



2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Year A

15 January 2017

LAMB OF GOD

Some people may be puzzled by John the Baptist referring to Jesus in today's gospel as the "lamb of God", since for most of us the lambs we see in the paddocks are cute, but weak and vulnerable to predators. You don't hear of nations, or even sporting teams, adopting 'lambs' as their emblem. Why should John identify "the Chosen One of God" as the "lamb of God"?

The people for whom John was writing would have heard the "lamb of God" very differently to us. For those familiar with the Old Testament, the term "lamb of God" had extremely powerful resonances, especially in the suffering servant passages in Isaiah, as well as in the Exodus from Egypt.

Recall how Isaiah gives an astonishing account of the suffering servant who is beaten, arrested and put to death: "Like a lamb about to be slaughtered, like a sheep about to be sheared, he never said a word." Yet by his endurance we are saved and forgiven by God (53:7).

Again at the Exodus from Egypt, we read of God sending a destroying angel to kill all the first born in the land, of people and animals, to force Pharaoh to release the Israelites from their bondage. Moses instructs the Israelites to take the blood of a lamb or kid and put it on the doorpost overnight to protect them from the angel of death (Ex. 12). This Passover became a defining feast for the Jewish people ever after, and it resonates in our Christian Eucharist as well.

So for us the "lamb of God" is indeed a term of great honour, not one of weakness but of incredible endurance and commitment by God in

Jesus to our wellbeing and salvation. The symbol of the lamb is not one of threat or violence, but of innocence and solidarity with those in suffering.

Curiously in John's Gospel, there is no mention of him baptising Jesus. John even says he did not know Jesus, but recognised him from the sign of the Spirit descending on him. John speaks as a prophet witnessing to the true identity of Jesus as the Chosen One who takes away "the sin of the world", the primordial disorder in all creation and in us.

John witnesses the Holy Spirit coming down on Jesus, but the Spirit is not for Jesus alone. Jesus will baptise with the Holy Spirit, and so the Spirit will be alive in all the followers of Jesus.

John is intent on showing how the same Holy Spirit in Jesus is the very same Spirit animating the small and seemingly insignificant Christian communities of his day. He is urging the followers of Jesus to allow God's Spirit to nudge them to be good news, with the 'lamb of God' as their emblem, capturing God's intense personal commitment to our wellbeing, and calling us to a similar commitment to others.



Bruce Duncan
CSsR
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2017

OUR VISION

"Everything is to be oriented towards the praise and glory of God".

OUR MISSION

The St Agnes' Parish Community strives to make our Vision a reality by a commitment to:

- holiness in the image of Christ
- proclaim the good news of salvation
- minister within the faith community
- the service of all, particularly those in need

Episcopal Ordination of

Bishop-elect Gregory Homeming

The date 22 February 2017 at 7.00pm in St Carthage's Cathedral is confirmed for the Episcopal Ordination at which our new bishop will also take canonical possession of the See in assuming the cathedral as Sixth Bishop of Lismore. In anticipation of the forthcoming ordination, this prayer is being offered in all parishes in the Diocese.



'For Gregory, our Bishop-elect, as he prepares to take up the sacred office of Bishop of the Church of Lismore. As our Chief Shepherd in the line of the Apostles, may he govern your people in love, and inspire and strengthen them in the faith, and in their lives of Christian witness.'

Reflection

Ours is an historical religion. It not only unfolds within the joys and disappointments of time and place, but it is rooted in actual events that took place in the lives of real people. The Christ to whom we commit ourselves is not a mythic character, a figment of communal religious imagination. He is someone who was born into history, at a specific period of time, in a particular place. He was known by real people like John the Baptist; he submitted himself to historical rituals like baptism. He had followers who testified to the truth of both his existence and his life. Jesus was a man of history.

Like Paul, we too have been called to be apostles. We received this call when we were baptised. The beginning of the year, with its custom of making new resolutions, is a wonderful time to remember to what we have committed ourselves. At times it seems that our own apostleship is no less daunting than was Paul's. However, it is no less immediate either. Whether the period of history is the first half of the first century, as was the time of Jesus, or the second half, as was the time of Paul, or the twenty-first century, as is our time, salvation unfolds within the events of time. Furthermore, the followers of Jesus always return to the events of his life in order to discover the meaning of the events in their lives. These past events are reinterpreted in the ongoing present. Discipleship is never otherworldly.

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Parish Retreat

Will be held on Saturday, 11 February at the Francis Retreat Centre, Bonny Hills. It will be a one day retreat. All parishioners, teachers and parents are most welcome. Register on line via the St Agnes' website using the following steps, or call the Presbytery Office.

- Website: www.stagnesparish.org.au.
- Click on Parish Education link.
- On the RHS click on Parish Registrations.
- This will take you to School Interviews, enter Event code for Parish Retreat - 422eh - then click green 'Go' button.
- This will take you to Retreat Registrations.

St Agnes' Parish State School Sacramental Program

If you are interested in your child participating in this program and require a Registration Form, or you have any questions please contact Stacey or Donna. The sacramental timeline is below. More detailed information will be available closer to the dates. The Registrations will be held in St Agnes' Church.

- PENANCE: students in Year 4 or over. Registration: 20 February.
- CONFIRMATION: students in Year 2 or over. Registration: 15 May.
- COMMUNION: students in Year 3 or over. Narrated Masses will be held on 20, 21 & 22 August.

Email: sacramentalprogram@gmail.com.
Phone Stacey on 0438 287 898 or call Donna at St Agnes' Primary School on 6583 7433 when school resumes.

Baptism Information Night

The next Baptism Information night will be held on Thursday, 19 January at 6.00pm in St Agnes' Church. It is important for you to attend an information session prior to your child's Baptism. If you have any questions contact the Presbytery on 6583 1024.



Welcome to our Visiting Priests

Over the weekends of 15/16 and 21/22 January, we are very fortunate to have visiting Priests assisting us in our Parish whilst Fr Peter Wood is on his annual leave.

We welcome Fr Greg Jacobs this weekend and welcome back for next weekend Fr James Foster.

We farewell and thank Fr Frank Devoy for sharing his wisdom with us over the past 2 weekends.

MacKillop Gift Shop

The gift shop has for sale a wide range of gifts, religious items and cards. It is open Monday to Friday 10.00am to 2.00pm and is located on Hayward Street, behind KFC. The phone number is 6584 9779.

Coeliac Hosts

Coeliac Hosts are available for parishioners who prefer these hosts. Prior to Mass commencing please go to the Sacristy and speak with our Pastoral Assistant, Peter O'Driscoll, and then sit towards the front of the Church. Coeliac hosts are available at the Chapels.



World Day of Prayer

Friday 3 March

What is the World Day of Prayer?

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide ecumenical movement of women of many faith traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year on the first Friday in March. Throughout the entire day, we collectively pray all over the world, beginning with the first sunrise and ending at the last sunset. Our prayers follow the sun's path around the globe. Co-ordinated services of Christian worship and prayer are held in over 170 countries. The program for the service is prepared by women from one focus country. This year the service is prepared by women from the Philippines. Each service has a theme and involves Bible readings, prayers and songs and a reflection. The theme is 'Am I being unfair to you?'

What are the goals of World Day of Prayer movement?

The motto of the World Day of Prayer is "informed prayer and prayerful action". The prayer day promotes informed prayer for the women of the focus country. The WDP service presents their needs and concerns and their praise to God through the use of Bible passages and prayers and testimonies. Hopefully too the service will generate subsequent informed action in support of the women of the focus country. The Day of Prayer also encourages Christians of all traditions to join together and express community in prayer and praise to our God – locally and globally.

World Day of Prayer will be held in St Agnes' Church at 9.30am on Friday, 3 March.



World Day of Prayer
AUSTRALIA

Remember in Prayer



Recently Deceased: Stella Gilligan, Ellen Breakell, Di Lathlean, Margot O'Connor.

Anniversaries: Gerard O'Brien, Kelly Sherlock, Raymond Cameron, Bernard Heagney, Michael Bridge, Herbie Kelly, John Abi Saab, Julie Brown, Emanuel Bayada, Rita Lulham, Fr Brian Murphy.

Other Mass Intentions: Jeff Condon, Frank Bayada, Janelle Ramstadius, Pat Chuck, Peter Chuck, Sr Josephine Quinn RSM, Tony Petro, Marija Miller, Hilton Dodds, Minnie Downes, Nora Downes Roberts, Ern O'Reilly, Beryl Thomas, Molly & Robert Friggens, Stan Condon, donor intentions and Masses of thanksgiving.

Port Macquarie Men

Come along and join with us in sharing a meal and discussion on Thursday, 19 January at Westport Club from 12 noon to 2.00pm. If you are interested contact Grey on 0418 247 107.

St Agnes' Rugrats

Community Youth Group

Rugrats is an open youth group centred around social activities held at the Port Macquarie Youth Hub in Horton Street. It is held on Friday from 3.30pm to 7.00pm. The cost is \$3.00 per person or \$6.00 per family, with two or more children and includes afternoon tea and dinner.

Rugrats is fully supervised and recommences on Friday, 20 January – all are welcome. For further information please contact Peter on mobile number 0429 658 404.

Stamps

The parish is happy to accept stamps as we have now found a person willing to collect and send to the Missions. However we cannot accept stamps unless they are trimmed of excess paper waste. That is – leave a 2 mm border around each stamp. The stamps will be sold to help the poor areas of Peru under the auspices of the Mary MacKillop Missions Fund.

Need help with your parish giving?

Call Trudi
(02) 6588 7444



Parish Giving Programme

Parish Priest

Father Leo Donnelly

Assistant Priest

Father Peter Wood

Assistant Priest

Father Roland Agrisola

Pastoral Assistant

Peter O'Driscoll

T (02) 6584 9970

Presbytery Office

47 Hay Street Port Macquarie

PO Box 23

T (02) 6583 1024

E pastoraloffice@stagnesparish.org.au

www.stagnesparish.org.au

Office Hours:

8.30am - 4.30pm

FEAST DAYS

St Anthony

Tuesday 17 January



St Fabian & St Sebastian

Friday 20 January

St Agnes

Saturday 21 January



PARISH MASSES

ST AGNES' CHURCH | Hay Street, Port Macquarie

Monday to Thursday: 5.15pm

Friday: 12.05pm

Saturday: 8.00am, 6.00pm Vigil

Sunday: 7.30am, 9.00am, 5.00pm

Please note: Weekday Masses at 9.00am on Public Holidays

Reconciliation: Friday 11.30am -12 noon, Saturday 11.30am - 12.30pm

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

1st Saturday of the month 8.30am - 9.30am.

ST FRANCIS CHAPEL /Lochinvar Place, Port Macquarie

Contact: Sr Anne Hannigan

Ph 6589 9814 or 0419 243 259.

Communion Service or Mass: 9.30am Monday - Thursday

Sunday Mass: 9.30am

CHRIST THE KING CHAPEL | Boronia St, Port Macquarie

Contact: Sr Anne Hannigan

Ph: 6589 9814 or 0419 243 259

Weekday Mass: See Notice On Chapel Door

Mass: Saturday Vigil - 4.30pm

Rosary: 1st Saturday of the month 4.00pm.

ST BERNARD'S, TELEGRAPH POINT | Rollands Plain Rd, Telegraph Point

Thursday: 6.00pm.

STAR OF THE SEA, LAKE CATHIE | Ocean Drive, Lake Cathie

Sunday: 8.00am.

ROSTERS

21 & 22 January 2017

READERS AND COMMENTATORS

6pm Vigil: Maureen Dick
Margaret Swan
Bill Skane

7.30am: Peter Swan
Sonia West
Pat McLoughlin

9.00am: Cathy Hawtin
Trish Green
Anne Thurgate

5.00pm: Diana Smith
Lani Gobius
Sarah Smith

9.00am: Betty Hodgson
Nigel Toole
Judy Brady
Peta Rourke

5.00pm: Hannah O'Brien
Sophie Priddis
Carol Briscoe
Peter Briscoe

GIFT BEARERS ROSTER

6pm Vigil: B & S Skane

7.30am: S & K Panes

9.00am: P Sharpe &
A Schwennesen

MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST

6pm Vigil: Jodie Rich
Charlie Peoples
Des Grissell
Jason Gill

7.30am: John McQueen
Dianne Gander
Denise McLoughlin
Lisa Toomey

THE STATUE OF OUR LADY

Sue Kingston
37 Church Street
Port Macquarie
Phone: 6584 9815

NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

3rd Sunday of Year A

Isaiah 8:23 9:3; Psalm 26;
1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17;
Matthew 4:12-23.

DIOCESAN INVESTMENT FUND PAYS 2.15% AT CALL!

There are no fees or charges on your account. *AGENTS: Mrs Veronica Rinkin & Mrs Mary O'Brien*
DIF Office, Parish Administration Centre, Phone: (02) 6583 7439 9am – 1pm Monday - Friday