

(and more than that, he was raised), who is at the right hand of God, and who also is interceding for us.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation Jn1.41

Alleluia, alleluia! We have found the Messiah: Jesus Christ, who brings us truth and grace. Alleluia!

Gospel 16:15-18

The holy Gospel according to Mark

Jesus showed himself to the Eleven and said to them, 'Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation. He who believes and is baptised will be saved; he who does not believe will be condemned.

These are the signs that will be associated with believers: in my name they will cast out devils; they will have the gift of tongues; they will pick up snakes in their hands, and be unharmed should they drink deadly poison; they will lay their hands on the sick, who will recover.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection

The life of Paul (Fr Richard Healey)

Paul, originally named Saul, as in King Saul, was a Jew of the Diaspora, living in the city of Tarsus which is outside the holy land, up north in Asia-Minor (modern day Turkey). Born around 8AD in the tribe of Benjamin, in his early 20s he went to Jerusalem to study the roots of the Mosaic

.....

St Michael's Parish Contacts

- Fr Patrick Faherty, *Parish Priest* 4423 1712
- Fr Richard Healey, *Assistant Priest* 4423 1712
- Fr Leo Duck, *Resident in Vincentia* 4441 5571
- Fr Ronan Kilgannon, *Resident in Kangaroo Valley*
- Mr Duane Fernandez, *Seminarian* 4423 1712
- Mrs Robbie Forsythe, *Secretary* 4423 1712
- Sr Margaret Prendergast sgs 4421 2260
- Sr Patricia Lawless sgs 4421 2260
- Sr Val Green rsc 4441 7035
- Mrs Lyn West, *Catechist Coordinator* 4423 1009
- St Michael's Primary School 4421 3630
- St John the Evangelist High School 4423 1666

Law under the great Rabbi Gamaliel. He also studied a manual trade, supporting himself as he travelled by tent-making or leather-working.

Saul (Paul) first appears in the pages of the New Testament as a witness to the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7:57-8:3). He was, as he described himself, a persistent persecutor of the Church (1 Cor 15:9, Gal 1:13), until his experience on the Road to Damascus which resulted in his 'conversion'. It is important to realise that when we speak of the 'conversion' of Paul, we do not understand this to mean that he went from being a Jew to being a Catholic! Paul remained deeply convinced throughout his life of the continuing centrality of his Jewish faith and identity - but he became a Jew who recognised the coming of the Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ, and that all of the scriptures were fulfilled in him.

In the Book of Acts there are three accounts of his 'conversion' experience (Acts 9, 22, 26), but in Paul's own writings there is little detail of this event, but he writes often of the consequences, such as in Phil 3:12 - there, "Christ made me his own." His letters go directly to the essentials, and he speaks not only of a vision (1 Cor 9.1) but of an illumination (2 Cor 4.6) and of a revelation and vocation in the encounter with the risen one. (Gal 1.15-16)

He acknowledges that he is not an apostle by his own will, but by divine choice, "an apostle by the will of God" (2 Cor 1.1). So it is not just the fruit of careful thinking and discernment that led to his conversion, but only the fruit of divine intervention - an unforeseeable divine grace. Paul realises that what ultimately counts is to place Jesus Christ at the very centre of our lives, 'so that our identity is marked' by that encounter.

Pope Benedict's weekly audiences offer rich reflections on the life, ministry and teaching of St Paul. All of these have been collected on the Diocesan website:

dow.org.au/year-of-st-paul/

.....
The scriptural quotations are taken from the Jerusalem Bible, ©1966-1968 Darton Longman and Todd Ltd. Extracts from the Lectionary for Mass ©1997, 1981, 1968, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. Used with permission; all rights reserved. ©2009 liturgyhelp.com.au & St Michael's Parish, Nowra

Our Sunday Word

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

nowraparish.org.au

Conversion of Saint Paul, apostle (Year of St Paul)

25 January 2009

First Reading 22:3-16

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Paul said to the people, 'I am a Jew and was born at Tarsus in Cilicia. I was brought up here in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was taught the exact observance of the Law of our ancestors. In fact, I was as full of duty towards God as you are today. I even persecuted this Way to the death, and sent women as well as men to prison in chains as the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify, since they even sent me with letters to their brothers in Damascus. When I set off it was with the intention of bringing prisoners back from there to Jerusalem for punishment.

'I was on that journey and nearly at Damascus when about midday a bright light from heaven suddenly shone round me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" I answered: Who are you, Lord? and he said to me, "I am Jesus the Nazarene, and you are persecuting me." The people with me saw the light but did not hear his voice as he spoke to me. I said: What am I to do, Lord? The Lord answered, "Stand up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told what you have been appointed to do." The light had been so dazzling that I was blind and my companions had to take me by the hand; and so I came to Damascus.

'Someone called Ananias, a devout follower of the Law and highly thought of by all the Jews living there, came to see me; he stood beside me and said, "Brother Saul, receive your sight." Instantly my sight came back and I was able to see him. Then he said,

Grace & peace
from God our Father
and our Lord Jesus Christ
be with you



.....
"The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Just One and hear his own voice speaking, because you are to be his witness before all mankind, testifying to what you have seen and heard. And now why delay? It is time you were baptised and had your sins washed away while invoking his name."

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 39

R/ Go out to all the world,
and tell the Good News.

1. Praise the Lord, all you nations; acclaim him all you people. (R.)
2. Strong is his love for us; he is faithful for ever.

Second Reading 8:31-34

From the letter of St Paul to the Romans

What then shall we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all - how will he not also, along with him, freely give us all things? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is the one who will condemn? Christ is the one who died



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.

**3rd Sunday of the Year (B)
The Conversion of St Paul - 25th Jan. 2009**

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 8.00am (**Aust Day**) Tues/Wed/Thurs 8.15am
 Friday 7.00am and 11.30am Sat 9.00am
Holy Hour: Fri 10.30am
Berry: Tues 5.30pm..... **Culburra:** Thurs 5.30pm
Bomaderry:First Friday only 5.45pm
Vincentia: Mon, Thur, Fri 8.00am . Tues, Wed 5.30pm
S/Heads: Fri 30 Jan 3.30pm Community Centre
Kangaroo Valley:Mon/Tues/Thurs/Sat 8.00am;
 Wed 6.15am. Divine Office is chanted 15 mins prior to
 Mass. No Mass on Fridays.

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 - 5.30pm.

Feastdays ;Mon 26 – Australia Day

Wed 28 – Thomas Aquinas, priest, doctor

Sat 31 – John Bosco, priest

We prayerfully remember: the recently deceased:

Shirley Moore and Lisa Roberts (nee McMillan),**Anne Rawson**(Sale, Bob Luxford's sister). Also **Sally Moss, Emmanuel Portelli, Theodoro Labrador, Gwen Walker**, whose anniversaries occur . *May they rest in eternal peace.*

RETREAT DAY FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION on Sat 28 March- most likely at Kerever Park, Burradoo – please mark this date on your calendar.

MORNING PRAYER OF THE CHURCH on Wednesdays at 7.50am will recommence on 4 February 2009.

THE CULBURRA FAMILY GROUP will be having a picnic at Bicentennial Park, Callala Bay at 5pm on Mon 26 Jan for their 2009 planning meeting. Please bring a picnic to share.

BISHOP PETER INGHAM INVITES YOU to hear his presentation on “The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church” following his attendance at the Synod of Bishops in Rome in October 2008. Two venues – **Campbelltown** on Wed 28 Jan at 7.30pm in St John's Parish Hall and **Albion Park**, Wed 11 February at 7.30pm in St Paul's Parish Hall. RVSP Campbelltown 4625 8044 or Albion Park 4256 2038 if you wish to attend.



ASH WEDNESDAY 2009 is on 25 February. So our 6 week Lenten program will commence on Monday 23 February. We ask that regular Lenten Group leaders and/or hosts, (Nowra/Bomaderry) as well as anyone willing to be a leader or host this year contact Peggy 4421 3417 or Francene 4421 5962 as soon as possible.

FIRST SATURDAY MARIAN DEVOTIONS will reconvene on Sat 7 Feb. Reconciliation at 8.30am followed by Mass at 9am. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with Rosary and Benediction at 9.30am. Morning tea will be available in the Parish centre following devotions.

A MEMORIAL MASS for Marie Lowry will be celebrated on Monday 2 February at 11.00am at Holy Spirit, Church Vincentia

CATECHIST NEWS: Welcome back for 2009.

- Our first meeting will be on Mon 2 Feb., 9.30 – 11.30am in the Parish Centre. It is **very important that all** Catechists attend.
- **Orientation, Child Protection & Legal Matters** in-service for **NEW** Catechists will be on Thurs 5 Feb – 9.15 – 2pm (byo lunch) in the Parish Centre. Intro. to the Ministry - 9.15am; Child Protection – 11.00am It is essential for **all** to upgrade Child Protection every 3 years.
- **Level 1 Training** – Tues Feb 10, 17, 24, Mch 3, 10, 17, 9.30 – 2.00pm in the Parish Centre. Ring Lyn to enrol 4423 1009.

GENERAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS – coordinated by the Pastoral Council Sunday February 15 – 7.15.p.m. Parishioners are invited and encouraged to attend this gathering as an expression of your interest in and support for, the life and ministries in the Parish. There will be some brief reports delivered on the evening; however all organisations within the parish are invited to send in a brief written report on their respective work/ ministry by the end of January. All such reports will be coordinated and made available on the night - they can be e-mailed: office@nowraparish.org.au **THIS IS NOT AN AGM – NO ELECTIONS!!!!** There will also be a brief open forum to take suggestions that the Council might be able to act upon in the ensuing 3 year term

From the Christmas Day 2nd collection the parish has been able to allocate donations as follows: \$3500 to a number of Aged Care facilities in the Shoalhaven; \$1500 to **Caritas** towards the Middle East Crisis and \$1500 to SECET – Christian education in the State High Schools in the Shoalhaven.

THE DIOCESE OF WOLLONGONG, through Centacare is offering a Pastoral Care Training Program to be held one day a week for those visiting older people in parishes or who would like to acquire pastoral care skills; on Tues 10 Feb to 17 March from 9.30am to 3.30pm at Gerringong Parish Centre. It is hoped to conduct a similar program in Nowra after Easter, probably in May. Please contact the Diocesan Aged Care Advocate Carmen Karauda on 4254 9331, 0448 930 287 or carmenk@centacare.woll.catholic.org.au or more information.



We bid a sincere and prayerful farewell to the many visitors and holiday makers who have been with us in the Shoalhaven over recent weeks. We appreciate the great witness to your faith given by so many by your hospitality and fidelity to Sunday Mass. We look forward to seeing you in the not too distant future. Meanwhile we wish you and your families good health and God's blessings.



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.

3rd Sunday of the Year (B)
The Conversion of St Paul - 25th Jan. 2009

PAUL: THEN AND NOW with Fr Ron Peters. St Francis Xavier's Cathedral in the parish meeting room. 4 sessions, 10.30am – 12 noon Fri 6, Wed 11, 18 & 25 March or 7.30pm – 9pm Thurs 5, 12, 19 & 26 March. Light refreshments provided. RSVP Michael Dwyer 4228 6511 or Wollongong@parish.woll.catholic.org.au