

to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Gospel thoughts

by Fr Richard Leonard SJ

Sometimes translators of the Bible get it wrong for all the best reasons. We are used to hearing in today's Gospel that Jesus 'felt sorry' when he encountered the leper, but the Greek word Mark uses is more accurately translated 'anger', not 'pity'. With the exception of the cleansing of the temple in John's Gospel, generations of translators found it hard to imagine Jesus angry. Jesus' anger, however, provides a wonderful insight into him, and a strong challenge to us.

Anger tells us that something is wrong. It is an important and valuable emotion. Anger is value-neutral. It's what we do with it that defines its effect in our lives. Some of us sit on it and stew. Others gain energy from their anger to right the wrong.

People who had any type of skin disease in first century Palestine were called lepers. They were treated shamefully. They had to live outside the villages and towns, call out 'unclean, unclean' when they came near others, could never attend the temple and were considered cursed by God

and so excluded from the Chosen People. No wonder Jesus was angry when he encountered a man with leprosy. Here he also confronts a social class system that robbed this man of his human dignity and religious laws that robbed him of hope.

There are two details in this story that are especially important. The man with leprosy feels comfortable enough to go straight up to Jesus, to put his case, and ask for healing. We are told that Jesus touched him. Social and religious laws were being broken in this encounter. But Jesus' healing of the man isn't just about challenging social laws and taboos. Jesus tells the man to fulfil his religious obligations so that he can attend the temple again and rejoin the community. Jesus was interested in converting all those he met to the higher laws of love and compassion.

We are challenged this Sunday to trust our anger. This is not only about fighting for our rights when we have been wronged, but more so, it's fighting for the dignity and rights of others. It can take many forms: taking the life of those yet to be born, or who are near natural death, fighting for future generations by calling for a just care of the earth. And it can be about standing up for those people in our home, parish, workplace, neighbourhood, country and world who are treated shamefully, excluded, derided, or declared unclean.

Why should we bother? Because this Sunday Christ comes to us, again, and declares that despite what we might think about ourselves, or what we have been told, there is nothing in us which cannot be healed or is beyond hope.

May this Eucharist give us the love and compassion of Christ to fight for others' dignity because of the dignity we have received from Him. May we trust our anger and pray that it be like that of Jesus, and so turn us into agents of change for a more just church and for a more just world.

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

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Our Sunday Word

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

nowraparish.org.au

Sixth Sunday (Year B) ~ Season of the Year

15 February 2009

First Reading

13:1-2. 44-46

A reading from the book of Leviticus

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons.

'The man is leprous: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean". As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart; he must live outside the camp.'

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 31

R/ Turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.

1. Happy the man whose offence is forgiven, whose sin is remitted. O happy the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt, in whose spirit is no guile. (R.)
2. By now I have acknowledged my sins; my guilt I did not hide. I said: 'I will confess my offence to the Lord.' And you, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin. (R.)
3. Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord, exult, you just! O come, ring out your joy, all you upright of heart. (R.)

Second Reading

10:31-11:1

A reading from first Corinthians

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of



God. Never do anything offensive to anyone – to Jew or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved.

Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

The word of the Lord.

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 7:16

Alleluia, alleluia! A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people. Alleluia!

Gospel

1:40-45

The holy Gospel according to Mark

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing

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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.

6th Sunday of the Year (B)
15 February 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 7.00am Tues/Wed/Thurs 8.15am
Friday 7.00am and 11.30am.....Sat 9.00am
Morning Prayer: Wed 7.50am **Holy Hour:** Fri 10.30am
Berry: Tues 5.30pm..... **Culburra:** Thurs 5.30pm
Bomaderry: First Fridays – 5.45.p.m.
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.



There will be a meeting at **St John's High School** at 5pm on Mon 23 Feb to continue organisation for the school's **20th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS** on 22,23 & 24 May. Interested parents, students, parishioners, past or present are invited to attend. Enquiries please ring Josephine Geer on 4423 1666 (w) or 4234 3567(h).



We welcome you to join us when the **"COME AND SEE" Spirituality Program** resumes on Wed 18 Feb. The evening will be led by Les Ambrus directing us in another dimension of prayer "Christian Meditation – The Art of Being". Join us for prayer and conversation at the Parish Centre, 7.30pm, followed by supper (please bring a plate of finger food to share). Contact Moira 4423 6077 or Liz 4422 1279.



in these devastating fires. They are very much in our thoughts and prayers as we reach out to offer assistance." **ALL LOOSE MONEY IN THE 2ND COLLECTION THIS WEEKEND** will be forwarded to **The Catholic Archbishop's Charitable Fund – Bushfire Appeal**, much of which will be channelled through the St Vincent de Paul Society. Or you can forward your tax deductible donation directly to the Appeal at PO Box 146, East Melbourne Vic 8022 or to **SVDP Victorian Disaster Appeal** www.vinnies.org.au/vic or hotline 131812 or use form available in Church foyer.

THE HOPE OF NEW CREATION: What on earth are we doing for heaven's sake? Fr Richard Healey presents this five-week course which will look at the significance of the resurrection of Jesus for our lives today. What happens when we die? What do we hope for after death? Is heaven the ultimate destination, our final 'home'? Often our vision of heaven, the way that we imagine it, looks so terribly boring – is that true? Is the point of the Christian life just to 'save souls'? Does heaven have anything to say about things like global warming and the mission of the Church? Come along for a great Biblical journey from the dawn of creation to the second coming of Jesus and the final judgement to discover what it really means to be a citizen of heaven.

Tuesday evenings, from 7.30 – 9.00pm in the Parish Centre from 3 March – 31 March.

GENERAL MEETING OF PARISHIONERS – coordinated by the Pastoral Council this Sunday evening at 7.15pm. 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. **THIS IS NOT AN AGM – NO ELECTIONS!** **Loretta Brinkman** the recently appointed Diocesan Youth Coordinator will be **our guest speaker**. We anticipate that parishioners should be on their way home by 9.00pm.

BISHOP PETER CALLS FOR prayer & practical support for Bushfire Victims in Vic. "On behalf of the Dicoese of W'gong I pray for those who have died and extend my deepest condolences to all who have lost family members, friends and loved ones



LORD TEACH US TO PRAY the 2009 Diocesan Lenten Theme. In the Lenten booklet Bishop Peter urges us "this Lent to recommit ourselves to daily prayerful communication with

God. Consider how we may discover new ways of praying, or to refresh and deepen our current prayer".. In Nowra/B'derry Group leaders names with time and place of meetings are on lists in the Church foyers. This w/end is the last opportunity to add your name to the lists available at Nowra/Bomaderry Churches. Numbers are restricted as listed. Any queries contact Francene 4421 5962 or Peggy 4421 3417. Contacts for other areas

- **Berry/S'heads** Sr Patricia 4421 2260 or after Mass.
- **Culburra Beach** Jean Helliwell 4447 3018 and Harry Ray 4447 2941
- **Currarong** Connie Heap 4448 3157
- **K/Valley** Fr Ronan
- **Vincentia** Fr Leo 4441 5571
- **Callala** Joyce Buttel 4446 5569

Booklets are available for \$5 each.



We prayerfully remember: **Norma Dixon (Woodhill)** ; also **Regina Werda** and **Patrick Maguire** whose anniversaries occur at this time. *May they rest in eternal peace.*

RETREAT DAY FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF HOLY COMMUNION on Sat 28 March- Mt Carmel, Varroville, alternatively St Patrick's Berry, Sat April 4th. Fr Ronan will conduct the same format on both days.

STUDYING OR WORKING IN SYDNEY IN 2009? Xavier House, Stanmore, 10 mins by train/bus to the city and near several universities, offers accom. to young men from the country and is a safe and affordable home in the city, operated by St Vincent de Paul. For inform contact Jimmy 9560 2570, 0447 288 208 or www.xavierhouse.org.au. Email x.h@bigpond.com.au

Older Children seeking Baptism: Primary School children and older who with their parents are keen to approach Baptism, are invited to meet at St Michael's Church with Fr Pat on Saturday Feb. 28th. at 1.00.p.m.