

The Voice

13th June, 2007

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

Psalter Week 3



PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS

- **Recently deceased:**
Kevin O'Connell, Robert Burnie,
John McShane.
- **Anniversaries:**
Bishop Leo Clarke, Pat Hill,
John Nolan, Sturt Kwong-Wah,
Maude McQuade, John Lyon,
David Steele, Margaret Jura-
towitch.
- **Remembrances:**
David Snr. Siok Bee & Kai Tee
Cang, Alfred Johnston, Tom
Towsend, Juliet Hutton, Jesse
Geronimo, Renato & Constan-
cio Soriano, Pacita Mercado,
Canidad Toledo.
- **Sick:**
Fr. John Wakeling, Fr. Ted Shep-
herd, Fr. Donald Gunn, Peter
Smith, Alicia Harwood, Rita
Sheil, Wanda Grima, Bidy Elli-
ott, Pauline Taylor, Vince Ryan,
Eric Jones, James Emery, Phil
Gleeson, James Saldanha, Na-
than Clifford, Jan Mahoney.

Forgiveness of Sin

The story of the repentance of David is one of the great stories of the Bible.

Nathan, who confronts David in today's first reading, is a sort of court prophet. On the face of things, then, he lacks the independence that a prophet from outside the royal sphere of influence would have. It does Nathan credit that he is prepared to risk the wrath of the King in denouncing his sin.

We should not think that Nathan knew about the actions of the King in a way unavailable to anyone else. Given the way the story is told (2 Sm 11), many people in Jerusalem would have known of David's adultery with Bathsheba and her consequent pregnancy. When Uriah the Hittite (Bathsheba's husband) is recalled from the siege of Rabbah, he would have learnt very quickly about what had happened, and would have guessed what the King was up to. This comes out in his conduct: he does not go home to his wife, even when David gets him drunk. When he refuses to get David off the hook, the King sends him back to Joab (his general at Rabbah) and orders that Joab arrange things so that Uriah is killed during an attack on the city. With Uriah out of the way, he takes Bathsheba to wife and she gives birth to a son.

Nathan addresses the problem by telling David a parable about two men: one is rich and has many flocks; the other is poor, with only one ewe lamb; yet when a guest must be fed by the rich man, he takes the lamb from the poor man and kills it for the meal. When David gets angry and declares that the rich man deserves death, Nathan turns on him with the words, 'You are the man!' He continues in the words that we hear in today's reading.

The lesson from the story is that David did repent; he did not, as so many other absolute rulers have done down the centuries, assume that he could do what he liked, even in defiance of the law of God. It is characteristic of David that, although he was ruthless and bloody, he loved God (a strange mixture).

The gospel story shows us what happens when a sinner does *not* love God. The Pharisee is amazed that Jesus should allow the 'woman with a bad name in the town' to wash Jesus' feet with her tears, wipe them with her hair and anoint them with ointment. She is forgiven because she loves; the Pharisee is not forgiven because 'the man who is forgiven little shows little love.'

FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! God first loved us and sent his Son to take away our sins. *Alleluia!*

Inside this issue:

Notices and News	2
On True Wealth	3
Directory	4
Getting the Least	4

Around the Parish

The Queen's Birthday Public Holiday Monday 14th June. Morning Mass at 9.00am followed by Exposition and Benediction.

Parish Pastoral Council May meeting report:

- School Hall to be officially opened on 1st July. Enrolments have begun and there was a meeting for parents in the Hall
- Plans have been made to thank our Priests as the Year of the Priest ends.
- Youth Ministry had a session with Mark McDonald on the "Image and Likeness of God". The sessions were enjoyed by all. The Youth Ministry will be having another session with Mark.
- Pastoral Plan is due for renewal.
- Faith Formation Ministry organizing Survey to see if there is an interest in the Ministry.
- Robyn from Mary Mac's is retiring and finishes on 11th June.

Baptisms: We welcome into our Faith community and pray for the following who were baptized last week: Hamish Medley, Tristan Medley, Indigo Swain and Alexander Seamer.

Sympathy: St. John the Baptist Parish family would like to extend its prayerful sympathy to the family, relatives and friends of Steven Vlahovich, Margaret Quirk and Gwenth Green who were buried from our Church the past week.

Adult Faith Formation Survey: Thank you to all who com-

pleted the recent survey held in this parish. The Steering Committee has examined the results and determined that there is sufficient interest to proceed with organizing some programs. Most people would prefer weekday programs of one day, or evening programs conducted over a short number of weeks. The most popular topics were "Catholic Ethics" and "Liturgy and The Sacraments". The committee is investigating the availability of top quality programs in both these areas and hopes to have something in place by late winter or early spring. We will keep you informed.

On the Bus: Drivers of the bus for the weekend of 19/20 June: Vigil 5pm: Carmen Hopson. 7.45am & 9.15am: Vince Weigold.

Coffee, Cake & Chat: A social afternoon for the housebound and elderly in our parish community is held every 3rd Monday of the month in the Riley room, 1.30pm-3pm The Parish bus will be available to assist with transport. If you know of people whom you think may enjoy meeting others over a cuppa please tell them of this opportunity and phone the Parish office on their behalf to arrange transport.

Bus Trip for a Shopping Trip to direct factory outlet leaving 9am Wednesday, 30th June. Cost \$15. Contact Susie Casey 4342 3893 / 0403 417 639.

Mary Mac's Place: After six rewarding years, it is with some sadness that I begin a new chapter in my life. I sincerely thank our generous parishioners who have taken Mary Mac's to their

hearts. I am especially grateful to Fr. John Hill whose vision and commitment has led Mary Mac's to our permanent home.

I have been truly privileged to see Mary Mac's grow and flourish. I welcome Christine Burge as the new Co-ordinator, and I look forward to hearing of ongoing endeavours.

Sincere thanks to our wonderful volunteers who are the heart and soul of Mary Mac's. To those early volunteers who saw a need, and do something about it—congratulations. I'm certain Mary MacKillop is well pleased with the results.

May God Bless. Robyn.

Update from Fr. Wakeling:

Hello all. The results of the MRI are not completely good. There are three lesions in the brain, two extra came up on the MRI. I undergo radical radiotherapy on Friday 11/6 at the Alfred Hospital. Following the radiotherapy my oncologist will then discuss with me the details and treatment of the adrenal glands. At present things are confusing and I am not sure what's happening. It is all coming too fast. I am sure the good Lord will only give what he knows I will be able to deal with. Please keep me in your prayers. Thanks.

John Wakeling.

Thank You: On behalf of SJB Craft Group, I would like to extend a big thank you for helping make our Biggest Morning Tea a huge success. We were able to raise \$800 towards this worthy cause – Cancer Research.

Pat Savage.

The Just Word

An Invitation to 90 minutes of prayer and reflection.

- To honour the courage of refugees who want a life free from fear.
- To strengthen the faith of all people of good will by promoting God's plan of salvation for all.
- To unite in solidarity with the

Bishops of Australia in calling on the government to formulate a policy on the treatment of asylum seekers that does justice to their human dignity.

Refugee Week will held Sunday, 20 June 2010 (World Refugee Day) to Saturday 26 June 2010. The theme of the week is Freedom and its 1967 Protocol de-

fines a refugee as:

Any person who owing to a well founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his or her nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail herself or himself of the protection of that country.

From the Diocese and beyond

Newcastle Hymnfest at Christ Church Cathedral, Newcastle. Sun 20th June, 2pm. Free admission with pre-program music from 1.30pm. See notice board.

Light of the World Retreat Weekend: Our Lady of the Rosary Parish Centre, 239 The Entrance Rd. The Entrance Fri.

25 June 6 - 8.15pm. Sat 26 June 9am - 5.30pm. Sun 27 June 9am -3pm. Bookings: Parish Office 4332 2216.



On True Wealth

13th June, 2007

Bruce Janiga

Tradition says that before Alexander the Great died in 323 BC, he left orders for his officers to scatter his treasure along the road as his coffin was carried to his tomb. He also asked to be carried to his burial place with his hands outside his coffin. In these two gestures, the man whose empire spread from Spain to India was indicating that the acquisition of wealth is futile in the face of death. This theme is common among Greek philosophers and Hebrew poets and prophets. But in every age, there are those whose ears are closed to wise advice because they are blinded by their own concerns.

People mistakenly believe that Christianity, and Jesus in particular, is opposed to riches and the wealthy. But a careful reading of the gospels shows that Jesus does not condemn wealth. Rather, he warns those who do not use their wealth appropriately and those who rely on their own wealth without an awareness of a need for God and the danger such self-reliance can bring.

For biblical Israel, wealth was viewed as a sign of God's blessing. Those who followed God's ways were rewarded. But most people in Israel were not rich. They lived off the land as farmers and herdsmen, and with a poor crop or the loss of a few animals, they would fall into poverty and become dependent on the small group of wealthy landowners. With the development of the monarchy, the king became responsible for the welfare of those marginalised by society. Many of Israel's prophets condemned the actions of the wealthy who ignored or abused the poor, in particular widows, orphans, and foreigners.

Throughout his Gospel, Luke focuses on the poor or lowly of society. The shepherds, to whom the announcement of the birth of the Messiah is announced, serve as the first example of the importance of Jesus to those who are on the fringes of society. Jesus' ministry to the blind, lame, lepers, and others who were looked down on by society exemplifies God's special care for the poor. And Jesus came to tell us that as God's children, we are to have a similar concern for them. His inaugural sermon in the synagogue at Nazareth illustrates that he saw himself as anointed "to bring good news to the poor" (4:18).

The parable of the rich fool in Luke's Gospel illustrates Jesus' attitude toward wealth. Jesus tells the parable in response to a man who asks Jesus to arbitrate an inheritance, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me" (12:13). Jesus' response warns him about the danger of greed, for "one's life does

not consist in the abundance of possessions" (v 15).

In the parable Jesus tells of a rich man whose land "produced abundantly" (v 16). In the eyes of Jesus' audience, this man would be considered blessed. But rather than sharing his blessings with others, he decided to hoard them for himself; he intended to replace his filled barns with even larger ones. He failed to realise that "the bellies of the poor were much safer store-rooms than his barns," as St. Augustine commented. By sharing his abundance with the needy, the man could have acquired wealth in the eyes of God. Instead, he decided to keep his wealth to himself, anticipating a long life of contentment during which he could "relax, eat, drink, be merry" (v 19). But he did not consider that in these barns, his wealth could spoil or be stolen by thieves or eaten by animals. Then it would be useless to him. Nor could he determine the length of his life, for that is up to God.

In the midst of the man's security, God announced his imminent death, calling him a "fool" because the things he had relied on would be of no help to him now. Things that were treasures for him in life would become valueless in death. So, "whose will they be?" (v 20).

Jesus concludes his teaching by announcing, "So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God" (v 21). He challenges the man who sought arbitration to realise that life is more than riches, and he calls him to focus instead on the riches that last beyond death.

"Only virtue is the companion of the dead. Compassion alone follows us," St. Ambrose says. We are to learn from this parable that, as followers of Christ, we are called to live lives of compassion and virtue. **ML**



Like Nathan in today's first reading, we sin when we begin to feel entitled and act as if what we have is ours by right, when we forget that everything we have is an unmerited gift from God. But God is gracious and forgiving — even when we use His gifts wrongly or squander them thoughtlessly — if, like Nathan, we confess our guilt and ask His pardon.



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 6744.

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
P.O. Box 264
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Walter Baker Hall
100 Blackwall Road

Phone: (02) 4341 1073

Fax: (02) 4341 0214

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"He must increase, I must decrease"

Dr John Hill, *Parish Priest*

Fr Barry Nobbs, *Assistant Priest*

Office Staff: Libby McManus, Pamela

Burton & Raelene McLenaghan

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 7.45am, 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 7.15 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).

CENTACARE Marriage & Family Counselling, Pregnancy help—20 Watt St, Gosford. Phone: 4324 6403.

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 Robyn on 4341 0584.

CASH HOUSE every Saturday night at St Mary's Hall, Ocean View Rd, Ettalong (opposite Palm Beach Ferry Wharf). Games start at 7.30 p.m. and finish approx 10.15 p.m., cash prizes. Ticket sales from 6.00 p.m. Proceeds benefit Parish. Enquiries 43690626.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST YOUTH MINISTRY—for information and events contact Parish Office 4341 1073.

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

Getting the Least

Paul Turner

If you'd like to get the least out of going to Mass on Sundays, here are some strategies you can try:

- Eat a large meal just before going to church.
- Arrive for Mass late.
- Sit in the back of the church.
- Read the bulletin during the service.
- Don't sing any songs.
- Don't make the responses.
- Keep your cell phone turned on and handy to hear your ring tones and send texts.
- Chew gum.
- Mentally criticise the appearance of people you see.
- Be angry about something. It really doesn't matter what.
- Think constantly about where you are going when Mass is over.
- Whenever there is time for silent prayer, look at your watch.
- Never offer to assist as a greeter, usher, lector, communion minister, server, or cantor.
- Don't contribute to the collection, or if you do, use coins.
- Avoid eye contact during the sign of peace.
- Never drink the Blood of Christ at communion.
- Leave Mass early. After you receive communion, head for the door. Do not return to your seat. You may want to put your car keys in one hand while you receive communion with the other.
- Drive away as quickly as possible. If others who are trying to get the least are in your way, honk the horn at them.
- Don't pray at home during the following week, unless an emergency comes up.

This bulletin insert originally appeared in *Ministry & Liturgy*, a pastoral planning resource used by the worship leaders in your parish as an aid for better liturgy. Copyright © 2006, Resource Publications, Inc. 160 E. Virginia St. #290, San Jose, CA 95112, (408) 286-8505. This article may not be reproduced in any form without permission from the publisher. For permission e-mail info@rpinet.com. Paul Turner, pastor of St. Munchin Parish in Cameron, MO, holds a doctorate in sacramental theology from Sant' Anselmo University in Rome. Comment online at ML-Current-Issue-Discussion.

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Diocese of Broken Bay