

been saved - and raised us up with him and gave us a place with him in heaven, in Christ Jesus.

This was to show for all ages to come, through his goodness towards us in Christ Jesus, how infinitely rich he is in grace. Because it is by grace that you have been saved, through faith; not by anything of your own, but by a gift from God; not by anything that you have done, so that nobody can claim the credit. We are God's work of art, created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it. **The word of the Lord.**

Gospel Acclamation John 3.16

Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ! God loved the world so much, he gave us his only Son, that all who believe in him might have eternal life. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel 2:13-25

The holy Gospel according to John

Just before the Jewish Passover Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and in the Temple he found people selling cattle and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting at their counters there. Making a whip out of some cord, he drove them all out of the Temple, cattle and sheep as well, scattered the money changers' coins, knocked their tables over and said to the pigeon-sellers, 'Take all this out of here and stop turning my Father's house into a market.' Then his disciples remembered the words of scripture: Zeal for your house will devour me. The Jews intervened and said, 'What sign can you show us to justify what you have done?' Jesus answered, 'Destroy this sanctuary, and in three days I will raise it up.' The Jews replied, 'It has taken forty-six years to build this sanctuary: are you going to raise it up in three days?' But he was speaking of the sanctuary that was his body, and when Jesus rose from the dead, his disciples

remembered that he had said this, and they believed the scripture and the words he had said.

During his stay in Jerusalem for the Passover many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he gave, but Jesus knew them all and did not trust himself to them; he never needed evidence about any man; he could tell what a man had in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Gospel thoughts

by Dianne Bergant CSA

Each reading provides us with an example of divine mercy. God's use of Cyrus to deliver the Israelites, even though he was not a believer, shows that every circumstance and any person can demonstrate the scope of God's love. In fact, it is often the situation or the individual that we least expect that has been chosen to manifest God's mercy to us. This same mercy is seen as God brings us to life with Christ even when we were dead in sin.

Mercy means that strict justice is set aside in favour of compassion. Dispossessed people are raised out of defeat and given another chance. Sinners condemned to severe punishment are raised out of despair and offered a reprieve. The whole world is raised up out of darkness when God's own Son is sent into that world as saviour rather than as judge. God's mercy raises us out of loss and hopelessness, out of darkness and sin, so that we might enjoy the blessings of life.

We too have been raised up so that we might live in truth and might become the visible sign of God's mercy in the world. We have been made a new people, free from the restraints of the past. Joined with Christ we become God's handiwork, creations that bear the seal of the great creator. We are the very sacrament of God's mercy. The forgiveness that we have experienced and the new life within us shine forth as witness to the mercy of God.

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

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Our Sunday Word

St Michael's Parish, Nowra

nowraparish.org.au

Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year B)

22 March 2009

First Reading 36:14-16, 19-23

A reading from second book of Chronicles

All the heads of the priesthood, and the people too, added infidelity to infidelity, copying all the shameful practices of the nations and defiling the Temple that the Lord had consecrated for himself in Jerusalem. The Lord, the God of their ancestors, tirelessly sent them messenger after messenger, since he wished to spare his people and his house. But they ridiculed the messengers of God, they despised his words, they laughed at his prophets, until at last the wrath of the Lord rose so high against his people that there was no further remedy.

Their enemies burned down the Temple of God, demolished the walls of Jerusalem, set fire to all its palaces, and destroyed everything of value in it. The survivors were deported by Nebuchadnezzar to Babylon; they were to serve him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. This is how the word of the Lord was fulfilled that he spoke through Jeremiah, 'Until this land has enjoyed its sabbath rest, until seventy years have gone by, it will keep sabbath throughout the days of its desolation.'

And in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, to fulfil the word of the Lord that was spoken through Jeremiah, the Lord roused the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to issue a proclamation and to have it publicly displayed throughout his kingdom: 'Thus speaks Cyrus king of Persia, "The Lord, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; he has ordered me to build him a Temple in Jerusalem, in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his



people, may his God be with him! Let him go up."

The word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 136

R/ Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you!

1. By the rivers of Babylon there we sat and wept, remembering Zion; on the poplars that grew there we hung up our harps. R./
2. For it was there that they asked us, our captors, for songs, our oppressors, for joy. 'Sing to us,' they said, 'one of Zion's songs.' R./
3. O how could we sing the song of the Lord on alien soil? If I forget you, Jerusalem, let my right hand wither! R./
4. O let my tongue cleave my mouth if I remember you not, if I prize not Jerusalem above all my joys! R./

Second Reading 2:4-10

A reading from the letter to the Ephesians

God loved us with so much love that he was generous with his mercy: when we were dead through our sins, he brought us to life with Christ - it is through grace that you have



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.

**4th Sunday of Lent (B)
22 March 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 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. 5³⁰pm. **Berry:** Tues 6⁰⁰pm
B'derry: 1st Fri. 5¹⁵pm.; **K Valley:** Sat 4³⁰ – 5⁰⁰pm
Vincentia: Sat 11⁰⁰ – 11³⁰am & 5⁰⁰ - 5³⁰pm.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS –

Holy Spirit Church following 8.00am
 Mass on Fridays.



Nowra Fridays Mar 27th,/Apr 4th.- 7.00p.m.
Kangaroo Valley: Fri 5.00pm
Culburra Wed April 1st. – 10.30.am.

2ND RITE OF RECONCILIATION (Penance) –

Thursday 2 April at 7⁰⁰pm at St Michael's. 4 or 5
 priests will be available for the Sacrament

THE HOPE OF NEW CREATION: Fr Richard's

talks continue on Tuesday evenings, from 7.30 –
 9.00pm in the Parish Hall until 31 March. Audio and
 handouts from the first 3 weeks are available on the
 Parish website. The CD set of the talks will be
 available in early April for \$5.

Wed 25 March: The Solemnity of the Annunciation.

CHOIR FOR HOLY WEEK/ EASTER CEREMONIES on
 Thursday at **5.30pm** in the Church – all singers and
 musicians welcome.

LORD TEACH US TO PRAY Part of our opening prayer in
 week 5 asks “Father in heaven...help us to embrace the
 world you have given us, that we may transform the
 darkness of its pain into the life and joy of Easter”. The
 reflection for the week discusses the reality of suffering in
 the lives of God's people – no solutions, other than the cry
 “Lord teach us to pray”.

PARISH PASCHAL MEAL CELEBRATION! We invite all
 parishioners, their children, friends, family etc. to come to
 this simple meal and celebration in the Parish Hall. Here
 we remember the Last Supper which Jesus shared with
 His disciples and so began the journey of His Passion
 which culminates in Easter and Resurrection. You may
 form your own group or give your names to a Lenten
 Group Leader or to Francene 4421 5962, Maree 4421
 8516 or Peggy 4421 3417. **Lenten Group Leaders** – final
 numbers by Mon 30 March please.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK – 22 to 28 March. The
 theme is ‘Youth in Action’. The relationship between Parish
 and school is a critical one and this week gives us an
 opportunity to celebrate this vital link. You are invited to
 join us and visit our open classrooms on **Mon 23 March**
from 2.10 to 3.00pm. During this time our new interactive
 whiteboards will be demonstrated in many rooms. Contact
 the school for any further information.

CONGRATULATIONS TO CATECHISTS who completed
 the Level 1 training course and will now fill some
 vacancies although **WE STILL NEED MORE!** Ring Lyn
 4423 1009 if you can help. **Coordinators** please forward
 the following census information for your school to Lyn by
 28 March – number of Special Religious Education (SRE)
 classes; total number Catholic Students; number of
 children not receiving Cath SRE and any joint inter-
 denominational classes.

We prayerfully remember: **Bob Boyd** who died this past
 week. Also **John Basha, James Thomas
 Fryer, Thomas Stevens, Peter Garratty** and
Desmond McDevitt whose anniversaries occur.
May they rest in eternal peace.



CONFIRMATION PREPARATION: On Wed 25 March at
 7.00pm Confirmation Candidates and their
 parents are asked to participate in an essential
 part of their Sacramental preparation. The
 theme is ‘Signs and Symbols’ all relating to the
 Sacrament of Confirmation. The evening will
 also include a brief Commitment ceremony for both
 candidates and their parents. This evening applies to
 children from all Schools, and takes approx one hour.



ROTARY CLUB OF NOWRA invite you to view “**Climate
 Change**” at the Roxy Cinema on Mon 23 March – meet
 7pm for fellowship, movie starts 7.30pm. Cost \$20 per
 person – tickets avail for pre-purchase at the cinema –
 seats are limited. Profits go to the Vic Bushfire appeal.

**RETREAT DAY FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS
 OF HOLY COMMUNION** – conducted by Fr Ronan at St
 Patrick's Berry, Sat 4 April from 9.30am – 2.30pm. Cost
 \$5. BYO lunch, tea & coffee provided. Please book by
 ringing 4253 0900.

ENROLMENT for Kinder 2010 at St Michael's Primary
 school – application packs available from the school now.
 Interviews will be held in May.

**PALM SUNDAY YOUTH MASS & SPANISH FIESTA –
 5 April.** Dioceses around the world will be celebrating the
 24th WYD with the theme “We have set our heart on the
 living God.” At St Peter's Basilica, Pope Benedict will
 witness as a delegation of young Aussies farewell the
 WYD Cross and Icon and pass it on to the young people
 of Madrid. In Wollongong, a Youth Mass will be
 celebrated in the Cathedral at 5.00pm followed by a
 Spanish Fiesta. At 8.00pm we will witness the handover.

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED in playing **500** (a card
 game)? If so please contact Cathy Elton on 4422 1784. It
 is envisaged that group/s would meet at players' homes
 on a regular basis. If you aren't rusty – you could help
 those who are!

CULBURRA AUXILIARY will be selling tickets for their
 Easter raffle this weekend. Any donations towards the
 prize would be gratefully received.