



Not from the Pulpit: Rachel McLoughlin IBVM



Statue of Mary by David Wynne
Lady Chapel at Ely Cathedral Cambridgeshire, UK

We are living in mystery which I believe we can enter ever more deeply. Once we do this then we are beginning to be bold for change. But how do I enter more deeply into the mystery? Listening to our bodies as a place of revelation is a way of encountering the mystery. Have you ever named your deepest desire? A deepest desire is one that keeps reoccurring through our life. It resonates deeply in our body, giving life and energy. We experience our deepest desire as a place where our head, heart and body are in sync. It not only gives life to us, but also others around us.

Our deepest desire can be difficult to name because we are invested in it and so it makes us feel vulnerable. But once we name our desire and let it build, we can let go of obstacles and fears that hinder us. We are drawn by the desire with a wholeheartedness that is sometimes inexplicable. If we trace the journey that we have been on we become conscious that all of it is much more than we originally imagined.

I know many women who have tapped into this creative self-giving love that is at the same time so life-giving. Women that are not only doing extraordinary practical works of justice but just by their very presence enable change in those around them. They are women that are free to be who they are called to be. Women that are fully alive. Women that build communities of equality through the virtues of peace and justice that overflow from this healing love pouring out of them.

Women that are fully aware of the interconnectedness of all and spend time contemplating creation and all its wonders. Women that know that they are living in the mystery.

One of my heroes is at the heart of the Church; Mary Magdalene, recently justly reinstated as 'Apostle to the apostles'. She exemplifies the embodiment of being 'bold for change'. Christ commissioned her to tell the disciples that he is risen. She stands at the very foundation of our Church's life.

On International Women's Day, we connect with her courageous witness and declaration 'I have seen the Lord'. We stand too with the many women in our Church who, like Mary, continue to inspire us with their loving apostleship. We allow their words and example to ignite our own hearts and voices and share this Good News message of love, peace and justice.

Now more than ever in the Church we are called to be bold for change.

Rachel McLoughlin professed her vows as a Loreto sister in February 2017

Parish Notices

New Anglican Minister- Rev Lachlan Edwards

The Service of Commencement of Ministry for the Rev Lachlan Edwards for Christ Church, Lavender Bay will be held on Saturday 18 March. Owing to an earlier appointment Fr Andrew Bullen SJ will be unable to attend but will be represented by Fr Daven Day SJ. The Jesuit Community and the Parish of Our Lady of the Way congratulate the Rev Lachlan Edwards on his ministry.

Explore your faith, ask questions, share.

Alpha is a modern approach to Christianity. It's not only for involved Catholics but for everyone. Each week, Alpha showcases original talks and excellent videos, which explore the many layers of Christianity.

10.30 am Mon 13 March: 6.30pm Thurs 16 March: 12.30pm Sun 19 March (for under 35's) at Harrington Hall in Our Lady of Dolours School, Archer St Chatswood. Contact: Adrian Brannan - 0414 826 326
adrian@catholicparish.com.au

Sick & Housebound Ministry

If you would like to receive the Eucharist in your home please call Peter Walden 0448-474-629

First Reconciliation and Holy Communion Information Evening

Thurs 27 April @ 7.00pm , Ron Dyer Centre

Candidate registration: <https://www.trybooking.com/OJNA>

Please contact Claire Loneragan: clairel@sjparishnsw.org.au or 8918 4143 – Tuesdays only

Confirmation for children in Year 6

Sun 13 Aug & 20 Aug @ St Mary's Church North Sydney

Further information about this program and registration/enrolment will be available shortly.



“EMERTON NEEDS OUR HELP!”

The Opportunity Store at Holy Family Parish Emerton is now again accepting quality household items for the less fortunate in the Mt Druitt area. Items can be left in the foyer of the Ron Dyer Centre, North Sydney. Please no furniture items at this time. Thank you from the Jesuit Social Services team.

St Mary's School Knitting Project

The students of St Mary's are knitting a rug for Mary's House. Wool donations are needed to help complete this project. Any wool or unfinished works will help and is much appreciated. Please place your donations in the tub provided at the back of St Mary's Church.

2017 Aloysian Law Lunch with Fr Frank Brennan SJ

Friday 24th March, 1230pm: Doltone House, Elizabeth Street, Sydney

www.trybooking.com/DLQP Info at james.halliday@staloysius.nsw.edu.au or 9936 5568



Join us for fun with friends at OMG!

Fri 31 March , 6.00pm – 8.00pm, Ron Dyer Centre, 42 Ridge St, North Sydney.

Omg is about friends, fun and community for Years 5 and Year 6 students on the lower North Shore from all Parishes and Schools.

- ❖ **GIANT OUTDOOR GAMES**
- ❖ **JUMPING CASTLE**
- ❖ **SLUSHIES, PIZZA AND MORE**

Bring \$5 on the night and a water bottle. Parent registration and collection from the Ron Dyer Centre. Bookings: www.trybooking.com/PDPK Contact: marcia.o.sullivan@bigpond.com or 8918 4101.

Sunday's Readings

1st Reading

Gen 12: 1-4

Abram leaves home receiving promises from the Lord

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 32: 4-5 18-20 22 R.v22

Second Reading

2 Tm 1: 8-10

Following the Gospel entails some hardship

Gospel

MT 17: 1-9

Jesus is transfigured before Peter, James & John

In Our Prayers

Baptisms

Sebrina Gross, Marcus Vaccarella, Adele Azar, Anthony Kevric

Alexander Colomer, Alexander O'Donnell

Weddings

Loic Barancourt & Lillian Lau, Peter Theodosiou & Gabrielle Davis

Thomas Caristo & Katherine Ross, Paul Dyer & Ellise Bosilkovski

Sick

Christine Mitchells, Olivia Scott, John Landels, Andrew Dyer, Sr Natalina Todeschini, Donna Lukas, John Taylor, Margaret Mc Donald, Frances Boyle, Brian Mcloskey Sr Anna Gaha IBVM, Gerald Curtin, Craig Chase, Rosa Maria Santos, Paul Gardiner SJ,

Recently Deceased

Adrian Short, Pat Watts

Anniversaries

Enrico Piccioli, Maureen Kaye, Francis Murray

Parish Office:

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olw@sjparishnsw.org.au | www.northsydneycatholics.com | A.M.D.G.

Reconsidering Confession by James Martin SJ

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I have a Catholic friend who hates confession. I am not going to break any confidences, but my friend despises confession so much that he hasn't gone for a decade. He has offered several reasons why he doesn't go to what is formally called the sacrament of reconciliation. He is afraid that his sins are now too much to confess all at once; he is frightened of what the priest might say (he's had a few bad experiences); and he is too busy.

My friend is not the only person I've met who feels this way. Several years ago, while directing a retreat, I met a woman who said that she hadn't gone for 20 years. Her reason was also an unpleasant experience with a priest during the sacrament. As I recall, he berated her for not coming in more frequently. In response, I asked her: "If you had a bad experience with a physician, would you would never see a physician again?" However, even after we talked about her experiences, she was hesitant to return. Our spiritual direction session was brief, and by the time our 20 minutes was up it was time for another retreatant. So, I have no idea if she ever returned to the confessional.

Sometimes I feel nearly tongue-tied in these situations. Not because I judge people in these situations to be bad Catholics, or because I don't know any helpful responses to these common roadblocks. Rather, it's because I go to confession frequently. Very frequently. And I like it.

Admittedly, it's easier for me to do when I live in a house filled with priests, and especially when my spiritual director is a member of my community. If I ever feel burdened by sin, or even a sin, all I need to do is knock on someone's door and ask.

On the other hand, it's arguably harder, since these are men with whom I live and, in many instances, work. After confessing your sins to someone, you may see the fellow at breakfast the next morning. Or at an editorial meeting. But that has never bothered me, because I figure that anyone who lives or works with me already knows I am not perfect.

I often ponder what makes me more inclined to go than the people I mentioned. I am certainly not any holier than anyone else—not by a long shot. It's not that I have fewer sins.

Maybe it's the frequency. I go to confession once a month, if not more. I'm used to it. Consequently, it ceases to hold any conceivable fear. Something like a person who has a fear of flying taking 50 flights in one year, and then suddenly realizing that he's comfortable on a plane. He knows there will inevitably be turbulence and can say, "I'm used to this. And it is not as bad as I thought it would be."

Sometimes I tell skittish Catholics how wonderful it feels to be honest with God in the sacrament. The old argument against confession that you can always tell God your sins is a good one. Of course you can. But often you don't. Moreover, it helps to verbalize your sins with another person. And hearing the words of absolution, *viva voce*, is a lot more powerful than intuiting them in prayer. At least for me.

My comfort level may also stem from experiences with confession from the other side. When hearing confessions, and offering absolution, I can see how people feel unburdened. They exhale. They relax. They smile. And I can feel how grateful they are to be forgiven for something they thought was unforgivable. All that makes confession precious to me. But mainly I like the way I feel afterward, as if God had given me another chance—which, of course, God has. And no matter if I'm hearing confessions or going to confession, I always think of what my theology professor, Peter Fink, S.J., told our class, "Confession isn't about how bad you are, but how good God is. "I wish I could invite everyone who has stayed away to come back. And for returnees, I hope you hear some form of what I say to people who haven't been to confession for years: "Welcome back."

Reconciliation is offered each weekday at St Mary's prior to the 530pm Mass



Project Compassion 2017 – Week 2 Martina's story -Timor-Leste

For Martina, an East Timorese mother of eight, escaping domestic violence was the first step in her journey to a new life. But at first, her future seemed very uncertain.

Timor-Leste is one of the least developed countries in the world, with extremely low levels of basic health, literacy and income. The shelter where Martina sought refuge, Uma PAS, offered her many ways to transcend these challenges. Uma PAS is a partner in Caritas Australia's Protection Program, a holistic community-wide program in Timor-Leste that offers women like Martina economic empowerment and a life of safety

in a supportive community. Please support Caritas with their continued support of Martina and people like her in need. Envelopes and boxes are at the back of all churches: donations can also be made via post: GPO Box 9830, Sydney, NSW 2001 or at www.caritas.org.au or by phone 1800 024 413.

Darkness Into Light

8pm, 6 April
St Mary's, North Sydney

“The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead thou me on.”

Music by *Prima Luce* Polyphony Ensemble
More Info at www.northsydney Catholics.com