghan, Leon de Pradines, Margaret Davin, Helen Taylor, Amanda Sheridan, Sofie Raj, Thambu George.

If ever you get the chance to travel to Turkey make sure you go to the Roman ruins at Ephesus. The trip is instructive for all sorts of reasons, not least because two thousand years ago Ephesus was a seaport and now you have to drive inland for over an hour to get there. I wonder what our cities will look like in another two thousand years? But Ephesus is worth the trip. The Roman ruins there, especially the library, are extraordinary. For Christians, however, three other places there capture the imagination. It's the place to which the great letter in the New Testament was addressed. There are the ruins of the hall in which the important Council of Ephesus met, and there are ruins of a monastery built over what is claimed to be the final home of St John, the Beloved Disciple. There is also the much more dubious claim that Mary's final house, and the site of her Assumption, is on top of the mountain overlooking the ancient city.

There are good reasons to believe that the Gospel of John, from which we have just read, was written in Ephesus, 70 years after Jesus' death. I like to think about the context in which the Scriptures were written, not just because it helps me understand some things in the text, but also to appreciate that our Scriptures were inspired by the experience of a flesh and blood community.

Ephesus was a centre of learning, trade, government and religion in the ancient world. We also know that the early Christians were greatly persecuted and martyred there. The early church was filled with stories of betrayal, torture, death and heroic witness to the faith. The stakes for believing in Jesus were very high. And it was the heroic witness of these martyrs that eventually led to the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity. It should come as no surprise to us then

that John's Gospel should have a special focus on sharing in the sufferings of Jesus and the glory to come.

The words of Jesus in today's Gospel must have been very important to a community that was awash with the blood of their fellow believers. Our foremothers and forefathers in the faith counted themselves blessed to die as Jesus died, alive in the faith of God's love for the world. Just imagine how that community of martyrs first heard these words, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit.'

By comparison we have it easy today, but martyrdom comes to all believers in different ways. In the broadest sense a martyr is one who is prepared to pay the price for holding true to Christ. For us now this might mean making serious choices about the company we keep, the business ventures we enter into, the non-violent protests we mount, foregoing luxuries so that others in our world might have necessities, and even remaining faithful to the vows and promises we have made. Christian faith sometimes bites hard, and when it does we know we are sharing in the martyr's lot.

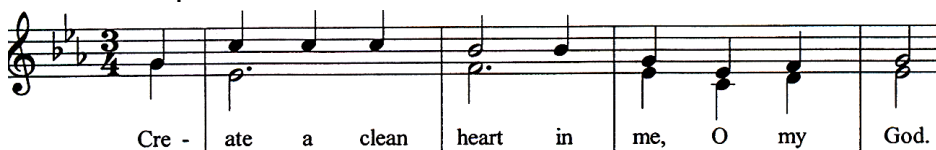
And what should be our response when our faith in Christ costs us something big? Jesus models it for us in today's Gospel, '...hat should I say? "Father, save me from this hour." No, it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.'

May this final week of Lent, then, see this flesh and blood community be like our forebears in Ephesus and actively seek out ways of sharing in the martyr's lot by letting go of what is not essential and focusing on the One who loved us to the end.

Richard Leonard SJ

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory! If you serve me, follow me, says the Lord; and where I am, my servant will also be. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!

Around the Parish

Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for Kayla Hanzic and Harriet Jones-Tighe who were baptised last Sunday.

Readers Rosters for Holy week are available in the Sacristy for collection

2nd Rite of Reconciliation will be held *this* Monday, 19th March at 7pm.

Volunteer Church Cleaning Roster 23/3/18: Kevin Glacken, Bev Whackett, Rano Spiteri.

Volunteers required to cut palm fronds this coming Friday, 23rd March after morning Mass. Please notify the Parish office if you can help and bring your gloves and secateurs.

Church Garden Rejuvenation! On Saturday, 24th March, 10am (after 9am Mass), there will be a massive clean up and replanting of the Church's gardens; front, lane way and the rear prayer garden. Volunteers needed!!! Please come even if for a short period so that we can repair this long neglected area. A light lunch will be served to all our helpers in the Leo Mahon room.

Children's Liturgy Roster 25/3/18: Marian Bowyer, Mimi Lambert, Shadeeqh Quai Hoi.

Wardens: Please write your name on the list in the wardens cupboard if you are able to assist during Easter Masses.

Chrism Mass: will be celebrated at 7.30pm on Tuesday, 27 March at Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, Waitara. The parish bus will be available. Please call the parish office on 4341 1073 to book a seat.

Passion or Palm Sunday next Sunday, 25th March is the solemn beginning of Holy Week. Instead of the normal Gospel, the Passion of Christ is read.

Holy Thursday 7pm Mass is the best day to bring in your Project Compassion boxes or envelopes to the church. There will be baskets in the church for you to put them in. Alternatively, bring your contribution to any one of the Easter Masses.

Good Friday Envelopes donations will help support the missionary work of the Church in the Holy Land by providing financial assistance to schools, medical centres, parishes and orphanages, welfare projects and poor Christians and it helps to preserve the sacred shrines associated with the life of Jesus.

Envelopes are in the church for your convenience.

Morning Tea Roster 25/3/18 will

be our Catechists.

Senior Servers and Junior Servers Needed!!!

If you would like to assist at our Sunday Masses, we would like you to join our team of Junior and Senior Servers. Please leave your name and details with our Parish office. Training provided.

Catechists: A reminder to attend our meeting on Thursday, 22 March at 9am to sort out the Easter Assemblies. The first is at Umina School this Friday. We ask THE PARISH COMMUNITY to pray for the children attending our Scripture Classes that this Easter brings them greater understanding of our Lord's sacrifice for us. Pray their love and faith grow through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Bless you all.

Lectio Divina and Bible study Group Monday 19th March, 2.30pm-4pm. Upstairs meeting room in parish office*
* change of venue for this week only.

Divine Mercy Sunday Prayers 2.30pm-3.30pm, Sunday 8th April, Woy Woy church.

Parishioner looking for accommodation. Single male, non-smoker, requiring cabin or flat under \$200 a week. Call Ruth 0400 434 489

The Just Word

Homelessness in Australia:

Having a place to call home provides an individual or family with the stability needed to lead life with dignity and to fulfil their potential. A home is more than just a shelter; it is a place where a person or a family can feel safe and secure and maintain hope about the future. However, in Australia more and more people are finding it challenging to have and maintain a safe, permanent and affordable home.

People experiencing homelessness can be invisible. When they become visible, it is too often because they are seen as an embarrassment, cluttering our tidy streets, or as an annoyance, when they beg for money. Pope Francis has challenged us with this bold claim: "There is no social or moral justification, no justification whatsoever, for lack of housing."

In a rich country like Australia, it is a national shame that we have people who for reasons beyond their control do not have a secure roof over their head. A range of factors lead to homelessness: among them are poverty, unaffordable housing, domestic violence and mental illness.

Sadly, more and more families and children are without adequate housing and are unable to participate fully in the community, deprived of education or employment. This is happening not just in large cities. Rural and regional areas of Australia are also affected by housing shortages and factors of disadvantage. In Australia today, more than 100,000 individuals are homeless and rely on increasingly stretched support services to help them find secure housing. This appalling situation is compounded because without a secure and affordable place to call home, other stresses in the lives of individuals

and families cannot be addressed. One of the drivers of household stress is low income, especially in the locations with high housing prices. In 2014, nearly 3 million people, or 13.3 per cent of the general population, were living below the poverty line in Australia. Income inequality is growing in Australia with the wealthiest 20 per cent of households having a net worth 68 times as high as the least wealthy 20 per cent.

Unfortunately, the stock of public housing is in decline, placing pressure on already long waiting lists and on affordable housing in the private rental market. In 2015, there were 427,800 social housing dwellings, but a further 200,000 households were on the waiting list. The private rental market is also increasingly unaffordable for many low-and-middle income workers, especially in Sydney and Melbourne. A.C.S.J.C.

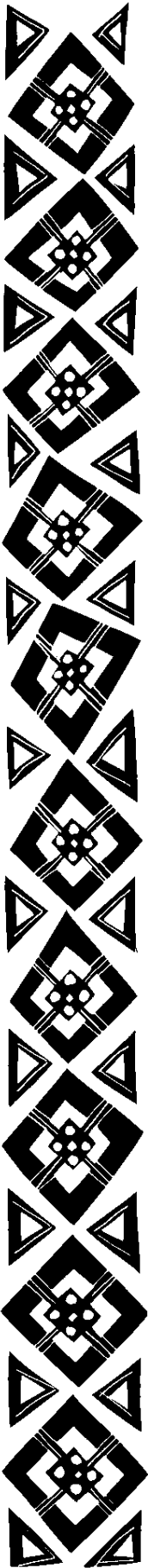
From the Diocese and beyond

Spirituality in the Pub meet Tuesday 3rd April, 7.30pm-9.00pm. The Grange Hotel Function Room, Cnr. Renwick St. & Pacific Highway, Woy-woy. Bistro opens 5.30pm.

Theme 2018: "My Spirituality: Then and Now". Enquiries: 4328 2596 or 0498 588 261.

SIP Central Coast is an Ecumenical & Interfaith Speakers Forum with Q's and A's, The focus is on

developing understanding and encouraging dialogue about Spirituality through people sharing their life's journey. See notice board for speakers.



Scripture Readings

5th Sunday of Lent, March 18

Jer 31:31-34
Ps 50:3-4, 12-15
Heb 5:7-9
Jn 12:20-33

Jeremiah, living during some of Israel's darkest days, the Babylonian Exile, prophesies a time when God will renew the earth and its people: "Days are coming ... when [the Lord] will make a new covenant" (v 31). In the prior covenant, God's law was written on stone tablets, but "they broke my covenant" (v 32). Now God's law will be written "upon their hearts" (v 33); it will be internalised. The prophet anticipates that God will once again lead them back to the Promised Land and renew their relationship: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (v 33).

The author of Hebrews speaks of Christ's sacrifice as the "source of eternal salvation for all who obey him" (v 9). In light of the sacrifice of his death, Jesus is "declared by God high priest" (see v 10), whose task is to offer sacrifices on behalf of the people. But unlike the other high priests, who repeatedly offer sacrifices for the sins of the people, Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice once and for all. Through his death, he reconciled us with

God and established the new and eternal covenant. In Jesus's death and resurrection, the new covenant foreseen by Jeremiah is established.

In today's Gospel some Greek-speaking Jews ask Philip to introduce them to Jesus. Our evangelist does not narrate a mere meeting but uses this request to introduce the beginning of Jesus's "hour," his *kairos*: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified," Jesus says (v 23). Earlier in the Gospel, Jesus had anticipated this hour, but from this point he embraces it. It is a time of significance, the time he has waited for and the reason he came into the world. In this "hour" Jesus will experience death and then resurrection, inaugurating the new covenant that binds the people to God in a new way, leading to our salvation.

For Reflection: How does having God's law written on my heart help me in my spiritual life? Has this Lent been a time of renewal for me? How can I best make use of these last weeks to grow spiritually?

Fr 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

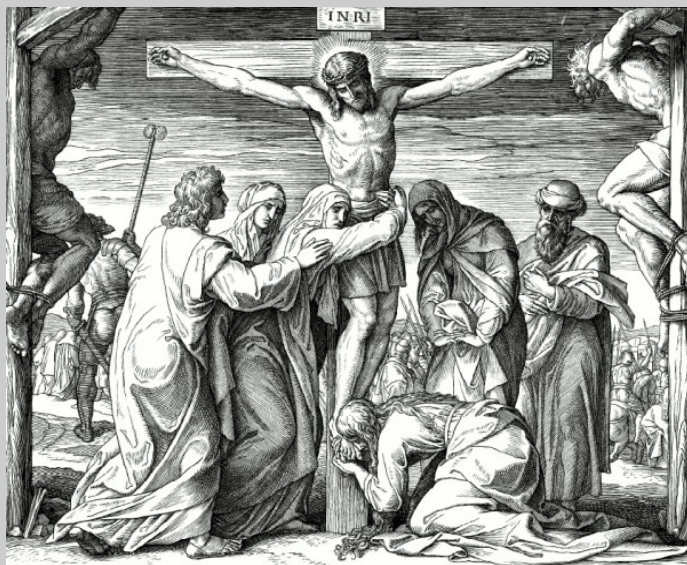


"If anyone would serve me," says Jesus in today's Gospel, "let him follow me; where I am, there will my servant be."

In what way is Jesus inviting me to follow Him? What service is He asking of me?

See John 12:26

Holy Week



2nd Rite of Reconciliation
7:00pm Monday, 19th March

Holy Thursday

7:00pm - Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday

9:00am - Stations of the Cross - Church

**10:00am - Stations of the Cross at
SJB Primary School
21a Dulkara Rd South Woy Woy**

12:00pm—Last Seven Words of Jesus

3:00pm - The Lord's Passion

Easter Saturday

8:00am - Devotion to Mother of Sorrows

7:00pm—Easter Vigil

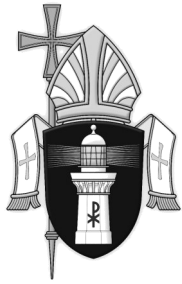
Easter Sunday

7:30am, 9:15am and 6:00pm

Easter Monday

9:00am

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,

Cnr Blackwall and Victoria Roads, Woy Woy

Parish Office Ethel Cox Parish Centre
P.O. Box 264 100 Blackwall Road.
54 Victoria Road
WOYWOY N.S.W. 2256

Phone: (02) 4341 1073
Fax: (02) 4341 0214
Email: parish@woywoycatholic.org.au
Website: www.woywoycatholic.org.au
Out of hours **medical emergency**
0438 631 327.

"He must increase, I must decrease"

Administrator: Fr. Timothy Raj. M.S.F.S.

Assistant Priest: Fr. Philip Thottam. M.S.F.S.

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Raelene Spithill.

Office Hours:

9.30 a.m.—4.00 p.m., Monday to Friday

Deadline for The Voice:

Midday Wednesday.

Easter Bingo Marathon 100 Games:

Easter Saturday – 31st March 2018.

100 Games, \$100, \$150, \$180 Prizes and a chance of winning \$2,000 jackpot (game 50 reverts to \$1,000 if not won in certain calls, game 100 unlimited).

\$48 for 6 tickets in 50 games (\$96 for 100 games).

2:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at Peninsula Community Centre, 93 McMasters Rd Woy Woy. Free Catering during half time break 5.30pm. Free Tea and Coffee all day.

Operated by Woy Woy Catholic Parish Housie, Enquiries: Rob - 0427 990 818 or wwcphousie@hotmail.com FACE-BOOK/Woy Woy Bingo.

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 7.00am.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

1st & 3rd Sundays, 11am; (5th Sunday during 9.15am Mass by arrangement only).

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

MINISTRY OF INTERCESSION . Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

Every Thursday night, 7.30pm-8.30 pm.

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. p 024341 0884 www.sjbwoywoy.org.au

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH GROUP Held once a fortnight during school terms for high school students (Years 7-12), in the Leo Mahon Room. . For more information, contact Matthew French on 0411 792 587.

CATECHISTS conduct special religious education classes at the four Primary State Schools in our Parish. Experience isn't necessary—but Volunteers are always needed—to teach and help. Details: Susie 0411 566 622 without any obligation.

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.

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 Peter 0425 358 376 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 10.20pm, cash prizes.

Ticket sales from 6pm. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries: Rob: 0427 990 818.

