



St Michael's Parish Nowra

Incorporates the Church communities of St Michael's - Nowra, St Patrick's - Berry, Sacred Heart - Bomaderry

Mary Help of Christians - Culburra, Holy Spirit - Vincentia & St Joseph's - Kangaroo Valley

Telephone: 4423 1712 Email: office@nowraparish.org.au Web: www.nowraparish.org.au

6th Sunday of Easter

17th May 2020



The priests of the parish continue to celebrate Mass for parishioners, anniversaries, the sick, and special needs

Dear parishioners,

We had hoped that in view of the Premier's announcement this week easing some restrictions in regard to numbers at various venues, that we might have been able to have some more positive news for you in regard to the opening of Churches and Mass attendance. However, the following extract from our Bishop means that we have got to abide by the current regulations.

"My brothers and sisters COVID 19 remains present in the community and is highly infectious. We need to continue to act with prudence, calm and hope. The NSW government has announced today that certain restrictions are being eased. The purpose of today's communication is to direct you as to how we will implement this in our diocese. Believing it to be the more prudent course of action at this time, and given the limitations on the number of people who could attend and the associated logistics, I have determined that the public celebration of Mass will remain suspended and churches will remain closed. This will be reviewed in two (2) weeks. The previously communicated dispensation of the faithful of the Diocese from the obligation to attend Sunday Mass remains in place. This decision has been made for the safety and wellbeing of all involved - parishioners, clergy, parish staff and wider community. Therefore, the current directives remain in place, except for the changes in relation to the attendance numbers for weddings and funerals: • Weddings are limited to no more than ten (10) guests plus the couple, celebrant and assistants. • Funerals are limited to no more than twenty (20) mourners indoors and thirty (30) mourners for outdoor ceremonies excluding celebrants, funeral directors and assistants. The government requirements for hygiene practices and physical distancing guidelines of one person per four square metres must still be adhered to at all times....."

BISHOP BRIAN MASCORD



THE EASTER SEASON: The Paschal Candle - the great Easter symbol.

"Jesus Christ is the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be forever." (Blessing of the Candle)
(The Letter to the Hebrews 13:8)

Easter is the longest season in the Church Year, which we call the Liturgical Year. Like many words in church language, the word, 'liturgy' comes from the language used by the early church in its worship and writings - Greek. The word liturgy is derived from leitourgia which was used to refer to any public work or function exercised by the people as a whole. Liturgy' is the public Worship and Prayer of the Church.

"The fifty days from the Sunday of the Resurrection to Pentecost Sunday are celebrated in joy and exultation as one feast day, indeed as one 'great Sunday.' These are the days above all others in which the **Alleluia** is sung." (US Conf. of Bishops)
The Sundays of this Season are referred to as Sundays of Easter, rather than Sundays after Easter, a continuum of Easter.

Just as the 40 days of the Lenten Season was and is the time when catechumens were prepared for baptism on Easter Sunday, the initial purpose of the 50-day Easter season was to continue the faith formation of these new Christians. This sacred period of fifty days concludes with Pentecost Sunday.

Each Sunday at 9am, the Diocese currently broadcasts Sunday Mass with Bishop Brian. You can view it on the Diocesan website www.dow.org.au or [YouTube Channel](#) or [Facebook page](#).

We pray for the human family worldwide currently afflicted with the coronavirus. May human lives be spared; and through medical expertise, and global cooperation may it be soon effectively controlled, and eradicated. Lord hear us

Living our faith at home.

Faith Circles: The Diocesan weekly resource offers a copy of the upcoming Sunday Gospel, commentary (often by Pope Francis), questions for reflection/sharing and brief prayer points. Would you like to be part of a small group, meeting by Zoom from the comfort of your own lounge room, but don't feel like facilitating a group yourself?

Sue sgs is willing to facilitate a small group if anyone interested. Suggested time: **Thursday 10.30 - 11.30 a.m.** Expressions of interest: ring parish office this week.



Our sincere congratulations, and prayerful best wishes to Greg and Joan Watts who celebrated their 65th Wedding anniversary on Thursday.

Greg and Joan as many parishioners would be aware were well known and highly respected dairy farmers at Pyree, before retiring to Berry in more recent years.

The Eucharist - Exploring our Catholic Faith

We are all missing the Eucharist - but what does this mean? What are we missing? In this four-part online series, we will refresh and deepen our understanding of the Eucharist and its relevance for our lives.

Mondays 1st - 22nd June or Fridays 5th - 26th June all at 4pm via Zoom Video Conferencing.

For more information and registration please email darren.mcdowell@dow.org.au



We prayerfully remember those who died this past week: **Deirdre Turner (Berry)** **Eileen Agnes Gurney (UK)**. Those whose anniversaries occur: **Patricia**

(Pat) Mason, Richard Singleton, Bernard Court, Herbert M Cooke, Kevin Merriman, Jenny Davis, and Alan McRae. Also all who have died from the Covid-19 virus, in Australia and worldwide. May they rest in peace.



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First Reading - [Acts 8:5-8, 14-17](#)

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Philip went to a Samaritan town and proclaimed the Christ to them. The people united in welcoming the message Philip preached, either because they had heard of the miracles he worked or because they saw them for themselves. There were, for example, unclean spirits that came shrieking out of many who were possessed, and several paralytics and cripples were cured. As a result, there was great rejoicing in that town.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, and they went down there, and prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit, for as yet he had not come down on any of them: they had only been baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Responsorial Psalm - [Ps 65:1-7, 16, 20](#). R. [see v.1](#)

(R.) Let all the earth cry out to God with joy.

1. Cry out with joy to God all the earth,
O sing to the glory of his name.
O render him glorious praise.
Say to God: 'How tremendous your deeds! (R.)
2. 'Before you all the earth shall bow;
shall sing to you, sing to your name!
Come and see the works of God,
tremendous his deeds among men. (R.)
3. He turned the sea into dry land,
they passed through the river dry-shod.
Let our joy then be in him;
he rules for ever by his might. (R.)

4. Come and hear, all who fear God.
I will tell what he did for my soul:
Blessed be God who did not reject my prayer
nor withhold his love from me. (R.)

Second Reading - [1 Pt 3:15-18](#)

A reading from the first letter of St Peter

Reverence the Lord Christ in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you all have. But give it with courtesy and respect and with a clear conscience, so that those who slander you when you are living a good life in Christ may be proved wrong in the accusations that they bring. And if it is the will of God that you should suffer, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Why, Christ himself, innocent though he was, had died once for sins, died for the guilty, to lead us to God. In the body he was put to death, in the spirit he was raised to life.

Gospel Acclamation - [Jn 14:23](#)

Alleluia, alleluia!
All who love me will keep my words,
and my Father will love them, and we will come to them. Alleluia!

Gospel according to John [14:15-21](#)

Jesus said to his disciples:

'If you love me you will keep me commandments.
I shall ask the Father,
and he will give you another Advocate to be with you for ever,
that Spirit of truth
whom the world can never receive

since it neither sees nor knows him.
but you know him,
because he is with you, he is in you.
I will not leave you orphans.
I will come back to you.

In a short time, the world will no longer see me; but you will see me,
because I live and you will live.

On that day you will understand that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you.
Anybody who receives my commandments and keeps them will be one who loves me; and anybody who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I shall love him and show myself to him.'

Reflection by Greg Sunter

In next week's liturgy we celebrate the Ascension of the Lord and the following week we celebrate Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples. This week's reading is the perfect precursor to these coming weeks. Prior to this section of the Last Supper discourse, Jesus has told the disciples that he will be leaving them. By referring to the Spirit as 'another' advocate or paraclete, Jesus names himself as having been an advocate. The Spirit is to continue the work that Jesus has begun in and with the disciples, standing as witness and strength for them to help them when the world turns against them. Christian people believe that Christ continues to be present in the world even though he is no longer physically present. Jesus' reference to 'the world' is a reference to those who do not believe. It is only those who believe who continue to recognise and affirm his ongoing presence in the world. Whilst the Spirit, the advocate or paraclete, will act in the world to bring about the reign of God, it is in the hearts and minds of those who believe where the Spirit will act most strongly.