



St. Michael's Parish, Nowra

Incorporating the Catholic Communities of St Michael's, Nowra - St Patrick's, Berry - Sacred Heart, Bomaderry
- Help of Christians, Culburra – St Joseph's, Kangaroo Valley - Holy Spirit, Vincentia

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28th Sunday in Ordinary Time A

11th October 2020

SPIRITUALITY AND THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

One size doesn't fit everyone. This isn't just true for clothing, it's also true for spirituality. Our challenges in life change as we age. Spirituality hasn't always been fully sensitive to this. True, we've always had tailored instruction and activities for children, young people, and for people who are raising children, carrying a job, and paying a mortgage, but we've never developed a spirituality for what happens when those years are over.

Why is one needed? Jesus seemingly didn't have one. He didn't have one set of teachings for the young, another for those in mid-life, and still another for the elderly. He just taught. The Sermon on the Mount, the parables, and his invitation to take up his cross are intended in the same way for everyone, irrespective of age. But we hear those teaching at very different times in our lives; and it's one thing to hear the Sermon the Mount when you're seven years old, another when you're twenty-seven, and quite another when you're eighty-seven. Jesus' teachings don't change, but we do, and they offer very specific challenges at different times of our lives.

Christian spirituality has generally kept this in mind, with one exception. Except for Jesus and an occasional mystic, it has failed to develop an explicit spirituality for our later years, for how we are meant to be generative in our senior years and how we are to die in a life-giving way. But there's a good reason for this lacuna. Simply put, it wasn't needed because up until this last century most people never lived into old age. For example, in Palestine, in Jesus' time, the average life expectancy was thirty to thirty-five years. A century ago in the United States, it was still less than fifty years. When most people in the world died before they reached the age of fifty, there was no real need for a spirituality of aging.

There is such a spirituality inside the Gospels. Even though he died at thirty-three, Jesus left us a paradigm of how to age and die. But that paradigm, while healthily infusing and undergirding Christian spirituality in general, was never developed more specifically into a spirituality of aging (with the exception of some of the great Christian mystics).

After Jesus, the Desert fathers and mothers folded the question of how to age and die into the overall framework of their spirituality. For them, spirituality was a quest to "see the face of God" and that, as Jesus makes clear, requires one thing, *purity of heart*. So for them, no matter your age, the challenge was the same, trying to achieve purity of heart. Then in the age of the persecutions and the early Christian martyrs, the idea developed that the ideal way to age and die was through martyrdom. Later, when Christians were no longer physically martyred, the idea took hold that you could take on a voluntary type of martyrdom by living the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. They believed that living these, like the quest for purity of heart, taught you all you needed to know, no matter your age. Eventually this was expanded to mean that anyone who faithfully responded to the duties in his or her life, irrespective of age, would learn everything necessary to come to sanctity through that fidelity. As a famous aphorism put it: *Stay inside your cell and it will teach you all you need to know*. Understood properly, there's a spirituality of aging and dying inside these notions, but until recently there was little need to draw that out more explicitly.

Happily, today the situation is changing and we're developing, more and more, some explicit spiritualities of aging and dying. Perhaps this reflects an aging population, but there's now a burgeoning body of literature, both religious and secular, that's taking up the question of aging and dying. These authors, too numerous to mention, include many names already familiar to us: Henri Nouwen, Richard Rohr, Kathleen Dowling Singh, David Brooks, Cardinal Bernardin, Michael Paul Gallagher, Joan Chittister, Parker Palmer, Marilyn Chandler McEntyre, Paul Kalanithi, Erica Jong, Kathie Roiphe, and Wilkie and Noreeen Au, among others. Coming from a variety of perspectives, each of these offer insights into what God and nature intend for us in our later years.

In essence, here's the issue: today, we're living longer and healthier late into life. It's common today to retire sometime in our early sixties after having raised our children, superannuated from our jobs, and paid our mortgages. So what's next, given that we probably have twenty or thirty more years of health and energy left? What are these years for? What are we called to now, beyond loving our grandkids? Abraham and Sarah, in their old age, were invited to set out for a new land and conceive a child long after this was biologically impossible for them. That's our call too. What "Isaac" are we called to give birth to in our later years? We need guidance.

Mass Times

Saturday Vigils

| | | |
|-----------|--------|--------|
| Nowra | 5:00pm | |
| Culburra | 5:00pm | |
| Vincentia | 5:00pm | 6:15pm |

Sunday Mass Times

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------|--------|---------|
| Nowra | 8:00 am | 9:30am | 5:00 pm |
| Berry | 8:00 am | | |
| Bomaderry | 9:30 am | | |
| Vincentia | 9:00 am | 10:15 | |
| Kangaroo Valley | 11:00 am | | |

| | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|-----------------|---------|---------|-----------|----------|---------|
| Nowra | 8:00 am | 8:00 am | 8:00 am | 8:00 am | 8:00 am |
| Berry | | 5:30 pm | | | |
| Culburra | | | | 5:30 pm | |
| Bomaderry | | | | | 5:30 pm |
| Vincentia | 8:00 am | 5:30 pm | 5:30 pm | 8:00am | 8:00 am |
| Kangaroo Valley | | 9:00 am | 9:00 am | 9:00 am | |

To Register for weekend Masses in *Nowra, Culburra, Berry and Bomaderry*

please call 0477 427 396 (Mon to Fri between 10:00am & 3:00pm)

To register for Mass at **Kangaroo Valley**, please email ronankangaroo1@gmail.com

To register for Mass at **Vincentia**, please call 0435 862 156 or email holyspiritvincentia@gmail.com

***** IF YOU HAVE REGISTERED FOR MASS AND ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND, PLEASE CALL TO CANCEL YOUR BOOKING.*****

Confessions / Reconciliation

Nowra: Saturday: 9.30 – 10.30am

Culburra: Saturday prior to Vigil Mass at 5.00pm

Vincentia: Saturday 4pm

Berry: Tuesday following 5.30pm Mass

Bomaderry: Friday following 5.30pm Mass

This week includes the following celebrations:

Wednesday: The Optional Memorial of **St Callistus I**, pope, martyr

Thursday: The Memorial of **St Teresa of Jesus**, virgin, doctor

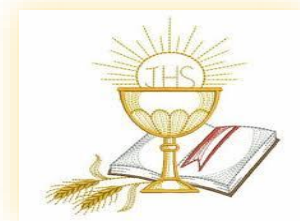
Friday: The Optional Memorial of the **St Hedwig**, religious and **St Margaret Mary Alacoque**, virgin

Saturday: The Optional Memorial of **St Ignatius of Antioch**, bishop, martyr



We prayerfully remember the recently deceased and all those whose anniversaries occur at this time especially **Henry Ruhl, Vera Guthrie, Christine Maguire and Joseph Azzopardi**. We pray also for all who have died from Covid-19 in Australia and worldwide. May they rest in peace.

First Holy Communion: A meeting for the parents of candidates for this year's First Holy Communion will occur on Wednesday (14th Oct) at 7pm in St Michael's Church. This meeting is for the parents of children that attend schools other than St Michael's Catholic Primary School. Lessons to *prepare* the children will commence the following week in Nowra and Berry. For further information please contact Frances: 44231712.



Children's Liturgy Worksheets can be downloaded from the parish website -

<http://nowraparish.org.au/other-resources>



Livestream Holy Hour

Join the NET Team for online Holy Hour! Every Wednesday from 6:30pm on Instagram @wollongongnetteam or Facebook @CYMDOW (Catholic Youth Ministry Wollongong). Witness adoration, join in for praise and worship, and hear the Gospel as well as a reflection written by one of our team members! All from the safety of your home!



You are
the body of Christ,
and each of you
is part of it
(1Corinthians 27)

Carer's week October 11th - 18th

We have many parishioners who are carers for someone in their family or who work / volunteer in the Caring professions. This role is often hidden and unsupported. This week we would like to affirm and bless the selfless efforts of those who care, either voluntarily or professionally for someone who has special care needs.

We invite all who identify as a Carer in any capacity to come for a special blessing **at 8.00 a.m. Mass at St Michael's next Wednesday 14th October.**

A special Blessing will also be offered at **weekend Masses on the weekend of 17th- 18th October.** Prayers of Intercessions will also mark this special week.

There will also be a simple take-home reflection: "*Beatitudes for those who care for another*" available for your encouragement. We hope parishioners will take a copy of this reflection and pass it on to someone you know who won't be at the church.



Next weekend 17th & 18th October our parish will be holding the annual Catholic Mission Church Appeal. This year we are invited to partner with the Church in Cambodia, which is reaching out to those who have been affected by disability and giving them hope and support to live a fulfilling life.

Chen was just 16 years old when he lost both his legs in a landmine accident. Knowing that his life would never be the same, he felt hopeless, until he and his family were approached by the Arrupe Centre. Led by Bishop Enrique Figaredo Alvargonzalez, the Arrupe Centre provides children like Chen with support and opportunities they may not access otherwise. Next week you will be offered the opportunity to personally partner with the Church in Cambodia as a monthly giving partner, with all gifts specifically directed to support community and child-focused programs in Cambodia. Freecall: 1800 257 296 catholicmission.org.au/cambodia



A Saint For Our Time: Carlo Acutis

Carlo Acutis was born in London in mid-1991. He contracted leukemia and offered his pain for both Pope Benedict XVI and for the Universal Church in which he said that "I offer all the suffering I will have to suffer for the Lord, for the Pope, and the Church". The doctor treating him asked him if he was suffering much pain and he responded that "there are people who suffer much more than me". He died on 12 October 2006 at 6:45am from M3 fulminant leukemia and he was buried in Assisi in accordance with his wishes.

On 14 November 2019, the Medical Council of the Congregation for Saints' Causes expressed a positive opinion about a miracle that was attributed to Acutis' intercession. The miracle happened in 2013, which involved a young boy from Brazil who suffered from a rare pancreatic disease.

Pope Francis confirmed this miracle in a decree on 21 February 2020 which enabled for Acutis to be beatified on 10 October 2020.

Google – Carlo Acutis, for YouTube presentation or go to: https://youtu.be/yC_oZlY_f5w

A Vocation view Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (11/10/20)

"The Lord of hosts will provide a feast of rich food." Let us look only to the Lord for our salvation and peace, for the things of this world pass away. (Isaiah 25:6) If you want to talk about your discernment, please contact the Diocesan Vocations Director, Fr Duane Fernandez at vocations@dow.org.au or our Vocations video at <https://www.dow.org.au/covid-19/sunday-mass-online-with-bishop-brian/>

Entrance Antiphon Ps 129:3-4

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But with you is found forgiveness, O God of Israel.

A reading from the prophet Isaiah Is 25:6-10

On this mountain, the Lord of hosts will prepare for all people a banquet of rich food, a banquet of fine wines, of food rich and juicy, of fine strained wines. On this mountain he will remove the mourning veil covering all peoples, and the shroud enwrapping all nations, he will destroy Death for ever. The Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek; he will take away his people's shame everywhere on earth, for the Lord has said so. That day, it will be said: See, this is our God in whom we hoped for salvation; the Lord is the one in whom we hoped. We exult and we rejoice that he has saved us; for the hand of the Lord rests on this mountain.

Responsorial Psalm Ps 22

Response. I shall live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. (R.)
2. He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. (R.)
3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. (R.)
4. Surely goodness and kindness
shall follow me all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. (R.)

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians Phil 4:12-14. 19-20

I know how to be poor and I know how to be rich too. I have been through my initiation and now I am ready for anything anywhere: full stomach or empty stomach, poverty or plenty. There is nothing I cannot master with the help of the One who gives me strength. All the same, it was good of you to share with me in my hardships. In return my God will fulfil all your needs, in Christ Jesus, as lavishly as only God can. Glory to God, our Father, for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia, alleluia! May the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ enlighten the eyes of our heart that we might see how great is the hope to which we are called. Alleluia!

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew Mt 22:1-14

Jesus said to the chief priests and elders of the people: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a feast for his son's wedding. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. Next he sent some more servants. "Tell those who have been invited" he said "that I have my banquet all prepared, my oxen and fattened cattle have been slaughtered, everything is ready. Come to the wedding." But they were not interested: one went off to his farm, another to his business, and the rest seized his servants, maltreated them and killed them. The king was furious. He dispatched his troops, destroyed those murderers and burnt their town. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready; but as those who were invited proved to be unworthy, go to the crossroads in the town and invite everyone you can find to the wedding." So these servants went out onto the roads and collected together everyone they could find, bad and good alike; and the wedding hall was filled with guests. When the king came in to look at the guests he noticed one man who was not wearing a wedding garment, and said to him, "How did you get in here, my friend, without a wedding garment?" And the man was silent. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the dark, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

