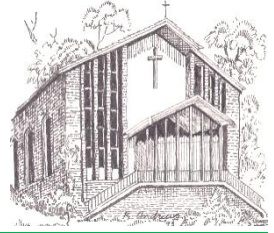




Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra

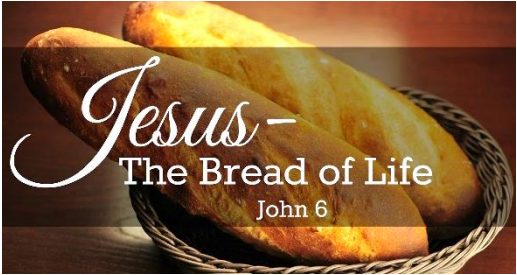


11 / 12 AUGUST 2018
19TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR B
John's Gospel, Ch 6 ✦ Feast of the Assumption ✦ Drought Collection

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

Becoming Food and Drink

The prophet Elijah is weak from hunger, but the angel of the Lord feeds him with a hearth cake and a jug of water. Elijah is no longer hungry, but what is more important, “strengthened by that food, he walked forty days and forty nights.” There was work to do, a journey to be made, and the food made it possible. When Jesus talks about the bread that he is giving, he compares it to manna, which performed a role similar to Elijah’s food: it enabled a journey to take place (out of the desert and into the promised land). So, it is obvious that Jesus intends the bread of life not just to satisfy hunger but also to make possible the accomplishment of a task, the completion of a journey.



In one sense, this journey is on the road to salvation: “bring us to our promised inheritance,” we pray in our prayer. Jesus has to have something else in mind also, because he talks about not just feeding but also becoming food: “the bread I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.”

We are to give of ourselves, as Jesus on the cross and in the Eucharist, for the sake of the poor ones, the lowly and the afflicted. The Eucharist challenges us to become their food, their drink, so that they may complete the journey “to the mountain of God.”

“According to the Christian message, our relationship to our neighbour is bound up with our relationship to God; our response to the love of God, saving us through Christ, is shown to be effective in our love and service of all people. Christian love of neighbour and justice cannot be separated. For love implies an absolute demand for justice, namely a recognition of the dignity and rights of one’s neighbour. Justice attains its inner fullness only in love. Because every person is truly a visible image of the invisible God and a sister or brother of Christ, the Christian finds in every person God’s very self and God’s absolute demand for justice and love.”
 – Synod of Bishops, *Justice in the World*, 1971: 34

We continue the Eucharistic meditation from John’s gospel. Last week Jesus called his audience to be open to the gift of faith that will enable them to appreciate the Eucharistic mystery. In today’s reading he explains further what this faith implies. Understanding that this passage is a meditative recollection of what Jesus had done for us, we are able to share in the outlook of the community in which this gospel was written. This passage echoes many of the themes that were fundamental to the faith of that community. John’s gospel begins with a declaration of faith in the Incarnation: “The Word became flesh’



✠✠ This momentous truth is constantly reaffirmed in the writings of this community. Jesus is confronted, in our passage, by the complaints of those who find it hard to accept: 'Come down from heaven! This is Jesus the son of Joseph'. The faith to which Jesus calls us, however, is not an embarrassing burden. It is a blessing that comes to us from the depths of the divine generosity and freedom – we are 'drawn by the Father', setting out on a journey which leads to 'eternal life' in God.

**I am
the living
bread
that came
down from
heaven.**

John 6:51



The Father and the Son share in all things, and so he declares that faith is also his gift, a gift that will be ours when we 'come to him' – we must live in his company as his first disciples did. For Christian faith, Jesus is the revelation of the Father – he has truly 'come from God', and 'has seen the Father' – an echo of the memorable words of the gospel's opening: 'it is the only son who is close to the Father's heart who had made him known'. The teaching is like a commentary on his words at the Supper: 'Eternal life is this: to know you [Father], the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent'. Those who live by the faith Jesus is offering share in the divine wisdom itself; they 'hear the teaching of the Father and learn from it'. ('Knowledge' in the Scriptures, and in the outlook of the community of John's gospel, has a rich and profound meaning; it is personal and life-giving, far more than the gaining of information.) Referring to the manna – symbol of God's caring for the people of the Exodus – Jesus reminds his listeners that the time of foreshadowing has ended. (Our first reading mirrors this theme – in the strength of heavenly food, the prophet walks for forty days until he reaches 'Horeb, the mountain of God' – another name for Sinai where the old covenant was given.) The faith Jesus offers recognises that all the promises that sustained Israel's faith are being fulfilled: 'I AM the living bread come down from heaven'.

Jesus has prepared his listeners for his announcing of the Eucharistic mystery. Through this mystery he will be nourishing bread for the world, not in metaphor only, but in reality: 'The bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world'. These climactic words clearly echo the words of the Eucharistic ritual familiar to the community of John's gospel: 'This is my body, given for you'. 'Jesus came in the flesh' is one of the formulas of this community's Incarnation faith.

Paul's teaching from Ephesians continues to chime in with our theme: let your communion be shown by genuine friendship; show forth the Christ-life you share in through the Paschal Mystery.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE: TUESDAY

Next **Tuesday, 14 August**, commencing at 11:00am in the McCarthy Centre, **Magda Pires** – our Parish Secretary – will demonstrate Origami – the Japanese art of paper folding. Light luncheon to follow. **All welcome.** Monthly meeting 1:30pm.



FIRST PENANCE AND FIRST COMMUNION 2018

When a child reaches the age of reason – usually seven – the parents may present their child for the Sacraments of Penance and First Communion, that is, usually when the child is in Grade 2. Enrolments for these Sacraments in our Parish close on **Tuesday, 18 September**. Enrolment Forms may be downloaded from our Parish website. Details of the preparation program for these Sacraments are on our Parish website. First Communion will be celebrated at weekend Masses on or after 1-2 December, or 8-9 December. Parents wishing to have their child celebrate these Sacraments in 2018 should enrol the child by 18 September.

THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The feast of the **Assumption** is on **Wednesday, 15 August**. The feast is a holy day of obligation in Australia. There will be **three Masses** to celebrate the feast: **5:30pm Tuesday, 14 August** and **Wednesday, 15 August** at **9:15am** and **7:00pm**.

The feast was celebrated under various names (Commemoration, Dormition, Passing, Assumption) from at least the fifth or sixth century. Since Mary is closely associated with all the mysteries of Jesus' life, it is not surprising that the Holy Spirit has led the Church to belief in Mary's share in his glorification. So close was she to Jesus on earth, she must be with him body and soul in heaven. Pius XII, when defining this doctrine in 1950 left open the theological and historical question of whether or not Mary actually experienced death. In the Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Churches, Mary is referred to as **Theotokos** (Greek θεοτόκος) **God-bearer**; the title has been in use since the 3rd century.



VINNIES NSW – DROUGHT APPEAL

With 99% of New South Wales affected by drought, Vinnies has launched its NSW Drought Appeal to raise vital funds for rural communities in need. The difficulties and hardships for farmers and their livestock caused by this drought will have ongoing ramifications for the affected communities. Through your kind donation, Vinnies will be involved in the recovery of these communities, helping to keep the hard-working farms of the NSW regional area afloat as they care for their land, their livestock and crops, and most importantly their families, with financial aid and emotional support.



Over the next two weekend, 18/19 and 25/26 August, there will be a special collection at both weekend Masses, with all proceeds going to the Vinnies NSW Drought Appeal. Thank you, in anticipation of your generosity.

THE BLESSING OF ST CLARE OF ASSISI – 11 AUGUST

The Blessing of St Clare: I, Clare, a handmaid of Christ, a little plant of our holy Father, Francis, a sister and mother of you and the other Poor Sisters, although unworthy, ask our Lord Jesus Christ through his mercy and through the intercession of his most holy Mother Mary, of all holy angels of God, and of all his men and women saints, that the heavenly Father give you and confirm for you his most holy blessing in heaven and on earth.

May you always be lovers of God and your souls, and the souls of your sisters and brothers. May you always be eager to follow the Gospel of Christ. May the Lord be with you always, and, wherever you are, may you be with the Lord always. May the Lord bless you, now and for ever. Amen.

SOCIAL JUSTICE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Refugees: Listen to the stories ... Pope Francis, in his words and actions, cuts through the global indifference by making the issue personal. He shows us that, when we look into the face of the asylum seeker and really hear their story – each stage of their journey – they are no longer a stranger to be feared and we can no longer be indifferent to their need. (*Social Justice Statement* 2015–16) On your own or with others try reading stories about asylum seekers and refugees.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Tuesday 14 Aug **St Maximilian Kolbe**, priest, martyr
Wednesday 15 Aug **The Assumption of Mary**
a holy day of obligation in Australia
Masses: Tuesday, 14 August, 5:30pm
Wednesday, 9:15am and 7:00pm



CHAPTER 6 OF JOHN'S GOSPEL

The usual approach to chapter 6 is pretty straightforward: Jesus feeds 5,000, showing his awesome, God-like powers; Jesus walks on the water, showing his awesome, God-like powers; Jesus teaches a lesson on the Lord's Supper, which the Jews totally miss. But that overlooks the real drama going on here. This is a recapitulation of the Exodus. The text is filled with references — some obvious, some subtle, all important.

Jesus feeds the Israelites with fish and loaves, just as God fed the Israelites with manna and quail. Jesus feeds the people because they preferred to hear Jesus' words to being fed. They briefly lived the lesson: we do not live by bread alone. Jesus demonstrates his power to cross a Sea that can only be passed by a miracle, just as God allowed the Israelites to cross the Red Sea by a miracle. The people grumble/murmur against Jesus just as they grumbled against Moses. Both events occur at the time of the Passover. The Exodus begins with the slaying of a lamb. John 6 predicts the slaying of Jesus as the Lamb of God. The 12 baskets are symbolic of the 12 tribes. Jesus spoke from a mountain, just as God spoke from a mountain on Sinai. Jesus is declared to be the "Prophet" like Moses. God told the Israelites "Do not be afraid" just as Jesus said to the apostles in the boat (Deuteronomy 1:29). Now, if John wants us to see Exodus, then what is the role that Jesus plays? He is the Passover lamb. He is Moses. He is the lamb sacrificed at the tabernacle for forgiveness. He is God.

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

19th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B
1st Reading 1 Kings 19:4-8
2nd Reading Ephesians 4:30-5:2
Gospel John 6:41-51

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

20th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B
1st Reading Proverbs 9:1-6
2nd Reading Ephesians 5:15-20
Gospel John 6:51-58

SUNDAY MASS TIMES

Church of St Michael • Thirroul
 Saturday – **5:30pm** • Sunday – **8:00am**
Bulli • Sunday 8:30am and 5:30pm
Corrimal • Saturday 6pm, Sunday 9:30am

LITURGIES THIS WEEK

Wombarra [Liturgy] Monday 4:30pm
Thirroul Tuesday 5:30pm
Wednesday 9:15am and 7:00pm
Thursday 9:00am
Friday 9:30am

Parish of St Michael – Thirroul and Wombarra

Moving forward as a Parish Family + one of the Northern Illawarra Parishes

Patrick Vaughan • *Parish Priest* ❖ Andrew Granc ofm, Geoff Allen, Ken Cafe ofm • *Assisting*

325 Lawrence Hargrave Drive
 4268 1910 4268 1976

PO Box 44 • Thirroul 2515
thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish Office Hours **Tuesday, Wednesday Friday**

9:00am to 3:30pm Magda Pires
10:00am to 3:00pm Maureen Franciskovic