

The Voice

22nd January 2012

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B

Psalter Week 3



The Message: Repentance

After last Sunday's interlude with John, we return this week to Mark, our evangelist for the year.

Mark begins his work with the words, *the beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God*. That Gospel, or Good News, had been preached by the first missionaries of the Church; now it is being written down for the first time. So, in a sense, the whole story, from the preaching of John the Baptist to Jesus' death and resurrection, is the Gospel.

We frequently find in the Bible efforts to sum things up, to make them brief and memorable. So, while the gospel is the whole story, Mark today gives us the short version: *Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: 'This is the time of fulfilment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'*

So there are four essential elements to the Gospel. The first two: what to believe.

1. *"This is the time of fulfilment" or "the time has come."* When Jesus came, the "time" predicted by the prophets came with him; it was "fulfilled." This "time" is the "Day of the Lord", the "hour" of God's definitive intervention in salvation history, when he built on all the steps traced in the Old Testament by which he brought mankind to faith in Him.

2. *"The kingdom of God is at hand."* The people of Galilee had known many kingdoms but their dream - and that of all Jews - was that God would reign over all mankind. There were many opinions about what that kingdom would be like, and we shall see in this gospel how Jesus persistently worked on clarifying the idea to his hearers.

3. *"Repent."* The second two: how to respond to the Good News. The first is to repent, i.e., to turn one's back on worldly ways of understanding human life, and to follow Jesus, by walking in the direction into which God invites us.

4. *"Believe in the gospel."* The second response is to believe, not only in the summary, but also in what Jesus says and does in order to spell the message out.

The message is *urgent*, for the reason Paul gives in the second reading: *I tell you, brothers and sisters, the time is running out*. We find the same urgency in Jonah's preaching in the first reading. It does not become less urgent because we have heard it so many times before. It should seem more urgent every time we hear it.

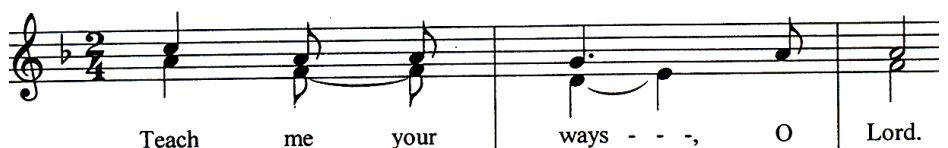
FR JOHN HILL, P.P.

OF YOUR CHARITY PRAY FOR THE SOULS OF

- **Recently deceased:**
Rohan Mullins, Molly Reynolds, Eileen Smith, Matilde Carpio.
- **Anniversaries:**
Agnes Arahill, Bill Wise, Ernest & Morya Burton, Patrick Barrett, Richard Culmer, Veronica Booth, Irina Marsic, Edward Luxford, Peter Hope.
- **Remembrances:**
Mary & George Hilliard, Hilliard Brothers, Kevin Mills, Mills Family, Bernie Hanna, William Arahill, All Souls in Purgatory.
- **And for the sick:**
Rita Flower, Alisha Harwood, Mary Gourlay, David Wood, Catherine McMahon, Sue Morrill, Wanda Grima, Anne Liddle, Hilda Hedevang, Anne Hume.

Psalm Response

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Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! The kingdom of God is near:
Believe the Good News! *Alleluia!*

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Around the Parish



Australia Day—Public Holiday Thursday, 26th January. Morning Mass will be at 9.00am.

Parish Office will be closed re-opening 9.30am Friday.

Newsletter Deadline Tuesday 24th January, 4pm.

School resumes Monday 30th January Years 1 to 6. Tuesday 31st January. Kindergarten.

Enrolments at the School on Friday 27th January (please see Fr. Hill prior to this date). Forms available www.sjbwvdbb.catholic.edu.au

Lenten Discussion Groups: Each year, groups meet within the Parish to pray, discuss, and reflect on the significance of this period during the church year. To date, there is material relative to the season, available from three sources, Sydney, Brisbane and Canberra. Parish-

ioners who are interested in organizing a group or would like more information should contact Don Anderson on 4342 3357 before 24 January. When groups, times and locations are established, full information will be provided to parishioners who would like to participate.

New Rosters: Children's Liturgy and Church cleaners all available for collection in the Leo Mahon room.

Justice of the Peace Service is being offered on the first week-end of every month, unless stated otherwise, before Mass in the Leo Mahon room, commencing Saturday 4th February, 4.30pm-4.45pm and Sunday 5th February, 5.30pm-5.45pm.

On the Bus: Drivers of the bus for weekend 28/29 January: Vigil 5pm: Carmen Hopson.

7.45am & 9.15am Masses: Bernard Edwards.

'El Shaddai' Charismatic Prayer Group meetings for the month of February are 4th, 11th and 18th. Enquiries: Linda Thurlow 4342 9092.

Catechists: There will NOT be a General Meeting of catechists this month. Our first meeting will be held Thursday, February 23rd at 9.30am.

Closing Down Sale—Extended for 2 weeks. Fisherman's Nook, Christian Gift and Book Shop, 151 Blackwall Rd. Woy Woy. 16-27 January. Mon-Fri 9am-4pm. Everything half price!

Rosary & Scapular Making Group meeting every Tuesday 9am-12md, Walter Baker Hall. All welcome to come for a cuppa and make rosaries and scapulars for our Missions.

The Just Word

January 26 Australia Day/Survival Day: As we celebrate the beginning of British settlement (invasion) it is timely to remember the importance of acknowledging the traditional owners of Australia.

A *Welcome to Country* is a formal welcome onto Aboriginal Land given by an elder or person of that land.

An *Acknowledgement of Country* is a statement of recognition of the traditional owners of the land. An Acknowledgment of

Country can be given by an Indigenous or non-Indigenous Australian.

Here are some examples of an Acknowledgement of Country:

As we begin, we acknowledge the traditional custodians on whose ancestral lands we are meeting today. We recognise the deep feelings of attachment and relationship of Aboriginal peoples to country, and pay respect to the cultural authority and traditions with

which they have gifted this place.

We gather here today with an awareness of the primacy of the First Peoples of this land, who have been custodians of this country for many thousands of years. We acknowledge the importance of mutual respect and understanding, and the benefits of a close and informed relationship. We are committed to furthering reconciliation and to ensuring that the First Peoples of this nation are valued for their contribution to Australian life.

From the Diocese and beyond

Pancake Night: This year's pancake night will be held at the Uniting Church, Ocean Beach Road, Umina, on Tuesday 21st February, 6.30pm for 7pm. Gold coin donation. Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Peter Swain will give a light hearted talk about the many uses of pancakes. Enquiries: Mary Ford 4342 1515.

Our Lady of Dolours Parish of Chatswood is seeking applications for a Parish Catechist Coordinator. The position is part-time fixed term appointment for one year in the first in-

stance, with strong prospects for renewal. Applicants are required to complete the *NSW Working with Children Check—Applicant Declaration and Consent*.

For application pack please contact Parish Office 9419 9000 or office@chatswoodparish.org.au. After reading the documentation for this position please direct enquiries to Fr. Paul Finucane, Parish Priest. Email: paul@chatswoodparish.org.au or phone 9410 9022.

Closing date: Applications in writing to be received in Parish

office Friday 10th February.

Red Mass: The annual Red Mass will be celebrated by His Eminence Cardinal Pell at St. Mary's Cathedral, Monday 30th January, 9am. The Red Mass marks the commencement of the judicial term and invokes the guidance of the Holy Spirit on those who seek or administer justice. All are warmly invited to attend, especially all those who work in the courts or legal profession. Enquiries: Michael McAuley, St. Thomas More Society, 0409 115 981.

Finger pointing

Ron Raab

My parents taught me not to point my finger at strangers. I was told it was rude to point to another person and whisper behind his or her back. As a child I dared not point to a person with a different skin colour or another child who somehow did not fit into my scheme or pattern of life. It was simply rude to be seen in public pointing to other people. Most other children were also taught not to point at anyone in public. However, on playgrounds everywhere, new kids, different kids, gentle kids, smart kids, big-eared kids, freckled kids, and fat kids were all pointed at by just about everyone I knew.

I now live on a block where children and adults still point. Strangers point at other adults who line up on the sidewalk outside our doors. They also point in the direction of a teen who is so stoned he cannot walk across the street. Other passers-by do more than point — they spit, wag their fists, and kick men who are sleeping on the sidewalk. I still believe it is impolite even to point.

As we listen to the Scriptures during the beginning of Ordinary Time, once again John the Baptist appears strong and sure. We relied on him to show us the way to Christ and the kingdom of God all during the Advent season and even during the Christmas holiday. John continues to do one thing — he points toward Jesus. John has been portrayed in art throughout the centuries as pointing to Jesus. He has been caught in paintings and in sculpture doing the very thing so many parents and teachers have taught us not to do — point to another person in public.

John's pointing is different. He points to his cousin because he is sure Jesus is

the one who will bring unity and peace to the world. John points to Jesus during his baptism because Jesus is the revelation of the Father's love. John assures us that the Spirit will continue to point us all in the direction of the kingdom. John also points to Jesus with more than his index finger. John's heart, mind, and soul are also oriented to the direction of Christ Jesus. His very soul knows that the only way through earthly life will be in the direction of the kingdom of heaven.

John's voice also points to Christ. As Jesus walks by, John proclaims with his entire being, "Behold, the Lamb of God." This is one of the most sacred statements and recognitions in the Scriptures. This is an act of sheer love and deep awareness of the living Christ. This statement is a profoundly contemplative act on John's part. His statement is the result of years of pointing in the direction of the holy. This is an awakening moment, a joy-filled expression, which comes from a loving and profound understanding of Christ on the earth.

As we continue in this Ordinary Time, we all need to reflect on how our lives point toward Christ. We need to take some retreat time for our parish staffs to view where we are heading. We need to evaluate our liturgies, education, and service to see if they are rooted in our deep awareness of the Lamb of God. Do we recognise the Lamb of God from our hearts and in our worshiping assemblies? Do we have the conviction and the awareness to know Christ in such a passionate way? Perhaps our finger pointing can be to our own selfishness as we point out the differences of other parishes in order to make ourselves look good; as

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There is a certain urgency in today's Gospel as Jesus calls His first disciples — Andrew and Simon, James and John. Each one follows Jesus immediately, unhesitatingly abandoning nets and boats and father and fellow-workers. To what is Jesus calling me — at this moment, in these circumstances? What will I need to abandon in order to follow Him?



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"

Dr John Hill, *Parish Priest*

Fr Stephen Hume, *Assistant Priest*

Office Staff: Helen Cameron, Pamela Burton & Raelene McLenaghan

Parish 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).

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.

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 Christine on 4341 0584.

CASH HOUSIE 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.

Finger pointing

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we point to the fact that we have more money and parishioners; as we point to our music ministry because our liturgical style is certainly better than that of the parish next door; as we point out that we are glad that we have no one sleeping at our church doors and no homeless people sitting in our pews. Fingers, hearts, and lives may be pointed in many other directions than toward the Lamb of God.

These days of Ordinary Time also show us that Christ is pointing directly to us. Jesus rebukes our unclean spirits. He reaches out his hand to heal Simon's mother-in-law. He heals many who are sick with various diseases, and he drives out demons. He

stretches out his hand to touch the people we have pointed to as dirty, such as the lepers. Even the leper pointed to him and asked to be made clean.

Our finger pointing must imitate that of John the Baptist so that we may know who Jesus is among us. We also must stretch out our hands in the name of Christ Jesus and heal the lepers, the outcasts, the marginalised, and every person whom we judge as different from ourselves. I long to point my finger in love, "Behold, the Lamb of God." **ML**

Rev. Ronald Patrick Raab, CSC, serves as associate pastor at the Downtown Chapel of St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Old Town, Portland, Ore. He hosts On the Margins, a weekly Scripture commentary on radio, KBVM.com. His e-mail address is raab@downtownchapel.org. From *Ministry & Liturgy*, copyright © Resource Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Reprinted with permission under licence number 115216.

