

ST.ALOYSIUS GONZAGA Catholic Parish of Cronulla

Incorporating: Our Lady of the Way Church, Bundeena

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As a Parish we Serve God

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Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

Unlike the Scribes, he taught them with authority ::::

For the Jewish people, the synagogue was a place of meeting and assembly, where they would hear the Scriptures proclaimed, and they would read and pray. At such assemblies, it was usual for one of the Rabbis or Teachers of the Law to give a sermon based upon the established means of interpreting the Scriptures. This was intended to help the people to gain a deeper insight into God's unique Covenant bond that he had made with them, and how this was expressed through their observance of the Law. The Jews still continue this practice even until today. The actual building of the synagogue is thought to have come about during the Jewish exile in Babylon, and by the time of Jesus there were many synagogues throughout Palestine, and in every city of prominence and importance. The synagogue was constructed as mainly a rectangular room with a rostrum or pulpit from which the Scriptures were read and explained.

Within this sacred place of learning and the study of God's Law, the Synagogue at Capernaum, Jesus revealed his own authority to teach. Yet, there was a remarkable difference between his teaching and that of the Scribes and Pharisees. When Jesus taught from the Scriptures, he was able to speak in his own name and from his own experience, whereas the Scribes and Pharisees would teach and would not do. They would explain the Scriptures in a largely legalistic way, whereas Jesus could breathe life into these same teachings, and help the people to draw a vitality of faith from them, in response. Jesus could relate the Scriptures directly to what he knew and what he had seen. For example, he could refer to a teaching from the Old Testament Prophets, say Isaiah, and be able to relate this directly to himself, and explain that he was the one sent to fulfil God's promises made through the Prophets long ago. He could refer to other teachings from the Old Testament, for example the observance of the Commandments, and have the authority to rephrase and reinforce these in two Commandments: love of God and Neighbour.

There are other countless examples of how the Lord could interpret and teach Scripture, in reference to his own mission and person. For this reason, Jesus could speak about the mysteries of God, and the impact that these mysteries have on human relationships, in a profoundly simple and yet authoritative way. 'Authority' in this sense does not mean to dominate, or to force agreement, but to demonstrate that he had the right and privilege to teach as he did, so that the people could freely accept what he taught, because they found faith in him.

While he taught, a man possessed by an unclean spirit was brought to him. These kinds of miraculous cures demonstrate the clear link between what he taught and the actions that followed. Jesus' words and actions are revealed as having a divine power which provokes wonder and awe in those who hear and see him. Consequently, when he taught that the Kingdom of God had come in his own person, he demonstrated this authority to teach by the clear sign of banishing evil and the power of darkness, as witnessed through the cure of the possessed man. This was a classic sign that God's Kingdom had come about. The Pharisees and Scribes were unable to do anything like this! Jesus reveals that he is the Messiah, the Saviour, by possessing a power greater than any evil spirit, which only reinforced and gave authority to what he taught.

This Gospel reading raises a profoundly simple, and yet crucial question for us. Have we recognised this same authority of Jesus' teaching in our lives, as witnessed by his words and actions? This is an important question for us particularly in our age, because there are often many contradictory theories and modes of thought and opinion, which all claim the authority to teach the truth. The most familiar of these is that we should simply judge what we believe to be true or false, simply by what we feel inclined to believe or to reject. Or, that we do whatever we please, as long as it doesn't "hurt" anyone. Yet these theories do not add up when they are placed beside each other! How then do we come to understand what is genuinely right and true in our lives, from a whole ocean of opinion and thought? Do we recognise that the authority to teach the truth can never be something of our own creation and formation, but rather something ultimately revealed by God to us, directly and personally, through the Body of Christ, the Church.

God has given us intelligence and reason, whereby we can come to know and understand what is true, by recognising his authority to teach us, but this cannot be a reality for us, until we recognise that the teaching of the Lord is to hold a prominent place and authority in our lives. However, we cannot discover this teaching for ourselves, alone and unaided, but only by recognising that the Church too, although formed by vulnerable and sinful human beings, has the same divine authority of Jesus to teach and guide in his name. This Sunday could be an opportunity for us to reinforce and renew our respect and reverence for the Gospel of Life, in our lives.....Fr Andrew Benton



RESPONSES FOR THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME YEAR B

Prayer of the Church: Psalter Week 4

Entrance Antiphon: (If no entrance hymn)
Save us O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you..

Responsorial:

If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Gospel Acclamation:

ALLELUIA, ALLELUIA! A people in darkness have seen a great light; a

radiant dawn shines on those lost in death. **ALLELUIA!**

Communion Antiphon:

Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.



CALENDAR FOR THE COMING WEEK

Monday:	St Aloysius Playgroup: This addition to the Wednesday group will gather in Thornton Hall at 10.00am. School Resumes.
Tuesday:	Memorial Of St John Bosco, Priest. The 55 and over Club: This group of seniors will gather in Thornton Hall at 10.00am for carpet bowls and other activities. Come along and join with them. The Legion of Mary meet in the Parish Centre at 4.00pm.
Wednesday:	St Aloysius Playgroup: This group of mums and dads will gather in Thornton Hall with their little ones at 10.00am The Rosary Guild will meet in St Aloysius' Church Chapel at 12.30pm.
Thursday:	Feast of the Presentation of the Lord.
Friday:	St Aloysius Youth Group meet in Thornton Hall at 6.30pm.
Saturday:	Vigil Mass of the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B. Mass at St Aloysius' Church, 6.00pm
Sunday:	Masses of the 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B. Masses at St Aloysius' Church: 8.00am. 10.00 am 6.00pm. Mass at Our Lady of the Way Church, Bundeena. 9.00am

COMGRATULATIONS TO

Levi George, Mileta Richards and Charlie Throssen whom we welcome to our Holy Catholic Church this weekend. Through their Baptism we pray they will love and serve the Lord always.



BAPTISM

On the Lighter Side! A Bulletin Blooper!
Ladies, don't forget the rummage sale. It's a chance to get rid of those things not worth keeping around the house. Don't forget to bring your husbands with you.

MASS OF FAREWELL
Celebrated by
Fr Thomas Kurunthanam
Friday 24th February, 2012
St Aloysius' Church 7.00pm
All Parishioners are invited to join in this celebration.

and
After Mass, join in a farewell supper to Fr Thomas in Thornton Hall

Envelopes are available at the entrances of our churches if you wish to contribute to a gift that we can present to Fr Thomas on behalf of the parish as a thank you for his dedication to our parish.

DINNER FOR EIGHT 2012 ::::

Would you like to meet some new friends? Would you like to be re-acquainted with some old friends?

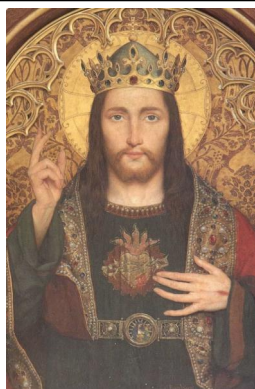
A new round of Dinner for Eight will commence in February and we would like to have the pleasure of your company!

Dinner for Eight is a popular way for Parishioners to get to know each other socially. Members of each group take turns to act as host (not a compulsory condition of participating if you can't manage it) and other members bring along something to contribute to the meal. In the course of six months, the group ideally meets four or five times. At the end of the six months, half the group will move on to mix with half of another group, giving you more opportunities to mix with and get to know other people in the Parish.

Stella Maris Ladies Auxiliary :::::

AGM and election of officers. Meeting this Wednesday at 2.00pm

The Auxiliary would love to welcome new members. Come and join us on Wednesday for afternoon tea in the Activities Room at Stella Maris Aged Care Facility, 6 Coast Ave, Cronulla. Cost \$3,00.
Any enquiries? Contact Lillian on 0438266857



WELCOME TO OUR NEW PARISH PRIEST, REV. DR. THOMAS CARROLL

This weekend, we will have the opportunity of saying welcome to our new Parish Priest, Fr Tom Carroll, after Masses at St Aloysius' Church. On behalf of our Parish, we offer a great welcome to you Father, and pray that your time with us will be a happy one. Fr. Tom will, in the next couple of weeks, celebrate Mass at Bundeena, and he will look forward to meeting our Parishioners there. We extend to you our full support during your initial stages of getting to know us, and throughout your time in our Parish.

POSTPONEMENT OF PARISH RETREAT

Unfortunately, at very short notice and due to unforeseen circumstances, it has become necessary for us to temporarily postpone the Parish Retreat "OPENING THE DOOR". It is thought, at this stage, that we might try to re-schedule this year's retreat some time in August this year, hopefully at the same Marist Brother's venue in Mittagong.

Parishioners, who wish to receive a refund of any retreat fees that have already paid, are of course welcome to approach our Secretary, Kim, between 9am and 3pm Monday to Friday for a full refund. Once again, our apologies, and we will advise the Parish of the new arrangements as soon as possible.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Cathy Sammut at our Parish on 02 8522 0300.

