

solemnly, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, a pattern of true righteousness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection

by Dianne Bergant CSA

In every life there is a struggle between obedience and disobedience, and this struggle takes various twists and turns. At times we are willing to conform to regulations set from the outside, and at times we are not. We are invited to choose in favour of the reign of God, or we are free to ignore the invitation. Those who are fundamentally righteous sometimes fall from grace, and people considered evil to the core sometimes reform their lives. What ultimately counts are not the promises made, but the actions taken.

We are called to discipleship, and there may well be urgency in this call, but it is an invitation that is to be accepted freely. As is the case with life itself, options are placed before us all the way along the road. We are invited to choose in favour of the reign of God, or we are free to ignore the invitation. However, the invitation always remains open to us, because God's desire for our acceptance is persistent and enduring.

The real choice set before us today is the imitation of Christ. The specific characteristic of Christ today is his humility. Since demanding one's rights can undermine the loving quality of community, Jesus' humility is offered for our imitation. It is very clear that whichever aspect of discipleship we examine, some aspect of community is also present. To be

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a disciple of Jesus is to follow him humbly as a member of a believing community.

Biblical Overview

by Greg Sunter

Hey, Jesus is talking about me again! I love it when he says that I'm better than some of those stuck up chief priests. All my life they've looked down on me; pretending they're better than me. I've seen the way some of them behave when they think no-one's watching! They're no better than me! And Jesus says that people like me will enter the kingdom before people like them! Yes! I know I've done the wrong thing plenty of times – Jesus has helped me to see that. Maybe that's what makes me different from those priests; I don't pretend that I've never done anything wrong.

Some Questions

- Which character in the gospel story do you relate to? Why?
- In what ways have you ever said 'Yes' with your words but 'No' with your actions?
- In what ways do people say 'Yes' to God but fail to follow through on their commitment?
- What message for your life do you take from this week's gospel?

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Our Sunday Word

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

nowraparish.org.au

26th Sunday (Year A) ~ in the season of the year

28 September 2008

First Reading

18:25-28

A reading from the prophet Ezekiel

The word of the Lord was addressed to me as follows: 'You object, "What the Lord does is unjust." Listen, you House of Israel: is what I do unjust? Is it not what you do that is unjust? When the upright man renounces his integrity to commit sin and dies because of this, he dies because of the evil that he himself has committed. When the sinner renounces sin to become law-abiding and honest, he deserves to live. He has chosen to renounce all his previous sins; he shall certainly live; he shall not die.'

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 24

R/ Remember your mercies, O Lord.

1. Lord, make me know your ways.

Lord, teach me your paths. Make me walk in your truth, and teach me: for you are God my saviour. R.

2. Remember your mercy, Lord, and the love you have shown from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth. In your love remember me, because of your goodness, O Lord. R.

3. The Lord is good and upright. He shows the path to those who stray, he guides the humble in the right path; he teaches his way to the poor. R.

Second Reading

2:1-11

A reading from St Paul to the Philippians

If our life in Christ means anything to you, if love can persuade at all, or the Spirit that we have in common, or any tenderness and sympathy, then be united in your convictions and united in your love, with a common purpose and a common mind. That is the one thing which would make me completely happy. There must be no competition among you, no conceit; but everybody is to be self-effacing. Always consider the other person to be better

than yourself, so that nobody thinks of his own interests first but everybody thinks of other people's interests instead. In your minds you must be the same as Christ Jesus:

His state was divine, yet he did not cling to his equality with God but emptied himself to assume the condition of a slave, and became as men are; and being as all men are, he was humbler yet, even to accepting death, death on a cross.

But God raised him high and gave him the name which is above all other names so that all beings in the heavens, on earth and in the underworld, should bend the knee at the name of Jesus and that every tongue should acclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Jn 10:27

Alleluia, alleluia! My sheep listen to my voice, says the Lord; I know them, and they follow me. Alleluia!

Gospel

21:28-32

The holy Gospel according to Matthew

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, you go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not go", but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?' 'The first' they said. Jesus said to them, 'I tell you



St Michael's Parish, Nowra – Tel: 4423 1712 E-mail: office@nowraparish.org.au

Website: nowraparish.org.au Incorporates the Church Communities of St Michael, Nowra; St Patrick, Berry Sacred Heart, Bomaderry; Mary, Help of Christians, Culburra; St Joseph, Kangaroo Valley; Holy Spirit, Vincentia.

26th Sunday of the Year (A)
28 September 2008

SUNDAY Masses:

NOWRA 6pm Vigil; 8am, 9.30am & 6pm
BERRY: 8.00am **BOMADERRY:** 9.30am
CULBURRA.....6pm Vigil
VINCENTIA..... 6pm Vigil, & 9.30am
KANGAROO VALLEY..... 11.00am

MASSES DURING THE WEEK:

Nowra: Mon 7.00am, Tues/Wed/Thurs 8.15am, Fri. 7.00am & 11.30am; Sat 9.00am
Morning Prayer: Wed 7.50am; **Holy Hour** Fri 10.30am
Berry; Tues. 5.30.p.m. **Culburra:** Thurs. 5.30.p.m.
Bomaderry First Friday 5.45pm
Vincentia: Mon/Thurs/Fri. 8.00a.m. Tues/Wed 5.30pm
S'haven Heads: Friday: 3.30.p.m.
Kangaroo Valley: Mon/Tues/Thurs/Sat 8.00.a.m. Wed 6.15am.

Confession/Reconciliation

Nowra: Sat 11.30-12.30pm. 5.00 - 5.30pm
Culburra: Sat. 5.30pm. **Berry:** Tues 6.00pm
B'derry: 1st Fri. 5.15pm. **K'Valley:** Sat 4.30--5.00pm
Vincentia: Sat 5.00pm – 5.30pm

LIVING JUSTLY OR JUST LIVING? Bishop Peter will launch this year's **Social Justice Statement** on the challenge of affluence and poverty in Australia at the Cathedral at 10.30am Mass this Sunday 28 Sept. Copies of this Statement will be on sale in the Parish @ 50 cents each.



We prayerfully remember the recently deceased: **Eileen Rooney**; and **Sarah Le Ban, Des Rutherford, Freda Reynolds** and **Jack Ison**, whose anniversaries occur at this time.

May they rest in eternal peace.

Pastoral Council Meeting: Sunday 5 October
Members please note the commencement time of **4.00pm** to accommodate our guest speakers

DIOCESAN MASS SUN, 5 Oct at St Thomas Aquinas Church Bowral at 11.00am as part of the Tulip Festival. Featuring music from WYD and a Mass arranged by Geoff Harvey.

THE FEAST OF ST MICHAEL 29 Sept - Our Parish Patron. The One who is like unto God.

The Shoalhaven Parish was established in 1863 and included Milton-Ulladulla until 1890. The Parish Church of St Michael's was blessed and opened in 1877.

We frequently conclude the celebration of the Eucharist with words such as: **May we put into practice what we celebrate here at this Altar.** A Catholic Parish is essentially a Eucharistic Community. The following extract from the words of Pope Benedict offer us a very relevant message on the occasion of our Parish feastday. "The mission of every parish community is a constant commitment to witnessing to God's love, fully manifested in the Crucified and Risen Christ, a love which actually embraces everyone without distinctions of race and culture; the parish community is called to proclaim the Gospel and to be a place of acceptance and listening, formation and fraternal sharing, dialogue and forgiveness. How can a Christian community stay faithful to this mandate? How can it become increasingly a family of brothers and sisters enlivened by Love? ...[Our] spiritual resources are in our docile listening to his Word, the Sacraments and every other spiritual resource of the liturgy and of personal prayer." (Pope Benedict 25 Mar 07)

CATECHISTS' NEWS

- A catechist is still needed at Nowra Primary on Wednesdays from 11.30 to 12.30pm for years 5 & 6. Ring Lyn at the Parish Office or 4423 1009 for further information.
- Please return all **resources** that you are **not currently** using. Don't forget to complete the resource folder.
- **The Gerringong Retreat** will be held on Mon 29 Sept from 9.30 to 2.30pm. The Theme is St Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles and the Leader will be Fr Graham Schmitzer. Bookings necessary – please phone Lyn.
- Preparation for First Reconciliation will begin directly after next School holidays early October.
- **Thank you** for all you do - enjoy the upcoming holidays.

CULBURRA FAMILY GROUP is having a Spring Garden Party at Joan & Greg Watts' home as their next function this Sun 28 Sept from 11.30am for 12 mid-day. Please bring lunch to share. The address is 85 Ryan's Lane, Pyree. Call 4447 1270.



THE PARISH WELCOMES Adrian Mathews, 30, who will be staying in the Parish for a few weeks. Adrian is from Malaysia and has spent about seven years in seminaries in Malaysia and Singapore, and will be assisting in the parish during his visit.

"POSITION VACANT" - Volunteers urgently needed to help at St John's High School canteen – operates daily 9.30am – 2pm. No handling of money required. If you can spare one morning a month or have any free time at all to offer please contact Vicki 4423 1359 in school hours.

FIRST SATURDAY MARIAN DEVOTIONS – Sat 4 Oct commencing with Reconciliation at 8.30am followed by Mass at 9.00am. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with Rosary and Benediction at 9.30am. Morning tea will follow in the Parish Centre – **All welcome.**

NOWRA CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE

- 18 Oct. Sat Fashion Parade – 2.00pm.
- 7 Nov. Friday Ecumenical Evening. – 7.30pm

WYD PASTORAL DVD'S & COMMEMORATIVE BOOK

can be purchased through Sydney. The DVDs can be purchased as a boxed set for \$79.95 featuring eight events. The Stations of the Cross or Highlights package can be purchased individually at \$24.95. Visit www.wyd2008.org

Feastdays:

Mon 29 - Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, archangels
Tues 30 -Jerome, priest, doctor
Wed 1 Oct – Teresa of the Child Jesus, (Lisieux) doctor of the Church
Thurs 2 – Guardian Angels
Sat 4 - Francis of Assisi