

# 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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**SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER Year B**

**11<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

## THE POWER OF BEAUTY

By Ron Rolheiser OMI

*The world will be saved by beauty!* Fyodor Dostoevsky wrote that, Dorothy Day quoted it, and centuries before Jesus, Confucius made it central to his pedagogy. They were on to something. Beauty is a special language that cuts through and sidelines all the things that divide us – history, race, language, creed, ideology, politics, economic disparity, gender, sexual identity, and personal wounds. Beauty melts down all differences. Its speech, like that of a newborn, has no explicit words, but is a language so perfect that it can only be soiled by violating oneself. Two things in this world cannot be argued with, beauty and a baby. They also cannot defend themselves, and have only their own vulnerability as protection.

In classical Western philosophy, beauty is seen as one of the transcendental properties of being, and therefore as one of the properties of God. God is understood as having four transcendental qualities, namely, as being *One, True, Good, and Beautiful*. Hence, beauty possesses a divine, sacred quality. Artists and everyone sensitive to aesthetics have always recognized this, not necessarily in that they affirm explicitly that beauty is a property of God, but that they recognize a godly quality in beauty; they sense a “blaspheme” whenever it is defaced, and feel the energy to create as divine.

Beauty, as we know, takes many forms. Who of us has not at times felt the stunning power of physical beauty? Who has not been momentarily transfixed by the beauty of a sunset, an ocean, a mountain range, the stars, a full moon, a desert landscape, a particular tree, a thunderstorm, fresh snow, a gentle rain, an animal in the wild, a work of art or architecture, or a human body? Physical beauty is self-justifying. It cannot be argued with and may never be denigrated by an appeal to something higher and more spiritual. It is unequivocally real and thus needs to be recognized, affirmed, and blessed.

For most of us, when we hear the word beauty, physical beauty is what comes to mind. Now, while that beauty is real, powerful, and can transform the heart, there are other kinds of beauty equally as powerful and transforming. I am not sure what language works in terms of what I am about to describe, so forgive me if my expression here is amateur and awkward, but we can speak, and need to, of beauty in the emotional and moral realm. There is something we might call emotional beauty or moral beauty.

Emotional beauty is not the beauty of a sunset or a great painting, but is the beauty of a particular expression of love, of empathy, or of compassion that, like a beautiful sunset, we are occasionally graced to witness. For example, we can be transfixed when seeing the miraculous rescue of a child, when seeing a helpless animal saved by rescuers, when seeing an elderly couple affectionately holding hands, or when hearing of a generous response by the public to a plea for help by a poor family. As with physical beauty, there is a divine quality here and, as with physical beauty, there is something here that only the most boorish of persons would dare smudge. However, whenever our emotions are involved there is always the danger of an unhealthy sentimentality also being present; but, that danger notwithstanding, our emotions, like our eyes, are also an opening to beauty.

Finally, not least, there is moral beauty, beauty of soul. The salient example here is martyrdom and every other kind of love that sacrifices its own wishes, desires, and life for something higher. While this does not always make for a beautiful body, it does make for a beautiful soul. In affirming this, I am not thinking, first, of its most salient examples, the religious martyrs who gave up their lives rather than deny their faith, or even of persons like Mohandas Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day, Maximilian Kolbe, Oscar Romero, and the many today who give up their lives for others. These are powerful examples of moral beauty, but many of us see this first-hand in our own families and circle of friends. For example, I look at my own mother and dad who for most of their lives sacrificed to provide for a large family and, especially, to provide that family with what is more important than food and clothing, namely, faith and moral guidance. There was a moral beauty in their sacrifice, though sometimes during those years, by Hollywood standards, my mom and dad looked more haggard than beautiful. Moral beauty, though, is measured by a different standard. That being said, there is also the need to be cautious here: while emotional beauty carries the risk of sentimentality, moral beauty carries the risk of fanaticism. Fanatics, serial killers, and snipers are also highly focused morally. Morality, like anything else, can be misguided.

*The world will be saved by beauty!* True, though I would employ the present tense, *the world is being saved by beauty.*



### **Nowra Catholic Women's League (CWL)**

The next monthly meeting will be held on **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> April**, in the St Michael's Parish Centre. Join us for morning tea from 9:30am and the meeting will follow at 10am. All welcome!



**The Parish Craft Group** will meet on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> April** in the St Michael's Parish Centre from 9:30am to midday. Due to Covid19 it is BYO mug, morning tea will be provided. For further details please contact Susan on 0400 210 988.

## **The Year of St Joseph**



Pope Francis on December 8, 2020 published an Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* (With a Father's Heart), commemorating the 150th anniversary of the declaration of Saint Joseph as Patron of the Universal Church. To mark the occasion, the Holy Father has proclaimed a "Year of St Joseph", running from December 8, 2020 to December 8, 2021.

A number of resources are being developed to encourage and support the celebration of the Year of St Joseph by the ACBC, that we will look to make available to your parish via this weekly communication, via our Website and printing of prayer cards. Other organisations and events, such as the ACBC National Catholic Men's Gathering will make this a focus of their formation.

You are encouraged to visit the ACBC year of St Joseph page at

**<https://www.catholic.org.au/yearofstjoseph>**

## VINCENTIA CHANGE IN MASS TIMES:

From Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> April  
the Vigil Mass at Holy Spirit Church will be celebrated at **5:00pm**,  
with Reconciliation from **4:00pm**.

### Weekend Masses

<b>Nowra</b>	Saturday	5:00pm
	Sunday	8:00am
		9:30am
		5:00pm

<b>Culburra</b>	Saturday	5:00pm
<b>Bomaderry</b>	Sunday	9:30am
<b>K'Valley</b>	Sunday	11:00am
<b>Berry</b>	Sunday	8:00am

<b>Vincentia</b>	Saturday	5:00pm
	Sunday	9:30am
Croatian Mass	Saturday	7:00pm
	1 <sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month	

### Reconciliation/Confessions

**Nowra** Saturday: 9:30 – 10:30

**Berry** Tuesday following 5:30 Mass

**Bomaderry** Friday following 5:30 Mass

**Culburra** Saturday before 5:00pm Vigil Mass

**Vincentia** Saturday: 4:00pm

### Weekday Masses

<b>Nowra</b>	Monday to Friday	8:00am
	Wednesday	5:30pm
	Friday	11:30am

<b>Berry</b>	Tuesday – 5:30pm
<b>Culburra</b>	Thursday – 5:30pm
<b>Bomaderry</b>	Friday – 5:30pm

<b>K' Valley</b>	Tuesday to Thursday	9:00am
<b>Vincentia</b>	Mon, Thurs & Friday	8:00am
	Tue & Wed	5:30pm

## Check in with the SERVICE NSW QR CODE

Nowra, Culburra, Berry and Bomaderry – **are now using the Service NSW QR check in (the Service NSW QR remembers your details) or signing in at the door.**

For Mass at Kangaroo Valley, please email [ronankangaroo1@gmail.com](mailto:ronankangaroo1@gmail.com)

For Mass at Vincentia - **are now using the Service NSW QR check in you no longer need to book for Mass.**

## Thank you for your generosity!



### PROJECT COMPASSION

Thank you for your generous donations throughout the Lenten Season. To date we have banked **\$10,944**. There are still some donations filtering in. If you have boxes or envelopes, you can drop them when you come to Mass or at the Parish Office, at your convenience.

### Good Friday Collection for the Holy Land

Once again, a big thank you to all those who gave so generously. We have sent **\$3,686**, to further the works in the Holy Land.

**We prayerfully remember** the recently deceased **Roderick Bryant** and **Peter O'Grady**, and those whose anniversaries occur at this time: **Jeanette Jensen**. We also pray for all who have died from Covid-19 in Australia and worldwide.

## Second Sunday of Easter Year B

### Entrance Antiphon

1 Pt 2:2

Like newborn infants, you must long for the pure, spiritual milk, that in him you may grow to salvation, alleluia.

### A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Acts 4:32-35

The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed for his own use anything that he had, as everything they owned was held in common.

The apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power, and they were all given great respect. None of their members was ever in want, as all those who owned land or houses would sell them, and bring the money from them, to present it to the apostles; it was then distributed to any members who might be in need.

### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 117:2-4. 15-18. 22-24. R. v.1

(R.) Give thanks to the Lord for he is good, his love is everlasting.

Let the sons of Israel say: 'His love has no end.'

Let the sons of Aaron say: 'His love has no end.'

Let those who fear the Lord say:

'His love has no end.' (R.)

The Lord's right hand has triumphed;

his right hand raised me up.

I shall not die, I shall live and recount his deeds.

I was punished, I was punished by the Lord, but

not doomed to die. (R.)

The stone which the builders rejected  
has become the corner stone.

This is the work of the Lord,  
a marvel in our eyes.

This day was made by the Lord;

we rejoice and are glad. (R.)

### A reading from the first letter of St John

1 Jn 5:1-6

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been begotten by God; and whoever loves the Father that begot Him loves the child whom he begets. We can be sure that we love God's children if we love God himself and do what he has commanded us; this is what loving God is – keeping his commandments; and his commandments are not difficult, because anyone who has been begotten by God has already overcome the world; this is the victory over the world – our faith. Who can overcome the world? Only the man who believes that Jesus is the Son of God; Jesus Christ who came by water and blood, not with water only, but with water and blood; with the Spirit as another witness – since the Spirit is the truth.

### Gospel Acclamation

Jn 20:29

Alleluia, alleluia! You believe in me, Thomas, because you have seen me; happy are those who have not seen me, but still believe! Alleluia!

### Gospel

Jn 20:19-31

In the evening of that same day, the first day of the week, the doors were closed in the room where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews. Jesus came and stood among them. He said to them, 'Peace be with you,' and showed them his hands and his side. The disciples were filled with joy when they saw the Lord, and he said to them again, 'Peace be with you.'

'As the Father sent me, so am I sending you.' After saying this he breathed on them and said: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. For those whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven; for those whose sins you retain, they are retained.' Thomas, called the Twin, who was one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the disciples said, 'We have seen the Lord', he answered, 'Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into the holes they made, and unless I can put my hand into his side, I refuse to believe.' Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them. 'Peace be with you' he said. Then he spoke to Thomas, 'Put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.' Thomas replied, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him:

'You believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.'

There were many other signs that Jesus worked and the disciples saw, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name.

### Communion Antiphon

Cf. Jn 20:27

Bring your hand and feel the place of the nails, and do not be unbelieving but believing, alleluia.