



Welcome to the Parish of St Michael Thirroul and Wombarra



29 / 30 SEPTEMBER 2018
26TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME ✦ YEAR B
SAMARITAN'S PURSE ✦ SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

THIS WEEK'S READINGS

A Truly Catholic Spirit

The Second Vatican Council declared that the church is 'a universal sacrament of salvation,' in other words, the people of God are a sign to the whole world announcing its salvation. The priestly function of this people is to mediate salvation; its prophetic function is to announce salvation to the world through its sanctifying presence in the world.

The problem is that too many of God's people view this prophetic function within a limited context. They see it as a task of the leadership, somewhat like the old sedative, "Let Father do it."

Today's reading from the book of Numbers makes it clear that prophecy, the carrying of God's message to the world, is not the special task of only a few people: "Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets!"



If only all Christians felt a commitment "to bring [God's] pardon and [God's] kingdom to all we meet!"

The Gospel takes this point a step further. Not only must God's truth be spread through all of God's people; it must also be spread by those who are "not of our company."

Vatican II recognized that there is truth in all the world's great religions as well as in its secular institutions, for as Jesus declared: "Anyone who is not against us is with us."

"Since the entire church is missionary, ... the spreading of the gospel is a fundamental duty of the people of God. ... Therefore, let all sons and daughters of the Church have a lively awareness of their responsibility for the world; let them foster in themselves a genuinely catholic spirit and devote their energies to the work of evangelization."

– Vatican II, *Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church*, 1965: 35-36

Today's gospel reading from Mark has a lesson as telling today as it was when Jesus was instructing his disciples. The seriousness that characterises groups upholding a religious tradition often becomes exclusive and intolerant. The apostle John reports disapprovingly that they had seen a man 'casting out devils' in the name of Jesus. How precious in the memory of Christian faith is the Lord's response. Authentic faith and discipleship must reflect the inclusive ways of God, proclaimed by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: 'Love your enemies ... you must set no bounds to your love, just as your heavenly Father set none to his' (Matthew 5:48). 'Anyone who is not against us if for us' – words filled with wisdom and generosity. The Lord is at work in every human heart, and who are we to make judgments that may obstruct the mysterious purposes of God?



✚✚ The rest of the reading provides an important complement to the great lesson concerning outsiders that has just been given. Those who are within the community of faith have a great responsibility to uphold and protect the truth and values of the Gospel – ‘these little one who have faith’ are not the children in the community, but members of the community who may be led astray. What are we to make of Jesus’ drastic advice to ‘cut off’ bodily members that may ‘cause sin’? If they refer to personal morality – the more frequently heard interpretation – they are a reminder that faithful discipleship may call for heroically painful decisions. (As we know, the Semitic forms of expression used by Jesus are surprisingly strong to our ears.) There is a strong case, however, for an interpretation of these words as following on from reference to the ‘little ones’. In this interpretation they would refer to exclusion from the community, of persons who would corrupt the faith of insecure believers.



The first reading from Numbers provides a remarkable parallel to the gospel text. Now it is Joshua – the leader who was to succeed Moses and lead the Israelites into their Promised Land – who reacts in too exclusive a fashion. The response of Moses has a timelessness that is breathtaking; it sums up the ideal that should animate any leader of God’s people: ‘Are you jealous on my account? If only the whole people of the Lord were prophets, and the Lord gave his Spirit to them all’ Prophets are those who speak out in God’s name, pointing the way forward to God’s people. Vatican II stressed the need to foster such gifts of the Spirit in the Church.

The reading from James reminds us of another exclusiveness, the sense of power and difference that can close off wealthy people from their fellow human beings. Our passage follows an ironic description of the plans of the wealthy. In the spirit of old Israel’s Wisdom tradition, it goes on to declare that these grand plans will have no lasting outcome. It is not rich people in the Christian community who are being referred to, but the wealthy and unscrupulous of the surrounding society. Even so, they carry an implicit reminder for believers of the Saviour’s words: ‘It is harder for someone rich to enter the kingdom of Heaven’ (Matthew 19:23; see also Paul’s rebuke to an early Christian community in which the behaviour of the wealthy was forming ‘factions’ 1 Corinthians 11:18-21).

SOCIAL JUSTICE SUNDAY

The Australian Catholic Bishops’ Social Justice Statement for 2018–19 is titled **‘A Place to Call Home: Making a home for everyone in our land’**. The latest Census figures show that more than **116,000** Australians are homeless – something unacceptable for a rich and well-resourced nation like ours. Yet these people are only the tip of the iceberg: welfare agencies report growing numbers of families and individuals struggling to meet the cost of mortgages or rents and turning to specialist housing services, which are often unable to meet demand. House prices and even rents are spiralling out of reach of too many families and placing huge financial stress on ordinary people, even when they are employed. For those living on pensions or allowances, finding secure housing can be a far greater challenge – one that often takes a terrible toll on social wellbeing and mental health. The Statement challenges us all to confront Australia’s growing rate of homelessness and unaffordable housing. You can download a copy of the Statement:

www.socialjustice.catholic.org.au/publications/social-justice-statements



SAMARITAN'S PURSE OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Operation Christmas Child hand delivers gift-filled shoeboxes to children in many countries who have nothing. Thailand, New Guinea and Cambodia are among those countries. Thirroul Catholic Women's League combines with Austinmer Uniting Church Fellowship to fill shoeboxes. We are asking please, for the support of parishioners for gifts and donations to enable boxes to be filled for boys and girls aged 2yrs to 14yrs. Items required are toothbrushes, soap, hair clips and hair bands, combs, shorts, t-shirts, undies, exercise books (48p, 64p, 96p), small colouring books, lead and colour pencils, biro, note pads, marbles, chalk, erasers, sharpeners, balloons, tennis balls (that bounce), skipping ropes (not heavy), Matchbox and Hot Wheels cars and trucks. **NB all items must be NEW.** (No toothpaste or liquids.)



On **this weekend [last chance]** there will be a tub for the items in the porch of St Michael Church. Thank you in anticipation for your generosity.

PLENARY COUNCIL 2020

Have you had your say in preparation for Plenary Council 2020? We want to hear from everyone! There are a number of ways you can contribute and no limit to how many submissions you can make: * join a small group listening and dialogue session after Mass on Sunday for the next two weeks, Saturday afternoons (put your name down on the sheet at the front of the Church), or run your own (see one of the Plenary team for resources). We're also running sessions through existing Parish groups, including Lenten groups, Vinnies and CWL, and will run 1-2 evening sessions after the holidays (stay tuned!) ... * using the books or forms at the front of the church ... * have your say online at plenarycouncil.catholic.org.au ... * or have a chat with one of the Plenary team. We usually have both Masses covered.



Plenary Council 2020
Listen to what the Spirit is saying...

Bishop Brian will host a regional listening forum on 11 November, at St John Vianney Co-Cathedral, to hear from Local Animators the themes that are emerging. So have a chat to one of the Plenary team or come along in person to have your say.

ADULT FAITH TALKS AT THIRROUL

There has been great interest in the proposal to have a series of adult formation talks for interested parishioners. Here are the details:

Monday, 22 October at 7:30pm in the Parish Church **Ken ofm**
Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation ... *Amoris Laetitia* ... On Love in the Family.

Monday, 29 October at 7:30pm in the Parish Church **Andrew ofm**
If your faith be the size of a mustard seed. ... Living adult faith: a dynamic experience.

Monday, 5 November at 7:30pm in the Parish Church **Andrew ofm**
Praised be You my Lord for all Your creatures. ... St Francis of Assisi: Patron of the Environment, basic elements of a Franciscan perspective.

Monday, 12 November at 7:30pm in the Parish Church **Andrew ofm**
Be You Holy – as I the Lord am Holy: Explorations into personal and communal holiness.

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK

Monday 1 Oct St Thérèse of the Child Jesus
 9:30am Blessing of Animals
 Tuesday 2 Oct The Holy Guardian Angels
 Thursday 4 Oct St Francis of Assisi



SOCIAL JUSTICE FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Care for your pets: Pets are lovable and often make good companions. When caring for pets, remember that most household pets need to be contained within the area of your home. They can damage Australian flora and fauna. We need to preserve our native creatures and their habitats. Cities, suburbs and rural areas are more than social communities in which human beings live and grow; they are also part of natural communities in which we share space with a wondrous variety of life.

BLESSING OF ANIMALS ... 9:30AM MONDAY, 1 OCTOBER

All animals and their carers are welcome. *Leopards must be easily spotted.*

**ONE NON-PERISHABLE ITEM PER FAMILY EACH WEEK
 TO HELP THE NEEDY IN THE LOCAL ILLAWARRA AREA**

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



- ↪ Weekend 29/30 September Samaritan's Purse Donations
- ↪ Weekend 29 Sep to 1 Oct Model Train Exhibition, *Whitlam Centre, Liverpool*

DROWNING SURGE LAST SUMMER HAS SURF LIFESAVERS URGING CARE AT NSW BEACHES

39 people drowned last season along the NSW coast. **Red–Yellow This weekend!**

THIS Sunday's Readings *on our website*

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B
 1st Reading Numbers 11:25-29
 2nd Reading James 5:1-6
 Gospel Mark 9:38-43,45,47-48

NEXT Sunday's Readings *on our website*

27th Sunday in Ordinary Time • Year B
 1st Reading Genesis 2:18-24
 2nd Reading Hebrews 2:9-11
 Gospel Mark 10:2-16

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 9:00am
 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

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📧 thirroul@dow.org.au

Parish Office Hours Tuesday, Wednesday Friday

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

🌐 www.thirroulcatholic.org.au Parish School of St Michael 📞 4267 2560